

# **A magnificent collection of animals for private hobby**

## **A visit to Stal Zegwaard**

**By: Nico van Benten and Elly Vogelaar**

**In the area between Delft and Rijswijk,  
Holland, in a serene scene  
amongst greenhouses,  
Zegwaard Stable is situated.**



**Only few are allowed entrance  
to this private territory, on which are  
mostly stables with a large number of horses.**

**However, our interest lays in the smaller things around there, for instance the superb collection of various poultry and waterfowl. 12 Men are around each day feeding, grooming and nursing the animals, managed by Rob, who is guiding our tour today.**

Built against the walls of the grand stables there are several pigeoncotes, in which all kinds of pigeons nest, homers as well, although they are kept out as much as possible. Copper, red and yellow (barless) South German White Tails tinker about the yard; a rather rare pigeon in the Netherlands, which is very welcome here as they get rid of the cobwebs while flying around in the stables.

It is striking that these free-flying White Tails hardly ever get caught by birds of prey, foxes or other predators; this must be because they are a bit shy and very alert. While walking along the yard towards the next stable we suddenly caught eyes with a Nuremberg Lark, another beautiful pigeon breed, walking free at the ridge of the tiled roof!





The presence here, of this Nuremberg Lark, by pigeon breeders often jested the Nuremberg Shyly, proves that his shy character enables him to do so. Predators cause a lot of trouble at Stal Zegwaard. One has to be constantly at one's guard and safely lock away all animals at night time. Nothing is safe; even some larger poultry like turkey and peacock were slaughtered by a fox. Pullets are not at all safe, not even during daytime; the very crows have the nerve to snatch such a little one

right out of the grass! That's why the Barnevelder and Wyandotte mother hens have to stay inside with their little chicks. Such a pity, for them as well as for us; nothing can beat the sight of a mother-hen proudly parading around the yard with her own chicks. While admiring the Barnevelder chicks, it strikes our eyes that there must have been some spontaneous crossing between the diverse breeds. No wonder, as they all walk around free here, neither selection nor pure bred have high priority, though the parent stock once was purchased as high quality animals. We even notice that none wear footrings, such meaning membership of clubs and unions. Obviously the only principle here is the enjoyment of the beauty of the animals.

We walk on, towards a territorial ditch in which a pair of Coscoroba swans are swimming in that stately manner only swans can do. Rob explains that a dam will be built soon, so the water level can be higher.



A fountain installation will provide better watercirculation.

***This is so remarkable, concerning all animals that are kept here! First class material is purchased, they are optimal looked after and everything is***

***done to bring the circumstances of keeping and housing up to the highest required level.***

An enormous L-shaped aviary catches our attention because of the multi-coloured animals that fly, walk and swim around. One leg contains a watergarden



with all kinds of geese and ducks; the cornerpiece is a large pigeon-house with German Modena's and the other leg is the domain of bantams and pheasants, with at the top end a private pool for some redcheek turtles. Once again it is

obvious that everything purchased is for pleasure and a feast for the eye; Ruddy Ducks with their azure beaks, Red-crested Pochards with their amazing heads and Red-Breasted Mergander with those refined markings; Barnacle geese and little Red-breasted geese, Golden Pheasants and Holland Bantams, all together too numerous to mention.



**It must have been too difficult to choose 'the best' colour Modena, as in fact all colours were gathered together here!**



**Black Swans in all there proudness**



**Right:  
Barnevelder rooster**



**Below:  
Two White Wyandotte mother-  
hens with there chickens**



## The utmost surprise are the aviaries of the parrots

Beautiful, large aviaries with plenty of space for flying and all sorts of climbing and breeding facilities, all dressed up with green plants or treetrunks, carefully attuned to the desires of the different species of Cockatoo, Macaw and Amazon parrots.

**Right:**  
Rose-breasted or Galah Cockatoo  
(*Eolophus r. roseicapillus*).



**Left and below:**  
Redtailed Black Cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus magnificus*)





Left:  
Hyacinth Macaw (*Anodorhynchus hyacinthinus*).

Below:  
Red-lored Amazone parrot (*Amazona autumnalis autumnalis*).





**Greenwing Macaw enjoying the “rain” from the sprinkler.**



Neither effort nor expense is spared to create a as much as possible true to life habitat for these animals. Even a devised sprinkler is installed high above the aviaries, which creates a soft rain twice a day; a true delight, especially for the Macaw's.

The manager of Zegwaard Stable, with his favourite White Crested Cockatoo (*Cacatua alba*).



It is obvious that the 17 pairs of parrots feel happy, as in almost every nest there are eggs or youngsters. Parrots breed 28 days on the average and the nestlings have to be fed by their parents for some 14 weeks. The offspring is mostly sold to Zoo's.



## Horses and Mini's

**Left:**

**"Home-made" crossbred from USA horse and German mare**



**Below:**

**Some of the last Shetlanders at Stal Zegwaard**



During the last 10 years Stal Zegwaard specialised in stockbreeding Shetland Pony, American Miniature Horse, Bergmann Miniature Horse, and the number one mini, the Falabella. In the USA however the breeding of minihorses is at a much higher level. With a slight difference; in the Netherlands we select more on the pace, whilst in the USA the 'stand' is most important. Minihorses have their own stud-book in Holland, but the Falabella's only have a so called 'daughter stud-book' here; the real stud-book is in Argentina. Each Falabella foal which is born here, has his DNA and photograph sent over to Argentina. If everything is correct you will receive a certificate with signature from Signora Falabella, the keeper of the Stud-book. She has reached the honourable age of ninety now, but still breeds her own Falabella's. Mister Zegwaard has met her in person once. The breeding of these little horses is mostly aimed at colour; the more variation in colour the better, whilst colour and markings find the most expression when shorn. Each horse that is born here, at Stal Zegwaard, gets a passport and a chip.



**Left:**

**American Minihorses, mare and foal, shoulder height of 35 inch maximum.**

**Below: "Bergman" stockbook  
Minihorse with foal.**

**Below:  
"Bergman stockbook" minihorse, shoulder  
height 90 cm.**



**Below right: View of the "maternity ward" of the KWPN horses.**

**Foal KWPN**



The gestation period of a mare is 11 months and at birth the whole bag of tricks can go wrong. So when their time is due, the pregnant mares are supplied with a censorbelt, which will automatically give a signal when parturition is started; at first an acoustic sign in the stables, followed by a telephone call to the mobile of Rob Mulder, the manager.

And as speaking of Rob: he is 27 years old and working at Stal Zegwaard for 6 years now, following on a trainee-job during his education at 'Groene Delta College' (nowadays Wellant College). He lives on the territory in a caravan, but his house will be ready soon. As a visitor with a big love for animals, one is apt to sigh that he must have the most wonderful job in the world; this place almost being as paradise! Rob himself is a bit more down-to-earth; in fact he must be available 7 days a week, with sometimes long working ours, specially during April and July when the horses foal. He loves his job though, as there is a lot of freedom as well, and his job also involves vary specialised things, as the attending of the horses to the show-jumping, or to the International Judging of Mini-horses in Denmark this year in August.

The looking after and feeding of the different animals is equally shared by all of them, so that each employee is 'all-round'. Rob has no preference, he says, but the horses are just a little bit favourite.



There are two different branches, the horses which are trained for dressage, and the minihorses, which are kept for pleasure and children's play mate. The tour of the stables is impressive; everything so spacious and very neat, all aimed at the well-being of the horses. What about a solarium for the horses! In spite of the heat-wave, the temperature inside is comfortable. We already saw many mini's grazing outside with their foals, but inside

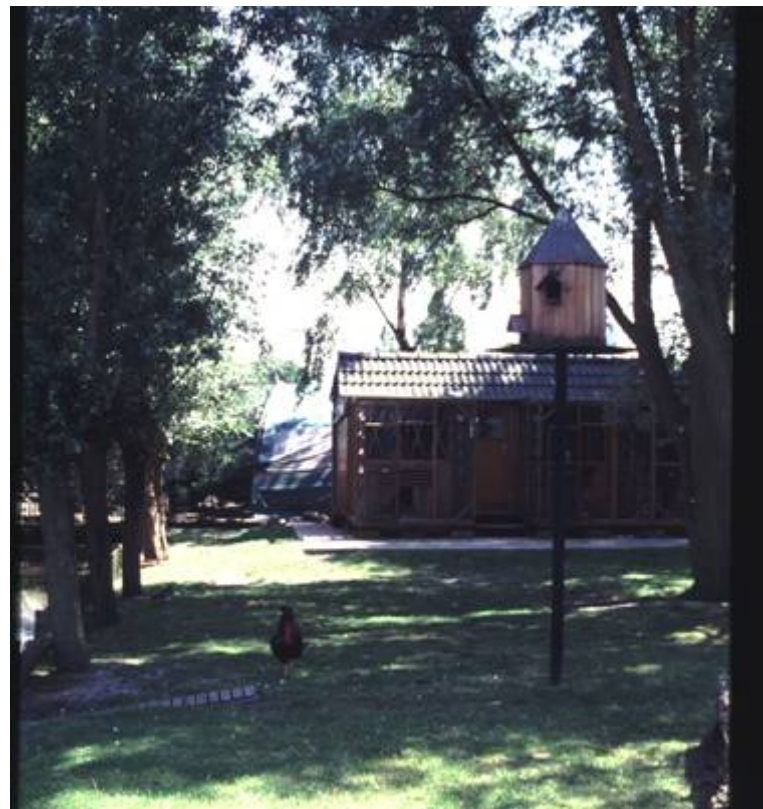
there are plenty more, mostly horses, and a lot of them with foals as well. The mares are remarkably placid and benevolently let us come so very close to take pictures of their little ones, an all over mollifying look, such an innocent bundle of awkward folded legs.



**In the front a dapple-grey KWPN mare.**

Stal Zegwaard owns two registered stallions: UB40 and Kimberly; something to be very proud of, as there is a lot involved before a stallion is passed registration! During 70 days the horse is tested at various capacities, and the first year after passing, his offspring has to be approved by the committee.

The man behind Stal Zegwaard is mister Wim Zegwaard, for years and years sympathizer with de Avicultura exhibition and always present with his Minihorses and other animals from his stable. Regarding to the many pleasant chats we use to have, it is obvious that Mister Zegwaard is a real animal lover, a man who procures animals, such as pigeons, poultry and waterfowl, from pure enthusiasm, always searching to make contact with the breeders for buying the latest new colours. It was a remarkable experience to be allowed to visit his 'Stal' and we appreciate it very much that he made story and pictures exclusively available for our new magazine Aviculture Europe.



*With our regards to Rob Mulder, for his patient and extensive replies to our inexperienced questions.*

<http://www.stalzegwaard.nl/>

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#### **STAL ZEGWAARD**

Stable Zegwaard is one of the larger stud-farms in Europe in the field of breeding minihorses in a professional way and in particular minihorses with the airs and looks of the Arabian horse. On this moment there are 180 minihorses on hand at Stal Zegwaard, which includes Falabella, Appaloosa, Bergmann Miniature, Shetland Pony's & American Miniature. Due to an extended selection program all breeds are top level quality and are sold and/or hired out all over the world. The Stal Zegwaard minihorses originate from world's best bloodstock and studfarms. Besides stockbreeding, Stal Zegwaard offers you the opportunity to rent an approved studhorse. Also for advice, preparing for shows and buying your own minihorse mare, at Stal Zegwaard you come at the right shop.