



About the Speakers: a Series of Brief Autobiographies

George Amato is the director of the Science Resource Center and Senior Conservation Biologist at the Wildlife Conservation Society. He has lectured and published extensively on conservation strategies for endangered species, concentrating much of his work on the use of molecular analysis to determine conservation priorities. Dr. Amato serves as an adjunct professor at Columbia, Yale, and Fordham Universities. Additionally, he is the chairman of the American Zoo and Aquarium Association's (AZA) genetics advisory group as well as an advisor to numerous IUCN and AZA specialist groups. Dr. Amato is involved in conservation issues on a global scale working on projects in Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Caribbean. He received his BS from the University of Connecticut and his MS and PhD in Biology from Yale University.

Joe Barkowski is currently the Curator of the Bird Dept. at the Sedgwick County Zoo in Wichita, Kansas. The current collection of approximately 200 species with 600 individual birds includes a wide array of psittacine representation. Through the American Zoo and Aquarium Assoc. (AZA), Joe chairs the Parrot Taxon Advisory Group (TAG) as well as the Turaco/Cuckoo TAG. His involvement allows him to work with programs for Thick-billed parrots, Palm cockatoos and Cuban amazons.

Stephen Durand has spent several years in the Forestry and Wildlife Division, Botanical Gardens, Roseau, Dominica. He has been working to conserve Dominica's endemic Amazon parrots, the Sisserou and Jaco (*Amazona imperialis* and *A. arausiaca*, respectively) for several years. Additional information is not available at the time of printing.

Amos Glasgow, a teacher of eight years, joined the Forestry Department in February 1984 as a Forest Guard. His daily task at the time involved patrolling of Crown lands, traversing and collection of data on forest plantations and conducting environmental education programs within schools, and with community and farmers groups.

In 1987 he enrolled in the Forest Recreation program at Paul Smiths College of Arts and Sciences, New York, and successfully completed the course. On returning to St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) in 1989, he became Officer in charge of the Forestry Department's recreation and beautification programs. Besides his main recreation management duties, Amos also developed a keen interest in dendrology and has become a local expert in the flora of SVG.

In 1999, Amos was reassigned to the Leeward Range, one of four geographical forest regions



into which the island is divided. He is now responsible for the implementation of the Department Silviculture, Agroforestry, and Forest Protection activities within the Range, and supports the other Forestry units. The Leeward Range also contains two of the four main forest sectors (habitats) for the St. Vincent Parrot (*Amazona guildingii*).

Amos is one of the founding members of AvianEyes and has participated in the collection and documentation of the various studies the Group have conducted over the years. He also assists the Ministry of Tourism with Tour Guides training and conducts guided tours. Apart from local training he has been exposed to a number of workshops and conferences at the regional level including Ramsar Interim Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee meeting to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas (S P A W), and Wetland Conservation in the Caribbean workshop in French Guiana in 1993.

Amos has also participated in all of the Forestry Department's biennial parrot censuses.

Neiva Maria Robaldo Guedes received her Master degree in Forestry Science from the University of San Paulo. Over the past thirteen years she has been working as a field conservation biologist and is the coordinator of the Hyacinth Macaw Project, a thirteen year success story. She serves on the IBAMA Hyacinth Macaw and Lear's Macaw Committee. Her husband, Joacilei Lemos Cardosa, is a talented artist and will be accompanying Neiva to the convention.

Mark Hagen is the Research Director at The Hagen Avicultural Research Institute (HARI). He has a Master of Agriculture from the University of Guelph and specialized in Psittacine Aviculture. In his Bachelor of Science, Mark concentrated on nutrition and zoology and attended a semester at the University of California, Davis taking courses in cage bird medicine, nutrition and avian science. It has been more than ten years that he has been studying companion birds; writing his first paper on parrot breeding in 1983 and establishing HARI in 1985.

Following five years of experience housing birds indoors in a converted warehouse, Mark designed the new HARI facility in Rigaud, Quebec in 1989. This facility incorporates the latest techniques in environment control. Presently his research includes nutrition, and the influence of temperature, humidity and light cycles on breeding.

Mark is a firm believer in sharing his experiences and knowledge. He has published dozens of papers relating to the work at HARI i.e. egg incubation, oil and nutrition, formulated diets, husbandry and sanitation disease control, cage design, ventilation, pediatric care... Several of these have been presented at many of the avicultural conferences held every year throughout



the USA and Canada.

The science of breeding pet birds in captivity is still very young. The costs associated with the development of diagnostic tests and vaccines for various exotic diseases at Universities is not being fulfilled. Understanding the importance of this type of research has lead Mark to contribute at least five thousand dollars worth of products and gifts to three major fund raising events every year for the past two years. Mark is auctioneer and assists with the auctions at the Mid-West Avian Research Expo, International Aviculturists Society, American Federation of Aviculture, and the Canadian Parrot Symposium. Mark is speaking on behalf of Hagen.

Sallie Klink: Owner of Sallie Klink's Bird Haven, Inc., Spring Hill, Florida, Charter Member and Director of International Aviculturists Society, Founding Member and Director of the Florida Federation of Aviculture, former Corresponding Secretary of AFA, former President of Tampa Bay Bird Club, Inc., former member and Director of Central Florida Bird Breeders and the current Founding Member and President of the Hernando Exotic Bird Club, Inc.

In 1979, Sallie became interested in aviculture and began breeding canaries. In 1981, Sallie expanded her interest in aviculture and began breeding larger species of birds. Over a period of several years, her interest developed into a business. Currently, she owns and operates Klink's Bird Haven Inc., which is a farm consisting of various larger species of birds, as well as smaller species such as lories and conures. She owns and operates this farm with her husband, Mike.

Sallie has delivered presentations to the various avian bird clubs throughout the state of Florida and is well known within the avicultural community.

Rosemary Low has been passionately involved with birds since she was five years old. It was a pet duck that she pushed around in a doll's pram! Birds, and ultimately, parrots were more than a hobby. They became a way of life. As a child she kept and bred Budgerigars. At the age of 16 she was given her first parrot, a Grey. Neotropical parrots and the nectar-feeding species, the lories, have always been her special interest. *The Parrots of South America* was published before she was 30, and her two works on lories (published in 1977 and 1998) became the definitive works on these birds. She has had more than 20 books published, including *Endangered Parrots* and *Parrots, their care and breeding*. Her books have been translated into German, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Dutch and the Czech language. During nearly eight years in the Canary Islands she was curator of two of the world's largest parrot collections, Loro Parque in Tenerife, where she had more than 200 parrot species in her care, and Palmitos Park in Gran Canaria.



In line with her interest in conservation, in 1989 she was a co-founder of The World Parrot Trust and has edited its magazine, *PsittaScene*, since its inception that year. She says that with its emphasis on parrot conservation, this was the magazine she always wanted to read but it didn't exist until then. It is highly regarded by field workers, conservationists and parrot lovers throughout the world.

Rosemary Low has travelled widely, speaking at avicultural conventions in many countries and observing over 80 species of parrots in the wild in more than 20 countries. Watching parrots in their natural habitat, from the Kakapo in New Zealand and the Imperial Parrot on Dominica to the Tahiti Blue Lory on Aitutaki, is her greatest thrill, common species providing just as much enjoyment as rare ones. She initiated the highly successful campaign to raise funds for the conservation of the Great Green Macaw in Costa Rica and last year was able to observe this species at the nest. As a professional writer, she has numerous articles published in avicultural magazines worldwide. Very concerned at the direction that aviculture is taking, she still keeps parrots but no longer breeds them.

Rev. Ramon Noegel (by editor) bred Amazons long before they were being bred by others. He shared his techniques and innovations with other aviculturists. He pioneered many of the techniques and husbandry we now take for granted such as the suspended aviary. First Captive Breedings achieved by Ramon Noegel and Greg Moss in the period between 1974 and 1984 at Life Fellowship include:

Cayman Island *Amazona leucocephala caymenensis* (World first) 1974, Isle of Pines *Amazona leucocephala palmarum* (World first) 1976, Jamaican Black-billed *Amazona agilis* (World first) 1978, Cayman Brac *Amazona leucocephala hesternana* (World first) 1981, Tucuman *Amazona tucumana* (World first) 1981, Yellow-shouldered *Amazona barbadensis barbadensis* (World first) 1982, Yellow-shouldered *Amazona barbadensis rothschildsi* (World first) 1982, Red or Orange-throated Conure *Aratinga holochlora rubritorquis* (First U.S.) 1982, Dusky Pionus *Pionus fuscus* (World first) 1983, Red-browed *Amazona dufresniana rhodocorytha* (First U.S.) 1984, Yellow-lored *Amazona xantholora* (First U.S.) 1984, and the Parvipes *Amazona orchrocephala parvipes* (First U.S.) 1984. Greg and Ramon subsequently have gone on to be recognized with more than 20 avian awards. Since 1974 they have successfully reared to maturity no less than seven hundred leucocephala through multiple generations. Over the past 22 years, they have worked with and regularly bred another Caribbean Amazon, the St. Vincent Parrot, *Amazona guildingii*. Additionally Ramon and Greg have made significant contributions to the husbandry and propagation of endangered reptiles including *Geochelone nigra*. Ramon Noegel and Greg Moss are founding directors of the Friends of the St. Vincent Amazon Foundation, an IRS approved charitable organization dedicated to the conservation of endangered species.

Jean Pattison, known as "The African Queen", currently lives in Lakeland, Florida, where she



and her husband Tim operate their breeding facility. In 1984 she acquired a pair of Senegals, from there her fascination with African parrots grew to include the African Grey, and then naturally more Poicephalus. Her studied observation of the Senegals taught her about behavior and social patterns that she was able to apply to other African parrots in her care. Through the years her collection has grown to over 100 pairs of African parrots, including an impressive collection of the Un-cape parrot. Jean was one of the founding members of the Florida Federation of Aviculture. Inc. She has lectured at the national conference of The American Federation of Aviculture (AFA), and at the Midwest Avian Research Expo, the Bird Clubs of Virginia national convention as well as many other national conventions and symposiums, and bird clubs throughout the United States. She is past President and associate editor of the African Parrot Society, as well as writing for many of the major publications, such as Bird Talk, Birds USA, Bird Breeder, Pet Product News, and the AFA Watchbird. She has helped field researchers, and conservation groups, with her knowledge of the habits, and husbandry of the African Parrots. Authors have consulted with her when writing books on African Parrots, and she has just co-authored a book, African Parrots, with Rick Jordan that is an over view of African parrots.

L. FitzGerald Providence was born in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. He received his Diploma in Forestry from the Eastern Caribbean Institute of Agriculture and Forestry (ECIAF), Trinidad. He went on to obtain a BSc in Forest Management with a minor in Wildlife Biology from the University of New Brunswick; Fredericton New Brunswick Canada. He currently is Forestry Supervisor (Development) with responsibility for projects, specifically the Integrated Forest Management and Development Programme

FitzGerald is married to his wife, Romona, and has two boys Lemuel, age 5, and Jonathan, age 4. Hobbies include Gardening, Photography, and Sports (squash).

His special interest is the Ecology and specifically the endemic flora and fauna of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Special papers completed include “**Protecting Our Protected areas (St. Vincent)**”; in the Proceedings of the Eight Caribbean Foresters, Grenada, 1996 as well as “**Report on the Flora and Fauna of St. Vincent and the Grenadines**”; contribution the Biological Diversity Report for St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Paul Reillo, Ph.D. is founding director of the Rare Species Conservatory Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving biodiversity. Employing the “flagship species” concept, RSCF has initiated *in situ* conservation programs that leverage conservation of priority species into protection of entire ecosystems. A recent, significant example of this



strategy is the joint parrot conservation program between RSCF and the Government of Dominica, through which research and conservation efforts for the Sisserou (*Amazona imperialis*), Dominica's national bird, culminated in the creation of the Morne Diablotin National Park—irrevocably protecting vast expanses of pristine, oceanic rain forest. [www.rarespecies.org]

Branson Ritchie, D.V.M., Ph.D... is a graduate of the University of Georgia College of Veterinary Medicine and received his Ph.D in Medical Microbiology in 1990. Currently he is Assistant Professor of Avian/Zoological Medicine at the University of Georgia. He has interned at the Riverbanks Zoological Park in Columbia, South Carolina; the White Oak Plantation in Yulee, Florida; and at the All Animal and Bird Hospital, Lake Worth, Florida. He serves as a consulting veterinarian for several zoos and wildlife projects, and is frequently asked to lecture to veterinary and aviculture groups. Smith Kline Beecham awarded him their Research Excellence Award in 1991. As a co-editor of Avian Medicine: Principles and Application, Dr. Ritchie combined talents with Greg and Linda Harrison and over 30 of the worlds leading authorities on avian medicine and surgery to produce a state of the art text on the care of companion and aviary birds. His also authored Avian Viruses: Function and Control. Dr. Ritchie and his group have been at the forefront of research into the isolation and characterization of the virus that causes Psittacine Beak & Feather Disease, a deadly disease affecting many companion bird species. In addition to discovering the virus that causes PBFD, his group has developed several diagnostic tests for the virus and are working on a vaccine to prevent this disease. Dr. Ritchie's group has developed a USDA approved, safe vaccine for Polyomavirus, (probably the leading cause of viral deaths in young parrots in captivity). The group has done extensive work with Proventricular Dilation Disease. Dr. Ritchie will update us on many facets of Avian Research.

April Romagnano ,PhD, DVM, DIPL. ABVP received her PhD from the Universitie de Montreal (Vet. Cytogenetics) in 1987, her DVM from the University of Florida, in 1992, served her internship (Sam and Wildlife) from the University of Florida in 1993, and residency (Avian Medicine and Surgery) from North Carolina State University in 1995. April has been Staff Veterinarian at the Avicultural Breeding and Research Center since 1995 until it was sold earlier this year. She currently is extremely busy with private practice (Animal Health Clinic, Jupiter, FL) in addition to her duties as a mother.

Michael Russello is a PhD candidate in the Ecology, Evolution, and Environmental Biology Department at Columbia University and a Research Associate in the Science Resource Center at the Wildlife Conservation Society. He has conducted molecular genetic studies on Amazon parrots including published research on non-invasive, PCR based sexing techniques and the development of novel microsatellite markers. Mr. Russello has been working with Dr. George



Amato and the Forestry Division of St. Vincent and the Grenadines to develop a genetic management plan for the ex situ population of St. Vincent Amazon parrots. He received his BS from the University of San Diego and his MS from Columbia University.

Natasha Schischakin became involved in the conservation of the Spix's macaw at the 1988 IUCN Parrot Specialist Group meeting in Brazil. She served on the Brazilian government Spix's Macaw Working Group, that recommended the establishment of the Permanent Committee for the Recovery of the Spix's Macaw, of which she was a member, studbook keeper and coordinator of its working group for captive breeding. The Committee was dissolved after 12 years of existence after the Brazilian authorities demanded that in order to participate in the Committee, the ownership of all privately owned Spix's macaws would have to be returned to Brazil. This has resulted in a new private-sector based Spix's macaw conservation strategy. She is now coordinating this initiative that includes captive management of the privately owned birds (approximately 80% of the population) and is developing the conservation and captive-breeding component for the eventual reintroduction of this species to the wild.

After twenty years with the Houston Zoo, Natasha Schischakin recently retired to form her own international environmental consulting firm (Rara Avis Consulting) with offices in Houston and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Her experience in the zoological community, first working in the Houston Zoo's Bird Department and later as the Conservation and Research Coordinator for the Houston Zoo, has provided her with an extensive knowledge and understanding of both avicultural and international conservation issues.

In the ten years she served as the Chair of the American Zoo and Aquarium Association (AZA) Brazil Conservation Action Partnership, she developed and implemented numerous conservation, research and training programs in Brazil and Latin America. She was instrumental in involving zoos in field-program initiatives and linking zoo based captive-breeding programs with range country in-situ projects. She is involved in numerous in-country projects in Brazil and serves as the AZA Director of Education and Media Services. A native of São Paulo, Brazil, Natasha is fluent in Portuguese, Spanish and Russian.

Gail J. Worth has been breeding exotic birds since 1973. After graduating with a B.S. in Biology, she relocated to the Los Angeles, California area where AVES INTERNATIONAL was founded in 1977. For five years she operated an import quarantine station and imported mostly soft-billed species of birds and concurrently maintained a small breeding operation. The import facility supplied many birds for U.S. Zoological Parks including hummingbirds, tanagers, cranes, thrushes, motmots, woodpeckers, and many other species. After selling the import facility she concentrated on domestic breeding. The collection currently numbers over 350 pairs of mainly larger psittacines.



Since 1986, Gail has produced the Baby Bird Calendar featuring her photographs of adorable baby birds. For the first time since 1986, the Baby Bird Calendar will not be published for the 2003 year due to family illnesses.

She contributed to a monthly column for Bird Talk Magazine called "Ask The Experts" for a decade (1990-2000) and has written a number of articles for national and international bird periodicals. Birds raised at Aves International have been featured in the movie "Paulie, A Parrot's Story" and on the television program, "Wild Things" on the UPN Network, as well as in television commercials (remember the hornbill on the Yahoo commercial?).

Gail has been a speaker at many national and international avian conferences including those of the American Federation of Aviculture, International Aviculturists' Society, Canadian Parrot Conference, the Midwest Avian Research Expo, Aviculture Society of America, the AVES Conference in Grafton, Australia, and the International Parrot Convention at Loro Parque, Tenerife, Spain.

Her photographs have appeared in many national and international publications and in the Baby Bird Calendar for seventeen years.

Gail and her husband, Dave Venanzi, are avid scuba divers.