



ORNITHO

info



Scientific journal for contemporary bird keeping

Mondial 2008 in Hasselt

H. Gyselbrecht

The eye-catcher of the coming show season will undoubtedly be the COM World Championship Mondial 2008 in Hasselt (B). After two consecutive cancellations the Mondial 2008 is the ideal opportunity to show your top birds to the world. So many birds can only be compared at a World championship. Winning one or more medals provides the ultimate confirmation of the quality of your birds and is the pinnacle of the breeding season.

As the main sponsors Versele-Laga and Orlux want to make the **Mondial 2008** a magnificent event together with the organisers. We also count on the huge interest and participation from all breeders for this.

To stand out amongst the other champions your birds will have to be in top condition. Your effort and knowledge as a breeder, supplemented by a correct food, form the basis for success. The breeding of young birds will play an important role in this. This is only possible with a **perfectly balanced feed** that contains all necessary **vitamins, amino acids, minerals** and **trace elements**. There are numerous products that can be used for this within the Orlux-range:

- **MUTA-VIT** is a multivitamin supplement enriched with sulphurous amino acids: essential for a perfect plumage
- **OPTI-BREED** is a mineral blend, enriched with vitamins and amino acids: ensures excellent growth of young birds.



HASSELL BELGIUM



MONDIAL 2008



PRESTIGE

oroPHARMA



NutriBird

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 **VERSELE-LAGA**

A good digestion and balanced intestinal flora ensure an optimal absorption of the nutritional elements offered. Orlux makes two quality products available to you to help your birds in this:

- **BIO-DIGEST** is an intestinal conditioner (based on Fructo-Oligosaccharides): prevent watery droppings and the attachment of pathogens to the intestinal wall.
- **PROBI-ZYME** is a combination of probiotics and digestive enzymes: stimulates the crop and intestinal flora and promotes the digestion.

And we must certainly not forget that all Orlux-egg foods are now also enriched with **nutraceuticals**, to obtain even better breeding results:

- **Pro-Feather:** omega 3 fatty acids and sulphurous amino acids: for top quality plumage
- **Pro-Growth:** essential amino acids, calcium and L-carnitine: for optimal growth of the chicks
- **Florastimul®:** prebiotics: for healthy intestinal flora and a good digestion



We would here like to wish you every success with the breeding season and hope to welcome you to the **Mondial 2008** in Hasselt.



Feeding raptors

Dr. P. Ghysels

In the wild, most raptors are opportunists when it comes to food. They eat both mammals and birds, but also insects, reptiles, fish and carrion. Some breeds have specialised in some prey through years of evolution but in other breeds the food is mainly defined by what they can find in their surroundings. For that reason it is extremely difficult to offer raptors a 'natural diet'. Moreover numerous studies have already shown that more than half of young birds in the wild do not even make it to a year old and that the wrong food is the main cause of death in the wild. It is a considerable challenge for keepers of raptors to do better.

A raptor will usually eat the entire catch, so the muscles and the hair, feathers, bones, intestines and even the contents of the intestines. Account must be taken of all these elements when feeding raptors in captivity. The presence of hair, feathers and bones is necessary for the formation of good pellets. The correct energy content depends on the season and activity of the birds. Vitamins and minerals must be balanced correctly.

A modern falconer will always ensure variation in the type of feed. There is a wide choice of options for this: day-old chicks, quail, pigeon, rat, mouse, guinea pig, ... The use of pure muscle meat is not recommended. Even a combination of one-day old chicks with 20% muscle meat is nutritionally deficient. For reasons of cost, the diet for raptors is usually based on one-day old chicks, supplemented with other types of prey for both breeding birds and hunting birds. Because one-day old chicks contain insufficient

levels of nutrients, this diet must be supplemented with vitamins, minerals and trace elements. As a result, and in consultation with various falconers, Orlux has developed a new supplement for raptors.

Carni-mix is a balanced blend of essential amino acids, vitamins, minerals and trace elements to supplement the daily ration of carnivorous birds. It contains all the necessary nutrients in the right proportions to keep raptors in top condition all year round. **Carni-mix** helps prevent common disorders in raptors caused by an imbalanced diet (e.g. calcium deficiency and vitamin D deficiency). During breeding, **Carni-mix** ensures optimal growth of the young birds, a healthy bone structure with strong bonds, healthy shells and a perfect structure of skin and plumage.



The composition of **Carni-mix** is based on the most recent scientific knowledge. As a result it contains a number of nutraceuticals, which are not present in any other product. β -carotene ensures optimal pigmentation of the legs and if applicable the rhinarium and helps to increase the natural resistance. Florastimul[®] supports good intestinal flora. L-carnitine stimulates the metabolism whereby more energy is available for physical exertion (such as hunting), but also for the growth of the chicks.



How healthy is the consumption of clay?

Dr. G. Werquin

Consuming clay and earth (geophagia) appears in numerous types of animals. In man there are also reports from all over the world of populations that eat clay. The custom was recorded in ancient China, Greece and Egypt. In African supermarkets rolls of clay are next to the sugar and nuts. Geophagia in birds has been studied even less. Parrots and pigeons in particular are known to consume minerals from the soil, yet the habit was also described in gallinaceous birds and songbirds. The pictures of large colonies of macaws and other parrots enjoying the clay rocks along the Amazon River are famous all over the world. The common characteristic of the majority of soil-consuming animals is that they mainly have a vegetarian diet. According to experts eating clay may be healthier than expected.

Scientists are still searching for explanations for the eating earth or clay in birds. It is generally accepted that the three main reasons in birds are: the absorption of grit to ground the seeds, the mineral intake and the absorption of dietary toxins.

A lot of birds consume hard stones that help to ground down the seeds. This is described especially in gallinaceous birds and pigeons. This does not appear to be the main reason in psittacine birds, as a lot of South American parrots choose the finest clay minerals.

Another reason for geophagia is the absorption of essential minerals and trace elements. Sodium is especially scarce in a lot of vegetarian diets. Sodium is important for a range of vital functions including the maintenance of osmotic balance, nerve transmission, etc. In the wild, parrots consume a lot of nutritional elements with extremely low sodium levels. Studies in Peru indicated that birds with sodium deficient diets seek clay rocks

with the highest concentrations of sodium. A lot of plants produce toxic or bitter substances as a natural defence against being eaten by animals. A lot of these toxins are widely known: caffeine, nicotine, tannins, digitalis, cocaine, opium, etc. The consumption of these vegetable chemicals in high concentrations can be fatal for the animal. The majority of these toxins are found in seeds and unripe fruit, major components of a parrot's diet. The absorption of clay protects the birds from these toxins. The clay types investigated bind the majority of vegetable toxins, which stops them from damaging the birds.

Recent research (Donald Brightsmith, Rainforest Expeditions) showed that the absorption of clay in parrots in the Amazon forest is highly seasonal. Contrary to what is generally accepted, the main absorption of clay does not correspond with changes in the climactic seasons (rain season – dry season) or the availability of certain fruits. The main clay absorption falls together with the breeding period, especially the time that the chicks in the nest need to be fed. Studies of the crop contents of baby parrots at 3 to 4 weeks of age show the presence of clay in the majority of the chicks.

Due to the fast growth during the first days/weeks of life, the consumption of food by the young

birds is extremely high, and consequently the consumption of vegetable toxins is also high. As a result, young birds consume more vegetable toxins than adult parrots. It consequently appears that adult parrots feed their chicks abundant quantities of clay during this important stage of life to give them a resistance to the natural toxins in their diet because clay in the diet protects the young chicks from the vegetable toxins and supports the digestion.

Feeding clay is also especially recommended for parrots and parakeets in cage and aviary. Clay not only protects against vegetable toxins, but also toxins produced by fungi. Harmful heavy metals and pesticides are also neutralised by clay. Moreover, clay has a regulating effect on the digestion and can consequently be used as a safe and effective agent for combating diarrhoea.

Orlux Clay Block Amazon River is a natural source of clay, perfectly suitable for parrots and large parakeets.



Piet en Teake Nicolai, Boelenslaan (NL)

Attracting attention



Willy Eeckeloo, Aartrijke (B)

Breeders of:

Colour canaries: white, yellow agate, white opal Red lipochrome and melanin

Colour mutations of ringneck's, Asian parakeets and rosa cockatoo's

Awards:

World Championship: 3x gold, 1x silver, 1x bronze
Holland Championship: 35x gold
Provincial Championship: 85 x gold

Belgian Championship for psittacines 2005: general champion
Author of the book 'Asian parakeets and their mutations'

Their favourites:

- Orlux Eggfood dry Canaries
- Orlux Yel-lux
- Orlux Premium Health Line
- Prestige Premium Canaries

- Orlux Eggfood dry Big Parakeets & Parrots
- Orlux Gold Patée Big Parakeets & Parrots
- Orlux Premium Health Line
- NutriBird A19 High Energy