

S00099 – David Horn

There seems to be an ongoing war on the Aviculturist at the moment by Officialdom, firstly the proposed changes to the code to make Aviculturist a registered pet shop in NSW, now this.

In my 45 years+ as an Aviculturist there has always been an exempt list for common species, such as Budgerigars, Cockatiel, Zebra finches, Eastern Rosella's, Red Rumped Parrot and a number of others this appears to be deleted.

Why would this change be considered these are amongst the mostly widely kept birds on the planet, especially the first three, these have numerous Color mutations in the bloodlines and have little in common with Birds in the wild, in fact Budgies contain some lines imported into Australia from Show stock sourced in England in the early 90's.

Hybrids are on the list, what relevance do they have for Native species in the Wild; the answer is nothing, as they don't occur in the wild so why would they be on a protective species list.

As much as I digest the creation and propagation of Color Mutations in captive birds, there are non the less numerous species that carry them, Native species included, namely Bourke's Parrot, Turquoise Parrot, Budgie, Cockatiel, Eastern Rosella, Crimson Rosella, Twenty Eight Parrot, Scaly Breasted Lorikeet, Rainbow Lorikeet, Princess Parrot, Blue Winged Parrot, Diamond Dove, Elegant Parrot and some Native finches such as the Painted and now Diamond Firetail's.

My point is as per above why have them included on a protective species list, when 90+ % are carrying or are color mutations and therefore have little relation to wild birds, hence they should be off the list. I understand that there are some listed as endangered species e.g. Turquoise parrot, no there is no relevance to the modern Birdkeeper in obtaining wild birds, due to the above.

I strongly suggest the code include the exempt list for practical purposes, nobody is going to fill forms out to keep budgies, Zebra finches etc., perhaps that's your intent and purpose in drawing up the Draft code, perhaps if I was cynical I 'd suggest you drew this list up after the failure to created a license for all bird keepers to become registered pet shops.

Bird keeping started in the 1860's onwards, lets say 150 years ago, admittedly early practices where not ideal, however in the last 30 or so years, Aviculture has become

a sophisticated craft/hobby, there is more than enough information, products, Books etc. to enable the safe and effective captive management of both Native and Exotic species, we don't need to regress to the code as proposed, it highly impractical, cumbersome and is highly likely to be ignored in any event.

I can't see where you have discussed with industry groups i.e. The caged bird federation, Parrot Society and the Finch Society, both in NSW and the Australia wide groups; I'd suggest you do so.

I have the view that your organization should be a Conservation focused one, I don't see it in practice, Native Birds as you are no doubt aware are declining in numbers, due to a range of factors habitat loss (Destruction and fragmentation), competition from invasive species, especially Cats, foxes, Feral bee's, Feral birds (introduced by Government sponsored Acclimation Societies of the late 1800's), such as Starlings, Sparrows, Indian Myna's, also Feral pigeons.

Also Climate change is bearing down in the form of drier conditions and increasing widespread drought.

Would it not be a better focus to encourage private the Aviculturist to breed and keep adequate numbers of pure normal birds as a bio bank for the future in good captive conditions, for possible reintroduction into the wild, such is happening in the Southern States for the orange bellied parrot, albeit perhaps too late.

Over regulation will not help this cause.

Suggest that you keep the exempt list, work with the Industry groups to encourage the appropriate keeping of Normal colored birds in equal proportion to color mutations.

Take a big cup of harden up and develop programs to eliminate Feral pests, especially feral cats, Starlings, Indian Minor birds and feral bee's ,reclaim appropriate land ,reinvigorate it back to a Wild like state for the use of native species and reintroduce captive bred stock .