



## BOOK REVIEW

**A Guide to Popular Conures**  
**Author - Ray Dorge and Gail Sibley**

ABK Publications has released it's latest in the "A Guide to ..." series, a 112 page soft covered little book generously embellished with colour plates on every page. It should be stated here that the quality of all the conures appearing in this publication appear to be of good quality, something that cannot be said of some other books from this and other publishers.

"A Guide to ... Popular Conures" is not and does not pretend to be a definitive scientific work. It is rather, a very good handbook intended to be a ready reference for the intending breeder as well as the pet owner. It actually covers both areas of aviculture very well indeed. The pet or companion bird side of things has been neglected or not recognised by most other "breeder" type books.

Before "...Conures" landed on my desk I had already heard some criticism of it, mainly regarding the use of the USA based authors and their almost "interview of other breeders" style of presenting things. After reading most of the work, I find any criticism hard to follow. No one that I am aware of has the experience in Australia of the range of conures presented in these pages and the staff of Australian Birdkeeper have obviously gone to some trouble to ensure that the enthusiasts here are well covered. I like the different ideas related from other breeders of conures. It gives one the motivation to try different husbandry methods until you arrive at your own formula. Books on our hobby should be just that, something to stimulate a bit of lateral thinking, not the "you must do this" style manuals.

Curiously, a couple of species which are in Australia are not covered, although I feel that this is of minor importance as the book offers enough information to enable the keen enthusiast to take on conures with confidence. And at the prices asked for some of the species in Australia, keen would be an understatement!

I was really a bit surprised when ABK decided to release “ A Guide to Popular Conures” ahead of several other titles they have in the works. Other than Suns, Nandays, Jandays and Green-Cheeked Conures the population of conures in Australia is not great. Given where some of the lesser numbered birds are held, I will be more than surprised if a couple of the species increase their numbers to the point where they are in reach of we mere mortals. ABK answered my query about the timing of the release of this title by informing me that about 30%-40% of their publications sales are overseas. Something we should all be proud of.

Summing up, a little gem of a book. A must have for all conure enthusiasts and good dreaming material for those that have conures on the wish list. I believe that “A Guide to Conures” will become one of the better selling ABK publications, as at the price, it has more information and better colour plates than books at five times the price.

Review by Ian Frost