



## **FROM MATT'S PERCH**

**By Matthew Russel**

The question was asked of me the other day: "is aviculture a dying hobby?" We both agreed that it is without a doubt. We then went on to discuss the possible reasons why. My first reaction was that it is a result of there being more ways for young people to entertain themselves; eg. what self-respecting teen doesn't have an Xbox or a Playstation these days?

I know of a number of teenagers out there who would love to have their own aviary. I have approached potential future aviculturists' parents to say an aviary may be seen as a bit of an eyesore, and I understand that to the untrained eye this can be so. It's also true that the average new backyard is getting smaller and serves more of an ornamental purpose than a practical place where children can discover the world around them outside the house. My friend then voiced his view that it's a result of people becoming lazy and wanting their entertainment fed to them as they sit in a semi-comatose state.

So what can we take from this discussion? Well to me it sounds like aviculture is not evolving with the times and there are not as many people encouraging young people to start. As aviculturists we need to come up with more inventive ways to keep and breed birds in aviaries that can be seen as a feature of the backyard, whilst adding value to the property. An outside aviary will motivate kids to spend time outside in the fresh air learning about life through their birds, rather than just parking themselves in front of their computer and becoming increasingly agitated over their progress in the newest computer game.

So we need to all put on our thinking caps and come up with new ideas so there are less young potential aviculturists missing out on keeping birds.

Please let me have your thoughts on this matter, to share with all the members. You can e-mail me at: [tara\\_matt@hotmail.com](mailto:tara_matt@hotmail.com).

Cheers,

*Matt*



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