Husbandry Guidelines For the Bali Mynah *(Leucopsar rothschildi)* Species Survival Plan©

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NB: The manual has never been formally 'published' but instead remains in continual review, with updated material available online via the Avian Scientific Advisory Group website (www.riverbanks.org/aig/baliopen.htm)

V. Nutrition

Feeding Schedule and Feeding Locations

Fresh food should be provided daily, on an *ad libitum* basis. Like most arboreal perching birds, Bali mynahs are not comfortable on the ground, and prefer to eat and drink from elevated platforms. In large, mixed-species exhibits, it is recommended that food be provided in semi-enclosed feeding stations with a trap door to facilitate capture.

Diet and Feeding Interval

Like other members of the family Sturnidae, Bali mynahs are omnivorous. Preferred food items in the wild include seasonally available fruits of native trees and shrubs, a variety of insects and even small reptiles. Historically, they have been maintained in captivity on a multitude of diets, most being a mix of chopped or diced fruit and high-protein items such as dog or trout chow or mynah pellets, along with bits of raw meat (ground beef, Bird-of-Prey diet) and hard boiled egg. Bali mynahs, as well as many other captive birds, are susceptible to hemochromatosis or "iron storage disease" (see Health section). The complete etiology of this disease is unknown. However, one theory proposes that it is associated with high levels of iron in the diet.

Therefore it seems prudent to recommend that the diets for Bali mynahs contain levels of iron no higher than the range recommended for domestic species. Recommended values for poultry are approximately 66.7mg/kg dry weight of diet; it is suggested that this be the target value for the total diet eaten by the birds. Commercially prepared "Low Iron" pellets are available from a number of sources, however not all of these products have iron at or below the levels recommended. Diets should be designed to come as close to these iron levels as possible.

Products such Tropical Bits and Red Apple Jungle have been used successfully over a long period of time for species, such as sturnids and ramphastids, that are susceptible to iron storage disease. The iron content of these (Marion) products is about 105 ppm.

Marion Zoological P.O. Box 875 Wayzata, MN 55391 Manufacturers of: "Red Apple Jungle" "Tropical Bits" Manufacturers of nutritious cricket food	Mazuri Purina Mills, Inc P.O. Box 66812 St. Louis, MO 63166-66812 Manufacturers of nutritious cricket food

Reliable Protein Products, Inc. 70-105 Frank Sinatra Drive Rancho Mirage, CA 92270 Manufacturers of "Softbill Fare"	Zeigler Brothers, Inc. P.O. Box 95 Gardners, PA 17324 Manufacturers of "Bird of Paradise Pellets" Manufacturers of nutritious cricket food
Harrison's Low Iron Maintenance Diet HBD, Inc	Nekton Guenter Enderle Enterprises, Inc 27 West Tarpon Ave Tarpon Springs, FL 34689 (813) 938 1544 FAX 938 1545 Manufacturers of nutritious cricket food Manufacturers of calcium, phosphorus and mineral supplement "MSA"

Live food should be offered in moderate amounts. Outside of the breeding season live food should comprise no more than 5% (by weight) of the whole diet. During the rainy season in Bali there is an abundance of fruits and insects, which plays a role in triggering breeding activity. Hence in captivity the supply of live food can be increased during the breeding season to stimulate nesting. Mealworms are by far the most common live food offered, although crickets, waxworms, corn grubs and more obscure forms of live food have been used successfully. It is advisable that live food items be fed a commercial diet such as Zeigler Cricket Diet, Nekton Cricket Concentrate, Mazuri Hi-Ca Cricket Diet or Marion Cricket Diet for a minimum of 48 hours prior to feeding them to the birds.
When parents are feeding young, it is absolutely necessary that a ready supply of live food is available at all times during daylight hours for the first seven days after hatch. As has been noted already, mealworms are a preferred item. Parents will carry as many as a dozen mealworms up to the nest at a time. Impaction of the chicks due to the hard chitinous exoskeletons of the mealworms has sometimes been cited as a problem in other species, but does not seem to be significant with the Bali mynah.

Recommended Diet

A 100-gram bird requires 25-50 kcal daily to meet maintenance energy requirements, depending on activity level and any additional energy demands (such as cold temperatures). An example of a diet that meets known nutrient needs for one bird includes:
25 grams proprietary softbill pellet (such as one of the abovementioned brands)
15 grams of diced fruit
7 grams of mixed vegetables
5 grams of minced leafy greens

About 1 gram of livefood (such as mealworms, waxworms or crickets) per bird per day. This should be increased when chicks are being reared.

A balanced calcium, phosphorus and mineral supplement, such as Nekton MSA, should also be used according to the manufacturers' instructions.

Hand Rearing
In general hand-rearing is not recommended. However, under certain circumstances the SSP may recommend hand rearing on a case by case basis (eg when a genetically important pair has repeatedly failed to raise its own chicks). Hand raised specimens monitored in this studbook *have bred* and subsequently *raised their own offspring* on several occasions.