



words on
waterfowl

Newsletter of the Sylvan Heights Waterfowl Society and the International Wild Waterfowl Association

Birds of Paradise

Sylvan Heights Bird Park's new aviary is now open!

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PYGMY GEESE
Sylvan Heights Bird Park Celebrates 15 Years

2021 • Issue No. 16

Red-legged Seriema Chick
(Cariama cristata)



K.G. Lubbock

IN THIS ISSUE

- 4. The Director's Report
- 5. From the IWWA President
- 8. Birds of Paradise
- 12. Celebrating 15 Years
- 14. Blooms for Wildlife
- 18. An Introduction to the Pygmy Geese
- 22. The Avian Breeding Center
- 26. Incubation Investigation
- 28. Grants & Donations
- 30. Meet the Cassowaries



Scarlet Ibis Nests in South America Aviary | K.G. Lubbock



ON THE COVER

A Plum-headed Parakeet perches in the park's new Birds of Paradise Aviary (page 8).

CONNECT ONLINE!



Get park updates, event information and more. Connect with Sylvan Heights and the IWWA on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, or YouTube.

the director's report



In October, Sylvan Heights Bird Park celebrated its 15th anniversary. We have come a long way in 15 years - far beyond what I had ever envisioned. When we first opened in 2006, we had to feel our way forward on how to run a public facility. We could not have done so without the guidance of the North Carolina Zoo Society, who helped us considerably in the beginning. They taught us how to run a non-profit organization, how to fundraise, how to run a gift shop, and many other valuable tips to make our operation run as smoothly as possible.

During that first year, we had 7,000 visitors - and that figure included a "free day" in which 1,000 visitors came to see what we were doing. Fast-forward to 2021, which has been our best year for visitation, and we anticipate as many as 60,000 visitors. The park now hosts sold-out fundraising events, and our pavilion, Toad Hall, is being utilized almost every weekend for various celebrations.

We were initially called Sylvan Heights Waterfowl Park and Eco-Center. Waterfowl has always been our main focus, as we are home to the largest collection in North America. In 2006, the park consisted of five main aviaries housing mostly ducks, geese, and swans. Since those early days we have branched out into many other species and expanded our exhibit space substantially. Major additions included a flamingo exhibit in 2008, The Landing Zone in 2013, Wings of the Tropics in 2017, and this year, our largest construction project to date was completed with the opening of Birds of Paradise. Today, the park houses over 260 different species of birds. With this trajectory in mind, we changed the name to Sylvan Heights Bird Park in 2011 to better encompass the visitor experience. This also solved the issue of people arriving at the park with swimming gear thinking we were a Waterfall Park.

Sylvan Heights Bird Park's growth over the past 15 years is a result of the dedication and hard work of the many volunteers, staff members, donors, board members, and supporters who have helped us along the way.

MIKE LUBBOCK
Executive Director
Sylvan Heights Bird Park

Temminck's Tragopan
(*Tragopan temminckii*)

from the **iwwa** president

It is a pleasure to pass along best wishes to all IWWA and Sylvan Heights members from the IWWA Board of Directors. The Board of Directors of the IWWA met on September 20, 2021 via Zoom again this year for the second time. The Board also met in March 2021 via Zoom to host our first mid-year meeting. I sincerely appreciate the commitment of all of our directors to their roles, and I also would like to extend a welcome to Julian Loomans and Bert Kleijer, who have been appointed to the board to fill two of our vacant international seats. I am pleased to share that we again have a full slate of directors and look forward to a productive year ahead. I am also happy to share that our Executive Committee is largely unchanged. We welcome Matthew Smith, who is taking on the role of Secretary, and we thank Anne Lemenager for her service in that role for a number of years.

Despite the impacts of the pandemic on our human lives, our impact as a population on wildlife and wetlands has not subsided. This was very clear to those on our Conservation and Grants Committee, who received a significant number of grant applications, many of which were tied to impacts on wetlands and waterways. Two projects were selected to receive funds, and we hope to be able to share the results from these projects in future IWWA communications. On a similar topic, the IWWA was able to award a number of people and organizations for their work with captive and wild waterfowl species. The 2021 award recipients will be recognized and profiled in the next IWWA yearbook, planned for publication in the first half of 2022. If you know of someone who you think could be recognized for their contributions, please consider nominating them for an award in 2022. Complete details on the awards program and deadlines are published in the yearbook and on the website at www.wildwaterfowl.org.

The year ahead is anticipated to be a busy one for IWWA. We have a number of new initiatives we will be rolling out, along with our ongoing committees and offerings. Hopefully 2022 will allow us an opportunity to again gather in person. We do have a tentative conference agenda prepared for the southern US, and if appropriate, we will announce those details to members and on our website. Everyone is certainly looking forward to gathering and talking waterfowl in person again soon!

One of the priorities of the Board for the coming year will be the resumption of our fundraising activities. You may receive a request from us as the year draws to a close and we ask that you consider including IWWA in your charitable giving. IWWA wants to continue to be able to support the conservation of waterfowl in wild and captive populations and we ask you to help us to do so! Remember, IWWA is entirely volunteer driven, so all of your contributions go directly to the research projects we fund.

Thank you all for your support in 2020-21, and I look forward to another successful year ahead!

CLAYTON L. BOTKIN
President
International Wild Waterfowl Association



Sandhill Crane | photo by Clayton Botkin



Online Gift Shop Now Open

The Sylvan Heights Bird Park gift shop team is pleased to announce the opening of our online shop! Visit birdshop.org to purchase Sylvan Heights logo t-shirts and hats, duck t-shirts, gifts, and more. Additional items will be added just in time for holiday shopping. Shipping and in-store pickup options are available.

At our on-site shop in the Sylvan Heights Visitor Center, guests can now browse a new line of baby items, as well as popular new toys, like pop fidgets.

Art enthusiasts will enjoy our unique collection of consignment jewelry and artwork. Be sure to check out our new sculptures from Greenville, NC artist Jonathan Bowling, which are on display in the gardens throughout Sylvan Heights Bird Park. All of Bowling's recycled metal sculptures are available for purchase, and make wonderful decorations for gardens and landscapes.

On your next visit to the park, please stop by to see us in the gift shop!



Sylvan Heights on PBS NC

Sylvan Heights Bird Park has been featured on several PBS NC programs this year. Starting in April, the park's educational Keeper Talk videos have been part of Classroom Connection, an instructional program that is a partnership between PBS North Carolina, NC Public Schools, and Friday Institute for Educational Innovation, bringing educational content to remote learners across North Carolina. Past episodes of Classroom Connection can be viewed online at pbs.org/show/classroom-connection/.

Recently, PBS NC's popular "North Carolina Weekend" program re-visited Sylvan Heights Bird Park to provide updates about the park's growth as we celebrated 15 years. The episode, called "Autumn Adventures", premiered on October 14th, and can be viewed online at pbs.org/show/nc-weekend/.



Girl Scout Creates Audio Tour for Park

Girl Scout Nora Shipman of Cary, NC recently completed an audio tour for Sylvan Heights Bird Park as part of her Girl Scout Silver Award.

The tour consists of a series of plaques displaying QR codes in twelve locations throughout the park. When a visitor scans a QR code with their phone, an audio file with information about the bird species in that exhibit begins to play.

Shipman spent many hours researching information and writing descriptions, before narrating and recording all of the audio files herself.

Fascinated by birds, Shipman says she chose to partner with Sylvan Heights for her project in the hope she could create something that would "benefit the sanctuary and help it continue to thrive and protect all of the wonderful birds for generations to come."

Sylvan Heights Bird Park thanks Nora Shipman for creating this informative and interactive feature for our visitors.



Wildwood Garden Installation

The installation of a new shade garden is in progress behind the park's Australia aviary. Wildwood Garden will provide a rest area in the lower loop of the park where visitors can stop and enjoy the surrounding aviaries in the shade.

A short, paved pathway will wind through plantings of hydrangeas, paper plants, azaleas, ferns, and hostas. The area was partially chosen to protect a natural stand of ground cedar (*Diphasiastrum digitatum*) and a grouping of American Strawberry Bush (*Euonymus americanus*).

The garden is dedicated to the mothers of Mike Lubbock (Freddie Whittingham), and Mike Diacont (Virginia Costello Diacont). Two memorial benches, crafted by carpenter and Sylvan Heights volunteer Kenneth Harris, provide spaces for visitors to relax and enjoy the garden.



Meet Julie Connolly, Sylvan Heights Bird Park's Education Coordinator

Hi, I'm Julie Connolly and I started my time at Sylvan Heights in July of 2018 as a volunteer avian keeper. I'm now the new Education Coordinator at Sylvan Heights Bird Park. For the last two years, I had the pleasure of working along with Ashley Hamlet, the previous coordinator, as the Education Assistant. Prior to working with Ashley as an assistant, the thought of public speaking and standing in front of a classroom of 20+ students would've given me a heart attack. Despite the fact that I have a Bachelors of Science degree in Wildlife Management from the University of New Hampshire, with almost 25 years experience working with wildlife, and eight years with the U. S. Army Reserves, public speaking was my biggest challenge and was habitually avoided.

With absolute patience and grace Ashley Hamlet proved to me that you can indeed teach an old dog a few new tricks. As a result, standing in front of a classroom of students and teaching them about the natural world in fun and

exciting ways has brought me a sense of joy. After finding a position closer to home, where she and her husband can spend more time with their new baby boy, Ashley resigned her position and passed the torch to me.

On October 30th, the bird park hosted Trick-Or-Tweet, a fun Halloween event with educational stations and trick-or-treating in the park. We welcomed more than 500 guests that evening, and collected non-perishable food items for a non-profit serving local families.

These past few months have seen a steady increase in the number of school field trips, with October and November averaging about 15 trips per month for mostly private and home schools. Public school trips are slowly trending up with bookings already for next spring. It is our hope, a year after everything in the world was put on standby, to continue to increase the number of students we reach with our environmental education programs.

Birds of PARADISE

by **DUSTIN FOOTE**

General Curator, Sylvan Heights Bird Park

Sylvan Heights Bird Park's new aviary and propagation center reinforces the park's mission of conservation through the management of sustainable populations.

At the end of 2018, Sylvan Heights Bird Park (SHBP) was approached by Pandemonium Aviaries from northern California. Pandemonium was looking for a facility to take in their collection while continuing their core mission of sustainable captive populations. Founder, Michele Raffin, had spent a lifetime working with large numbers of several Papua New Guinea species, including Green-naped Pheasant Pigeons and Crowned Pigeons. The recently opened Birds of Paradise exhibit (BOP), sponsored by Pamela and Edward Taft, is the public side of SHBP taking in Pandemonium's collection. BOP is where our visitors can see many of the species received from Pandemonium.

While getting our visitors up close to birds is important to us, many species will simply not breed on exhibit. Knowing this, the past year we have been working on the Pandemonium Aviaries Propagation Center at SHBP. The propagation center is SHBP's first dedicated off exhibit breeding space to focus on non-waterfowl species. Those familiar with our history know that SHBP works in tandem with the Sylvan Heights Avian Breeding Center, however the breeding center's primary focus is waterfowl. As SHBP has grown (especially

with the addition of Pandemonium's birds), there are many non-waterfowl species that would benefit from a dedicated off exhibit space for successful propagation. From pigeons, finches, and hummingbirds to jays and toucans, there are many species SHBP plans to focus on with the propagation center. Chief among them are the core species Pandemonium focused on: Green-naped Pheasant Pigeons, Crowned Pigeons, Bleeding-heart Doves, Plum-headed Parakeets, and Nicobar Pigeons.

The propagation center was designed to be efficient for both energy costs and staff time. Rodent resistant insulation, heated floors, and an LED lighting system will help keep energy costs low while still providing a great environment for birds to breed. The interior of the building has also been finished with a two-part epoxy that will make cleaning quick! All 18 aviaries in the propagation center have large indoor and outdoor flights and will have natural plantings with ponds.

While the propagation center isn't on public view, we plan on including the facility in our annual Duckling Day tours for upper-level members.



Meet the world's largest pigeon. This is the Victoria Crowned Pigeon, a ground-dwelling bird native to forests of New Guinea. Larger individuals can weigh more than 5 lbs, which is about ten times larger than the common pigeons that inhabit cities worldwide. There are four species of crowned pigeons, but only the Victoria Crowned Pigeon has the white tips on its lacy crest of feathers. Visitors can see the Victoria Crowned Pigeon and its close relative, the Western Crowned Pigeon, in the new Birds of Paradise aviary.

photos by KATIE LUBBOCK

Birds of Paradise Aviary



Pandemonium Aviaries Propagation Center



Nicobar Pigeon
(*Caloenas nicobarica*)



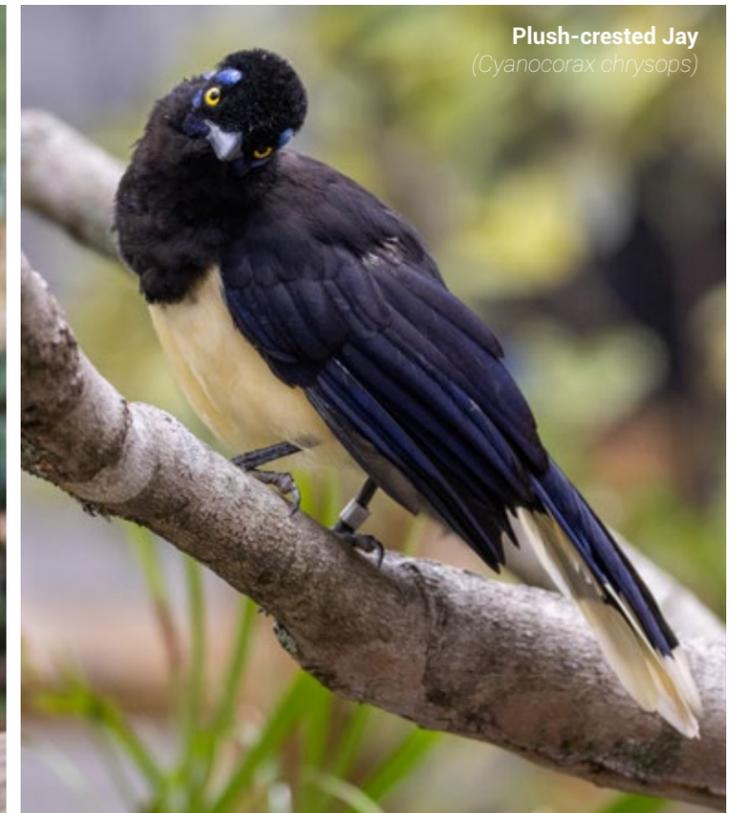
Plum-headed Parakeet
(*Psittacula cyanocephala*)



Ross's Turaco
(*Tauraco rossae*)



Plush-crested Jay
(*Cyanocorax chrysops*)





Celebrating 15 YEARS

2006 - 2021

October 2021 marked Sylvan Heights Bird Park's 15th anniversary, and to celebrate, we brought back both of our signature events!

On October 9th, the festivities began with the grand opening of the Birds of Paradise aviary, and continued later that evening with the return of Birds, Brews & BBQ, our popular BBQ cook-off and craft beer tasting event. The event also coincided with the launch of our online auction.

On October 23rd, supporters joined us for our 2021 Annual Fundraiser: The Year of the Flamingo. Event guests placed their final bids in our online auction, met flamingos up close during a "Flamingle" cocktail hour, then enjoyed dinner and a spirited live auction.

Sylvan Heights Bird Park extends our sincere gratitude to the many volunteers, donors, event guests, and sponsors who made these events possible. Thanks to your generosity, we raised more than \$49,000 for the park's conservation and education programs!

Thank you to our 2021 event sponsors:

Sandra & Keith Rogers
Sylvan Heights Bird Park's Board of Directors
Anchor Insurance Agencies
Clay & Ada Shields
ElectriCities of North Carolina
Keller Williams Realty - Nancy Winslow
H&R Block of Scotland Neck
Kim Mallard, CPA
Bobby & Robin Tysinger
Charlie & Ann Shields
AgLand Earthworks, LLC
Carolina Eagle Distributing
Koi Pond Brewing Company
Quick Trigger Brewing Company
Weldon Mills Distillery
Hook Hand Brewery/Blackwater Cider
Pitt Street Brewing Company

Birds, Brews & BBQ returns March 12th, 2022!

Ticket sales begin January 12, 2022 at shwpark.com

blooms for wildlife



Field of Gold

As summer 2021 drew to a close, four acres of sunflowers along the park's entrance road burst into bloom, providing a sunny welcome to visitors and abundant food for wildlife.

As the blooms faded, they became highly attractive to both migratory and non-migratory birds for their nutritious seeds. A single sunflower can produce over 1,000 seeds, each of which is packed with protein and fats. Hundreds of American goldfinches, warblers, sparrows, bluebirds, and doves have been taking advantage of this all-you-can-eat sunflower buffet.

Sylvan Heights Bird Park thanks Arthur Whitehead and Shields Fertilizer Company for making this year's sunflower field possible.

photos by KATIE LUBBOCK





Pollinator Power

Sylvan Heights Bird Park's pollinator garden is now open! Located next to the overflow parking lot, the garden features native plants that will help support bees, butterflies, and other important pollinator species. More than 50 monarch caterpillars hatched in the milkweed patch this year, and we hope to attract many more pollinators as the plants grow in the coming years. We also hope that this garden will inspire visitors to create their own pollinator-friendly spaces at home.



Sylvan Heights Bird Park thanks the B.W. Wells Stewardship Fund and the NC Native Plant Society for supporting the pollinator garden.

African Pygmy Geese
(*Nettapus auritus*)

These little feathered jewels are not geese at all.

by MORAG JONES

As you might expect from their name, the pygmy geese are the smallest of the waterfowl. Widespread across tropical Asia, Africa and parts of Australasia, these little feathered jewels are not geese at all. Their bill shape is most likely the reason why they came to be called 'geese'. They are grouped within the perching ducks, along with the Muscovy and the Wood ducks. Most of them are between 9 and 10 oz in weight and are buoyant swimmers.

Most familiar of the three species and most widely bred in aviculture is the African Pygmy Goose. These tiny waterfowl have a huge range in tropical Africa: from the Atlantic coast of West Africa to the Indian Ocean and extending to Madagascar. Despite their apparently conspicuous plumage, they are easily overlooked as they feed or rest among lilies on freshwater lakes. They are fast, agile fliers, taking off from the water easily, but seldom flying far when flushed. They are nomadic, following the best conditions and food sources. Happiest on the water, they pick food from the surface and occasionally dive. With short legs, they are not at all agile ashore.

From Asia is the Cotton Pygmy Goose. This is the most sexually dimorphic (male and female do not look alike) of the pygmy geese. The male in breeding plumage is readily identified by his bright white head, neck and underparts, while the female is duller and browner, though with a conspicuous dark eye line. But just when you think you have identification sorted, he loses his breeding finery quite quickly, and enters 'eclipse'.

an introduction to the

pygmy geese

He then looks very similar to the hen. In flight, the male displays flashing white primaries and secondaries that the female lacks. Cotton Pygmy Geese are typically seen in pairs or small flocks, but larger gatherings are not unusual. Where they live close to human activity, they can be remarkably tolerant of our disturbance. In Sri Lanka, they are known as the 'Flower Teal', often seen amongst brightly-colored water lilies.

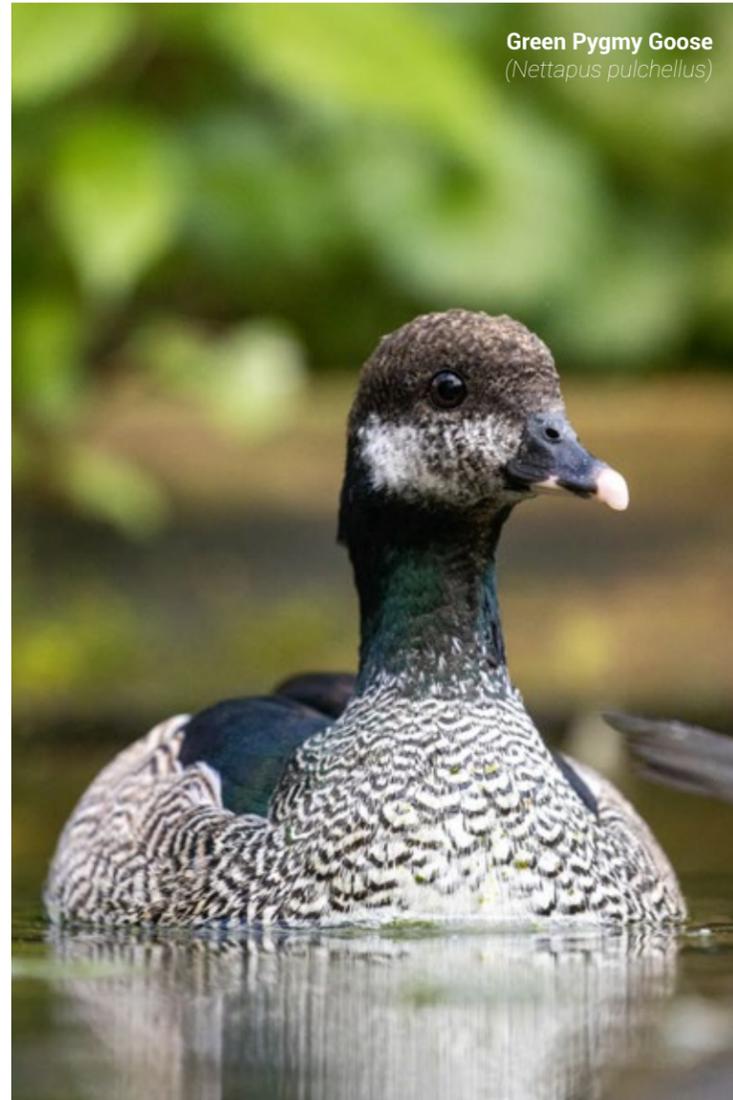
Though considered to be the hardiest of the pygmy geese, this species is rare in collections. First bred in captivity by the New York Zoological Society in 1978, it has subsequently been bred more widely, but is a bird that requires great care if it is to thrive.

The Green Pygmy Goose has the smallest range by far of any in its genus, found exclusively in Northern Australia and southern New Guinea. It likes coastal and lowland wetlands, also feeding among water lilies. There is some dispersal during the wet season, but in the dry season when fresh-water is scarce, flocks will congregate on remaining areas of permanent water.

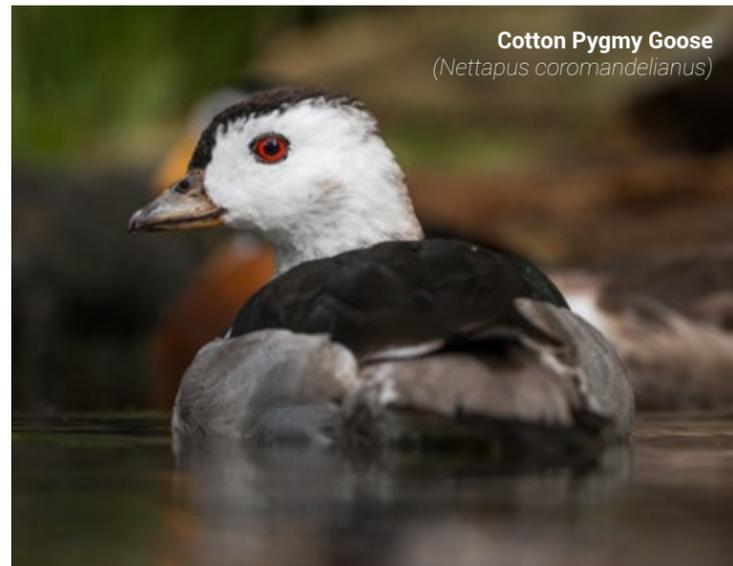
Both sexes of these tiny, rather toy-like birds have similar plumage, with green backs and finely barred underparts. The white cheeks are distinctive, though in eclipse the male's cheeks become smutty. They breed during the wet season, which in northern Australia is January to March.

The breeding habits of all three species is similar, they nest in tree holes close to water. The biggest threats to their survival are in our hands: Pollution, loss of wetland habitats, hunting and loss of food sources because of alien introduced species. These are all things we could reverse, if only we had the collective will to do so.

We have been delighted to have great success here with the Green Pygmy Goose. It's an extremely rare bird in aviculture and the first breeding in captivity was as recent as 2005, in Holland. Skills gained with difficult birds like these are invaluable when species face extinction in the wild. Our center here at Scotland Neck is proud to be an avicultural training site for conservation-orientated avian biologists and to have you, our members, supporting us.



Green Pygmy Goose
(*Nettapus pulchellus*)



Cotton Pygmy Goose
(*Nettapus coromandelianus*)

PROJECT UPDATE:

A home for HORNBILLS

In 2019, we asked you, our members and supporters, for donations to help build a new aviary for our Rhinoceros Hornbills. Thanks to your generosity, our new Rhinoceros Hornbill aviary opened in June 2021!

This spacious new exhibit, located next to the tree house, is now home for two Rhinoceros Hornbills. Native to the tropical forests of Borneo, Sumatra, Java, and Malaysia, these large arboreal birds feed primarily on fruit, but may also eat insects and small animals. They are named for the large orange horn, called a "casque", on the top of their bill. The casque is hollow, made of keratin, and is thought to help amplify the sound of their calls in the forest. The aviary intends to mimic their natural habitat, with ample space for flight in a quiet, forested setting.

Although the Rhinoceros Hornbills are currently off exhibit as they spend the cooler months in their winter home, visitors can expect to see them enjoying their new aviary again once the weather warms in the spring.



the avian breeding center

Located next to Sylvan Heights Bird Park, the Sylvan Heights Avian Breeding Center has been propagating rare and endangered birds since 1989.



Grey Crowned Crane Chicks
(*Balearica regulorum*)

photos by KATIE LUBBOCK

by NICK HILL

Curator, Sylvan Heights Avian Breeding Center

As Sylvan Heights Bird Park celebrates its 15th anniversary this year, many of our newer members may not know that the Sylvan Heights Avian Breeding Center has been around much longer! The Avian Breeding Center was established in Scotland Neck, NC in 1989, and has since grown into one of the country's largest propagation facilities for rare and endangered waterfowl. We are still here, located next to Sylvan Heights Bird Park, and still teaching interns studying conservation biology, veterinary science, zoology, and wildlife management who want to learn more about waterfowl. Our team of aviculturists here at the breeding center not only do a fantastic job of teaching our interns, but also in making them feel at home during their stay.

As we look to the future of propagating birds in facilities like the Sylvan Heights Avian Breeding Cen-

ter, we must also learn from, and build upon, our experiences from the past. In recent years, we have shifted in favor of parent-rearing many of our young birds, rather than hand-rearing. With parent-rearing, young birds remain in the aviary with their parents, and interference from aviculturists is minimal. Providing food and wellness checks a few times per day is often all that is required. Alternatively, hand-rearing birds in indoor facilities away from their parents is a time-intensive process for our aviculturists, but the benefit is that the young birds are more protected, and their environment is more controlled. Although both techniques are valuable, we have found that overall, parent-rearing seems to result in healthier, stronger birds. This year, we have had good success once again in parent-rearing Flying Steamer Ducks, and, for the first time, we allowed our Green Pygmy Geese to rear their own ducklings in an outdoor aviary. Our first



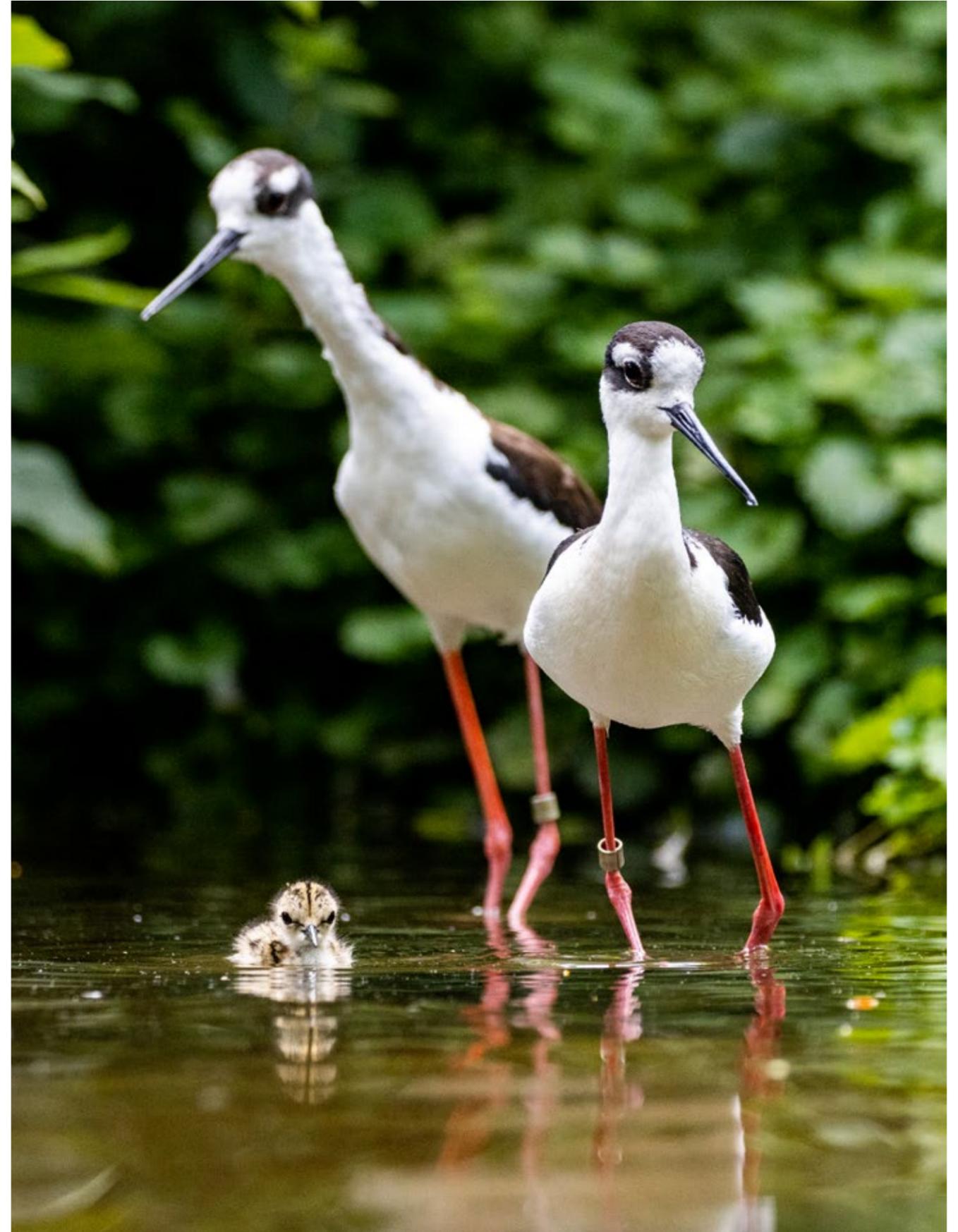
The Sylvan Heights Avian Breeding Center team (left to right): Aviculturists Jessica Long, Taylor Silcox, and Kat Lewandowski, Curator Nick Hill, and Holly.



group of Green Pygmy Geese that hatched last year are now on exhibit at the park in the new Birds of Paradise aviary. To the best of our knowledge, these may be the only Green Pygmy Geese on exhibit to the public in the country.

Many of the non-waterfowl species formerly housed at the Avian Breeding Center are also now moving over to the public exhibits at the park, where they add interest and educational value for visitors. These changes will also allow us to re-focus on the center's core mission of propagating waterfowl, and teaching the next generation of conservationists about their husbandry and biology.

Left: A young Andean Goose grazes in its aviary.
Below: A family of Green Pygmy Geese enjoy a meal of duckweed at the Sylvan Heights Avian Breeding Center.
Right: A pair of Black-necked Stilts watch over their chick.



incubation investigation

by JESSICA LONG

Aviculturist, Sylvan Heights Avian Breeding Center

In aviculture, chickens are priceless. Birds are the best at incubating eggs, and our hens at Sylvan Heights Avian Breeding Center spend the spring and summer incubating rare and endangered species of waterfowl. I started at the breeding center as an intern in 2017, and since then, I've taken on the role of raising the next generations of broody hens. But I noticed something strange was going on with my eggs.

North Carolina is a poultry state. We're the 7th largest poultry-producing state in the country. We know an awful lot about chickens. So, when I noticed that our eggs at the breeding center were hatching sometimes as early as 17 days after they started incubating, I wasn't sure what to think of it. I was taught that chicken eggs take 21 days to incubate. Some of the eggs took the classic 21 days, but not the majority. On top of that, the eggs I collected were from multi-generational hybrids – chickens that were essentially 'mutts,' mixes of many different chicken breeds over several generations. Each egg was a different shape, a different size, a different color. I wondered what about those differences was causing the incubation to vary.

Curiosity drove me to begin an undergraduate research project with Dr. Susan McRae, an ornithologist and professor at East Carolina University. She had a longstanding relationship with Sylvan Heights, which has been host to other research projects in the past, and she took me under her wing (pun intended). A project was born. I wanted to know why these chicken eggs had varied incubation times when they all began incubating at the same time. I thought the simplest

answer would be the dimensions of the eggs – when you hear hoofbeats, you think horses instead of zebras, right? Length, width, mass – measurements I could compare to incubation time and find my answer. But it was not that simple. Recently, my project has taken a fascinating turn. I found little correlation between incubation period and egg measurements, instead finding that the time of year I collected the eggs seemed to influence how long they needed to incubate.

Again, I thought the simplest answer should be tested first. Hoofbeats, horses. Temperature seemed like a likely culprit. North Carolina is known for its variable weather and the eggs were collected over winter and early spring. Data from the national weather service shot that hypothesis out of the sky, showing that the high temperatures on the day of egg collection were not the likely culprit.

So why are the chicken eggs hatching on such a spectrum?

I am currently looking into photoperiod – the amount of time the sun is up each day – as a possible cause of incubation differences. It looks promising so far, but my research is still ongoing. I hope to one day use this research to inform the management of rare and endangered species, like many of those kept at Sylvan Heights.

A simple question became a fascinating rabbit hole. It turns out those hoofbeats I heard might have actually been zebras.



grants & donations



Electric Vehicle Charging Station

Sylvan Heights Bird Park is excited to announce the opening of our first electric vehicle charging station! This project was made possible by a partnership with the State of North Carolina. Sylvan Heights Bird Park also thanks North Carolina's Electric Cooperatives, Halifax EMC, Edgecombe-Martin County EMC, Roanoke Electric Cooperatives, Tideland EMC, Lake Gaston Foundation, and the Town of Scotland Neck for supporting this project.



Smithfield Foods & Hog Slat, Inc

Did you know that our birds eat more than 6 tons of specially formulated waterfowl diet every month? Thanks to a generous donation by Smithfield Foods and Hog Slat, Inc, a new system of silos and augers now allows our aviculture team to store and access this feed much more efficiently. Sylvan Heights Bird Park thanks Smithfield Foods and Hog Slat, Inc for their contributions.



Duke Energy Foundation & The DeLeon Carter Foundation

The Duke Energy Foundation has granted \$15,000 to enable an extension of the current Duke Energy Nature Walkway and connect it with the existing wetland bridge. The walkway helps visitors and K-12 students on educational field trips to appreciate the importance of wetlands in their natural environment. The DeLeon Carter Foundation has granted an additional \$5,000 in support of this project.



Bayer Fund

Local farmer Ronnie Fleming recently directed a \$2,500 Bayer Fund America's Farmers Grow Communities donation to Sylvan Heights Bird Park. Sylvan Heights Bird Park will use the funds to support their ongoing conservation and environmental education programs.



Lowe's of Roanoke Rapids

Sylvan Heights Bird Park thanks the Roanoke Rapids Lowe's store for their generous contributions to improve the park's picnic areas and playground. Not only did Roanoke Rapids Lowe's donate some very well made and treated picnic tables, they also brought plenty of sand to fill up our sandbox.

thank you to our donors

Sylvan Heights Bird Park gratefully acknowledges our donors of \$500 or more since October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021.

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| Anonymous | Kaye B. Dotson | Robert King | Richard Shapero |
| Anchor-Lenoir Insurance Agency, Inc | Jeffrey W. Dudley | Darlene C. Kocich | Adah & Clay Shields |
| Russellene J. Angel | Duke Energy Foundation | La Casetta, LLC | Bruce Smith |
| Beth Bailey | Electricities of NC, Inc | Daniel D. Lance | Smithfield Foods, Inc |
| Bailey's Jewelers | Enviva | Lazy Lizard Travel | Caroline & Jim Stone |
| Wesley E. Barnes | Eriez Manufacturing Co. | Ali & Mike Lubbock | James T. Stone |
| Sandra E. Barnes | Estate of Nancy M. Collins | Jackie & Alan Luria | Gay & Walter Sturgeon |
| Laura T. Barwick | Family Fare, LLC | Katherine Mauney | Mary B. Styers |
| John Baum | Mr. & Mrs. Michael J. Fisher & Family | David C. Mayer | Pamela & Edward Taft |
| Bayer Fund | Susie & Ronald Fleming | McDowell's Pharmacy | The DeLeon Carter Foundation |
| Phyllis Bennett | John Foley | Susan McRae | The Grace Jones Richardson Trust |
| Joan April Blazich | Jane & Parks Freeze | J. Hope & Jerry G. Meadows | Joe C. Tucker |
| Joep Bloem | Frist United Methodist Church | NC Science Museums Grant Program | Estate of Leonard and Joyce Tufts |
| Henry Bose | Gerald & Elizabeth Jennings Foundation | NC Zoological Society | Bobby & Robin Tysinger |
| George-Anne & Matt Brown | Elizabeth & James Glassco | Judith L. & Charles E. Nagy | Steven Ulsas |
| Elaine & Wayne Bunting | George Goodyear | Nancy M. Collins Charitable Lead Trust | UNC at Chapel Hill |
| Burroughs Wellcome | Governors Club | Nicholas B. & Lucy Mayo Boddie Foundation | Claudia Von Grunehaum & Ralph Kennedy |
| Betty M. Byrum | H&R Block of Scotland Neck | Dorcas O'Rourke, DVM | William Werntz |
| John J. Campbell | Halifax County Convention & Visitors Bureau | Dr. R.B. Outland, Jr | WestRock |
| Cannon Foundation, Inc. | Halifax EMC | Pandemonium Aviaries | George C. Whitaker |
| Cindy Chappell | Louise C. Hamilton | Roberta Peters & Steve Parker | Susan B. Whiting |
| Susan Christman & Jim Bass | Midgie Harrell | Robert Partin | Rita Wiggs |
| Rebecca Cohen-Pardo | Hanna K. Herring | Maryanne Pennington & Walter Shackelford | Wildwood Nursery |
| Dr. & Mrs. David D. Collins | Hog Slat | Ona M. Pickens | Ann Lynch & Russ Williams |
| Holly & David Collins | Ella Ann L. & Frank B. Holding Foundation | P. Michele Raffin | Wings Movie, LLC |
| Whit Cotten | Michael J. Humphrey | Valerie & Ottis Reese | Nancy Winslow Real Estate |
| Mari Ellen Davis | IBM International Corp | Kathryn Riding | Kimberly Winslow |
| Laurel Degernes | International Wild Waterfowl Association | Roanoke Electric Cooperative | |
| Don Pancho | Debbie & Joey Josey | Sandy & Keith Rogers | |



Meet the CASSOWARIES

by **DUSTIN FOOTE** | General Curator, Sylvan Heights Bird Park

It is fitting that Sylvan Heights Bird Park's Birds of Paradise aviary opened the same summer the park welcomed a young pair of Southern Cassowaries. Like many of the species in our new aviary, these impressive birds can also be found in the forested regions of Papua New Guinea. If you have heard anything about cassowaries, it most likely has something to do with their title as the "world's most dangerous bird". Their inner toenail can grow to almost 5 inches, and when combined with their powerful kicks, they are not a species to be careless around. However, like most animals, they are not inherently malicious, though I wouldn't want to stand between a male and his chicks! I say male because cassowaries are one of the few species of birds where the female doesn't do much parenting after she lays the egg.

SHBP was careful in their selection of a young pair of cassowaries. It takes several years for them to reach maturity, and in that time our keepers will work on a standard routine so that husbandry and vet care is safe for staff and the birds. Their permanent exhibit, which will break ground this spring, is designed after other cassowary aviaries like San Diego Safari Park and Toledo Zoo. All contact is secondary, with keepers and birds never sharing the same space. Visitors will be

able to get close, but will still have two barriers that will keep everyone safe. Birds included!

We now need your help to create this home for our cassowaries that will allow visitors to safely experience these amazing birds. Please consider making a donation below if you would like to support this project.



A home for cassowaries

Your donation will help create a safe habitat and educational exhibit for the park's Southern Cassowaries.

Name: _____ Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____ Phone _____ E-mail _____

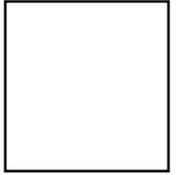
I pledge \$ _____ for Sylvan Heights Bird Park. Bill me One time. Quarterly for one year, beginning _____

Or, my gift of \$ _____ is included. Or, charge \$ _____ to my Visa Master Card Amex Discover

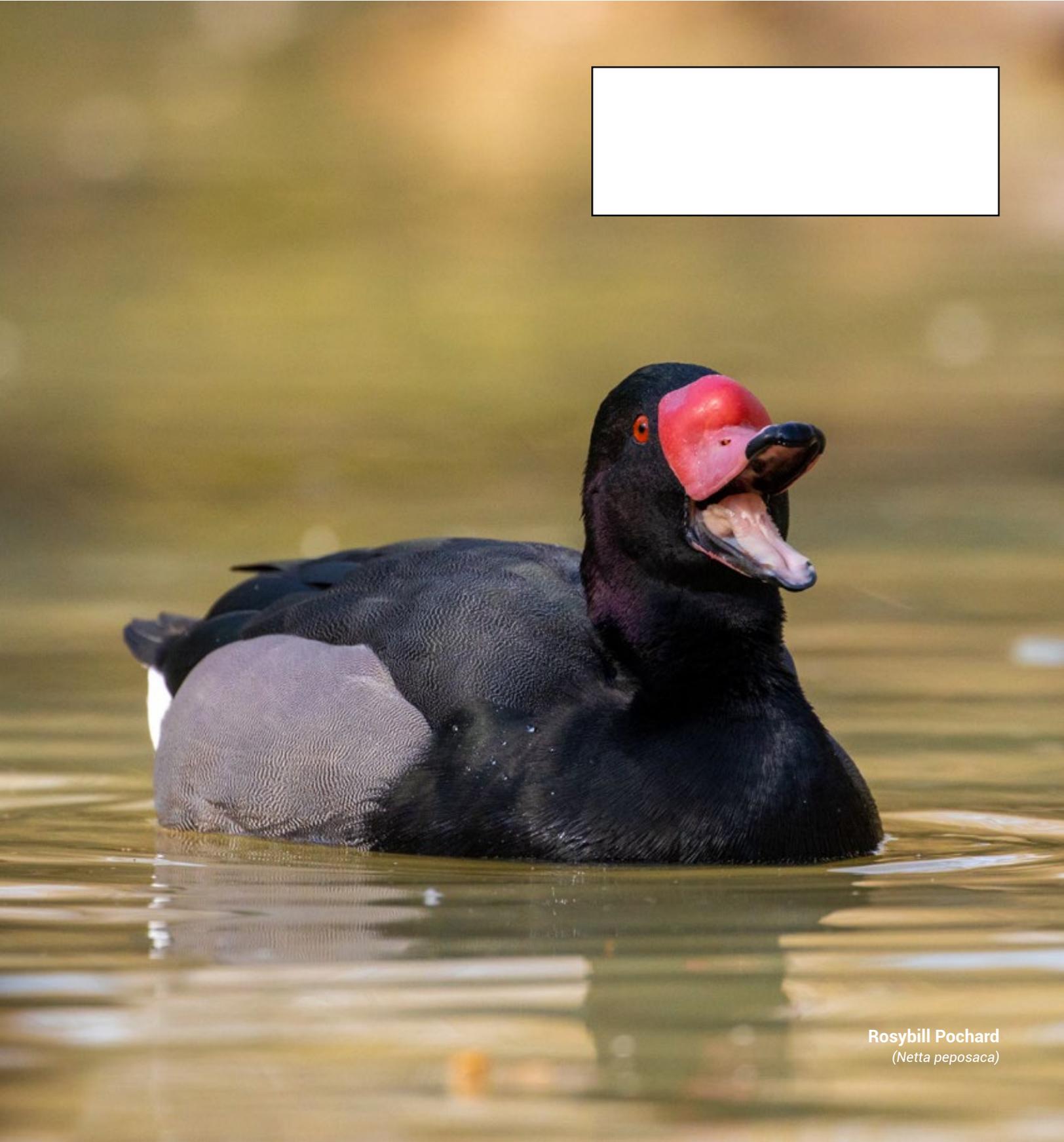
Account # _____ Exp. Date _____ CVN Number _____

Signature _____ Date _____

(Please send to Sylvan Heights Bird Park • PO Box 368 • Scotland Neck, NC 27874) Thank you!



500 Sylvan Heights Park Way • PO Drawer 368 • Scotland Neck, NC 27874



Rosybill Pochard
(*Netta peposaca*)