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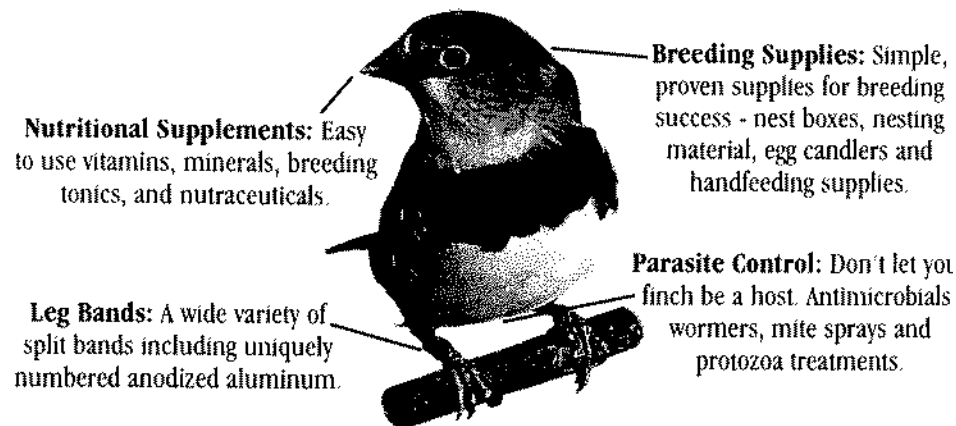
Special Points of Interest:

- ◆ Special Election Ballot on page 25
- ◆ Dietary Requirements of Waxbills (*Ian Hinze*)
- ◆ Aviary Predators, Part 2 (*Billy Cochran*)
- ◆ Avian Conversations (*Tom Riggs & Ross Bishop*)
- ◆ Breeding with the Seasons (*James Casey*)

Coming Next Month

- ◆ Pekin Robins (*Sally Huntington*)

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## The NFSS Bulletin

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Volume 3, May/June	May 1st	June 1st
Volume 4, July/August	July 1st	August 1st
Volume 5, September/October	September 1st	October 1st
Volume 6, November/December	November 1st	December 1st

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## From the Editor

First I want to tell you to be sure to enter the NFSS Raffle. There are some great prizes being offered and your support is both needed and appreciated. See the center of the bulletin for details and tickets.

Please welcome Annette Howard as the new FinchShop Manager. That being an appointed position, she was overwhelmingly approved by the NFSS Board of Officers and we're all very pleased that she has committed her time and effort toward this endeavor.

A Special Election was held on April 15, 2000 for Vice President of Region 7, Caribbean, with ballots mailed to all NFSS members residing in that region. Ballots had to be postmarked by April 29th to comply with the election deadline. Julio Mateo, pro-tem Region 7 VP, has been officially elected to the NFSS Board of Directors to fill this position. Two votes received were for a non-NFSS member. CONGRATULATIONS JULIO MATEO!

Another Special Election is being held and is open to the general membership. The position in question is NFSS Treasurer and the sole nominee is Bobbi Keenan. Be sure to get your ballots in by July 20th. Please see page 25 for the ballot and more details.

Two corrections from the last issue involving show judges. Julie Duimstra was listed twice as judge when she was, in fact, apprentice judge. The actual judges for the shows in question were as follows:

11/6/99	Finch Society of San Diego	William Parlee
11/27/99	Santa Clara Valley	Clarence Culwell

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**THE DIETARY REQUIREMENTS  
OF CAPTIVE WAXBILLS**

Ian Hinze, Whitefield, Manchester, England

I have penned the following from a British perspective, i.e. allowing the seasons experienced in my country to determine how I go about feeding my birds. Nevertheless, the American aviculturist will be able to adapt my recommendations to suit his own climatic conditions.

**The Equilateral Triangle**

It may seem patronizingly obvious when I say that to provide our captive birds with an environment as near as possible to that in the wild is the surest way to keep them healthy, increase their longevity and have regular breeding successes. The fact that so many keepers fail in at least one, or even all, of these matters is proof enough that observations in the wild are frequently going unheeded.

I have written many times on the necessity of keeping waxbills in a warm, draught-free environment of at least 15 degrees Celsius for most species (and even higher for others) and also the importance of providing them with a minimum of 12 hours of "daylight" (via a dimmer unit). These two commodities go hand in hand with a third one of extreme importance, correct feeding. Together they should be viewed as the sides of an equilateral triangle with the base, say, labeled "Feeding", the left side labeled "Temperature" and the right side labeled "Lighting" (inside the triangle we could write "Equals correct husbandry"). Take just one of these sides away, or have one weakened in some way, and the whole structure will eventually collapse. All are completely dependent on one another and this should never be forgotten.

Assuming that the reader does provide his birds with the correct temperature and lighting, I would like to concentrate on the base of our triangle, "Feeding". Waxbills, excluding the avadavats of Asia, all hail from Africa and, being estrildid finches, are closely related to the grassfinches of Australia. Indeed, for the purpose of this article, it would help if we were to consider all the waxbills encountered in American aviculture as "African grassfinches", for therein lies the biggest clue to their dietary requirements.

**Grass Dependency**

The majority of waxbills found in captivity are heavily dependent on grass. They deliberately seek it out to feed from it (the seeds and young succulent shoots), they hide in it (feeding off seeds that have fallen to the ground means they are often at liberty to eat while camouflaged from many poten-

tial predators) and the long leaves of grass are used in nest construction. For many species, if there were no grass they wouldn't exist.

Fundamental to the grass's growth is good light, it cannot survive in the deep shade of a forest. Some species of waxbill live on the forest edge, so they can retreat into the trees at the first sign of danger, and even breed in them, but, like their cousins who prefer/have to feed in the open, they, too, need the grass's seeds to survive.

One of the reasons finches, and I use the term in its collective sense thereby including the waxbills and grassfinches, are so popular in aviculture is that they are easy to feed. After all, one only needs to go down to the local pet-store, or order from a specialist supplier if preferred, to receive a bag or sack of a mixed collection of grass seeds of varying sizes which, we are reliably informed, are essential for our birds' well-being - and I've just stated how much waxbills are heavily tied to the grass and its seeds. Field-guides too, in the main, are quick to point out that these types of birds are regularly observed feeding primarily on grass seeds. But is this really all there is to it? Let's take a deeper look!

Grasses do not only spread themselves by means of seeds. They put out horizontal stems along the surface of the ground and each joint is able to sprout leaves and roots. These roots are fibrous and grow so thick that a matted tangle is created, extending for several centimeters below the surface, which prevents the plant from blowing away. When rain eventually falls, green leaves are produced in only a day or so. Why is this of importance to waxbills? Well, for one thing it means that, not only is there always a regular supply of seeds to be had, but also, and of vital importance at breeding time, the miniature jungle created by the tangled roots, matted stems and clumps of growing leaves harbors its own community of tiny inhabitants - aphids, bugs and beetles!

To survive, however, the grass and its tiny animal community need water, and this comes with the rains. As aviculturists we don't need to know at what times of the year these rains occur in Africa, but we should note the effect they have on the wild populations of waxbills because its all connected with the base of our triangle again - "Feeding".

The grass undergoes a remarkable transition immediately during and after rainfall. Shoots sprout forth in no time, followed by fresh ripe and half-ripe seeds abounding everywhere. Insects are stirred into action - and so are the waxbills. The waxbills choose just after the rains to breed. Instinct tells them that the grass is now pliable, nests won't be washed out - and food of the right kind is abundant!

The hard seeds (these are unlikely ever to be as hard as the commercial kiln-dried type) are neglected, instead, for the ripe and half-ripe ones. The insects, also stirred into breeding action, are everywhere and easy pickings for a growing family of hungry nestlings. Protein is essential for the rapid healthy growth of the chicks and so the parents take it in the quick and easily assimilated form that only a soft-bodied insect can provide, and which they can regurgitate into their offspring within an extremely short time for optimum results. What's more, the chicks are in fact getting two meals for the price of one because in the insect's gut will inevitably be some undigested plant matter. Talk about a meal of meat and veg!

#### Seasonal dietary requirements

What we learn from all of this is that there are really two different types of dietary requirements for our waxbills (which can be applied to all finches in actual fact) - an existence or daily staple diet (sometimes written of as an austere diet) and a richer breeding diet. Ordinarily these diets, due to the rainy seasons, would always be separate for the wild bird, but in aviculture there is a tendency to prolong the breeding period artificially and thereby reap the benefits of more young being bred. While I can see that these "benefits" are certainly most welcome to the aviculturist, what about the birds themselves?! Our aim should be to produce healthy breeding stock from other healthy breeding stock and not have them continually perpetuating to such an extent that our reward for their generosity is to allow them to die of exhaustion.

I am not a qualified nutritionist and, therefore, am unable to go into details of why my feeding methods are successful, only that they are! The nutritionist could take all the different foods that I am going to recommend, analyze them, and then say whether or not they are deficient in a certain mineral or trace element, etc., and which foods help to counter-balance this deficiency. What I do know, as a good avian chemist friend is quick to tell me, is that the provision of vitamins and proteins, etc., through supplements, is not an exact science. New findings are frequent, or so they seem, and the so-called experts cannot always agree among themselves as to the best doses to supply. What I have done is that which I referred to right at the outset of this article - I have read and continue to read all I can on the environment that the wild bird is found in. By doing this one comes to understand the real requirements of those we possess in captivity.

Yes, the bag or sack of seeds one regularly acquires for one's birds is essential. But this staple fare must be of the highest quality. I invariably find that the cheaper seeds (usually sold in pet-stores, at least in Britain) are of a grossly inferior quality to those one orders from the large established seed



merchants that are concerned solely with birds, either wild or captive but usually catering for both. Such seed is quality controlled to a high standard with all the dust and other potentially harmful elements being mechanically removed.

A quality staple seed mixture should consist of, primarily, mixed white, yellow and panicum millets and small canary seed. This is usually weighed out in equal parts before being bagged by the supplier which means, rightly, that the millets combined outweigh the canary seed. This is obvious, of course, but I point it out to question why some mixtures may have rather too much canary seed in them!

Like Goodwin, in his monumental and unsurpassed classic work *Estrildid finches of the world*, I, too, am perplexed as to why so many seed suppliers put red millet in their mixtures for waxbills. Unfortunately, such mixtures are sold as 'Foreign Finch Seed', thereby inferring that the contents are suitable for all foreign finches, whereas, in reality, neither Goodwin or myself, nor a legion of other waxbill enthusiasts, have ever seen a single waxbill eat it. Unless one purchases one's seeds separately to mix together later then one is paying over the odds, because the red millet is nothing but unnecessary ballast (and may even be positively harmful)! To the staple seed diet one can add a little niger and Japanese millet occasionally, unless one keeps the likes of Dybowski's Twinspots (*Euschistospiza dybowskii*), in which case the Japanese millet should be considerably increased and offered regularly.

As can be deduced by what we know of the wild waxbill, or rather the terrain in which it lives, some insects are likely (but not always) to be taken and, likewise, throughout the year livefood should always be provided. This can be by way of a few small white-skinned mealworms, waxworms, whiteworm (*Enchytraea*), baby woodlice and fruit-flies and their larvae. If one has access to termites and the larvae of ants and their eggs (the pupae actually), then by all means supply these.

I have had tremendous success in breeding the Blacked-rumped Waxbill (*Estrilda troglodytes*), known also as the red-eared waxbill, without the use of livefood. Instead of livefood I use the famous Dutch eggfood *Cè-Dé*. I have found the Black-rumped to be one of the easiest of all waxbills to breed on inanimate food. The staple seed mixture, the livefood and the eggfood, plus an occasional offering of greenfood, i.e. grated carrot, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, etc., is the only food I provide throughout the non-breeding season (some breeders call this the "rest season", which is probably a better phrase if it encourages keepers to give their birds a rest!) which, for my birds, runs from around January to March/April. To aid in

the digestion of their food I provide baked poultry egg-shells, limestone, oystershell and cuttlefish all crushed and mixed together. I do not provide mineralized grit which can be positively lethal.

Around March/April (spring), with the longer and warmer hours of natural daylight filtering through the birdroom windows, I don't have to do anything to the diet to see that the birds are keen to breed. However, for a successful outcome to all the courtship endeavors, the diet has to be changed considerably. Taking note of what happens after the rains in Africa, here in England I go hunting - for grass seeds! Top of my list is annual meadow grass (*Poa annua*). It is a native annual commonly found throughout Britain on wasteland, roadsides, fields, gardens and even cracks in pavements. It is also found in lawns where it continually re-seeds itself. It reaches up to 30 cm in height and flowers all year round. Other favorites are rough meadow grass (*P. trivialis*), narrow-leaved meadow grass (*P. angustifolia*), smooth meadow grass (*P. pratensis*), common knot-grass (*Polygonum aviculare*), and perennial rye grass (*Lolium perenne*). Besides these seeding grasses, a list which is by no means complete, I am always on the look-out for the aviculturist's favorite weed, chickweed (*Stellaria media*).

I collect handfuls of the above seeds on the stalk and place them on the birdroom floor, stand them upright in the corners, or hang them in bunches from the ceiling. At the same time I increase the livefood daily. While I still continue feeding the staple seeds every day along with the eggfood, it is the increase in livefood, and particularly the increase in the wild seeding grasses, that acts as the catalyst to getting the birds to go down to breed!

The dexterity with which the typical Estrilda waxbills, especially, perform in order to extricate the fresh milky green seeds is a sight to behold. Only the tit family, plus, to a lesser extent, the likes of the goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*), which frequently holds its food underfoot, can match their agility.

#### Summary

We have seen how the wild waxbill is very much dependent on grass in all aspects of its life and that we can utilize this knowledge by providing our birds, when in season, with some of the many different native wild seeds that we may formerly have taken for granted. We have also learnt the importance of certain livefood for our birds, substitutes for the type of insects that the waxbills would seek out in the grass. Providing one does their utmost to create a similar environment and feeding regimen to that of the wild counterpart then there should be absolutely no need to use vitamin supplements. The vitamins, minerals and trace elements found in the natural foods under consideration, not to mention the extra amounts in commer-

cialized eggfood, should prove to be all that is required. If one still feels the need to use a supplement, then at least use it sparingly. An overdose is as bad, if not worse, as an underdose. Above all, remember the equilateral triangle and the interdependency of all of its sides. The dietary requirements of waxbills, and indeed that of all birds for that matter, is only one aspect.

Ian Hinze

## Message from the President

Have you bought your raffle tickets yet? I would hope by now most of the people who want to win either a Pair of Forbes Parrot Finches, Painted Fire Tails, or Japanese Society Finches have their tickets in hand and are just waiting for the drawing. If not, turn to the raffle tickets and either tear them out or make copies and send them in with your money for the drawing to be held on July 1st, 2000. Kerri has worked very hard to make this a success. Let's all try to support her in this.

Most of you know that the region 7 VP spot was open following the election. Julio Mateo was the nominee for that region. Since only the members from region 7 can vote for the VP for that region, a special ballot was sent to only those members whose membership was current as of the mailing of the ballot. Congratulations to Julio Mateo and welcome as a voted member of the Board.

The Treasurer position was also open following the election for lack of a nominee. Bobbie Keenan stepped in to perform the duties of Treasurer until an election could be held. Please look for the ballot elsewhere in this issue. We also have had a change of FinchShop Manager. Julie Duimstra has been the FinchShop manager for longer than she ever intended. I want to thank her for all her dedication and hard work over the past several years. The new FinchShop Manager is Annette Howard. Annette is also the NFSS Executive Secretary. I am very pleased to have her move into this position and look forward to working with her for many years to come. By the time you read this we will have completed the 2nd Quarter Meeting. Please look for the minutes in the next issue. **BUY THOSE RAFFLE TICKETS.**

Dale Laird, President, NFSS

## Securing your Aviary from Predators (Part 2)

Billy Cochran

In this article, I will be discussing how to secure your outdoor aviary from predators. There will be ideas for you to use as you build your new outdoor aviary or to secure your existing outdoor aviary. I have talked to several breeders, not just finch and softbill breeders, but parrot and bird breeders in general, with outdoor aviaries, to see what techniques they have employed over the years. Also, I will be including a section on how I built my new outdoor aviary. I think I will start from the ground and work my way up.

**The Aviary Floor.** I think this is one of and if not the most important part. I am part of a 38-member club called the Southeast Bird Fancier Club. One of the topics we have discussed is outdoor aviaries. Several good suggestions were made about what to use for the aviary floor, such as, the use of brick pavers. By using pavers, vermin should not be able to push up through the bricks once they have dug underneath the foundation. If you like the idea of using pavers but you want more of a natural look just spread some dirt between the spaces of the pavers. Then, throw some grass or bird seed out, which should grow in the crevices of the pavers. Not only will brick pavers keep out vermin; they are easily cleaned by just hosing them off, and are visually pleasing.

Another suggestion is using a concrete slab for the floor and foundation. This would work well, as I know of nothing that can dig its way through concrete. Concrete is easily cleaned and is done so in the same manner as the brick pavers. Also, this will probably outlast the frame of the aviary which will rot (that is if its untreated wood).

I like the natural look of earth and grass, not only do I like it, the birds like it. Earth has natural minerals that the birds have access to and the best thing is its free. It also acts like grit, in which it helps grind up food in the bird's gizzard. If you feel like this will be unhealthy for your birds, because of exposure to wild animals, etc., then you could dig up the first few inches of earth and let the new exposed ground be your foundation. You can also have dirt brought in as a replacement. You can secure the aviary by placing wire

mesh directly on the ground or place it a few inches below ground. The mesh does not have to cover the entire floor of the aviary, but it wouldn't hurt. If that isn't feasible, then lay the wire mesh a few feet out from the aviary foundation. I am not certain of the life span of the wire mesh once under the ground, as corrosion will eventually take over and weaken the wire. By using wire mesh in this manner, it will help in preventing vermin from entering the aviary from underneath.

Why not combine the idea of concrete and earth flooring. Not only will this give you that natural look, but will help in protecting from vermin. To do this, all you have to do is pour a concrete foundation measuring 3-5 inches in thickness. Once this has dried, pour some dirt on top of the new concrete base. Before pouring the concrete, you will have to decide if you want the concrete above ground or below ground. Either way will be fine. Now, you have the look and the security.

#### The Foundation

The foundation of the aviary can be made of several things, such as pre-treated wood, concrete blocks, metal framing or concrete footings (rat walls). By only using pre-treated wood that is just laid directly on the ground, vermin can simply dig a tunnel into your aviary. If you have a concrete floor or rat walls, the wood can be secured into the concrete and prevent the vermin from tunneling into your aviary. In the land down under, Australia, several breeders use something called rat walls. Rat walls are simply, concrete footings that are poured several inches below and above the ground. This should help prevent vermin from tunneling into the aviary. In my existing outdoor aviary, I have the wood lying directly on the ground. But, I have the wire mesh overhanging about 5 inches. There, you dig a trench deep enough to place the overhanging wire mesh into. Then, cover the mesh with the dirt. This particular aviary has been in place for 3 years and has yet had a vermin invasion. This could mean that the vermin do not want in the aviary or that this technique actually works.

In my new aviary, I used concrete cinder blocks and concrete footings for my foundation. This aviary measures 10'x18'x7'. The con-

crete footings are several inches below the surface. On top of the cinder blocks is one layer of cap blocks. Cap blocks are solid concrete blocks that measure 4 inches high and are the same length and width as the cinder blocks. Where this aviary is placed, my yard is very uneven and I wanted to have at least one row of block showing above ground. So, at the lowest part of the aviary foundation, it is three blocks plus one cap block high and at the highest point of the foundation, it is one block plus one cap block high. As you have read, I have varying amounts of foundation under or above ground. In some areas, the foundation measures 10 inches below ground and in other areas, the foundation measures 5 inches below ground. I found some old wire mesh lying around, so I used this on the floor of the aviary. I dug up the grass around the inside parameter of the aviary and laid down the 3 ft width sheets of wire mesh. Then, I placed the grass back in place. I hope this keeps out those vermin!! We'll see.

A most effective, but extreme measure of securing your aviary is using an electric fence consisting of 2 strands of hot wire, just above the ground. This should zap those slithering pains in the rear, or what you probably call snakes. You can also place the hot wires about 3 ft off the ground, and encasing the parameter to protect against the larger vermin. Poison and traps are also used around the outside parameters, but you must make sure your household pets, such as dogs and cats, cannot get in contact with this stuff. Also, please be sure to keep children away from the most recently discussed techniques.

#### The Aviary Frame

By, using only one layer of  $\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2}$  inch wire mesh is fine, but are your birds safe? There could be raccoons, cats, or opossums lurking around and an unsuspecting bird, which is just sunbathing and not paying attention to its surroundings, could have feathers or limbs bitten or ripped off by a predator. Not only that, mice and maybe snakes can squeeze their way through this sized mesh. You say, "why don't you just use  $\frac{1}{4} \times \frac{1}{4}$  mesh." Well, I have heard folks talking about mice getting through mesh of that size. I have always heard if a mouse or snake can get its head through, then it can fit its whole body through. One solution in keeping those mice or snakes

out, is to place 2 ft metal flashing around the bottom outside or inside of the aviary. This can help deter those snakes from slithering in, or those mice from crawling through. By the way, you could also place metal flashing below ground, around the foundation of the aviary. This would help keep vermin from digging their way into the aviary. Another solution is to use two layers of wire mesh. Saying that the aviary frame is 2x4, you can place one layer of mesh on one side of the stud and the other layer of mesh on the opposite side. By doing this, the raccoon, cat, or opossum cannot grab at that resting bird. It acts as a double barrier between the birds and the outside world. This is an important factor when you have birds that like to hang on the sides, such as parrots or mousebirds. Also, if your problem makers are bees, wasp, hornets, etc., you can use door screen on your aviary. You can apply this by simply stapling the screen to the aviary frame. I would suggest not using this screen as the only barrier between your birds and the outside, because the screen is easily ripped. I wished I had known about this technique a few years back, because I had a problem with yellow jackets getting into the birds' egg food. The yellow jackets never harmed the birds. Luckily, I was patient enough to watch and follow them back to their hive/nest and which I poured gasoline on it. Then, I set it on fire. I would not try this without having running water handy or I would not do this on a windy day as flames can spread very quickly.

As explained in Part 1 of my article, I cut 2-3 inch strips of mesh and made into roughly a 90-degree angle and stapled this into every corner of the aviary. Whether it is where the frame meets a building, where the roof and walls meet, or on the corners of where the mesh is stapled to the studs. Heck, everywhere. If you can pass your pinkie finger through it, it needs to be covered up. Any opening to the outside needs to be covered, if not by mesh then something.

Some of these techniques are costly, but you must weigh your options. Ask yourself, "do I need to buy those extra of gouldians or could I use that money to help secure the stock I already have?" I must stress that the techniques discussed, in this article, are from breeders' experiences. Some techniques have been used for years, while others have been recently constructed. I am sure there will be faults found in some of the techniques, but what may work for one

person, may not work for the next. If all fails, go out and buy a dog. They should scare away any predators. But, you must also train them not to mess with your aviary. They may never show an interest in your birds, until one day, you come home and find a tunnel leading into your aviary, a dog with a dirty snout, happily wagging its tail, while at the same time, sitting right next to you and the tunnel it has just dug.

If you have Internet access, I can be reached at [FNCHESnAL@aol.com](mailto:FNCHESnAL@aol.com) or you can visit my web page at [www.geocities.com/fnchesnal/myfinchsoftbillpage.html](http://www.geocities.com/fnchesnal/myfinchsoftbillpage.html)

Billy Cochran  
Birmingham, AL

### CLASSIFIED ADS

Advertising (display ads), Inside cover \$300/yr or \$70/issue. Full Page \$200/yr or \$50/issue. 1/2 page \$120/yr or \$30/issue. 1/4 page \$80/yr or \$20/issue. Web site advertising \$100/yr, \$50/yr for Inside cover advertisers. Classified ads are \$.25 per word for NFSS members and \$.30 per word for non-NFSS members. Classifieds are also posted to the web site at no additional charge.

For Sale: Glossy Starling pair (greater blue-eared). \$275.00.  
New 5'x3' cage with supplies also available. Contact Lisa McMillan at 309-441-6884 or [lisa@arcsupport.com](mailto:lisa@arcsupport.com).

Wanted: New Bloodlines-( Forbes) Blue Breasted Parrot Finches, Fairy Bluebirds, Red Crested Cardinals, Luzon Bleeding Heart Doves, Cape Doves, and Yellow/Red Diamond Doves.  
Daniel Almaguer, 407-894-3808 or [DRAfinch@aol.com](mailto:DRAfinch@aol.com)

For Sale: Diamond Firetails, Red & Yellow Rump  
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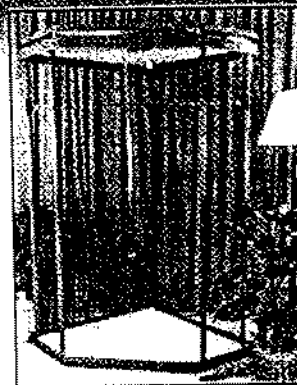
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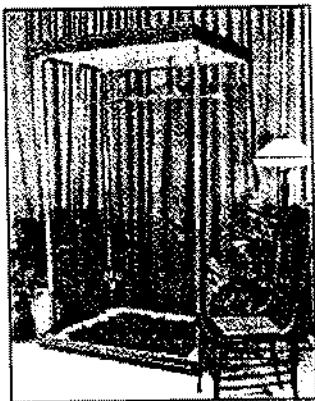
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**Avian Conversations (Continued)**

Tom Rigs &amp; Ross Bishop

**THE AVIAN DESERT**

Ross: Sometimes someone can make a small comment that opens up whole avenues in our thinking. That happened to me with a comment by Dr. Terry Martin, an Australia veterinarian. What he said really struck me. Now, I know a lot of people who keep finches and softbills struggle with creating the right conditions for their birds, and often cannot figure out why some birds don't breed.

In Australia, Grass Parakeets are found distributed through much of the country. Not every species is found all over the country, however. As you may know, Australia ranges from deep thick rain forest in the North to totally parched and dry open land in the outback, with almost every possible variation found in between. Most of the country is hot and dry. Various species of Grass Parakeets find environments suitable for them and localize in those places. So, although Grass Parakeets are found throughout most of the country, that is not true for every species.

People in the U.S. and Europe who breed Grass Parakeets have found some significant differences in the various species reproductive successes depending on climate. For example, Splendids breed better here in the arid and dry Southwest than on the coast. With other species it's the opposite. And, of course, there are notable exceptions which throw the whole theory into a hand basket, but on the whole, the theory seems to hold true.

OK, that leads me to Dr. Martin's comment. Terry has raised and shown finches for a long time. So he's a rare avian vet who is knowledgeable about finches. Anyway, the thing he said that struck me was "Remember that Australia is a hot dry country - so if you keep your birds in a desert they often remain healthier. That is why Australian birds are so successful as pet birds, pet owners always keep them in deserts!"

Kaboom! It hit me. Our homes are warm and dry. Many people keep their birds indoors - in virtual deserts. I went to my indoor avi-

ary and looked at my Tricolors and other Munias - notoriously difficult to breed here. I thought about their home in southeast Asia, in the rice fields and reed beds. In Java when you get up in the morning the humidity in the air is so thick you could almost cut it. When the sun comes out it gets quite hot. Your clothes stick to you in minutes. These are the conditions you need for growing rice, reeds and obviously, Munias. And, here they are in my warm (not hot) and comparatively dry, aviary (indoor desert).

Speaking of artificial environments, that brings up another subject, replicating natural daylight hours. Most of the birds we keep are southern hemisphere birds and because the seasons there are opposite, the natural light cycle is different than ours. I don't know if our birds are changing because they are born and raised in the Northern hemisphere, but I have noticed a marked change in my birds since I started paying more attention to their natural patterns.

During the summer most of my birds are in the outdoor aviary, so I can't do much about things there. But, when I bring them in during the fall and winter I do pay attention to their natural light cycles. I asked Benjamin Whitworth, one of the Australian members of the finchlovers email list to obtain sunrise and sunset hours for Australia for us, and he was kind enough to do so. The times are for Brisbane (and they are rough averages), but they will give you a general idea of the light cycle your birds would be on if they were living in the wild (these numbers are not corrected for daylight savings time):

#### **Average Daylight Hours for Brisbane Australia**

<b>MONTH</b>	<b>Sunrise</b>	<b>Sunset</b>	<b>MONTH</b>	<b>Sunrise</b>	<b>Sunset</b>
January	5:00	6:45	July	6:35	5:10
February	5:25	6:35	August	6:20	5:25
March	5:45	6:10	September	5:50	5:35
April	6:00	5:35	October	5:15	5:50
May	6:20	5:10	November	4:50	6:15
June	6:35	5:00	December	4:45	6:35

To the extent that you can control the hours of daylight, I do believe that birds do respond best to their natural conditions.

#### TOXINS

Tom: Toxins are out there and they can be absolutely disastrous. What I avoid like the plague is pesticides of any kind. They can get around in the oddest places. I remember a situation with the Birds of Paradise at a major zoo. They developed an ant problem in the aviary and the curator asked the pest control person to do something about it. Five days later the Birds of Paradise began to show symptoms of poisoning and eventually died. They had apparently picked up the ants or the poison had gotten into their water -- something. This process was supposed to be completely safe and professionally applied. I have also been fortunate in that I have never had an infestation of mites or anything like that. I think that this is because my aviary sanitation is good. I have had mice come into the bird room on two occasions. I will not poison them, I live trap them. All you need is one grain of poison to get into the aviary and plop! You've got a dead bird.

Ross: The risk from pesticides comes in a couple of ways. The most potent is usually in trying to treat the invasion of some pest into the aviary like bugs or mice. The caution here is to be really careful not only about where you put the chemical agent but also how and where it might migrate. Stuff gets into the air, you can carry it on your clothing or shoes, pets can transfer it around - you have to be really careful because that which is unexpected or unplanned often happens with disastrous results. Those things are almost impossible to trace, too. Even if the bird does not die immediately, it's immune system can be compromised, it gets a respiratory infection and dies or stops breeding and you will never know the cause. In addition to chemicals, some foods are dangerous to birds. Amongst these are chocolate, avocado, rhubarb, caffeine, alcohol, apple seeds, the pits of cherries, plums and apricots and possibly onions (although the jury is still out on this one). Peanuts, although not dangerous themselves, often carry a fungus that can be fatal to birds.

Although this is not a direct risk, something that is not well understood is that birds do not have the enzymes necessary to break down lactose and digest milk sugar. Milk sugar, being essentially non di-

gestible to birds, will cause an upset in their digestive systems. This generally manifests itself through diarrhea. I understand that in the "old" days people used to feed birds bread soaked in milk, and I guess some of that habit still carries over today.

Dr. Alicia McWatters points out that the milk sugar in cheese is broken down somewhat by the enzymes produced by the bacteria used to make cheese, but cheese still contains 20%-50% milk fat, therefore it should be fed in moderation. Yogurt and kefir are much better choices because they are cultured dairy products (the milk sugar is already digested) and provide live beneficial bacteria, which is helpful to a bird's intestinal health and immune system. The reason I bring this up is that these two are also excellent sources of calcium. For optimum benefit, purchase "live" yogurt and kefir, pasteurized before culturing, plain, and without added sugar.

Another place to be careful of chemicals is in our food supply. These days fruits and vegetables are treated with all manner of pesticides, fungicides, hormones and herbicides and then after they are picked they are treated with dyes, waxes and heaven knows what else. I just don't want my bird's ingesting that stuff. I find it rather amazing that even though certain chemicals have been banned, they still turn up in our food supply. Also, I think that people would be uneasy if they realized just how little of our food is ever actually tested or inspected.

Consumer Reports has studied the levels of pesticide residues in fruit and produce over the last seven years and the results are disturbing (Consumer Reports, March, 1999). Consumer Reports focused on the effects to children because of their small body size, developing nervous systems and because cancer kills more children under 14 than any other disease. They become the proverbial "canary in the coal mine" for the rest of us. Consumer Reports' researchers wrote: "It is surprisingly easy for children to eat fresh fruits and vegetables with unacceptable levels of some especially toxic pesticides." According to Consumer Reports the foods to be especially careful about are: apples, grapes, green beans, peaches, pears, spinach and winter squash. This is largely because current production techniques of these crops "require" heavy pesticide use. Plus, because of "budget constraints" (read: political pressure from

chemical manufacturers and large growers) governmental inspections of fruit and produce has been drastically curtailed. The effects of toxic chemicals are more profound on birds than on you (especially on young birds). EPA standards of allowable toxicity are set for human, not bird, standards. The leftover pesticide on the zucchini you bought at the supermarket may not be considered harmful to you, but we cannot say the same for your birds.

Besides, there is a raging debate at the moment as to whether current EPA/FDA standards allow too much pesticide to be passed on to us in our food (remember, the effects of these chemicals are cumulative). Some people attribute this problem to the fact that there has been a virtual revolving door for executives between Monsanto, one of the biggest producers of food chemicals and the FDA. In any case, Consumer Reports found a number of banned (illegal) chemicals were still being used, especially on spinach. In an interesting twist, imported fruit and produce generally fared much better than American grown. American produced fruits and vegetables often carried 10 times the chemical residue of imported products like peaches, apples and winter squash.

Research consistently shows virtually no chemical residue in organic products. One FDA administrator (a former chemical industry employee) has been trashing organic produce because manure is often used as organic fertilizer. His claims have been shown to be unfounded. But in any case, since there is always the risk of residue on any fresh food, be sure to clean any fruit or vegetable, no matter the source. Unfortunately the chemicals often used in traditional agriculture penetrate beneath the skin, and cannot be washed away. To be safe, peel everything you can. I do this especially for the birds because they are so much more sensitive to even tiny doses of chemical toxins. During the summer we grow our own greens and fruit. I also make it a point to always spray the external surface of any fruit or vegetable with an organic cleaner - I use Oxyfresh's Cleansing Gel. We eat largely organic, and that is how we feed our birds. I figure the cost is worth the difference because I haven't had to pay a doctor bill in ten years. Similarly, our vet bills are almost non-existent. I can buy a lot of organic veggies for the price of one vet visit (especially with vet costs these days!) Dr. Alicia McWatters has written a good introductory article about basic nutrition and or-

ganic food at: <http://www.parrothouse.com/organic.html>. You might want to check it out.

Tom: I agree. I feed organic whenever I can. Meaning when it is available and when it will not bankrupt me. But regardless, all of my fruit, vegetables or greens get thoroughly cleaned. Now that I have Oxyfresh I use that, but you can also soak things in a solution of vinegar water for a few minutes. This supposedly helps cut the oil that a toxic chemical is carried in. Then I rinse it three times. I will say this, I have never had a problem that I could trace to food pesticides.

Ross: A bird's respiratory and circulatory systems are different from ours. They are much more efficient. A bird exchanges gas (air) more frequently and more efficiently than you do. A bird's metabolism is considerably higher than ours. Thus chemicals in the food or fumes in the air will be taken in faster and absorbed in a much greater proportion than for you or me. Their smaller body mass means a greater sensitivity to even small doses of chemicals. That's why canaries were so useful in coal mines. Plus, remember that flying is an incredibly aerobic exercise so a bird absorbs significantly greater (proportionally) quantities of air than we do even at our peak exercise states (and of course we all reach those regularly!). All of this places the bird at far greater risk of toxic poisoning. So, just because bleach fumes or some cleaner's smell doesn't bother you, it does not mean that they are not affecting your birds. And, remember, these effects are cumulative! You can walk into a kitchen and turn off a burning Teflon® pan and be relatively unharmed. Those same fumes will kill a bird in the other corner of the house.

Tom: Teflon® is a toxin to be extremely concerned about. A Teflon® pan left to burn on the stove will quickly create a plume of gas that will kill every bird it touches. It's never happened to me, but I had a friend who kept his canaries in the kitchen and did the Teflon thing one day and - no more canaries!

Ross: Somebody said that there were only two kinds of cooks: Those who have already burned a Teflon pan and those who will. I used to think it was just a burning Teflon® pan that was dangerous. Dr. Margaret A. Wissman, DVM, DABP, advises: However, even

with normal usage, some fumes may also be released, so non-stick cookware, drip pans, irons, ironing board covers and heat -lamps with a PTFE coating should not be used around birds. Dr. Wissman goes on to speak of other toxic dangers: Passive inhalation of cigarette, cigar and pipe smoke can cause chronic eye problems, skin irritation and respiratory disease. Birds that live in homes with smokers may develop coughing, sneezing, sinusitis and conjunctivitis, which may resolve spontaneously, if the bird is moved to a location free of smoke. Some birds exposed to chronic second-hand smoke will develop secondary bacterial infections, as well, which can prove fatal. Many common disinfectants and household cleaning agents release fumes that can be toxic or fatal to birds. Chlorine bleach, phenols and ammonia can all have dangerous vapors that can cause irritation, toxicosis and even death. Common household aerosol products, such as perfume, deodorant and hairspray, can cause respiratory problems in birds. They may cause severe inflammation and difficulty breathing, and after large or direct exposure, death can occur. Any pump spray or aerosol using a propellant can be dangerous to birds, and these should not be used around birds. Natural gas leaks can cause sudden death in birds. Any type of heater, used improperly or with inadequate ventilation can be deadly to birds. Carbon monoxide, an odorless, colorless and tasteless gas, can also be fatal to birds. Anyone with pet birds should have a working carbon monoxide monitoring device in the home, preferably in the room where the birds are kept. Second-hand smoke from marijuana can also cause severe depression and regurgitation. . .  
([www.tampa-online.com/icarus](http://www.tampa-online.com/icarus))

So, fair warning to all you potheads from Dr. Wissman!

To be continued next issue.

## Awards Manager

Ginny Allen has been the Awards Manager for more years than she originally agreed to, but has decided it is time for her to turn position over to another volunteer. If you think you may be able to help NFSS by filling this position please contact Ginny at [gndallen@earthlink.net](mailto:gndallen@earthlink.net) or (334) 749-7168 for more details.



## Special Election Ballot NFSS Treasurer

We are pleased to announce this opportunity for the membership of the NFSS to vote for the office of Treasurer. The only nominee for the position at this time is Bobbi Keenan of Florida. Write-in candidates are, of course, welcome.

**Be sure to include your name and NFSS member number or your vote may not be counted.**

Any NFSS member can vote, but that vote is limited to one per member. You may use the form below or simply include the information below on a letter or postcard and mail to Steve Hoppin at the address below.

**Ballots must be postmarked by July 20, 2000**

### Ballot for the position of NFSS Treasurer

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

NFSS Membership Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Circle the candidates name or provide a write-in:

Candidate: Bobbi Keenan

Write in: \_\_\_\_\_

**Must be postmarked by July 20, 2000**

**Mail to:** Steve Hoppin  
NFSS Election Committee Chairperson  
3836 Hidden Acres Circle  
North Ft. Myers, FL 33903

# NFSS Raffle

**Check here for your chance  
to win. See page next page  
for tickets and page 38 for  
more exciting details.**

**How it works:**

Pull out this page containing the raffle tickets.

Fill in your name, phone #, NFSS #, and signature.

Include a check in US Funds in the amount due made out to  
NFSS.

Cost per ticket is \$1

Mail completed raffle tickets and check to:

**RAFFLE TICKETS**

Kerri McCoy

NFSS Fundraising Coordinator

3327 Aberdeen Avenue

Burlington, Ontario, Canada L7M 3Y4

**OR**

Harry Bryant

NFSS Webmaster

37212 Butternut Ridge

Elyria, Ohio 44035-8544

**Questions?**

[kerri.mccoy@sympatico.ca](mailto:kerri.mccoy@sympatico.ca)

or phone (905) 319-0680

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Fundraising Raffle #1 Prizes****Pair of Forbes Parrot Finches** (Donated by Vince Moase)**Pair of Painted Firetail Finches** (Donated by Kerri McCoy)**Pair of Japanese Society Finches** (Ino hen and split Ino chocolate male) (Donated by Garrie Landry)Rules and Regulations:

Raffle is open to NFSS members ONLY. Your membership must be current for you to be eligible to win. (Not a member? Click here for an application to join us!)

You may enter as many times as you would like, however, you can only win one prize per raffle. Photocopies of tickets may be made, or for convenience additional tickets are available for printing at the NFSS Website

Make sure to write your name, phone number, NFSS number and signature under disclaimer on EACH raffle ticket. Tickets mailed in without above information will not be included in raffle. Tickets must be signed to be valid.

First name drawn will have first choice of birds offered for raffle; 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> will follow suit. Winners will be notified by phone and will have their names posted on the NFSS Website.

Winner is responsible for any and all costs associated with shipping birds if that is deemed necessary. Particulars regarding shipping will be worked out with donor and raffle winner.

Due to the generosity of the donors, losses that may or may not be incurred during shipping and upon receipt will be at the winner's risk.

NFSS assumes no liability whatsoever in the event casualty or illness in raffle items occurs.

Raffle #1 will run during March/April and May/June issues of NFSS Bulletin. Drawing date for Raffle #1 will be on July 1, 2000.

Raffle #2 will run during July/August and Sept/October issues of NFSS Bulletin. Winners for Raffle #2 will be announced at the National Cage Bird Show in mid-November. Exact date of drawing forthcoming. Items available for Raffle #2 will also be forthcoming.

Officers and Board Members of the NFSS, and their family members, are not eligible for this raffle.

Questions?

kerri.mccoy@sympatico.ca  
or phone (905) 319-0680

## Breeding with the Seasons

by James R. Casey

I would like to share with you some thoughts on breeding your finches. I am an apartment breeder and some of my techniques may not go along with some of you. I have found some major advantages to breeding finches with the seasons.

After reading many book, articles and documentaries about bird behavior I noticed some very distinct behavioral patterns develop with my flock. As I started to breed my exotic finches I noticed over time that finches breed best in the spring, starting with late March and going until late August. It is the time of the year that their bodies prepare properly for the upcoming event. When I keep my finches resting during the winter I see them much drained from the breeding season. Even if they have not been actually breeding during this time. I find that during the winter they need to replace a lot of minerals especially calcium which I supplement in the drinking water with Calcivet from Vetafarms. Once late March arrives I put my breeding pairs in banks of breeding cages with external nesting boxes. I let each pair raise 3 separate clutches during this time period. After late August I put them back in the aviary with no nests whatsoever.

I noticed that when I had kept nests in my aviary it really put a lot of stress on the whole flock. When the finches notice a nest it appears this triggers a nesting cycle. My birds all seemed to weaken even more and caused a lot of feather pulling and pecking. Once I removed all the nests the flock began to calm way down and get along together. I am using my time now to let the flock recover and get ready to start it all again.

Everyone wants to have more exotic finches, but breeding all year for me actually lowered the yield of chicks. The way I have it figured now I can take one pair and breed them and at worst at 2 eggs per clutch x 3 clutches have 6 new members to my flock. I even had a case of 6 eggs per clutch x 3 clutches and have 18 young. When



1 left nests in my aviary all year I found a much, much lower increase. I would say 2 to 3 young raised successfully and my breeders totally drained and depleted all year.

I have read many a book that tells you some exotics need to breed in the winter and 3 separate time per year. I have not found this to be true. Until I started getting in sync with our seasons in the United States I had little success. I do not know how many others of you have the conditions I have. Statistically speaking from both a health standpoint and successful breeding with many healthy young and parents I urge you all to go with the flow!

Thank You,  
James R. Casey

## Awards Manager

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## The ESTRILDIAN

The ESTRILDIAN is produced for the purpose of relating the most up to date information on all species belonging to the family Estrilidae both in the wild and in captivity. Within its 124 species are all of the *Waxbills*, *Parrot Finches*, *Mannikins* and *Australian finches*. The aviculturist and the scientist have much to offer each other and the ESTRILDIAN brings together like-minded enthusiasts from around the world. The magazine is sent to 13 different countries ranging from Australia to Puerto Rico and has many leading Zoo's, Aviculturists and Researchers as both members and contributors. With well over 100 members in the USA, we have now been able to reduce our overseas subscription rates.

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*Jill Zachow or  
 Bill Silveus  
 (608)757-0454  
 5412 Baxter Ln Janesville WI 53546*



All Bird Show Judges to be announced

## Affiliated Clubs 2000

STATE	CLUB NAME	DELEGATE	CONTACT#
Internet	First Internet Bird Club	Myra Markley president@bird-club.org	319-362-9390
AL	Central Alabama Avicultural Society	Margie Lanier randy1@mindspring.com	334-567-4073
CA	Central California Cage Bird Club	Richard Pizzurro njones7110@aol.com	408-927-0734
CA	Finch Society of San Diego	Sally Huntington huntington-center@worldnet.att.net	858-452-9423
CA	Santa Clara Valley Canary and Exotic Bird Club	Richard Pizzurro doreen123@earthlink.net	408-927-0734
CO	Rocky Mtn. Soc. of Avi.	Glenda Pullum	303-937-1498
FL	Colorbred Canary Club of Miami	Nora Trincado	305-255-2661
FL	Suncoast Avian Soc. Inc.	Joe Ventimiglia	727-392-9391
GA	Southeast Bird Fanciers	Ginny Allen gndallen@earthlink.net	(none listed)
HI	Honolulu Canary and Elaine Shimokawa Finch Club	808-521-5544 ala1884@aol.com	
IA	Mid America Cagebird Soc.	Rhoda Shirley	515-243-1511
IL	Grtr Chicago Cagebird Club	Jane Muscato	jamjdm9223@aol.com
IL	Illini Bird Fanciers	Tom Rood 217-774-5265 tjrood@bmmhnet.com	
IL	National Institute of Red Orange Canaries, Inc.	Steve Hopman birdhop@aol.com	815-469-8455
MA	Massachusetts Cagebird Association	Kathleen Vieweg kvieweg@zooneengland.com	617-989-2089
MD	Baltimore Bird Fanciers Dorothy Haynes	Dorothy Haynes drhaynes@ubmail.ubalt.edu	410-256-9326

MI	Great Lakes Avicultural Society	Diana Hugo hugo@iserv.net	616-842-0163
MO	Greater Kansas City Avicultural Society	Nita Haas njhaas@oasiskc.net	816-331-5285
MO	Heart of America Hookbill Society	Earl Courts	816-554-3922
MO	Midwest Zebra and Society Finch Club	Nita Haas njhaas@oasiskc.net	816-331-5285
MO	Missouri Cage Bird Club	Rich Dickman skdatl@accessus.net	636-928-3444
NM	New Mexico Bird Club, Inc.	Gail Ranshaw ransaw@swcp.com	505-822-1483
OH	Toledo Bird Association	Rick Yunker ryunker@uoft02.toledo.edu	419-691-9432
OK	Bird Fanciers of OK	Tom Ressel	580-332-6254
OR	Finch Connection Bird Club	Paula Hansen	503-581-8208
PA	Greater Pittsburgh Cage Bird Society	Margie Jonnet pparrots@gateway.net	412-795-1904
PR	Organizacion Puertorriquena De Aves Exoticas	Rafael Suarez Lix4me@aol.com	787-752-4433
TN	SE TN Avicultural Society	Janet Burrell	423-472-1306
TX	Canary and Finch Society	Margie McBrayer	281-338-2814
TX	Fort Worth Bird Club	Clarence Culwell culwell5@flash.net	817-220-5568
TX	Texas Bird Breeders and Fanciers Association	Clarence Culwell culwell5@flash.net	817-220-5568
VA	Peninsula Caged Bird Soc.	Marian Rogers dickivy@two-rivers.com	757-484-6001
WI	Badger Canary Fanciers	Sue Feldstein	262-965-5362
WI	W.I.N.G.S. Bird Society	Carol Belisle bjnest@tieon.net	608-427-6674
Canada	Essex-Kent Cage Bird Soc.	Alfred Mion	519-948-6398

End

## Shows and Events 2000

For corrections or additions, please contact me @ [stevepoe@mindspring.com](mailto:stevepoe@mindspring.com) or the address/phone on page 5 of this bulletin.

Show:	June 3	Illini Bird Fanciers	Shelbyville, IL	4-H Building
Judge:		Tom Rood		
Show:	Aug 5	Midwest Zebra & Society Finch	Location not confirmed	
Judge:		Charlie Anchor		
Show:	Aug 5-6	Sun Coast Avian Society, Inc.	St. Petersburg, FL	
Judge:		TBA		
Show:	Sct 2-3	Central AL Avicultural Society	Montgomery, AL	
Judge:		TBA		
Show:	Sep 23	New Mexico Bird Club, Inc.	Albuquerque, NM	
Judge:		Dennis Lewis		
Show:	Sep 30	Badger Canary Club	Appleton, WI	
Judge:		Tom Rood		
Show:	Sep 30-Oct 1	Toledo Bird Association	Toledo, OH	
Judge:		Charlie Anchor		
Show:	Oct 1	W.I.N.G.S. Bird Society	Appleton, WI	
Judge:		TBA		
Show:	Oct 7	Fort Worth Bird Club	Colleyville, TX	
Judge:		Charlie Anchor		
Show:	Oct 7	The Finch Connection	Colleyville, TX	
Judge:		Charlie Anchor		
Show:	Oct 13	Essex-Kent Cage Bird Society	Windsor, Ontario	
Judges:		Vincent Moase and Sam Crabbe		
Show:	Oct 14	Bird Fanciers of Oklahoma	OKC, OK	
Judge:		Laura Bewley		
Show:	Oct 14	Essex-Kent Cagebird Society	Windsor, Ontario	
Judge:		Vincnt Moase and Sam Crabbe		

Show:	Oct 14	Massachusetts Cage Bird Society	Bellingham, MA
Judge:		None listed	
Show:	Oct 14	Mid America Cage Bird Society	Des Moines, IA
Judge:		Tom Rood	
Show:	Oct 21	Baltimore Bird Fanciers	
Judge:		Miki Spazak	
Show:	Oct 21	Great Lakes Avicultural Society	Rockford, MI
Judge:		Clarence Culwell	rviss@aol.com
Show:	Oct 21	Greater Kansas City Avicultural Soc.	Harrisonville, MO
Judge:		Harold Bowles	
Show:	Oct 28	Canary and Finch Society	League City, TX
Judge:		Dale Laird	
Show:	Nov 4	Central CA Cagebird Club	Modesto, CA
Judge:		Clayton Jones	
Show:	Nov 4	Greater Chicago Cage Bird Club	Harvey, IL
Judge:		Steven Hoppin	
Show:	Nov 4	Greater Pittsburgh Cage Bird Soc.	Monroeville, PA
Judge:		Conrad Meinert	
Show:	Nov 4	Missouri Cagebird Association	Days Inn, Eureka, MO
Judge:		TBA	
Show:	Nov 4-5	Rocky Mountain Soc. of Aviculture	Denver, CO
Judge:		TBA	
Show:	Nov 4	Texas Bird Breeders & Fanciers	Temple, TX
Judge:		Martha Wigmore	
Show:	Nov 16	Organizacion Puertorriquena de Aves Exoticias	Exoticias
Judge:		TBA	Caribe Hilton, PR
Show:	Nov 25	Natl Inst of Red Orange Canaries	Elk Grove Village, IL
Judge:		Dale Laird	
Show:	Nov 25	Santa Clara Valley Canary & Exotic Bird Club	
Judge:		William Parlee	Santa Clara, CA
Show:	Dec 1-3	Colorbred Canary Club of Miami	No location or judge listed.

End

## NFSS Board of Directors 2000-2001

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P.O. Box 2459, Goldenrod, FL 32733-2459  
Phone/Fax: (407) 657-7989 Email: dalel@magicnet.net

### Elected Officers

#### 1st Vice President

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#### 2nd Vice President

#### Publications

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Oshawa, Ontario,  
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#### 3rd Vice President

#### FinchSave/Census

**Manager**  
**Daniel Almaguer**  
P.O. Box 533015  
Orlando, FL 32853-3015  
Phone: (407) 894-3808  
Fax: (407) 894 6400  
Email: DRAFinch@aol.com

#### 4th Vice President

#### Judges Pnl, Stds/Research

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#### Membership Director

**Eileen Laird**  
P.O. Box 2459  
Goldenrod, FL 32733-2459  
Phone/Fax: (407) 657-7989

#### Executive Secretary

**Annette Howard**

#### Treasurer ProTem

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909 S. 9th Street  
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Email: bkeenan@digital.net

#### Liaison Officer

#### Club Delegates, Show

**Dates**  
**Dianna Rubly**  
525 Pottsville Street  
P.O. Box 52  
Wiconisco, PA  
17097-0052  
Phone: 717-453-9095  
Email: bearden@epix.net

#### Band Secretary

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Email:  
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#### President Emeritus

**William Parlee**  
631 Talcootville Rd, Apt. 4N  
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Email:  
BillHTFDCT@aol.com

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#### Regional Vice President

#### Region 1 – Northeast

**Christine Voronovich**  
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Phone: 860-649-8220

#### Regional Vice President

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**Armando Lee**  
P.O. Box 831238  
Miami, FL 33283  
Phone (305) 270-1000  
Email:  
ajlee@bellsouth.net

#### Regional Vice President

#### Region 3 – Mid-Central

**Nita Haas**  
Raymore, MO 64083

#### Regional Vice President

#### Region 4 – Midwest

**Clarence Culwell**  
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Springtown, TX 76082  
Phone: (817) 220-5568  
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**Regional Vice President  
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**Regional Vice President  
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@worldnet.att.net

**Regional Vice President  
ProTem  
Region 7 - Caribbean**  
Julio Mateo Sato  
Calie 6F-10  
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**Patrick Vance**  
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Lathrup Village, MI 48076  
Phone: 248-443-0643

**Paul S. Williams**  
703 Donegal Drive  
Papillion, NE 68046  
Phone: 402-592-5488  
Email:  
RolTide@ix.netcom.com

### Changing your address?

Allow NFSS to be the first to greet you at your new home!

Be sure to notify:

Club Delegates also notify:

NFSS Membership Director  
Eileen Laird  
P.O. Box 2459  
Goldenrod, FL 32733-2459

NFSS Liaison Officer  
Dianna Rubly  
525 Pottsville Street, PO Box 52  
Wiconisco, PA 17097-0052.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
New Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ St: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Membership # \_\_\_\_\_

**2000 AFFILIATION AGREEMENT**

The basic affiliation fee is \$25.00. Make check payable to NFSS.

Mail to: Dianna Rubly, Liaison Officer  
525 Pottsville Street, PO Box 52  
Wiconisco, PA 17097-0052.  
Phone/Fax: 717-453-9095

Club Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Club Delegate: \_\_\_\_\_  
NFSS #: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ \*Email: \_\_\_\_\_

\*NFSS may use this information in the NFSS Bulletin and on the web site.

Delegate's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Club Officer: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ \*Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Club Email Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Show/Event Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Panel Judge: \_\_\_\_\_

Show Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Send NFSS Bulletin to: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please list other fairs or events hosted by your club for listing in the Bulletin. Please include dates, locations, and a contact member with phone number and/or email address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## AWARD ORDER FORM FOR SHOWS/EVENTS

Award order forms for shows and events will be sent to each affiliated club as soon as possible after the affiliation papers are processed by the Liaison Officer, Dianna Rubly. Allow a minimum of eight weeks before the actual show/event to process the order. The form and fee *must* accompany the order.

The prices remain the same, however, we have added a new rosette. Many clubs have indicated a desire to have an official Novice rosette with the NFSS logo. These have been designed and will be available for \$5.00. There are no NFSS rules regarding this award. Each club will set its own standard.

These are the 1999 awards available:

Ck Box	<b>PLAQUES</b> All plaques are \$25 each. They are walnut finish with the engraved NFSS logo on brass over black plate on one side and the club information on brass over black plate on the other side of the plaque. They can also be customized by each club.	Cost
	Service/Breeder Award Plaque (6"x 8")	\$25.00
	"Best in Show" Plaque (6"x 8")	\$25.00
	"Second Best in Show" Plaque (6"x 8")	\$25.00
	"Third Best in Show" Plaque (6"x 8")	\$25.00
	"Best Softbill in Show" Plaque (6"x 8")	\$25.00
	<b>ROSETTES</b>	
	The basic set consists of ten 15" long rosettes for the ten best finches or softbills, plus one best unflighted rosette. Unflighted birds are those banded with 1999 bands.	
	Basic Rosette Package	\$35.00
	Unflighted 2nd and 3rd place rosettes	\$7.00
	Novice Rosette	\$5.00
	<b>Total amount of check payable to NFSS</b>	

For more information on awards, contact the Awards Manager:

Ginny Allen  
307 Brookwood Court  
Opelika, AL 36801  
Phone/Fax: (334) 749-7168  
Email: gndallen@earthlink.net

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The National Finch and Softbill Society</b> <b>Membership Application</b></p>
---

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

New Member? \_\_\_\_\_ Renew NFSS#? \_\_\_\_\_

How did you hear about us? \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Dues:

Single: \$25  Dual: \$30  Junior (under 16) \$12.50 

\* 2nd name for Dual Membership \_\_\_\_\_

U.S. & Puerto Rico 1st Class mailing add \$5.00  
Canadian add \$5.00, Foreign add \$10.00 (Please send US funds)  
Canadian and foreign subscriptions mailed 1st Class.

NFSS thanks you for your support!

<p>Mail application and check or money order payable to NFSS: Eileen Laird Membership Secretary P.O. Box 2459 Goldenrod, FL 32733-2459 (407) 657-7989</p>
---

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The National Finch and Softbill Society</b> <b>FinchSave Application</b></p>
--

Interested in joining FinchSave? Please fill out the below preliminary information and send to the FinchSave Manager, Mr. Daniel Almaguer. Upon receipt of this form, you will receive a complete information package outlining all aspects of the FinchSave Program.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ NFSS# \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_  
State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

What would you like to accomplish through FinchSave?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

<p>Mail this completed form to: FinchSave Manager Daniel Almaguer P.O. Box 533015 Orlando, FL 32853-3015 Phone: (407) 894-3808 Fax: (407) 894-6400 Email: DRAFinch@aol.com</p>
--

**Thank you for supporting aviculture's foremost  
cooperative breeding program.  
You CAN make a difference!**

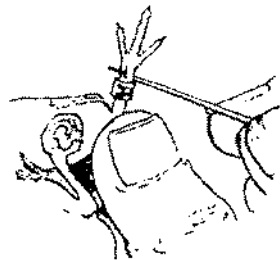
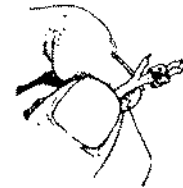
## The National Finch and Softbill Society Banding Procedures

The important thing to remember when banding chicks is to do it over a counter or table so if the chick is dropped, it doesn't fall to the floor. The age to band varies between species but is generally between 5 and 10 days. You can tell by looking at the ankle joint (the joint where the toes come together) and the size of the band. Have the bands, a toothpick (or other small blunt instrument) and some lubricant ready. Be sure you have the bands "right side up" for easier reading. The band is generally placed on the bird's right leg. Banding just before the parents go to roost in the evening will help prevent them from picking at the band. By the next morning, they will have forgotten about it.



Hold the chick firmly, but in such a way as to not cut off its' breathing, and so that you don't harm it. Remember their bodies cannot tolerate compression.

Put a little bit of lubricant on the chick's foot and slide the band over the three front toes and finally over the ankle joint.



The back toe will probably have to be gently pried out from under the band with a toothpick.

The band should now be in the proper location between the ankle and the elbow joint.



Check on the chick the next few days to be sure that the band has not slipped off and that there are no scrapes or irritations on the foot or leg.



## The National Finch and Softbill Society Band Order Form

Mail form and payment payable to NFSS:  
 Carol Heesen  
 NFSS Band Secretary  
 P.O. Box 752  
 Riverbank, CA 95367

NFSS offers, to members only, closed traceable aluminum bands, available only in the NFSS color of the year. The bands are engraved with the initials NFS, size code, year and number. There is no choice of numbers. All orders are recorded for permanent reference. Bands are ordered in strings of ten, all the same size. New members may order before receiving their membership number.

Write "New" for membership number on the order form. Orders processed weekly as received. Please, no mail requiring signatures. **\$1.00 handling fee effective 3/1/99.**

Band Size	# of Strings	Price per string	Total Amount
A		\$3.25	
B		\$3.25	
C		\$3.25	
D		\$3.25	
E		\$3.25	
G		\$3.25	
J		\$3.25	
K		\$3.25	
L		\$3.25	
M		\$3.25	
R		\$3.25	
S		\$3.25	
T		\$3.25	

<b>Postal Insurance:</b> Under \$50 = \$ .85 From \$50 - \$100 = \$1.80 Over \$100=\$2.75 If you choose NOT to include this sum, NFSS will NOT be responsible for replacement of bands lost in shipment.	Subtotal: _____ Insurance: _____ Handling <b>\$1.00</b> Total: _____
--	---

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ NFSS # \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**The National Finch and Softbill Society  
Guide to Ordering NFSS Closed Leg Bands**

Bird Species	Size	Bird Species	Size
Aracaris	S	Gouldian Finch	D
Black & White Mannikin	C	Green Singing Finch	C
Black Cheeked Waxbill	B	Green/Purple Starlings	R
Black Crested Finch	E	Grey Singing Finch	C
Blue Capped Waxbill	C	Heck's Shaftail	C
Blue Head Parrot Finch	D	Hornbills (small)	T
Bronze Wing Mannikin	C	Indian Hill Mynah	S
Cherry Finch	C	Java Mynah	S
Chestnut Breast Finch	D	Java Rice Bird	K
Cordon Blue Waxbill	B	Lavender Finch	C
Cuban Melodious Finch	B	Leaf Birds	M
Diamond Dove	L	Magpie Mannikin	G
Diamond Sparrow	E	Mannikins (most smaller)	D
Dove (other small)	L	Mannikins (other larger)	G
European Goldfinch	J	Nuns	E
European Greenfinch	E	Olive Finch	B
Fire Finch	B	Orange Cheeked Waxbill	A
Gold Breasted Waxbill	A	Owl Finch	A
Golden Song Sparrow	E	Pagoda Mynah	M

NFSS welcomes comments and suggestions for this Guide.  
Contact the Home Office

Bird Species	Size	Bird Species	Size
Painted Finch	C	Silverbills	C
Parrot Finch (most other)	D	Siskins	E
Pekin Robin	J	Society Finch (Bengalese)	E
Peter's Twinspot	E	Softbills (other small)	J
Pictorella Finch	D	Softbills	L
Pileated Finch	C	Spice Finch	E
Pintailed Nonpareil	D	Star Finch	C
Plush Capped Jay	T	Strawberry Finch	A
Pytilias	C	Sunbirds (large)	M
Quail	L	Superb Starlings	R
Quail Finch	A	Tanagers (small)	G
Red Crested Cardinal	K	Toucanettes	S
Red Eared Waxbill	A	Toucans (small)	T
Red Head Parrot Finch	C	Touracos (small)	T
Ring Neck Dove	S	Twinspots (most)	D
Rufous Backed Mannikin	B	Waxbills (small)	A
Saffron Finch	K	White Tailed Jay	S
Shaftail Finch	C	Yellow Rumped Finch	D
Shama Thrush	K	Zebra Finch	D
Silver Eared Mesias	J	(intentionally left blank)	( )

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-Editor