

# THE YOUNG GUNS OF AVICULTURE

By Chris and Gareth Oerman

(Photographs taken by Ken Bell)

Nick (or Nicholas to Tony Melbourne) Bishop welcomed the “**young guns of aviculture**” in his address to the public at the Adelaide Zoo when introducing his Blue and Gold Macaws at the free flight.



In the first of a series of ‘bird days’ for Junior Members the Society arranged a ‘**behind the scenes**’ view of the Zoo on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> October. Nick, a member of the Society, hosted the Junior Members and a number of ‘older Members’.

To start, we watched the free flight of the Blue and Gold Macaws. Everyone was enthralled at the graceful flight of the big birds. A couple of beats of the wing and they flew around the open area. Nick provided information about macaws, and parrots in

general, particularly how they are being threatened with habitat destruction. Members Dan Hassell and Ken Bell had the digital cameras whirring and at the end of the show Nick, Ryan, Sarah and Gareth had their photos taken with the Blue and Gold Macaws.

Nick fed the Hyacinth macaws in their aviary. One of their favourite foods was banana; they carefully removed the flesh with their big beaks without marking the skin. It was



interesting to discover that they are both males and were confiscated by the Customs Service as an illegal import. So they are most unlikely to breed!!!

We then went behind the gates to the food preparation area. There is a very large stainless steel table at which the food is prepared. Nick described and showed how the various foods were prepared.

The most interesting was the Finch breeding mix that comprised whole boiled egg mixed with Wombaroo™ Insectivore Rearing Mix.

We then moved on to the breeding aviaries where Orange-bellied, Swift, and Fig Parrots were ready to breed.

The ‘Control Room’ had a fridge that bred all sorts – not birds.

The computer stored details of each bird, where it was located and breeding success.



Is it true that the Zoo is getting another Palm Cockatoo? (picture at right) Perhaps there will be some breeding success in the future!



We then left Nick and members worked their way through the other aviaries in the Zoo. We saw Eclectus Parrots and a Green or Javanese peacock (picture below) displaying its tail in the rainforest aviary; Black-cockatoos in the new aviaries; Orange-bellied and Swift Parrots, some of the endangered parrots in Australia; lorries of South East Asia and the conures of South America.



All members enjoyed the day, Ryan said that he liked looking behind the scenes and particularly the feeding of the Hyacinth Macaws; Gareth liked the free flying and the Hyacinths.

We thank the Society particularly Tony and Jeanette Melbourne for arranging the day, other members for making everyone feel welcome and sharing their knowledge of the birds and Nick for his knowledge and making the trip fun.