



Volume 47 Issue 11 October-November 2020 SBBS Newsletter Established 1974

Dr. Irene Pepperberg to give us an update on “Life in the Lab, Post-COVID”

ZOOM on Sunday, November 8th at 1 PM



We are thrilled to welcome back **Dr. Irene Pepperberg** to SBBS and have her give us updates on her research on African Grey Parrots in connection with the Alex Foundation and meet some of her birds. There will be time for you to ask her specific questions about her work.

As parrot owners, we are not surprised to learn that parrots are smart. But, that wasn't always the pervasive assessment of their mental abilities. Thus, we have heard the unflattering term, “bird-brain” which was shorthand for unintelligent. Through Dr. Irene Pepperberg's 40 years of research with African Grey Parrots, **she has shown that these birds have the ability to speak and understand human language once thought to be unique to primates.** That ability is all the more remarkable considering that the last common ancestor between Irene and her first African Grey parrot was a dinosaur that lived over 300 million years ago. (See the article “Bird Brain” about Dr. Pepperberg's research in the July-August issue of the SBBS Newsletter).

After Irene finished her doctorate at Harvard in 1977, she purchased a 1-year-old African Grey Parrot at a pet shop and named him **Alex**. She was captivated by his ability to learn. Dr. Pepperberg started designing her own experiments to study Alex's intelligence and reasoning abilities. With Irene's research in the Grey's cognitive ability, she has revolutionized how scientists and the public think about the brains of birds. Through her perseverance, Alex learned to comprehend numbers and do basic arithmetic; to identify colors, sizes, and shapes; to understand concepts such as “same,” “different” and “zero” and over 150 English words. Unfortunately, Alex passed away prematurely in 2007 at age 31. **Dr. Pepperberg continues her work determining the cognitive and communication abilities with African Grey Parrots.** She is comparing their mental abilities with those of great apes, marine mammals and young children.

Irene also leads “**The Alex Foundation**” which aims to improve the lives of parrots worldwide by supporting research, encouraging responsible ownership and advocating for their conservation in the wild. She is the author of the best-selling book *Alex and Me*, and has published over 20 years of peer-reviewed experiments on African Grey Parrots in some of the most highly-respected scientific journals in her field.

Since COVID, the Avian Cognition Lab has vacated the Department of Psychology at Harvard University, to a temporary rented space, and is being run entirely through “The Alex Foundation.” The birds are being well-cared for by former members of the Lab. They are running those projects that can be done by one person, working alone, so they can maintain appropriate social distancing. **Please note this meeting is on Sunday at 1 PM.** (See page 5).

RSVP on the Meetup Site. See page 15 to learn how.

For more information, call Janet Ragonesi at (310) 376-5954

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Dr. Stephanie Lamb, DVM, DABVP

“SAFETY FIRST: Common & Hidden Dangers For Your Bird & Healthy Plants For Your Bird To Forage For Food And Fun!”

Monday, October 5, 2020 Presentation via ZOOM

By Diane Sivas



Dr. Stephanie Lamb

Monday, October 5th, found us back together in the ZOOM Room for another virtual meeting. We were fortunate enough to be joined by Stephanie Lamb, DVM, who spoke to us about bird safety, which focused on how to avoid common dangers. She also talked about how to navigate safe foraging for our birds.

Brief introductions, welcomes and announcements from Janet got us underway at 7 p.m. sharp. Our friend, **Dr. Irene Pepperberg, will be the speaker for our Sunday, November 8th meeting, starting at 1:00 PM**, so be sure to make a note of that. Also, gathering of items for our auction is underway with the deadline looming soon.

Karen Allen



Karen Allen introduced Dr. Lamb (may we call you Stephanie?) who started things off by speaking about trauma and common accidents. She said that we should all be aware of possible problem areas in our homes, and how we can prevent them. **Traumas can be caused by bird vs. bird, bird vs. other pets, bird vs. people, cage-induced trauma, toy-induced trauma and other unpredictable traumas.** **Bird vs. bird traumas** can be caused by **territorial aggression, mating injuries and fear aggression.** Two of Stephanie’s photos showed a cockatoo whose beak had been ripped off by another bird, and a budgie who met the same fate. This type of injury, she told us, is more common in small birds than large ones. Serious beak injuries need to be addressed ASAP so

that the beak is not lost. These types of situations can be prevented by knowing your bird’s personalities, keeping aggressors away from each other and monitoring each one for any hormonal behaviors.



Bird vs. other animals: Cat and dog **bites** that can be **deadly** because of **bacteria** found in their **mouths**. Antibiotics and vet care must happen quickly to prevent a bad outcome. Stephanie showed an Eclectus who had had a run in with a chihuahua after the bird cornered the dog in a hallway. Small puncture wounds had to be quickly treated with antibiotics. One photo showed a parrot who had been attacked by a raccoon in an outdoor cage. Unfortunately, the bird did lose a wing, but survived the incident. Always be aware of where your birds and other pets are in the household so their actions can be monitored.

Birds vs. people: We can accidentally step or sit on a bird, drop them, or involuntarily throw them when we are suddenly and unexpectedly bitten. We can help prevent these injuries by **knowing where our bird(s) is at all times**, watching where we are sitting or walking, and **using a towel**, rather than trying to grab them, if we need to catch or contain a bird.

Bird vs. cage: Wings or **limbs** can get **caught** in the **bars** or in **doors** when closing cages. Also, be sure cages are appropriately sized for each bird. Bar spacing must be correct for each bird to prevent heads or legs from getting caught.



(“Dr. Lamb” continued on Page 3)

(“Dr. Lamb” continued from page 2)

Bird vs. toys: Beware of **frayed rope** or string, **hooks** that are not attached to anything, and **inappropriate items** being used as toys that may be unsafe, if eaten. Remove pieces of frayed rope and hooks that are not holding up a toy.



Foraging: Stephanie talked about **plants** that are **safe** for our birds. **Herbs** can be grown in a home garden or window box, and can include dill, cilantro, parsley and basil. Stephanie brings things from her garden and adds them to the bird’s tree play stands and/or cages to encourage foraging and to provide a healthy, fun activity.



Remember that next month **Dr. Irene Pepperberg** will be **joining us** in “the **ZOOM Room.**” The meeting will be on **Sunday, November 8th at 1:00 p.m.** This one will be good, so do not miss it.



Stay healthy, and see everyone next month!! Diane

Cheeto says:

“Be sure to vote in this year’s election by Tuesday, November 3rd.

Also, NOW is the time to get your Flu Shot.”



Diane Sivas & Cheeto, her Blue and Gold Macaw



Her birds also forage outside under her supervision. It is best to keep birds off the ground and out of the soil, in case there are dangers lurking there. Citrus is also good; orange, lemon, lime and grapefruit are all safe and healthy for our birds.

Stephanie’s presentation was informative and entertaining, and we thank her for taking the time to speak with us.

SPEED BUMP By Dave Coverly

YOUR FATHER IS GOING TO DRIVE ME NUTS!

FOR HEAVEN’S SAKE, BOB, MAKE A DECISION AND PARK SOMEWHERE.

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SBBS MISSION STATEMENT:

The purpose of SBBS is to study all avian species (native and foreign) and their habitats; to disseminate among the general public and supporting members, information on all aspects of avian care and breeding and the preservation of endangered species and their habitats through written publications, educational lectures, seminars, activities; and to support and promote the propagation and preservation of species that are threatened with extinction.

THE SOUTH BAY BIRD SOCIETY

Is a Public Benefit Corporation and a qualified tax-exempt organization under IRS Code Section 501 (C) (3).

The President's Notes

By Janet Ragonesi



Greetings
SBBS MEMBERS,
SPONSORS AND
FRIENDS



As the weather cools down for most of Southern California, I enjoy walking during the day with friends and catching up on events. I am still wearing a mask, social distancing, washing, and sanitizing my hands!

With Halloween around the corner, this holiday tradition will be re-imagined, but can still pose threats and disturbances for your parrots. Note ways you can Prevent Halloween Dangers for Your Birds on page 17 and How to Make Pumpkin Treats on page 11.



THANK YOU FOR ZOOM!

I would like to thank our board of directors, volunteers, members and our speakers that have stepped up to assist SBBS with our ZOOM each month! **These ZOOMS allows us to stay connected.**

Once you have ZOOMED with us, and experience the speakers and the variety of topics, you will *not want* to miss another chance to share some ZOOMING with us!

NOVEMBER ELECTIONS

As the November elections deadline moves ever closer, please vote! It is our right as citizens to cast our vote freely!



REACH OUT

While the current environment and challenges that face our country continue to evolve, SBBS wants to be there to assist our members, sponsors and friends.

If you, or anyone you know, need assistance with their birds, please let us know. We will do our best to help.



Contact myself at (310) 376-5954 or Karen Allen, the SBBS "Parrot Lady" at (310) 371-9967.



SBBS SOCIAL ZOOM
MEETINGS

A report on the September 21 Social ZOOM,
"How to Disinfect Your Home Safely
While Keeping Your Pets Well
In Light of Covid-19"
can be found on the bottom of page 17.



7 PM, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16TH

The Topic will be: "Learn About
The SBBS Online Fundraiser &
Auction & Items Preview"

- You will learn how to access the online auction.
- Learn about the security, procedures and aspects involved for you to bid on your favorite items.
- Preview some of the items that will be available for you to bid on beginning Dec. 1 at 5 PM.



For more information,
see page 6 and the flyer on page 16.

RSVP on the Meetup Site. See page 15 to learn how.

SBBS ZOOM MEETINGS
WITH SPEAKERS:

THANK-YOU TO OUR OCTOBER 5TH SPEAKER—
DR. STEPHANIE LAMB, DVM

Because of SBBS utilizing ZOOM, we were fortunate to have a presentation from avian veterinarian, Dr. Stephanie Lamb. This was the first time we have been privileged to see Dr. Lamb's beautiful photos and listen to her insightful explanations from her Avian practice in Arizona. Check out Diane Sivas' report on pages 2-3.

Dr. Stephanie Lamb



("President's Notes" continued on Page 5)

("President's Notes" continued from page 4)

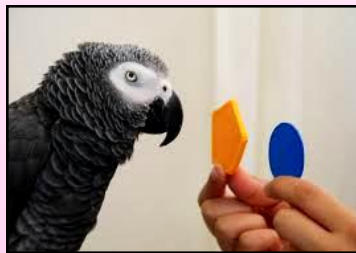
The Speaker Presentation Will Be
Dr. Irene Pepperberg from the Alex Foundation on
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8TH AT 1 PM

"Life in the Lab, Post-COVID"

We are thrilled to welcome **Dr. Irene Pepperberg** to SBBS to have her give us updates on her research on African Grey Parrots through The Alex Foundation. As parrot owners, we are not surprised to learn that parrots are smart, but Dr. Irene Pepperberg has proven it to the world! **You will have the opportunity to ask Dr. Pepperberg your questions about her research, and we may get a chance to visit with the parrots!**



Dr. Irene Pepperberg working with her African Grey Parrots

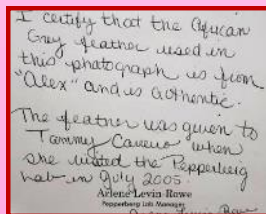


After Dr. Irene Pepperberg's presentation, SBBS will be auctioning off the plaque honoring Alex.

The framed plaque includes a photo of Irene with Alex, one of Alex's feathers, two commemorative coins, name plate and signature. The starting bid is \$100.00.

The money raised from this raffle, will be donated to the Alex Foundation! We encourage you to make your own tax deductible donations to the Alex Foundation at

<https://alexfoundation.tumblr.com> *(The items shown below are enlargements from the photo of the "Alex Plaque" to the right).*



You won't want to miss out on hearing what this world-class, published researcher has to share on current studies on Greys!

Please note the special time of 1 PM on Sunday, November 8th for this presentation.

For more information, see the flyer on page 1.

RSVP on the Meetup site. See page 15 to learn how.

("President's Notes" continued on Pg. 6)

("President's Notes" continued from page 5)

SBBS HOLIDAY SOCIAL ZOOM PARTIES!

The board has been planning some **fun events** we can **celebrate together** via ZOOM during the **holidays**. Let us know what you think, or any other enjoyable ideas!

7 PM, MONDAY, DECEMBER 21

HOLIDAY PARTY & FAVORITE ORNAMENT SHARE!

- Share your favorite tree ornament or other holiday decoration with others and explain what makes your item special to you.
- Share a holiday memory with your bird. Perhaps we will sing carols or festive songs with your birds while having a fun time!



7 PM, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31ST

BRING IN THE NEW YEAR PARTY!

Let us know your fun ideas for bringing in the new year. We can toast each other and make birdie resolutions for 2021.

We are starting early enough so you can still watch the virtual celebrations and ball-drop in New York City at 9 PM, CA time.



UPDATES ON: THE ANNUAL DECEMBER FUNDRAISER & AUCTION



The online auction will be secure with **approximately 100 items**. We will e-mail a **catalogue to our members** and will **post it on the website with all of the items before the end of November**. The catalogue will include photographs and descriptions to help you review and select any items you might want to bid on.

FUNDRAISER & AUCTION INSTRUCTIONS:



The on-line auction bidding through a company called, "32 AUCTIONS." This company has been used by other bird clubs and has worked out well. **The AUCTION will BEGIN at 5 PM, DECEMBER 1 and run through DECEMBER 5 and END at 5 PM that day.**

We will be **HOLDING A TUTORIAL** on how to access this on-line auction on **November 16, at 7 PM during our ZOOM Social** with SBBS members, David Benjamin and June Baker. Be sure to link-in with us that night to find out how EASY and SECURE this auction will be. See more about the tutorial on the flyer on page 16.

You are welcome to visit the "32 Auctions" site before our tutorial to practice so we can answer your questions at the 7 PM, Nov. 16 Social ZOOM. To practice, go to <https://www.32auctions.com>. Then, on the top right corner of the page, click on "DEMO AUCTION." Scroll down the page so see "FEATURED ITEMS" and then click on "VIEW ALL ITEMS". For fun, open an account, (see below) click on one item and you can practice bidding on an item to see how EASY it is to use.

To open an account for the auction, go back on the "Home Page," scroll down and to the right is the login to create your own account. Register with a user name and password. No personal information is required.

When June Baker and I practiced bidding on an item, I was able to *instantly* see whether or not I was the highest bidder and could raise my bid again, if needed.

Once our SBBS Fundraiser is up and running on the "32 Auctions" website with pictures and descriptions of the items, you can write down your choices to bid on, log-in and start bidding during the auction times and dates.

To pay for your winnings at the end of the auction, "PayPal" will be available for you on our website.

Thank you to Patte Fisher and June Baker who helped me organize the auction items, and to Marie Calleja, who took the photos of the items for the catalogue.



("President's Notes" continued on page 7)

("President's Notes" continued from page 6)

DONATIONS:

If you still wish to donate, NEW or NEARLY NEW items, or have any questions, please contact Janet Ragonesi at (310) 376-5954 or e-mail at Ragonesi@att.net to check to see if we have met our maximum limit of items.

Donations may include such items as: art, jewelry, bird & people toys, wine, books, bird cages & stands, sporting equipment, household items, art supplies, china, hand-painted or artisan clothing, beauty products, gift baskets and gift cards of all kinds!

If you choose to purchase new BIRD items for a donation, we would like to suggest you consider supporting one of our SPONSORS. For NON-BIRD items, consider ordering thru Amazon Smile and choose SBBS as your designated charity, and we will receive a small percentage of that purchase.



Tax deductible monetary donations can be made at any time.

Thank you for supporting SBBS!

Here are a few of the items that will be available for purchase at this year's fundraiser and auction!

Many of these Items will be great to give as gifts for your family, friends, your birds and even for yourself!



Rare Blue & Gold Macaw Rosenthal Porcelain Statue



Bird Pillows



Door Mat

Acrylic Travel Carrier



Bird Toys



Cockatoo Ceramic Piece



Cockatoo Mailbox



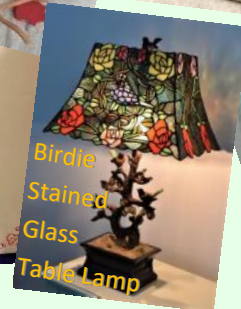
Large Bird Cage



Hawk-headed Parrot Picture



Pop Corn Maker



Birdie Stained Glass Table Lamp



Animal Blanket



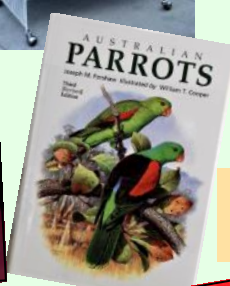
Bird Scale



Bird Toys



Murano Glass Vase



Parrot Book



Apple PEELER



Bird Travel Carrier



Stuffed Toy Bear

A complete list of items with photos for bidding will be sent to all members by Saturday, November 28.

Bidding will take place from 5 PM, Dec. 1 until 5 PM Dec. 5th!



Miraculous turns of fate can happen to those who persist in showing up.

By Elizabeth Gilbert

Cheers, Janet Ragonesi, SBBS President

Palos Verdes/South Bay

AUDUBON SOCIETY
NOW ON ZOOM!

3rd Tue./mo., 7 PM,

NOVEMBER 17TH:

Ann & Eric Brooks presents: "The Great Lakes Express: Ohio, Ontario, Michigan and Minnesota Birding"

(Search for our rarest warbler)



At this time, BIRD WALKS are CANCELED

(Check the website to confirm cancellations and re-start dates)

***BIRD WALKS:**

4th Sat. each mo., 8:30-10:30 am:

Madrona Marsh with Audubon leaders

1st & 3rd Sun., 8-11 am:

Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park with Audubon leaders. 1st Sun. meet in the parking lot, 3rd Sun meet in the parking lot closest to Anaheim & Vermont for Regional Park 2.



3rd Sun., 8-11 am:

South Coast Botanic Garden with Audubon leader David Quaadhamer

For Info: www.pvsb-audubon.org

Laugh Kookaburra



"I'm dressing-up as my parrot for Halloween!"

The Orange County Bird Breeders Meetings Are Canceled Due to Covid-19

Balearic Center, 1975 Balearic Center Ave, Costa Mesa
www.ocbirdbreeders.org



When disposing of your masks, **CUT the EAR STRAPS** so animals don't get tangled up in them!



BIRDING coordinated with the PV Ballona Wetlands and more led by Bob Shanman from Peninsula Land Conservancy, Madrona Marsh, Wild Birds Unlimited

CHECK WEBSITE TO CONFIRM CANCELED BOB BIRD WALKS

BIRD WATCHING WITH BOB SHANMAN

When: (4th Wednesday), 8:30 am

Where: **GEORGE F. CANYON**
27305 Palos Verdes Dr. East, Rolling Hills Estates, CA

When: (2nd Wednesday), 8:00 am

Where: **MADRONA MARSH**

When: (3rd Sunday), 8:00 am

Where: **BALLONA WETLANDS**

When: (3rd Wednesday), 8:30 am

Where: **WHITE POINT NATURE PRESERVE**
1600 Paseo Del Mar, San Pedro, CA

Other BIRDING Locations:

Where: BALLONA WETLANDS, KEN MALLOY HARBOR REGIONAL PARK (see PV/SB Audubon Society in the top, left, yellow box), BIXBY MARSH

(See "Events" on Wild Birds Unlimited web site: redondobeach.wbu.com or call (310) 543-2473 to know more)

Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy

RSVP: at pvplc.org, select "Events & Activities"

STAY SAFE!

Karen Allen Reminds Us To Continue To:

- Wash our hands often and vigorously for 20 seconds. Singing the "Happy Bird Day" song **TWICE** for perfect timing.
- Avoid people that are sneezing and coughing.
- Wear a mask in public.
- Keep a distance of at least **6 feet** away from other people.





THE ANNUAL HOLIDAY FUNDRAISER & SILENT AUCTION

5 PM, Tuesday, December 1 through 5 PM, Saturday, December 5

This year's Fundraiser and Auction will take place entirely online.

A **catalogue** with all of the items with descriptions and photos will be emailed out to all SBBS members and can be found online at www.sobaybirdsoc.com by **Saturday, November 28.**

To bid, register for the auction on the website:

<https://www.32auctions.com>

Place your bids for any items you want beginning at 5 PM on Tuesday, December 1 through 5 PM, Saturday, December 5.



When you bid, you will get notifications whether or not you have the highest bid, or when someone else outbids you. Then, you can re-bid a higher amount if you want to snag that item.

After the auction closes on Saturday, December 5th, you will be notified which items you won.

Payments for your winnings may be made through PayPal on our website.

Items are to be picked up later at Janet Ragonesi's house in Redondo Beach.



Want to learn more how this will all work?

Join us on the Social ZOOM at 7 PM, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16th!

There will be a demonstration on how to access the auction online and all questions will be answered.

You can check out the site: <https://www.32auctions.com> to see an example how this works.

See the flyer on page 16 and read the President's message on page 6 to learn more.

For more information, call Janet Ragonesi at (310) 376-5954



Q & A By Karen, The Parrot Lady



The answers to your questions are MY opinion based on nearly 50 years experience. I donated my time to Avian and Exotic Animal Hospital, working with Doctors Rosskopf and Woerpel. I have hands-on experience owning my own Exotic bird shops, raising and breeding, grooming and caring for parrots of all kinds.

Ask me your questions and I will answer to the best of my knowledge. If I don't have an answer I will make every effort to find one for you and tell you my source.

Here we go!!!!

Q I went into my Amazon's cage to change the water, and he went totally bonkers. He was so scared and so was I. Can you help?

A (I called this poor lady to see what was going on, and it turns out she just got home from the nail salon).

Finding out that she just had bright red nail polish put on, told the story in itself. Some birds react to colors way more than others (red in particular). My guess is they see blood and react. Solution: If you have one of the skitzy red-haters, Do Not Wear RED.



Q My bird throws up whenever we go for a ride in the car. What do I do?

A Do you get sick on a boat? Motion sickness is a bear! That is what is happening to your bird -- MOTION SICKNESS. The best treatment is to make sure he is in a carrier. Cover the entire carrier where there are any openings so he cannot see you, the cars or trees going by, or the birds flying by. Do not have swinging toys in the carrier -- nothing moving. Batten down the hatches! This generally helps, but not always.



Q My bird's nails are curling and his beak is very long. I am afraid to clip them myself. What do you suggest?

A Let a qualified groomer take care of the problem. The birds do not like the grooming, so if you do it, right or wrong, you could become the enemy. Who cares if he isn't crazy about the groomer? You are going to rescue him from the jerk with the towel and forever be his HERO.



Q Do you have a special recipe your birds like for a treat?

A Sure, I use a corn bread mix, add drained canned corn. Or you can switch around and use broccoli, peas, carrots (fresh or canned). Your imagination is there to have fun with. Sometimes just adding some cinnamon to change the flavor works. My birds also love celery with peanut butter, and we share because that is a favorite of mine, too! (Editor's Note: Use a corn bread mix that does not use lard, but uses vegetable oil or make your own corn bread from using corn meal. "Jiffy" has a brand that is vegetarian).



("Q & A" Continued from page 10)

Q

I have a cockatoo that screams his head off. Is there a cure?

A

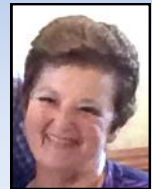
I know this will be hard, but ignoring that unacceptable behavior is the best cure. Cockatoos love attention and want it 24/7. When you respond, they have won the battle and the war, and can't wait to show you how well you are trained -- and do it again and again and again!!!! Always check to make sure there is no danger lurking in the cage like a horrific ant or moth, because their world will come to an abrupt end if you do not correct that situation.



I want a chance to remind everyone to **support your SBBS sponsors**. Most of us have stayed open during the pandemic, so you and your feathery children will have the things you need. Food, grooming, boarding, consultations and supplies are available to all of you. We, as sponsors, have shortened our store hours and sanitize often. We wear our masks and ask you to do the same. This is a trying time for everyone, and as long as we stick together and do what's right, we will come out ahead.

Until next newsletter stay safe, healthy and hand out bird kisses.

From Karen, Your Parrot Lady



Karen Allen has been involved with birds and a SBBS member for over 35 years. She is a lifetime member of SBBS. Karen owns her own bird shop, "Birds & More" located at 4301 Redondo Beach Blvd., Lawndale, CA. The phone number is: (310) 370-7550. She counsels and trains new bird owners and is a published writer.

Send your questions for "The Parrot Lady" to:

Karen Allen, P. O. Box 3863 Redondo Beach, CA 90277-3863

Email: Birdsnmor@aol.com



Halloween Treats For Your Bird: Pumpkin Cubes & Pumpkin Seeds

Pumpkin is a type of squash and makes a great food for pet birds. The simplest way to prepare pumpkin is to cut it into **cubes** and steam it for 35-40 minutes or until soft. You can mash the cubes for smaller birds such as finches. Serve the whole cubes to larger birds such as Amazons and Macaws.

Pumpkin seeds have long been a favorite of parrots. It is easy to prepare them.

Remove seeds from pumpkin.

Wash and remove pulp and strings.

Pat dry and place on cookie sheet (aluminum)**

Bake at 375 degrees for 40-45 minutes, turning every 5-10 minutes.

Let cool and serve these delicious tidbits to your feathered friends!

Please remember **do not salt these seeds** unless they are for human consumption. Birds cannot excrete salt the way humans can and it is not good for them.

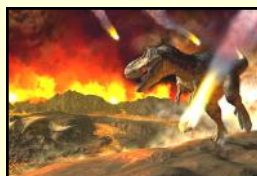
**Please beware of nonstick cookie sheets. It is very easy to burn foods on cookie sheets.

Teflon and other nonstick pans can release fumes that are deadly to birds. It is highly recommended that you use cookie sheets that do not have nonstick surfaces or that you remove your birds from any room near the kitchen.



WHY BIRDS SURVIVED, AND DINOSAURS WENT EXTINCT, AFTER AN ASTEROID HIT EARTH

Paleontologists think that beaks may have given birds an advantage over other creatures



66 Million years ago, an asteroid more than 6 miles across, struck what is now the Yucatan Peninsula, causing the extinction of the non-avian dinosaurs!

By Riley Black
Smithsonianmag.com,
September 15, 2020

Bird beaks may have allowed the animals to eat seeds and nuts after an asteroid hit the earth, wiping out many forms of life.



A great spotted woodpecker eats a hazelnut.

(Photo by: Arterra/Universal Images Group via Getty Images)

Birds are the only dinosaurs left. That might seem strange. A pigeon or a penguin doesn't look much like a Tyrannosaurus. *But the connection is still there, all the way down to the bone. About 150 million years ago, in the Jurassic, the first birds evolved from small, feathery, raptor-like dinosaurs, becoming another branch on the dinosaur family tree.*



Hesperornithoides Miessleri

For more than 80 million years, birds of all sorts flourished, from loon-like swimmers with teeth to beaked birds that carried streamer-like feathers as they flew.

With hindsight, **birds can be categorized as avian dinosaurs** and all the other sorts—from Stegosaurus to Brontosaurus—are *non-avian dinosaurs. The entire reason paleontologists make that split is because of a catastrophe that struck 66 million years ago. An asteroid more than 6 miles across struck what's now the Yucatan Peninsula, triggering the fifth mass extinction in the world's history. Some of the debris thrown into the atmosphere returned to Earth, the friction turned the air into an oven and sparked forest fires as it landed all over the world. Then the intensity of the heat pulse gave way to a prolonged impact winter, the sky blotted out by soot and ash as temperatures fell. All told, more than 75 percent of species known from the end of the Cretaceous period, 66 million years ago, didn't make it to the following Paleogene period. The geologic break between the two is called the K-Pg boundary, and **beaked birds were the only dinosaurs to survive the disaster.***

“There has been a lot of discussion about what enabled modern-type birds to survive the K-Pg extinction while other birds groups, non-avian dinosaurs, and even pterosaurs perished,” says Royal BC Museum paleontologist Derek Larson. The end of the Cretaceous boasted an entire array of birds and bird-like reptiles. But of these groups, it was **only the beaked birds that survived.** The happenstances of evolution had given birds a lucky break, the key events set in motion long before the asteroid struck.

All living birds have toothless beaks, but this wasn't always so. The **very first bird, the 150 million-year-old Archaeopteryx,** initially confounded 19th century naturalists because **it had teeth.** *For tens of millions of years after Archaeopteryx, toothed birds continued to thrive and evolve alongside their dinosaurian relatives. And some of these toothed birds eventually lost their teeth, plucking up their meals with toothless beaks instead.*



Archaeopteryx, the very first bird had teeth!

The question is **what evolutionary pressures pushed birds to lose teeth when teeth seem so useful.** Given that most birds fly, adaptation to the air seemed like a possibility. “Older hypotheses focused on the idea of weight reduction for flight,” says University of Texas at Austin paleontologist Grace Musser, but the discovery that some toothed birds were strong fliers has led researchers back to the drawing board.

Rather than flight, **food might have given birds an evolutionary nudge towards toothless beaks as ancient avians thrived among other dinosaurs.** Paleontologists have noticed that some dinosaur groups, including **birds, evolved beaks and lost teeth as they became more herbivorous.** While the earliest birds had teeth to nab insects and other small morsels, some bird lineages started to specialize on fruit, seeds, and other plant foods. **Instead of teeth to catch, the birds evolved beaks to pluck and pick.**

(“Birds Survived” Continued on page 13)

("Birds Survived" Continued from page 12)

Among the birds that began to lose teeth in favor of beaks, the **way beaks form during development may have helped the evolutionary shift.** "Changes to the skull and face as the beak became more complex may have moved developing tissues around, changing how they interact in the embryo, and resulted in the loss of tooth formation," says King's College London anatomist Abigail Tucker.

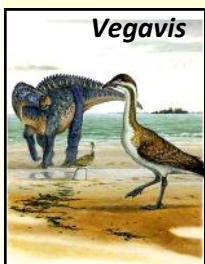
"All the things that make birds, birds, were already in place well before the mass extinction," says University College London anatomist Ryan Felice.

When the extinction struck, the **traits birds had been evolving for millions of years made the difference between life and death.** While some birds survived the impact and its aftermath, not all of them did. "When we think about hypotheses of traits that let birds survive, we need to take into account that it was only a small sliver of diversity that made it to the other side," Felice says. Entire groups of birds, such as **toothed birds called enantiornithes, went extinct.** It's unlikely that one single trait determined the fate of all these species. Still, surviving extinction often comes down to luck, and beaks may have been some birds' ace.



Enantiornithes, toothed birds, became extinct.

By the end of the Cretaceous, **beaked birds were already eating a much more varied diet than their toothed relatives. These birds weren't specialized on insects or other animal food, and so they were able to pluck up hard food items like seeds and nuts.** And in the aftermath of the extinction, **when animal life was severely cut back, those hard, persistent little morsels got beaked birds through the hard times. Beaked birds were able to feed on the seeds of the destroyed forests and wait out the decades until vegetation began to return.**



Vegavis

Not that beaks guaranteed survival of the impact event. The **duck-like bird Vegavis lived at the end of the Cretaceous and had a beak, yet there's no indication that this avian survived.** "Just having a beak was not enough," Tucker says. Rather, it's that **birds with beaks and powerful gizzards capable of crushing tough seeds had an unexpected advantage that increased their chances of survival.**



Both fossils and the timeline of bird evolution discerned from their genetic relationships indicates that early members of modern bird groups—such as **birds related to ducks, parrots, and chickens—were around by time the asteroid struck.** These groups still suffered losses, but enough survived to set up a new pulse of bird evolution in the millions of years following the catastrophe. **Many bird lineages became smaller in size while maintaining their brain size. Through evolutionary shrinking, birds wound up with larger brains compared to their body size, setting the stage for avian intelligence beyond what the non-avian dinosaurs could have evolved.**

But big evolutionary changes often come with constraints. "The loss of teeth does limit the number of dietary niches birds could explore," Felice says. "Herbivorous mammals and non-avian dinosaurs evolved ever-growing teeth so that could continue eating as the plants wore their teeth down, but this just isn't possible with a beak," Felice says. And that means that **bird skulls haven't needed to vary as much to support different jaws and ways of feeding,** meaning that **birds look like evolutionary slowpokes compared to non-avian dinosaurs**—as Felice and colleagues found in a new study of bird skull evolution.

To understand more about how birds managed to survive and make a living in a world recovering from one of the worst mass extinctions of all time, **the task at hand is to find more fossils from the time directly following the mass extinction,** from a time called the Paleocene. Paleontologists have some great examples of fossil birds from about 10 million years after the disaster, from a time called the Eocene, but birds fossils from the slice in between the Cretaceous and Eocene are fragmentary and hard to find. **These are the bones that may reveal new secrets.**

Samples of Bird Fossils





SBBS Welcomes New & Returning Members

RENEWALS:

LIFETIME MEMBERS: Cary & Anita Pao,
Karen Allen, Perry Ellwood, Donna Crossley,
Dr. Walter Roskopf, Jack Ford, Janet Ragonesi,
Don Hand, Bree & Deven Brozey

MEMORIAL LIFETIME MEMBERS:
Lorrie Mitchell, Diane Bock, Ron Ellwood

Number of Current Members: 64

Don't fly off the membership list! Please pay your dues.
Your dues help support your club by providing newsletters,
educational programs, the website and more.

To join SBBS, please print page 20 of the newsletter
or go to www.sobaybirdsoc.com and click on
"Membership" to find a membership application. Fill
the form out, include a check and send it to SBBS,
P.O. Box 3863, Redondo Beach, CA 90277
-3863. If you have received a hard copy
or found the membership application on
the back of the newsletter, fill it out and
send it to the above address. If you have
any questions about your membership,
please contact Membership Director,
Patte Fisher at pattefisher@verizon.net.



Patte

The West L.A. Bird Club

All Meetings are currently

CANCELED due to COVID-19

We will post updates when the club
can resume their monthly meetings

At the American Legion Hall
5309 Sepulveda Blvd., Culver City
www.westlabirdclub.com

For info. Contact
President, Doreen at
djseelig@aol.com
or (310) 488-9749



Laugh Kookaburra



How to protect your black cat
on Halloween!

Long Beach Bird Breeders

**ALL MEETINGS ARE CURRENTLY CANCELED DUE TO
COVID-19** Meetings are normally held on the 4th
Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. at the American
Legion Hall, 5938 Parkcrest Avenue, Long Beach, CA
90808 (S. of Carson, E. of Woodruff Ave.)



For info call: (562) 881-9847
Longbeachbirdbreeders.com

PARROT EDUCATION & ADOPTION CENTER

PEAC is not taking in any parrots right now, but they do have a lot of
nice birds ready to be adopted. There are classes going throughout the
month. The San Diego location has classes the last weekend of the
month. Classes in Orange County are on the third Saturday of the
month. There is a new class now being offered in Hemet on the first
Sunday of the month. Please check the website for topics, times, and
directions. **Please contact PEAC at parroted@cox.net or visit their
website www.peac.org for information.**

All members are invited to submit bird-related items for a future SBBS newsletter in any of the following segments:



Gala & Kahlia

- ☀ In "Wing Tips," share a tip that could improve the lives of both you and your bird(s).
- ☀ In "Laugh Kookaburra," send a bird-related cartoon, joke or humorous photo.
- ☀ In "Creative Corner," send photos of your **bird-related** drawings, ceramic pieces, needle point, paintings, etc. or texts of poems or photos with a unique point of view.

E-mail your ideas of what you would like to see, along with your SUBMISSIONS to: gidgetscal@aol.com.

The deadline for the next newsletter is Tuesday, November 10th



Adoptions



*There are so many birds needing homes out there.
If you are considering another bird, please think about adopting one.
Call one of these rescue/adoption groups.*

They all have many wonderful birds just waiting for someone to come and take them home.

Many of these groups have websites—take a look!

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Contact</u>
Fine Feathered Friends Foundation	(310) 529-1408 (Marie Calleja)	www.finefeatheredfriendsfoundation.org
Parrot Rehabilitation Society	(619) 224-6712	www.parrotsociety.org
Parrots First	(866) 248-7670, ext. 5937	www.parrotsfirst.org
Santa Barbara Bird Sanctuary	(805) 565-1807	www.sbbird.org
Southern Nevada Parrot Education, Rescue & Rehoming		www.southernnevadaparrotrescue.org

OPTIONAL MEET-UP RSVP FOR SBBS MEETINGS

In an attempt to reach out to the community, SBBS is listed as an pet/animal activity on the "Meet-up" website that is available to the public. Our meetings and activities, including our socials and meetings via ZOOM, are listed. Each of you who plan to participate in any one of these activities may consider an RSVP on this site. *(This is not necessary to participate, but is optional).* The more members who say they are participating, the more attractive our group looks to the public and hopefully will draw *new* members to our club. Each month, David Benjamin will send out a RSVP under Meet-up. The following is the link to access this site: <https://www.meetup.com/Redondo-Beach-Birds-Meetup/events/>. Thank-you for your help in spreading the word about SBBS to other companion bird owners.

Laugh

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Watch Out for witches with beaks and tails!

On Halloween,
I use my
broom to fly!

Jasper, Donna Crossley's Greenwing Macaw



Social ZOOM on Monday, November 16 at 7PM

Learn About:

“The SBBS Online Fundraiser & Auction & Items Preview”

- You will learn how to access the on-line auction
- Learn about the security, procedures and aspects involved for you to bid on your favorite items
- There will be a practice demonstration/tutorial for you to see how the bidding site: “www.32auctions.com” works. You are invited to check out the site before this meeting and then ask any questions at this Social Zoom about the fundraiser/auction
- The online auction will run between December 1 at 5 PM and December 5 at 5 PM (See more into on pages 4 & 6-7)



(Please be aware of background images and activities that will be in view. Meetings may be recorded and used for promotional purposes. Opinions voiced by the speaker or others do not necessarily represent the views of SBBS, its board or its sponsors. You can RSVP on the Meet-up Site. See how on page 15).

If you are new to ZOOM, don't worry; it is easy!
ZOOM works on most smart devices: PC, Mac, iPad, Android or iPhone.

[RSVP on the Meetup Site:](#)

[See page 15 to learn how to RSVP on this site.](#)

We look forward to seeing you on Monday, November 16 at 7 PM!

For more information, call Janet Ragonesi at (310) 376-5954



Preventing Halloween Dangers for Birds

Editor's Note: This article has been edited due to the increased precautions recommended during this pandemic. Trick-or-Treating is not advised this year. Hopefully, costume parties and other holiday rituals will be a part of Halloween in 2021. Wishing both you and your birds stay safe!

October 8, 2012, by Chris Davis, CPBC



If you are participating in handing out treats, make sure your bird is in an area where he cannot fly or walk to the opened door. Also, keep him away from windows where he can be seen by passersby and trick or treaters. **A television or radio playing in the room with him can soften doorbell and people noise.** These distractions also lessen the chances of his revealing his presence in your home by talking loudly or screaming for attention each time the doorbell rings or when he hears you talk to the people at the door.

After Halloween is over, remember that **candy and candy wrappers** are almost irresistible to most birds. Keep harmful items out of areas your bird can access.

Our feathered family members enrich and uplift our lives in ways that are inconceivable to non-bird people; we know that life without them would be hollow and sad. By actively anticipating and appropriately addressing events and situations that affect them, we honor their importance in our lives and can greatly increase the chances of our beloved feathered friends living many long and happy years to come.

REPORT ON THE SEPT. 21 SOCIAL ZOOM

By: Gala Burkholder, ***Includes a "Wing-Tip" of the day.***

The topic discussed:

"How to Disinfect Your Home Safely While Keeping Your Pets Well In Light of Covid-19"

The conversation began with stating that some pet owners are over-using disinfectants in their home in an attempt to help keep their family safe from Covid-19. Some pine cleaners might produce toxic fumes and should not be put on your pet's feet. Vinegar is not appropriate for all cleaning because it is acidic and can etch some surfaces, so what else can you use to sanitize? **Those on the Social ZOOM, shared WHAT THEY have USED and HOW THEY have CLEANED their bird items and homes SAFELY.**

Someone recommended using grapefruit-seed extract and water with a 1 to 6 ratio to clean surfaces. Another uses organic apple-cider vinegar or Simple Green with water with a 1 to 1 ratio. One person uses soap and water on their bird's toys and then lays them outside for 4 hours in the sun in order to sanitize them. (She puts a mesh over the toys to keep the bugs off). Others scrape off the debris from bird toys and cages and scrub them with soap and water. Then, they follow-up by spraying a product called "Pet Focus" and wait until the surfaces dry before using with pets. One person has hard-water in her home that is treated with chemicals and only uses distilled water for cleaning her bird's toys. ***(You may want to enlarge this next part to 200% to see the writing on the photos of the PRODUCT TIP OF THE DAY!***

But, a sanitizing tip from Donna Crossley gained the most attention! She uses a product called Chlorhexidine Solution which she **buys from Amazon for \$18.00 a gallon**. You mix it with water when you use it, so a gallon lasts a long time. **This product is used in vet offices** and can be used as a "foot bath" for anyone coming into your home during a Newcastle Disease outbreak. It can be even used on wounds! (I know of at least one person who was on this ZOOM that night and who immediately afterwards ordered this product to sanitize her bird room).



As



you know, **the topic each month is only a "starting point" for our informal chats.** The conversation shifted to issues of the day. During this time, members from Valencia, Glendale and the South Bay all agreed **the smoke from the fires was so bad they could not safely go outside.** Near Donna Crossley's home, someone knocked down a power pole which caused her to **lose electricity for 16 hours.** (If you have been to Donna's house, you know she has a huge freezer filled with bird and people food). Donna moved all of her freezer items into this one freezer along with frozen cold-packs. She reported her food stayed rock-solid! As you know, Donna is prepared for about any emergency and her neighbors all know that. So, many came over to her house to borrow batteries. **Join us on Monday, November 16 at 7 PM for our next friendly gathering and learn about our annual fundraiser and auction which will be online.**





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If you need to renew your membership, e-mail Patte Fisher at pattefisher@verizon.net

NEED A HOME for Your Ad?

Please Contact SBBS President, Janet Ragonesi at (310) 376-5954

SPONSORS

Upon review and acceptance by the board of directors, any business that donates \$25 or more per month in either goods, gift certificates or money to SBBS will be known as a SBBS Sponsor. For each month, a sponsor donates to SBBS, the sponsor will be listed in the newsletter for that month depending upon the timing for publication. These sponsors are listed above. **LET'S GIVE THEM OUR SUPPORT.**



PLEASE JOIN US



CURRENTLY, IN-PERSON meetings are CANCELED. Meetings are held at the Kiwanis Club of Hermosa Beach

2515 Valley Drive, Hermosa Beach, CA 90245 (near the corner of Gould and Valley Drive)

Our meetings are NOW being held via ZOOM. MOST MEETINGS are held on the 1st Monday of the month at 7 pm., with an added **ZOOM SOCIAL on the 3rd Monday of the month AT 7 PM.** Join in the fun and lively conversations!

* Sometimes, special meetings are held on Sunday afternoons, but [verify the meeting date by checking the website at: www.sobaybirdsoc.com](http://www.sobaybirdsoc.com).

You don't have to own a bird to participate!

Members are invited to participate Board Meetings which are usually the 2nd Monday of the month via ZOOM. Call Janet for details.

South Bay Bird Society

VOTING POSITIONS:



— Officers and Board of

NON-VOTING POSITIONS:

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS:

- President** Janet Ragonesi, (310) 376-5954
- V.P. CFO & Secretary** Diane Sivas, (310) 937-9925
- V.P. Education** Karen Allen, birdsnmor@aol.com

DIRECTORS:

- Program Director** **OPEN**
- Membership Director** Patte Fisher, pattefisher@verizon.net
- Raffle & Sponsors** **OPEN**
- Newsletter & Flyers** Gala Burkholder (gidgetscal@aol.com)
- Press/Media** June Baker (junespetcare@hotmail.com)
- Community Outreach** **OPEN**
- Technical Support** **OPEN**
ACTING—Gala Burkholder (310) 318-2662

SUPPORT POSITIONS:

- Adoptions & Foster Care** Janet Ragonesi, (310) 376-5954
Marie Calleja, (310) 529-1408
- Proofreaders** Sylvia Skidmore, Marie Calleja
- Web Master** **OPEN**
- ZOOM Coordinator** ACTING—David Benjamin (Davidsbbsr@dbenjamin.com)
- “Meet-up” Site** David Benjamin
- Refreshments** **OPEN**
- Photography** Gala Burkholder, Marie Calleja
- Cartoons** June Baker, Marie Calleja
- Lifetime Members** Anita & Cary Pao, Karen Allen, Perry Ellwood, Jack Ford, Donna Crossley, Janet Ragonesi, Dr. Walter Roskopf, Don Hand, Bree & Deven Brozey
- Memorial Lifetime Members** Lorrie Mitchell, Diane Bock, Ron Ellwood



Do you want to volunteer in ANY way for SBBS?

If so, contact the President Janet Ragonesi at (310) 376-5954 or ragonesi@att.net

The people listed above have chosen to “Step-up” to help with our club.

They have listed their contact information for your reference in SBBS business.



P.O. Box 3863
Redondo Beach, CA 90277-3863
www.sobaybirdsoc.com

EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY:

Members that require the US Postal Service for their delivery, please add \$15 to your membership. Thank-you.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE:

When a new or renewing member pays for a 2-year membership in advance, the member receives \$5.00 off of the 2nd year.

South Bay Bird Society Membership Application

Return your application to: P.O. Box 3863, Redondo Beach, CA 90277-3863

We appreciate your support. Your donations are tax deductible. SBBS is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit corporation

New ___ Renewal ___ Former Member ___ / Family \$40 ___ Individual \$32 ___ Senior (60+) \$25 ___ Lifetime \$350 ___

Name(s): _____

E-Mail Address for Newsletter Delivery: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: (____) _____

Other Phone: (____) _____ How did you hear about us? _____

To help us plan programs and activities, please tell us what kind of birds you own: _____

_____ How long have you been keeping birds? _____

During the meetings when you are invited to bring your bird, we sometimes take pictures of the birds for our newsletter. We like to identify them by name. If you want, please list your bird species and the names of those you might be bringing so we can label the photos: _____

Mark ways you will volunteer: Hold a Board Office ___ Help with Pot Lucks ___ Help with Community Outreach Events ___ Help with the Silent Auction/Fundraiser ___ Take Photos of Meetings ___ Foster Birds ___ List Other ways _____

Do you keep birds primarily as: Companions ___ Breeders ___ Both ___ Renewal Month: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____