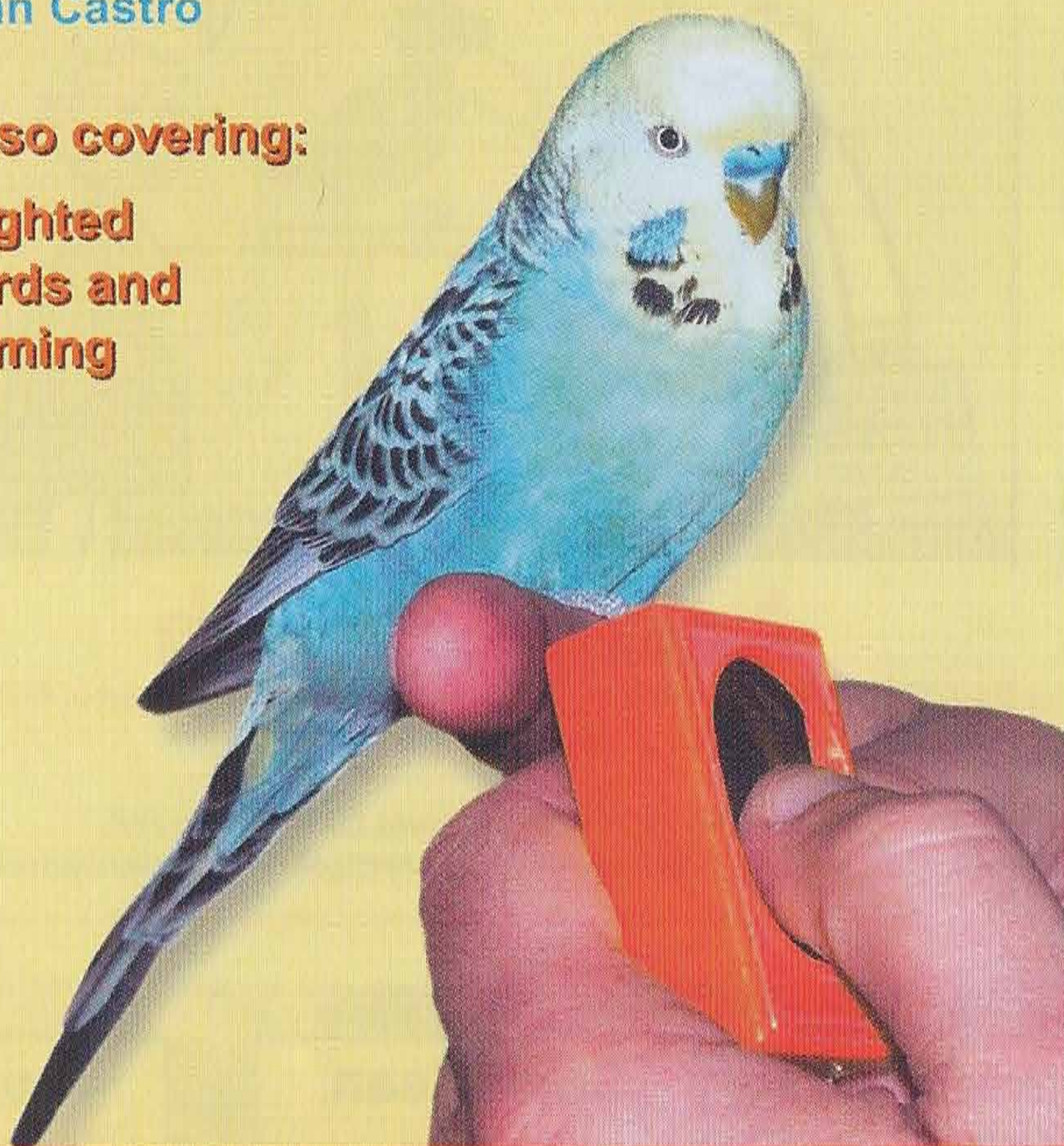


The bird school

Clicker training

Ann Castro

Also covering:
flighted
birds and
taming



for parrots and other birds

Adia

BOOK REVIEW BY DOROTHY SCHWARZ

The Bird School:

Also covering flighted birds and taming for parrots and other birds.

This English edition, originally published in German, makes a welcome addition to any Parrot owner's library. Written in jargon-free language it gives a clear exposition of the

theory of behaviour science and why and how clicker training is one of the easiest, most successful methods to socialize and train our captive parrots using modern non-punitive methods. Ann Castro is a

husbandry. Castro shows both in the text and with good illustrations how parent-reared birds are equally adept at becoming well socialised birds in the home.

One of Ann Castro's aims is to focus on the well being of the bird and treating/keeping it in a respectful and loving manner that allows the bird to remain being a bird. She says, "I am very much a proponent of species appropriate keeping. And my training takes this into account and works with birds that are so kept." She demonstrates with text and pictures how the training works with flighted birds, with birds kept in pairs and even flock situations.

Clicker training. Is it an ancient art?

384 - 322 BC Aristotle

Perhaps Aristotle was the first "Clicker trainer at heart". His law of contiguity states that: "When two things commonly occur together, the appearance of one will bring the other to mind." A perfect description of what a conditioned clicker does.

Her chapter on teaching the up command gives a precise breakdown of this complicated behaviour into the required small steps. The up command is essential if your pet parrot is to be fully integrated into the household. As an avid reader of training manuals myself, I find

that this one is one of the clearest and easiest to follow. The photographs match the text closely and help the trainer visualize what is happening. So often a text describes an activity but the illustration nothing. There are also included good examples training plans and a training diary that you can adapt for you own purposes.

Ann has added a chapter on taming which is particularly useful for rehomes and parent raised birds. The latter she has found to be preferable over (commercially) hand raised birds, who often exhibit more behavioural issues (screaming, biting, plucking) when reaching sexual maturity than parent raised birds, who appear to grow up more emotionally stable. (This insight comes from her experience in rescue and consulting for problem behaviours).

Castro has carefully described the theory of behaviour science but the bulk of her chapters consist in step by step instructions how to train for simple necessary behaviours. With the ample well-chosen illustrations, the book is a total joy to read.

Resources

The book can be ordered from www.amazon.com for 24.95 Euros plus shipping or from Ann Castro's website: www.thebirdschool.org