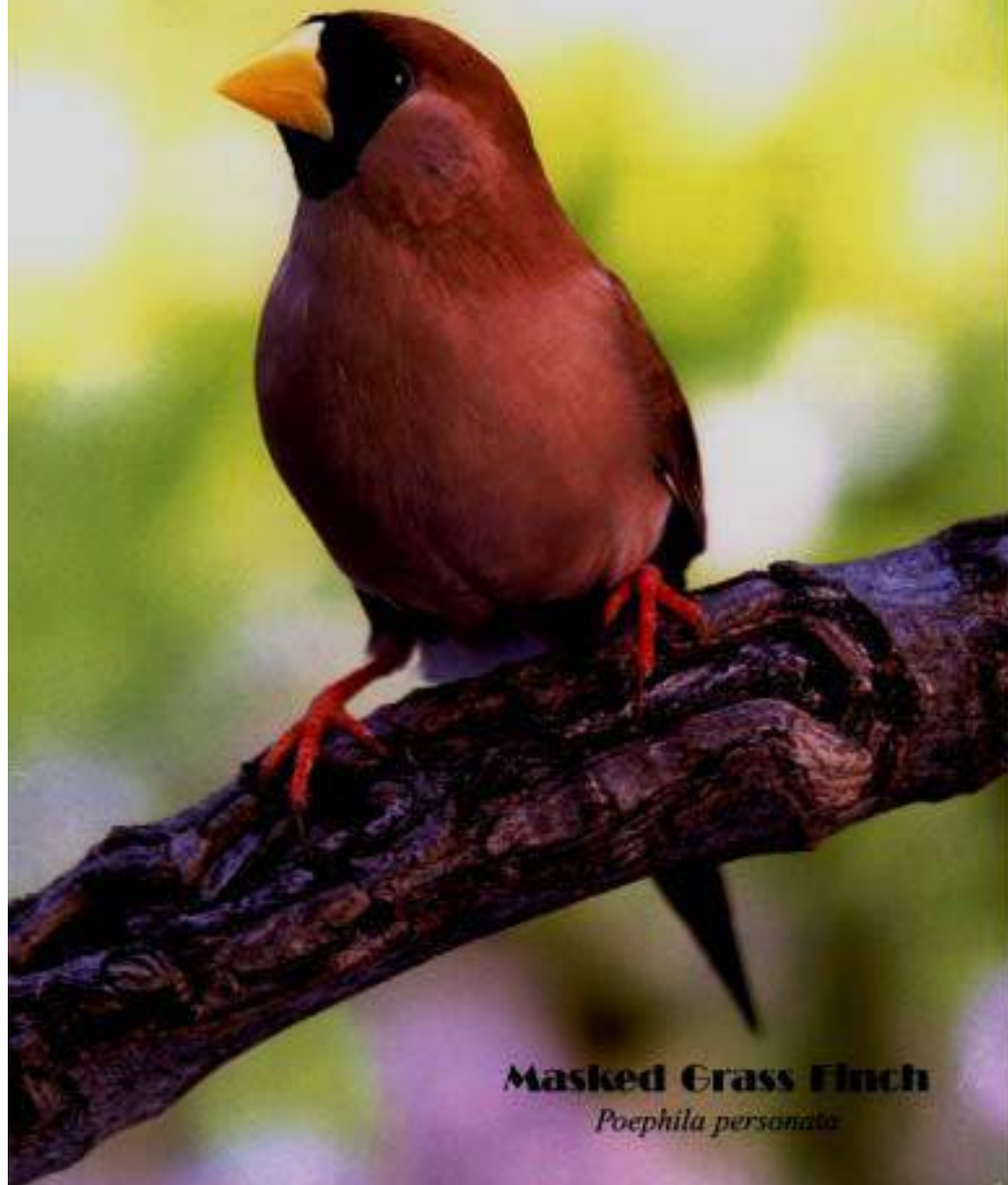


Journal of the
**National Finch &
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Volume 20, No. 5

September/October, 2003



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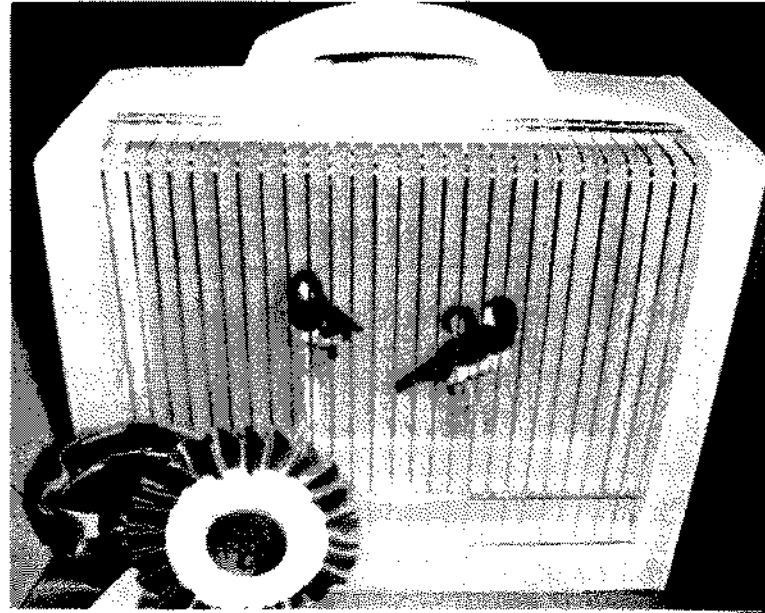
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The National Finch & Softbill Society is dedicated to the introduction of the enjoyment of keeping and breeding Finches and Softbills to all interested parties, enhance the knowledge of our members in keeping and care of these birds, encourage breeding programs, and cooperate with organizations for the preservation of aviculture in this country.

On the Cover....

Our thanks once again to Roy Beckham for sharing this gorgeous photo of a Masked Grass Finch with us. Don't miss the very informative and insightful article in this issue, "The Status of Australian Finches in American Aviculture" from Clint Harris' presentation at the 2003 AFA Convention.

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Journal of the National Finch and Softbill Society

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Table of Contents

NFSS President's Message - Sally Huntington 4
 Letters 6
 The Status of Australian Finches in American Aviculture - Clint Harris 10
 A Comparison of Ivermectin Administration Methods in Finches
 and Canaries - Lawrence L. Baum, D.V.M. 26
 The Red Siskin Project - Paula Hansen 30
 Scaly Breasted Munia - Mark Shipway 36
 Showtime in Biloxi - Ginny Allen 42
 On the NFSS 2002/2003 Census Report 44

NFSS Legislation News - Harry Bryant 54
 News from NFSS Judges Panel Director, Martha Wigmore 56
 Photos from St. Petersburg Show - Ron Castaner 58
 FinchShop Talk - Sue Haberkorn 59

The Classifieds 60

NFSS Board of Directors/Judges/Affiliated Clubs 61
 FORMS!! Membership/FSS/Affiliation/Awards/Bands/Finch Shop 67

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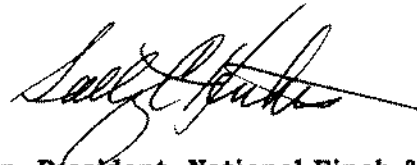
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Barbara Heidenreich of Austin Texas assured us in her video presentation, that birds respond to behavioral training and conditioning as well as any animal. She uses operant conditioning to train birds for Husbandry and Medical Behaviors to Reduce or Eliminate Stress.

The feedback at the AFA convention regarding NFSS overall made my feathers fluff up. We are seen as progressive and professional, yet with an ear tuned in to each member's needs. We are well respected. So many people said our Journal is 'the best'. NFSS has played a big part in getting zoo officials to take notice regarding finches. The information sign at the San Antonio Zoo, (in the photo below) indicates there truly is an overall need for a bit of education on finches.



Sally Huntington, President, National Finch & Softbill Society



*Avian Informational Sign at the San Antonio Zoo
Photo by Vince Huntington*

Letters

English Zebras?

I would like to congratulate Harry Bryant on the 2002/2003 Census Report. It is a monumental task and very well done.

What I am about to write is in no way critical of Harry. I have only admiration for him. Harry can only insert what bird keepers tell him they have.

I have been breeding and showing Zebras since 1957 and judging since 1963. ...Even won a time or two. As I was reading the Annual Census Report, something caught my eye. Where did we get two types of Zebras? (ie. Zebra Finch and English Zebra Finch). Breeders, there is no difference on the

show bench or breeding room in Zebras. There are Zebras from Germany, Belgium, Denmark, Australia, Canada, and even the United States. As I travel around the shows, I would like someone to show me what an "English Zebra" is.

Then there is another pet peeve of mine - Doves, Pigeons, and Quail. We, according to our mission statement, are to be dedicated to keeping, breeding, and showing Finches and Softbills. Doves, Pigeons, and Quail "ain't" any of these. I show these in Game Bird Shows - not in Cage Bird Shows. THAT'S WHERE THEY BELONG.

Charles Anchor

Reply from NFSS

"I would like someone to show me what an "English Zebra" is?"

Isn't it a zebra finch from England? <just kidding> Actually, I confess to knowing next to nothing about the various zebra or society finch standards or types. When I did this year's census, I took the previous census and added to it. The english zebras were listed on the previous census (matter of fact, I went back, and it looks like they were added in 1998) so they got included. I had heard that they were a "larger" zebra finch, but I don't know if it is true or not. I know that quite a few people think they have them because they responded to the census that they had english zebras of one type or another. Garrie Landry refers to his "english zebras" on his website at <http://www.zebrafinch.com/NewZebra/Zebra.html>. I don't know if they are considered

an "official" standard or type. I'll try to find out before next year's census.

"Then there is another pet peeve of mine - Doves, Pigeons, and Quail. We, according to our mission statement, are to be dedicated to keeping, breeding, and showing Finches and Softbills. Doves, Pigeons, and Quail 'ain't' any of these."

Everyone is entitled to their own "pet peeves" One of my goals with the census was to increase the participation of our members by listing all of the "cage and aviary" birds I could think of. I did make a mistake by listing the Doves, Pigeons, and Quail under "softbills", I probably should have had them under "Miscellaneous Birds." However, I would rather have them listed under "softbills" than not listed at all - it was my call, and since I was handling the census, I includ-

Letters

ed them. Next year, the decision will be someone else's!

Also, I'll have to disagree with you that the NFSS doesn't represent people dedicated to keeping, breeding and showing Doves & Pigeons. NFSS Official Show Classification Section Nine covers "Doves and Quails," which would indi-

cate to me that the founders of our organization did intend to cover those types of birds.

Harry Bryant

2nd VP & Legislative Representative
3rd VP- Census/FSS (*Pro-Tem*)
National Finch & Softbill Society

Do you have a comment, question, or suggestion for NFSS that you would like to share with others? Send your thoughts to Martie Lauster (address listed on Officers page). Nothing will be printed without prior approval from the author and where indicated, I will try to get a response/answer from the appropriate NFSS Officer prior to publication.



YELLOW HEADED, WHITE BREASTED GOULDIAN MALE WITH CHICKS

Photo Courtesy NFSS Member ©Tammie Hurley <http://www.geocities.com/gouldianfever/index.html>



Hey - Canaries are finches, too!!

Photo Courtesy NFSS Member ©Pam Filipski

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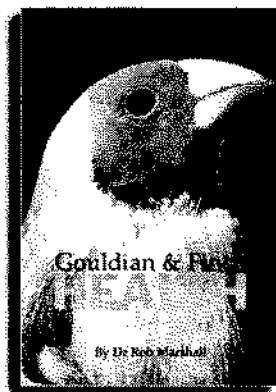
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The Status of Australian Finches in American Aviculture

American Federation of Aviculture Convention
San Antonio, Texas August 7, 2003
AFA Proceedings, 2003

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"The march of modern progress and development, the opening up of more and more land to grazing cattle and the competition it creates for the available grasses and the seed it produces, the use and aerial spraying of toxic agriculture pesticides combined with illegal trapping and smuggling is now, in our view so serious it is doubtful, that the natural regenerative process of the exotics will ever keep pace with the forces seemingly hell bent on their extinction."

RACC Discussion Paper Birds Australia Research and Conservation Priorities,
Tom Traill April 2000.¹

The purpose of this paper is to provide a general overview of the current status of the 18 recognized species of Australian grassfinches in American aviculture. It will examine the state of wild finches in Australia and how this impacts the future of American aviculture. Importation will also be discussed along with legislative issues. The activities of animal rights groups and how they impact the future of finch aviculture in the United States will also be addressed. Further, this paper will examine these finches in captivity by providing a detailed evaluation of each species. Additionally, the many facets of the National Finch and Softbill Society (NFSS) will be examined. Finally, the author will stress the important role that hobbyists play in contributing to the continued survival of healthy, genetically diverse Australian grassfinches.

This treatise will be divided into five parts. Part One will deal with Australian aviculture and how it impacts American breeders. Part Two will address importation and legislation. Part Three will be an in depth examination of each specie of grassfinch in American aviaries. Part Four will discuss the contributions of the NFSS to finch aviculture. Finally, Part Five will close out this work by examining the role of the hobbyist. At this point it will be useful to list the species in question. The common name is followed by the most currently accepted Latin name.²

Red-eared firetail finch (*Emblema
oculata*)
Beautiful firetail finch (*Emblema
bellus*)
Diamond firetail finch (*Emblema
guttata*)

Painted firetail finch (*Emblema picta*)
Crimson finch (*Neochmia phaeton*)
Star finch (*Neochmia ruficauda*)
Red-browed finch (Sydney waxbill)
(*Neochmia temporalis*)
Blue-faced parrot finch (*Erythrura
trichroa*)
Gouldian finch (*Chloebia gouldiae*)
Masked finch (*Poephila personata*)
Shafttail finch (long-tail finch)
(*Poephila a. acuticauda*)
Black throated finch (Parson)
(*Poephila cincta*)
Double bar finch (Owl, Bicheno)
(*Poephila bichenovii*)
Zebra finch (*Poephila guttata*)
Plum-headed finch (cherry)
(*Aidmosyne modesta*)
Chestnut-breasted finch (*Lonchura
castaneothorax*)
Yellow-rumped finch (*Lonchura
flaviprymna*)
Pictorella finch (*Lonchura pectoralis*)

Part One: Australian Aviculture and Impact on American Breeders

Australian finches belong to the order of birds called Passeriformes - perching birds, and the family called Estrildidae. Most of the 18 species of Australian finches have been widely kept and bred for well over a century in Australia, Europe, South Africa, Asia, and in more recent decades, the United States.³ Some of these birds are among the most popular and instantly recognized of all cage birds. Chief among these are the zebra finch and the gouldian finch.

The Australian government placed a complete ban on the exportation of its indigenous fauna in 1960. This of course encompasses the grassfinches. For several decades prior to this ban many of Australia's native birds, including the grassfinches, were trapped by the untold hundreds of thousands.^{3,4}

The decimation of once thriving flocks of grassfinches, coupled with the inevitable encroachment of growing human populations into their wide ranging habitats has taken a toll on wild bird numbers. Now some 40 plus years down the road, the

need to introduce new bloodlines into captive-bred populations is seen as critical by many aviculturalists.^{5,6} In closed systems, even when relatively large numbers of birds are present, genetic viability begins to decline. New bloodlines need to be infused to blunt the inevitable genetic drift.

^{5,6}

The fervent desire of this writer is that the government of Australia will continue cooperating with local bird clubs and organizations as well as conservation groups to stave off further degradation of wild populations of grassfinches. To assist in the survival of Australian grassfinches, one approach is to enact a special temporary provision to modify the exportation/importation ban, acquire wild caught species and captive-bred Australian stocks, and send this invaluable genetic avian cargo to selected American aviculturalists. The purpose of such dramatic efforts is to preserve rare species and to infuse much needed new bloodlines into American held grassfinches.

Consider the following: In the early 1970's the state of California suffered a devastating protracted Exotic Newcastle outbreak. This highly contagious viral disease spread quickly and ultimately some 12 million chickens were destroyed at a cost exceeding \$56 million dollars (\$239 million in today's dollars).⁹ Innumerable exotic birds were also "depopulated", including uncommon and rare species. Given the current status of so many of the grassfinches in their native environments, if such a plague came to Australia, it is not inconceivable that the meager remnants could be seriously compromised within a short time. To prevent this from occurring, it seems wise not to place all of one's eggs in one basket. Prudent husbandry would allow several species to find their way into the hands of capable and responsible American breeders. Simultaneously, American breeders should take reciprocal actions and send some of our bloodlines back to Australia. Captive-raised birds in Australia are suffering from the long-term effects of limited bloodlines.

The writer in no way suggests that

Australian breeders are incapable of preserving their own indigenous species, but rather suggests this action as an intercessory way to multiply the chances that some of the more rare species will survive. This suggestion is a stopgap, failsafe intervention intended to stay ahead of scythe of the Extinction Vortex. The Extinction Vortex is defined as: "**The interacting factors that serve to progressively reduce already small populations, drawing them into extinction like an inescapable whirlpool.**"⁶

The Extinction Vortex of the small-population approach looks something like this:

In small populations there is inbreeding and random genetic drift. This causes the loss of genetic viability. Loss of genetic viability results in reduction of individual fitness and population adaptability. This results in lower reproduction and higher mortality, all of which continues the downward spiral to even smaller populations and the cycle accelerates as it repeats itself until the species is no more.⁷

The writer acknowledges that the proposed scenario of species exchange is unlikely to occur and some will even accuse him of being naïve. Given the pace of continued destruction and encroachment of habitat, severe protracted drought, the volatility of captive-raised gene pools, and wildfires that blindly consume food sources and nesting sites, this proposal does not seem naïve at all. Instead it is offered as a sensible measure to protect some of the grassfinch species from going the way of the Dodo bird or Tasmanian devil.

At least one extraordinary precedent exists. As noted in the British finch magazine *The Estrildian*, New Zealand took a bold and forward-thinking position to rescind its then 39 year import ban in 1998.⁸ After years of intense lobbying by New Zealand aviculturalists, government ministers altered laws to permit the impor-

tation of finches from Great Britain - and not a moment too early. New Zealand author and aviculturalist Andrew Benson observes that Australian indigenous species numbers are very low in New Zealand; literally down to a handful. These survivors are in the hands of one or two breeders who are struggling to maintain them.⁹ This program required the cooperation and goodwill of British hobbyists and clearly demonstrates the commitment of breeders on opposite sides of the globe who desire to preserve Australian and African finches. The decline of wild finches accelerates with each passing year, therefore innovative provisions must be considered if these birds are to be spared the fate extinction.¹⁰

The number one cause for the drastic decline in native populations of grassfinches is loss of habitat; some 500,000 hectares per year.¹⁴ Habitat loss is an unfortunate, but familiar plague that threatens many species of birds on all continents. Loss of habitat in the case of Australian grassfinches results from the expansion of the timber industry, ranching for cattle and sheep, and to a lesser degree mining.¹ The second major cause for declining populations are unchecked forest and savanna fires that have scorched huge segments of natural habitat.

It must be noted, however, that some Australian conservationists support the idea of controlled fires as a natural way to improve available grasses and brush. Caretakers at Queensland's Mareeba Tropical Savanna and Wetland Reserve strongly support the idea that sustained regimens of controlled, very hot brush fires are required to get the savannas back into working order. This same group released 20 captive raised Gouldians supplied by local amateur aviculturalists back into the reserve for the first time in 25 years in March of 2003.¹¹

While American bird keepers can boast that the Lady Gouldian finch exists in significant numbers, this is not the case in

Australia. During the mid 1950's, estimates of wild Lady Gouldian finches were in the several million range¹¹ Reliable reports from various wildlife agencies tag the number of wild Gouldians now to be between 1200–2500 individuals.¹² This is less than world's wild tiger population!¹³ These surely must be viewed as shockingly low numbers. Even minor changes in the grassfinches' environment could quickly spell doom for them.

While Australia and New Zealand have many devoted aviculturalists and an extensive network of local and regional clubs, the majority of grassfinches face a perilous and uncertain future in their natural environments. The combined forces of human encroachment and natural plagues pose formidable obstacles against these beauties. If their numbers keep declining at the current pace, their demise may be measured in years and not decades.

Part Two: Importation & Legislation

American breeders cannot continue the lackadaisical attitude that all species will be inexhaustibly available via the next 747 from Europe. Some speculate that importation may soon be significantly restricted or halted altogether. With recent outbreaks of Monkey pox, avian influenza, and SARS in Europe and Asia, the pall of uncertainty hangs ominously over the future of importation. Therefore it cannot be stressed too strongly that the collective goal of American breeders must be to obtain and selectively breed as many species currently available before it is too late. The mindset of many breeders must evolve from bird keeping as a past time to that of serious-minded conservationists.

Availability was compounded when the Australian government placed a ban on the exportation of all indigenous fauna in 1960. Since that time no Australian finches - wild caught or captive bred - have legally left the shores of Australia. Fast forward to present and Australia is in the grips of a multi-year drought. Combine this with significant forest and range fires, the loss of land for timber, mining, and cattle grazing, issues of pollution, the siphoning of

natural water courses for irrigation, and it is not surprising that many species are disappearing from the landscape.¹⁴ Most of the Australian grassfinches are in danger in their native environments.

While newly imported birds can be viewed as welcomed additions to augment existing bloodlines of captive populations, seemingly endless streams of imported birds cannot be seen as the final solution. The solution needs to be the establishment of large populations of genetically diverse, captive-bred grassfinches in American aviaries. It is not inconceivable that in a few short years many of the rare or infrequently kept species will simply die out.

If this seems far-fetched, consider this. Between recently enacted restrictions in several European countries- including first time quarantines in some of them- higher shipping and handling fees, coupled the worldwide threat of terrorism and all the logistical nightmares it has created for airlines and their clients, it is not business as usual. American breeders must accept the responsibility that accompanies privilege. When importation ceases, the finch store will be closed. The ensuing chaotic scramble to start breeding to "save them", may be a moot point because sufficient numbers will not be present to sustain a viable breeding population of grassfinches. We will have effectively missed our window of opportunity to make the necessary gains now to prevent the scenario above.

Currently US bird breeders are facing a phalanx of irrational and increasingly militant animal rights groups. PETA- People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals- is chief among these radical organizations. Individuals known to associate with and that are financed by PETA have been convicted of firebombing animal research facilities.¹⁷ PETA Campaign Director Bruce Friedrich was quoted on July 2, 2001 with the following: "It would be a great thing if all these fast-food outlets, these slaughterhouses, these laboratories, and the banks that fund them exploded tomorrow... Hallelujah to the people who are willing to do it."¹⁷

Irresponsible and dangerous statements like this one and others of similar fanaticism must be viewed as wholly unacceptable.¹⁸ Not surprisingly, some groups closely linked to PETA, like Earth Liberation Movement, are on the FBI's list of domestic terrorist groups.¹⁷ American aviculturalists are among the most staunch supporters and practitioners of humane and ethical treatment of animals. Aviculturalists are involved in preservation and not domination.

The tragic dichotomy is, were not for the sacrificial labors of aviculturalists, many threatened species would have already died out, because they no longer exist in the wild. Recent legislation including the Animal Welfare Act may have dubious long-term impact on aviculture. The volume of this material cannot be dealt with appropriately within the context of this paper so the reader is strongly encouraged to visit the comprehensive legislative web pages of the NFSS www.nfss.org and the AFA www.afabirds.org.

Recently, diverse elements of avian interest groups formed The National Avian Welfare Alliance- NAWA- in May of 2003 at a meeting in Houston, Texas.¹⁹ At present the membership (which is already substantial) will be restricted to bird groups and societies and will be by invitation only. Additional information can be found at the NFSS website and the NAWA website: www.nawabirds.org. Bird lovers everywhere can anticipate positive results with the new national alliance of proactive and responsible avicultural groups, whose goals can be found in the NAWA mission statement. "To insure the welfare of birds in captivity through education, research, and conservation."

Part Three: Australian Finches in American Aviaries

As part of the research in preparing this document, the writer polled breeders, NFSS judges, importers, and brokers and asked to them to rate the relative establishment of the grassfinches based on their experience. Those polled came from every

region of the nation and their combined breeding experience exceeds several hundred years. The respondents were asked to rate all 18 species on a scale from 0 to 5, with zero being nonexistent and 5 being well established. The author gratefully acknowledges the valuable contribution of those who participated.²⁰

Red-eared Firetail (*Emblema oculata*) - Rating: 0

0 = Non-Existent in U.S. Well-Established = 5

The red-eared firetail has never been legally imported in to the United States. The author knows of anecdotal evidence that some are being bred in Belgium and possibly in other European countries. Next to the yellow-rump mannikin, this is the least known of the grassfinches. Immelmann details that the red-ear could be found within a tiny range of southern Western Australia.³ The writer has seen one or two clear color photographs of this bird and it is a gorgeous finch. This bird was recently found on one Australian bird dealer's list for \$1500 per pair (Australian). This firetail needs refuge in many American aviaries. The only other Estrildidae species in this bird's very limited range is the introduced red-brow finch.²¹

Beautiful Firetail Finch (*Emblema bellus*) - Rating: 0

0 = Non-Existent in U.S. Well-Established = 5

The beautiful firetail, also called the Tasmanian waxbill, has never been legally imported into the United States. It may exist in small numbers in Europe. Limited numbers of Australian breeders keep this bird. Even in its native land, the beautiful firetail is rare. Very few color photographs exist of the beautiful firetail, but what the author has seen, this bird most certainly lives up to its name. John Gould knew of what he spoke when he described this striking bird in his 1865 tome.²²

Beginning in the early 1980's a concerted captive-breeding program was initiated involving Australian researcher and aviculturalist David Myers of Newcastle, NSW.¹³ David White in Victoria conducted

separate programs. Through a unique cooperative program with the government, wild-caught beautiful and red-ear firetails were secured and a captive-breeding program launched. The original plan was to document their calls through a complete breeding cycle and release captive raised offspring back into the wild. The program proved to be so successful that breeders in the program were allowed to sell a limited number to other aviculturalists. This success seems to indicate that the beautiful firetail, and perhaps to a lesser extent the red-ear firetail, can be nearly as prolific in captivity as the diamond or the painted. This must surely be viewed as good news for aviculture. There is an immediate need to acquire and intervene on behalf of both of these impressive birds. It is a genuine tragedy that the beautiful and the red-ear firetail cannot be found in American avianes.

Diamond Firetail Finch
(*Emblema guttata*) - Rating: 3.3

0 = Non-Existent in U.S. Well-Established = 5



Photo Courtesy ©Roy Beckham

The diamond firetail enjoys moderate enthusiasm in America and is being bred fairly regularly, though few breeders report success parent raising these birds. This bird is regularly imported with those individuals ranging from \$140-\$175 per pair. There are several interesting mutations including an orange tail (found in the normal and fawn), fawn, pied, ino, white, and more recently a silver (\$500 per pair). Interestingly, some Australian dealers list the diamond at twice the price of the painted firetail. The diamond or diamys as the Australians call them, is an extremely intel-

ligent and active bird. Its bold and inquisitive nature makes it very desirable to keep. This firetail must surely possess one of the most exaggerated courtship displays of all the grassfinches. The bird builds a tremendous nest and both sexes are devoted parents. The diamond firetail is not too difficult to breed though it likely cannot be classified as a beginner bird. Difficulty in sexing this bird may contribute to it not having a more wide spread acceptance. The diamond firetail may be the writers' favorite Australian grassfinch.

Painted Firetail Finch
(*Emblema picta*) - Rating: 1.1

0 = Non-Existent in U.S. Well-Established = 5

This delightful and peaceful firetail is an enigma to the author because so few breeders are keeping them. Part of that reason must certainly be attributed to their high cost. Imported individuals still command \$450 per pair. This specie is sexually dimorphic and thus it is easy to determine true pairs. It has been bred numerous times and those who have had success report the painted is not difficult to breed once certain minimum requirements are met. In the wild it is a true ground nesting bird, building a singularly unique twig nest on a platform of dirt clods, rocks, and bark in the thorns of the spinifex bush.²³ The cock bird has a charming little song and the striking scarlet breast color makes this bird a very desirable addition to any collection. Immelmann reported that the species has one of the loudest calls of all the grassfinches.³ Its uniquely long and slender beak is thoroughly suited to pluck out seeds from the treacherous spikes of the spinifex and rocks in its native range. A yellow variety is known to exist in Australia. The painted finch needs serious and immediate attention.

Crimson Finch
(*Neochmia phaeton*) - Rating: 0.7

0 = Non-Existent in U.S. Well-Established = 5

This visual stunner is imported irregularly and often in very small numbers. It is not uncommon for several years to pass

without seeing this finch offered on import lists. This bird has a reputation of perhaps being the most aggressive of all the grass-finches. Wild caught Indonesian birds often find their way to importers and their price may exceed \$400 per pair. Klaus Immelmann detailed that this bird existed in New Guinea at the time of his research (1959-1960), but did not speculate if it was a feral bird on those islands or whether its natural range extended there.³ Immelmann lists two races for the crimson: the black-bellied and the white-bellied, with the latter most commonly imported. A yellow-bellied mutation also exists. The sexes are easy to differentiate.

Breeding successes are increasing in other countries, though reports are that this bird requires a lengthy bonding period and like some African waxbills, crimson cock birds can be treacherous to their mates. The writer could not locate any documentation the crimson finch has been bred in America. This should not deter serious breeders from attempting to stabilize this bird. This gorgeous bird deserves serious attention and should be accepted as a challenge by more experienced breeders.

Star Finch

(*Neochmia ruficauda*) - Rating: 4.3

0 = Non-Existent in U.S. Well-Established = 5

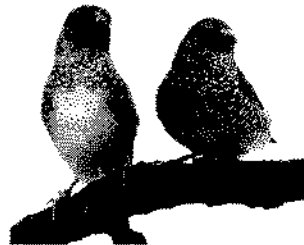


Photo Courtesy ©Roy Beckham

Regular passengers from Europe, stars are a favorite among breeders because of their docile nature and they are easy to breed. The star finch is an ideal bird for novice breeders and is easy to sex, but experienced breeders enjoy this bird as well. It is an ideal candidate in a mixed flight. The yellow face star is a lovely

mutation and there is also a cinnamon or fawn mutation as well. The recognition of birds on Australia's Cape York Peninsula as a distinct subspecies is welcome news, but the star finch is facing dire threats in most of its range.²⁴ In fact the nominate species, *n. ruficauda ruficauda* is now believed to be extinct in the wild.²⁵

Interested breeders can expect to pay \$100 per pair for normal stars and \$140 -150 per pair for the yellow face variety. This bird possesses a calm and sweet nature and is delightful in the bird room. The star finch appears to be reasonably well established in America.

Red-browed Finch (Sydney Waxbill) (*Neochmia ruficauda*) - Rating: 0.9

0 = Non-Existent in U.S. Well-Established = 5

Also known as the Sydney waxbill or red-browed firetail, this bird is only an occasional import. Though it is a pretty little bird, with splashes of scarlet on the lores and tail, it is surprisingly uncommon. The author secured one imported pair several years ago and found them active and engaging birds. They are difficult to sex. Regrettably the pair never laid any eggs. When the hen died, a necropsy revealed ovaries estimating the age of the hen at 6-7 years. No doubt the pair was some European breeder's culls; yet another unwelcome foible of importation. No anecdotal evidence has been located confirming that the red-browed has been bred in the US. Feral populations introduced into the red-ear firetails' range in the late 1950's did well until the late 1980's and early 1990's due to illegal trapping.²¹ Though this bird commands a price approaching \$300 per pair, it is still deserving of our efforts to establish it in American bird rooms.

Blue Faced Parrot Finch (*Erythrura trichoa*) - Rating: 3.1

0 = Non-Existent in U.S. Well-Established = 5

Curiously, this is the only bird that Klaus Immelmann did not see in the wild during his landmark research in 1959. The

blue-face is still routinely imported with prices ranging from \$180 to \$225 per pair. Like many species of parrot finches, frequent inbreeding and hybridizing occurs by less than prudent breeders.¹⁵ This bird can be a fairly free breeder, but many report frustrating results. An absolutely gorgeous lutino mutation exists, though it has not appeared on import lists for many years. The author once owned several and cock birds would sing all day long. Pied mutations can also be found in the blue face. The blue face parrot finch is in fairly good shape in America, but emphasis must be placed on selective breeding and closely monitoring bloodlines to prevent inbreeding and strictly avoid hybridization.

Gouldian finch
(*Chloebia gouldiae*) - Rating: 4.9

0 = Non-Existent in U.S. Well-Established = 5



Photo Courtesy ©Roy Beckham

The Lady Gouldian is easily the undisputed beauty of all the grassfinches. There is no way of knowing the exact number, but it may be safe to state that the Gouldian finch exists in the scores of thousands in America- perhaps even more. While American breeders can boast impressive numbers, considerable work lies ahead to improve the size and over all quality of this bird.

Few will argue that were it not for the Bengalese finch (*lonchura domestica*) this bird, and most of the other Australian grassfinches, would not exist in the numbers they do today. Gouldians have a history in the US at least going back to the 1930's.

Because the innumerable mutations are so popular, pure normal head colored

birds seems to be in the minority. Many conscientious breeders are now focusing on building strong lines of pure red, black, and orange headed Gouldians. The red head variety is clearly the favorite among breeders. In the wild the ratio of head colors is almost exactly opposite of what it seems to be in captivity. The original black head Gouldian numbers 80%, while the red head is only at 20%. The orange head is very rare in the wild.¹¹ The Gouldian is a peaceful bird, can be colony raised, and is a fairly free breeder. The Gouldian finch is safe in America, but efforts must continue to raise pure races of the original head colors. Domestically raised closed-banded individuals carry a \$150-200 per pair price tag for the normal head colors. In Australia blue body birds can fetch \$1500 a pair.

Masked Finch
(*Poephila personata*) - Rating: 2.3

0 = Non-Existent in U.S. Well-Established = 5



Photo Courtesy ©Roy Beckham

This bird has never been widely kept, although it probably cannot be called rare or even uncommon. This is puzzling because its striking yellow beak is almost singular among the grassfinches. Again, difficulty in sexing this species likely prevents wider acceptance. Next to the owl and Sydney waxbill, it may be the most difficult to visually sex.²⁶ This bird is occasionally seen on import lists. No known mutations exist. Klaus Immelmann reports that the mask grassfinch is even more social than the much better known Gouldian finch. The mask finch can also be colony raised. The reader should take note of its Latin name, *Poephila personata*, because this is truly a lovely finch with quite a

charming character. It does well in mixed aviaries and more breeders are encouraged to better establish this most excellent aviary specimen. Expect to pay \$160-180 per pair for quality stock.

Shafttail Finch
(*Poephila a. acuticauda*) - Rating: 4

0 = Non-Existent in U.S. Well-Established = 5



Photo Courtesy ©Roy Beckham

The shafttail was once so common in America that it was removed from the FSS list of birds accepted into the NFSS's Finch and Softbill Save program (to be discussed later). That has now changed. Also known as the long-tail finch this most endearing bird may well have the most docile nature of all of the grassfinches. Immelmann believed these birds mated for life.³ Another race called Heck's (*Poephila a. hecki*) exists and is known by its orange beak color. The shafttail is a particular favorite of the author.

It is easy to sex, very willing to breed, and makes a good beginner bird. It is excellent and lively addition to any mixed collection. Several mutations exist including the white and fawn. The shafttail finch is still imported frequently and can usually be purchased for under \$100 per pair. This bird is a delight in the aviary.

Parson Finch
(*Poephila cincta*) - Rating: 2.9

0 = Non-Existent in U.S. Well-Established = 5

The Parson is usually seen on import lists. This is a fairly popular bird, and has thrown mutations similar to the shafttail. It is also known as the black-throated finch. It is more difficult to breed than the shafttail

and harder to sex, but very intelligent and full of personality. This is feisty grassfinch.



Photo Courtesy ©Roy Beckham

Pairs in the author's possession have thrilled him with extensive freestanding nests and proved to be very good parents. Though the Parson does not possess bright colors, its distinctive patterns and gregarious nature makes it a very desirable addition to ones bird room. Costs range from \$180-200 per pair. Australian breeders report a chocolate variation of this bird. A race called Diggles finch *P. c. atropygialis* and a dark phase of Diggles, *P.c. nigrota* where the lower breast and abdomen are a grayish chocolate brown can also be found in Australia.²⁷

Owl Finch
(*Poephila bichenovii*) - Rating: 4.4

0 = Non-Existent in U.S. Well-Established = 5



Photo Courtesy ©Roy Beckham

The owl is an extremely popular bird and is being widely kept and bred. It is also imported regularly. Difficulty in visually sexing these birds prevents more people from breeding them. There are no known mutations. The owl is the smallest of the grassfinches and probably has the most unique facial features and coloration. A black-rump race is kept in America, but the

white-rump race is more common. In a large enough aviary, the owl can be colony raised. Even though the owl is widely bred and kept it still commands high prices. In certain parts of the nation, such as the south, owls are routinely offered for \$250 per pair. While imported birds can be found for \$140-175 per pair, domestically raised closed-banded pairs go for \$175-200 per pair. The owl finch appears to be safe in American aviaries.

Zebra Finch
(*Poephilia guttata*) - Rating: 5

0 = Non-Existent in U.S. Well-Established = 5



Photo Courtesy ©Roy Beckham

The zebra finch may quite easily be the most widely kept bird in the world. It is an excellent beginner's bird but is also a keen favorite among exhibitors. This is the only grassfinch to receive a 5 rating in establishment in America. The zebra finch may only rival the Gouldian in the number of mutations and variations it has produced. For decades this bird has been selectively bred to where exhibition quality specimens approach nearly twice the size of the native wild cousins. The zebra is mass-produced in staggering numbers for the pet trade. The author knows of several such operations in West Texas, with one facility boasting 10,000 breeding pair of zebra finches. The zebra finch is very safe in American aviaries, but too few breeders actually strive to produce quality individuals. Fortunately, because of the exhibition side of the hobby, numerous strains of genetically diverse specimens are still being bred. \$5-10 will secure the average zebra finch, while exhibition quality birds command much more.

Cherry Finch

(*Aidemosyne modesta*) - Rating: 2

0 = Non-Existent in U.S. Well-Established = 5



Photo Courtesy ©Roy Beckham

This bird is also known as the plum-head finch. These birds are still being imported including a very attractive Isabel or fawn mutation. Not many breed them, largely because they are not perceived as a splashy looking bird. The writer disagrees. A closer look at the crisp patterns and spots reveals a singularly quiet beauty. The soft plum color of the male and their peaceful demeanor makes them an ideal candidate for breeders, including mixed collections. Birds in the writer's possession have surprised him with freestanding nests. Some breeders report the cherry building ground nests similar to that of the painted. The plum-head finch is very easy to sex but appears not to be as prolific as some other commonly bred grassfinches.²⁸ The subtle but finely delineated coloration and the soft song of the male cherry finch makes it a must-have addition to a collection. Expect to pay \$125-150 for domestically raised closed-banded birds. The plum head is highly favored by the writer and other breeders should not overlook this aviary jewel.

Chestnut-breasted Finch

(*Lonchura castaneothorax*) - Rating: 1.7

0 = Non-Existent in U.S. Well-Established = 5

Here is another widely over looked gem among the grassfinches. Admittedly somewhat difficult to sex, this bird is none the less a fairly keen breeder. Recently viewed color photographs of this species reminded the author of how extraordinary

the earth shades of the chestnut-breasted finch are. Its courtship displays are different than most other grassfinches in that contact between the sexes is important,



Photo Courtesy ©Roy Beckham

even before actual mating commences.²⁹ The deep bowing gestures of both sexes is quite endearing. Known mutations include an albino and a deep chocolate brown chest color, instead of the normal "chestnut" color. There is also a crested and a fawn mutation as well. Chestnut-breasted pairs sell \$200 per pair and up.

Yellow Rump Finch
(*Lonchura flaviprymna*) - Rating: 0

0 = Non-Existent in U.S. Well-Established = 5

The writer has reliable documentation that the yellow-rump has been imported into America, but they are few and far between. In fact, scant information other than the work of Immelmann could be located for this species.³⁰ This is a real shame given that this bird belongs to the *Lonchura* family and probably is a fairly prolific breeder.

The yellow-rump can be found in Australian aviaries for a price of \$100-150 Australian. The bird is also kept in Germany, Belgium, and perhaps several other European countries. It may not exist in great numbers there; hence it has rarely been imported. Another likely scenario is, there has simply been very little, if any, demand for this bird. It may be correctly argued that the yellow-rump mannikin is the least distinctive of the 18 grassfinches, but this should not prevent its firm establishment in American aviaries. It must be

viewed as an important species and not neglected because of its somewhat austere appearance.

Pictorella Finch
(*Lonchura pectoralis*) - Rating: 0.4

0 = Non-Existent in U.S. Well-Established = 5

This bird is possessed of subdued coloration and quiet demeanor. It has seldom been kept and has not been imported for years. The writer had two pair several years ago, but had no breeding success and passed them along to a more experienced mannikin breeder. Unfortunately, the birds never bred. Although difficult to sex, it is another fairly free breeder. This bird deserves our immediate attention. Of the three *lonchura* grassfinches, the *pictorella* may be the most attractive. Price range approaches \$300 per pair. This bird is not uncommon in Australian aviaries and efforts must be made to secure good strains from European sources.

The following is a summary of the status of the birds which are currently being kept or are available to American breeders:

<p><u>5.0</u> Well- Established in U.S.</p>	<p>5.0 Zebra finch 4.9 Gouldian finch 4.4 Owl finch 4.3 Star finch 4.0 Shaftail finch 3.3 Diamond firetail 3.1 Blue-faced parrot finch 2.9 Parson finch 2.3 Masked finch 2.0 Cherry 1.7 Chestnut-breasted finch 1.1 Painted firetail 0.9 Red-browed finch 0.7 Crimson finch 0.4 Pictorella finch 0.0 Yellow-rumped finch <u>0.0</u> 0.0 Red-ear firetail</p>
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Overall, most of the Australian grassfinches must be honestly appraised as being poorly represented in American aviaries. Many of these grassfinches face precarious circumstances in their native environments, and to that end serious efforts are required to breed genetically diverse bloodlines to ensure their future. Their ultimate survival in the wild seems doubtful, and so the efforts of concerned aviculturalists become critical to their existence. Simply stated, while every specie of grassfinch cannot boast the polychromatic explosion of color of the Gouldian finch, every specie never the less is worthy of serious conservation efforts. All grassfinches can claim distinctive mating rituals, nest building techniques, subtle but intricate color patterns, calls, songs, and displays that make them fascinating and essential additions to every bird room. Perceived lack of visual beauty must not hinder serious endeavors to establish some of these orphan species.

Part Four: Contributions of the National Finch & Softbill Society to Aviculture

The only national organization devoted to finches and softbills in the USA is the National Finch and Softbill Society- NFSS. This organization is a community of bird enthusiasts who share an enjoyment of keeping and breeding finches and softbills. The NFSS publishes a bi-monthly Journal whose chief aim is to disseminate information to all its members. The NFSS also sponsors an online discussion group called the NFSS Forum. One of the hallmarks of the NFSS is the close banding of birds. The NFSS sells numbered closed bands to its members so bloodlines and families can be tracked accurately. The NFSS strongly encourages its members to faithfully close band their birds.

The NFSS also supports and sponsors several sanctioned shows and exhibitions throughout the year. Standards for confirmation and deportment have been established and many NFSS members enjoy the excitement and personal satis-

faction of exhibiting competitively. NFSS trained judges are available to local clubs. It has been through the diligent efforts of exhibitors, and meticulous selective breeding, that many of the finer strains of grassfinches now exist.

Another aspect of the NFSS is the website www.nfss.org. Here anyone can navigate many areas to learn about current legislation, read numerous archived Journal articles, locate resources for seed, supplies and equipment, browse through Finch Shop, look at classified ads, purchase NFSS closed leg bands, view color photographs, and much more.

Finally, within the NFSS more advanced breeders who wish to specialize can participate in the FSS- the Finch and Softbill Save Program. This program requires that breeders band all their birds- either open or closed- and register them in the program. Applicants are asked to complete forms detailing their breeding programs. Many of the more difficult to breed or rare species can be found in this program. The FSS stresses closed banding as the preferred ideal.

The National Finch and Softbill Society plays an important role in the preservation of finches. Its membership encompasses nearly all fifty states and several foreign countries. Between the Journal, the website, the Internet Forum, and shows, NFSS members combine to form a close knit family of like-minded aviculturalists. The NFSS is an organization worthy of joining and contributing to. The writer strongly encourages the reader to visit the website and join this vital community of enthusiastic breeders.

Part Five: Role of the Hobbyist

It should be apparent that the proverbial glory days of Bates and Busenbark are gone forever. Permanent closure of Australian borders to export, the volatile political environment in many nations around the globe, more stringent importation requirements from Europe and elsewhere contribute to avicultural instability. It

can be demonstrated that the survival or demise of many of the Australian species in North America lies in the hands of individual American aviculturalists. It is not an exaggeration to state that a good number of species have come to a critical mass. Daunting challenges such as outbreaks of Exotic Newcastle Disease (END), West Nile virus, militant animal rights groups, and small genetic bases, will continue to rend at the fabric of the American avicultural community. Breeders must embrace a vision for the future.

The entire avicultural community must expand its imagination and enhance its perception to acknowledge that grassfinches carry an equal weight in the big ecological picture. Who has the right or the authority to say that a Spix macaw (*Cyanopsitta spixii*) is more worthy of ecological intervention than a red-ear firetail? If either the red-ear or the Spix disappears, they both will pass into the ether of extinction and into the vapors of oblivion. One order or family of birds should not carry more importance or greater prestige than another.

The last surviving passenger pigeon- a bird named Martha- (*Ectopistes migratorius*), a bird once more numerous than all other indigenous North American species combined, died in the Cincinnati zoo in 1914.³¹ In the not too distant future will some aging crimson finch suffer an identical tragic fate in lonely anonymity in the garden aviary of some suburban hobbyist? We need to act now to ensure that never happens. What exactly can the average hobbyist do to help build up Australian finches in America? The writer offers these simple but important suggestions:

Join and participate in national avicultural organizations. These would include The American Federation of Aviculture- AFA www.afabirds.org, and the National Finch and Softbill Society- NFSS www.nfss.org.

Obtain some of the more uncommon or rare species discussed

herein. Learn all you can about them and then share your knowledge.

Be diligent in your record keeping and purposeful when pairing up birds to breed.

Close-band all your birds.

Become active at the local level in an area or regional bird club.

Become proactive with your state and national elected representatives. Write letters, send emails, make phone calls. Remember, the squeaky wheel gets the grease.

Share your love of birds with others. Become a mentor and get someone else excited about our hobby. Nurture the next generation of aviculturalists.

The writer strongly believes that contributions made by hobbyists with small to moderate size collections will prove invaluable in perpetuating strong diverse bloodlines of healthy grassfinches. Zoological institutions, wildlife reserves, theme parks and the like cannot be counted on to save the day. They have neither the space nor the financial resources to devote to maintain a stable population of finches. The backyard enthusiast therefore becomes a strategic player in the high goals to ensure that future generations- our grandchildren- will be able to experience the same kind of challenge and reward that many finch breeders enjoy today. It is neither a dramatic statement nor a romantic notion that a unified collective of individual hobbyists faithfully embracing a singular belief will ultimately win the day for the lasting existence of many of the Australian grassfinches.

In the absence of appropriate genetic diversity the effects of small populations reinforce each other in a negative spiral. The need for selective breeding using closed numbered bands to ensure diverse, robust bloodlines will be essential for the long-term survival of grassfinches. It will

be a tragic day if the writer has to show his grandchildren photographs of Australian grassfinches from some coffee table book. because these kinetic beauties died out in American aviaries. What a dark day it will be if the last individual of a species is sucked into the black abyss that is extinction. In closing, the writer respectfully leaves the reader with this simple but hopefully provocative challenge.

If not you, then who?
If not now, then when?


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A Comparison of Ivermectin Administration Methods in Finches and Canaries

Lawrence L. Baum, D.V.M.

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One thing I would like everyone to understand before reading this article is that I am not an avian veterinarian. I am a small animal practitioner whose patients consist of dogs, cats, and an occasional pocket pet. I have greatly enjoyed practicing veterinary medicine in this capacity for 34 years. I also enjoy keeping, breeding, and raising finches.

I refer avian patients to an avian veterinarian in a nearby larger city. Unfortunately, avian veterinarians are not readily accessible to everyone. Even when they are, many finch owners opt not to use their services for various reasons preferring instead to treat with over-the-counter medicines. Hobbyists frequently seek advice from other hobbyists, especially over the internet. Questions regarding the use of ivermectin regularly surface. This article was prompted by one such question on the NFSS e-group. One of our regular e-group participants questioned the safety and efficacy of adding ivermectin to the drinking water — a method about which she had learned from a Canary breeder on another internet e-group.

I had not previously heard of using ivermectin in the drinking water so my curiosity was aroused. I did some calculations and comparisons and shared them with the NFSS e-group. Since the majority of NFSS members do not participate in our internet group, our NFSS Journal editor requested I share the information in those posts via an article which I hope will foster

a better understanding of ivermectin and the manner in which it is currently being used by finch breeders. I do not profess to be an expert on the subject, but I hope that I may provide some insightful information.

Ivermectin is a livestock drug labeled and approved for use in a variety of animal species; it is not labeled or approved for use in birds. However, it is commonly used by veterinarians and many finch (and other bird) hobbyists to eliminate or control certain avian parasites such as air-sac mites, scaly leg and face mites, feather mites, and some intestinal worms. It works by interfering with gammaaminobutyric acid (GABA) which functions as a neurotransmitter in some invertebrates. Ivermectin causes paralysis and death in certain worms, mites, and lice by interrupting nerve impulses.

Mammals (and presumably our birds) avoid a similar fate because ivermectin does not readily penetrate their central nervous system where GABA also functions as a neurotransmitter. Acetylcholine, which is the principal neurotransmitter of their peripheral nervous system, is unaffected by ivermectin. moxidectin (Scatt) works in a similar manner.

Scatt (moxidectin) is labeled for use in birds; ivermectin is not. Various formulations of ivermectin manufactured by Merial are available for use in cattle, swine, horses, sheep, dogs, and cats. Merial's Ivomec Injection for Cattle and Swine is the formulation which is most often used for finches

and canaries. It is available without a prescription at most livestock stores. Use of this product in birds is not in accordance with its labeling; nor is it approved by any regulatory agency or Merial.

Dosage amounts of ivermectin and frequency of administration recommendations for avian species appear in multiple veterinary texts. These recommendations vary somewhat (both in amount and frequency) from one text to another so it's not surprising that dosages used by veterinarians and hobbyists are also somewhat variable. Such dosages may be empirical (based on user's experiences and observations) or extrapolated (based on the assumption that a dose used in one species might work if similarly dosed in another). This assumption is not always a correct one.

An empirical dose of ivermectin which is commonly used for finches and canaries is 200 mcg. (micrograms) per kg. of body weight applied topically. This is the same dose that is approved for oral administration in horses and sheep and for injection in cattle. It has perhaps been extrapolated from the doses used in those species. Some recommend repeating this dose in 2 weeks; others recommend repeating this dose once each week for 3 weeks and then repeating the weekly treatment cycle in four months. Other recommendations exist.

The Ivomec Injection for Cattle and Swine is a 1% solution. It contains 1% ivermectin, so there is 1 gm. of ivermectin in 100 ml. of solution. The solution consists of glycerol formal and propylene glycol. One ml. of this injectable solution contains 10 mg. of ivermectin.

When the 1% Ivomec Injection for Cattle and Swine is applied topically to finches and canaries, most recommend diluting it 1:10 with propylene glycol and applying one drop of the diluted solution to the bird's skin. Remembering that the 1% injectable solution contains 10 mg. of ivermectin per ml., the 1:10 diluted solution now contains 1 mg. of ivermectin per ml. If 20 drops are the equivalent of 1 ml., each

drop of this diluted solution contains 0.05 mg. of ivermectin.

The empirical topical dose (200 mcg. per kg.) of ivermectin for a 30 gm. Canary is 0.006 mg. If one drop of the 1:10 diluted solution containing 0.05 mg of ivermectin is applied to a 30 gm. Canary, the Canary receives a dose which is 8.33 times the empirical dose of 0.006 mg. The same dose is routinely applied to finches who weigh much less than canaries. This results in their receiving a dose considerably greater than 8.33 times the dose which was empirically recommended.

Fortunately, ivermectin has shown a wide margin of safety when used in other species of animals for which its use has been approved. It also seems to enjoy a wide margin of safety in most healthy finches. Most of us know hobbyists who have successfully applied the 1% Ivomec Injectable for Cattle and Swine to their Finches or canaries without diluting it, and empirical doses higher than 200 mcg. per kg. of body weight appear in some veterinary texts.

Most of us also know of birds which have died when treated with either ivermectin or moxidectin (Scatt). Masses of worms killed by these drugs may block the intestines; masses of air-sac mites killed by these drugs may block air passages. Extremely high doses which overcome the blood-brain barrier's ability to exclude these drugs from the central nervous system may cause neurotoxicity. Undetected infections and inflammatory processes may alter the blood-brain barrier permitting entry of the drug into the central nervous system. Ivermectin and moxidectin (Scatt) are best used judiciously or not at all on debilitated or ill individuals.

A formula for adding ivermectin to the drinking water of Finches and canaries has recently been circulating on the finch and canary internet e-groups. I do not know who formulated this dose so I will theorize on the manner in which it may have been developed.

The oral sheep dose of ivermectin and the injectable cattle dose are both 200 mcg. per kg. of body weight. One might

infer that oral administration of ivermectin in ruminants favorably compares with injectable administration.

The topical administration of ivermectin in cattle is 500 mcg. per kg. of body weight. One might infer that 2.5 times the oral and/or systemic doses are required for topical administration.

This formula recommends adding 4cc. of ivermectin (presumably the 1% Ivomec Injection for Cattle and Swine) to one gallon of water. A quart is 960 ml., which approximates 1 liter which is 1000 ml. I took the liberty of calculating based on 1 ml. of 1% ivermectin in 1 liter of water. The drinking water now contains 0.01 mg. of ivermectin per ml.

My sources estimate the water consumption of a 30 gm. canary as 2 ml. per day. Assuming this is correct, the canary consumes 2 ml. of drinking water containing 0.01 mg. of ivermectin per ml. The canary received a total dose of 0.02 mg. of ivermectin. Remember that the empirical topical dose for this bird is 0.006 mg. Therefore, the canary consumed a dose which is 3.33 times the empirical topical dose. If the canary bathes in the medicated water, additional drug will be absorbed topically.

Assuming the 30 gm. canary did not bathe in the water, the canary consumed 0.02 mg. of ivermectin. Had we applied the

1:10 dilution of ivermectin topically, the canary would have received 0.05 mg. of ivermectin. Remembering the inferences from the oral sheep, injectable cattle, and topical cattle doses, we theorized that 2.5 times the oral dose would be required topically. Figuring in reverse, one could divide the topical dose by 2.5 to obtain the oral dose, which is what I believe was done here. Divide the canary's 0.05 mg. topical dose by 2.5, and one obtains 0.02 mg. which is the same amount of drug the canary consumed via the drinking water.

I have never administered ivermectin via the drinking water to my birds. My water containers are large enough for the birds to bathe. Adding the dose which the bird consumes orally in this situation to the

dose which the bird may absorb topically by bathing could exceed the drug's margin of safety.

Ivermectin and moxidectin (Scatt) are useful drugs in aviculture. Fortunately, they appear to enjoy a wide margin of safety in most healthy finches and canaries, but their use is not without risk. I hope I have left you with a better understanding of the method by which these drugs work and the manner in which drug doses are sometimes formulated for species other than those for which they are labeled and approved.

“...If the canary bathes in the medicated water, additional drug will be absorbed topically...”

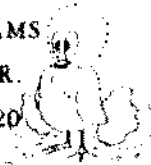
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The Red Siskin Project

by Paula Hansen

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Male Red Siskin (*Carduelis cucullata*)
Photo Courtesy ©Pam Filipski

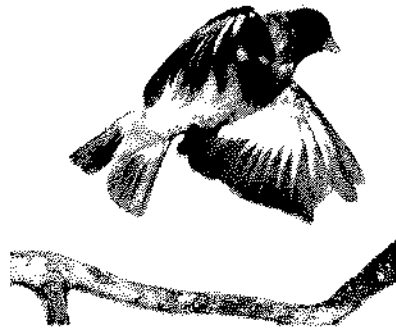
What is the Red Siskin?

The Venezuelan Black-hooded Red Siskin, (*Carduelis cucullata*), is 4 inches in length. The male has beautiful, visually deep, rich vermilion (red) plumage on its breast, belly and under-tail coverts. Red also appears on the rump, upper-tail coverts, wing bars, and appears on the back and neck, which blends to gray as it tapers down the back. The head, chin, throat, flight feathers, and tail are black. White appears around the vent, under-wing coverts, and legs. The adult female holds similar markings of the male with the exception of the black hood. Red coloring on the female only appears on the upper portion of the breast, and appears on the wing bars, rump, and sometimes the under-tail coverts. Juveniles are all gray

and begin to molt their plumage at 3-4 months. As the birds age, the red color deepens. No color food is needed with these birds. Their coloring never fades! This is the reason they are so sought after by canary fanciers. The red gene is bred into canaries and used to enhance the color and pass on the red factor to the canary.

The Red Siskin is protected by the Venezuelan government and the International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES). The United States Fish and Wildlife considers our captive bred Siskins protected also - including offspring or any hybridized young. Any interstate sales require that both seller and buyer must hold captive breeding permits to purchase these birds.

This beautiful bird continues to be trapped by the cage bird trade today. The Red Siskin may yet become extinct in the wild. One remaining isolated flock exists



Male Red Siskin

Photo Courtesy ©Ron Castaner

according to a recently published article in the June issue of an ornithology magazine called the AUK. The discovery was made by Braun and Mark Robbins of the University of Kansas. The research is a collaboration between the Smithsonian, the University of Kansas, and the University of Guyana.

What is the Red Siskin Project?

The Red Siskin Project (RSP) has been in existence since the 1970's under the American Federation of Aviculture's oversight. After a turnover in Directors, the RSP is now managed as a consortium. It is made up of private owners and volunteers who are experienced with this Siskin's or similar passerine's breeding and husbandry. The consortium came together to ensure this specie will be around in the United States for future generations and keep the birds pure. In order to accomplish this task, all birds are registered with the RSP Studbook Keeper, Dr. Orland Baker. The studbook is a database called S.P.A.R.K.S. This database is used by the Zoological community, which records the parentage, hatch, death, disease, transfers of ownership, and assigns each bird a studbook identification number. The studbook keeper is able to extract inbreeding

percentile which is a tool used in pairing the birds and ensuring stronger gene pairings in order to not weaken the bloodlines. All our birds are closed banded in order to lessen the chances of pairing up too closely related birds. Each breeder in the RSP is required to call, mail or e-mail the studbook keeper with all needed data.

Why would a breeder get involved?

Only half the offspring of the project's initial pairs will be moved to another breeder. The other half will become the property of the breeder. Any private breeder who already has Red Siskins can join the project. They must register their flock in our studbook and enjoy the benefits of the RSP. In return, they are expected to trade the RSP's breeders.

RSP also has a private Yahoo group. This group is exclusively for the RSP breeders, volunteers, board members, and



Male Red Siskin

Photo Courtesy ©Ron Castaner

director. Communication on the internet was established to strengthen better flow of information and sharing techniques, and most important, help.

Why give half to the breeder?

The value of "ownership" will encourage the breeders to invest more and take pride in managing both their flock and the Project's half. This was not an option in the past. A completely different attitude comes into play when ownership becomes the incentive. It also allows an opportunity for



Red Siskin Babies *Photos Courtesy ©Pam Filipski*



Young Red Siskins (Fledgling Male on the left - Young Adult Male on the right)

Photos Courtesy ©Pam Filipski

the breeder to recoup out-of-pocket expenses for supplies and transferring birds back to the next RSP breeder. Providing the breeder an opportunity to build their own flock and use the project's resources for ongoing support and networking. These tools and ownership will provide better outcomes for future generations.

What types of problems has the RSP had?

As with any breeding program - or just breeding birds of any type - you have disease, injuries, and accidents, as well as people coming and going. The RSP had mandatory necropsies of all deaths because all the birds belonged to the RSP.

This pointed to AFA for liability. The idea was what it was, and initially a good one until Avian TB happened. Stress, overcrowding, and lack of education may have added to those problems of the past. This volatile disease can wipe out an breeder's entire flock.

The birds that tested positive were not moved and are not available to breed with healthy birds. Most of these birds are now gone. This brought the project to a halt for a few years.

Where is the RSP heading now?

Today's breeders are able to manage better with available products and make better choices and decisions when modify-

ing their husbandry skills. Project breeders can still test for Avian T.B. when they fall suspect and at the breeder's expense. We do have a few healthy flocks and will be working with these birds again this year. There are the risks of managing birds of any type. It is imperative for any person breeding any type(s) of bird to test any suspect sick birds and avoid any type of overcrowding and unsightly housing. Cover crowding, filth, lack of exercise, and bad nutrition are all makings of trouble. Quarantining newly introduced birds should always be any person's breeding scheduled husbandry. This cannot be emphasized enough.

RSP has three zoos interested in obtaining birds for their exhibits - El Paso, Texas Zoo; Prospect Zoo, New York; and Dallas Zoo, Texas.

What are the RSP goals?

Red Siskin Project Goals:

To create a sustaining, healthy, captive population of red siskins within the U.S. - eventually make available to the bird trade in the US.

Support conservation efforts and scientific studies in the wild.

Share with bird clubs information on breeding with existing birds within the U.S.

Promote and encourage other consortium exchanges with other species no longer being imported.

The project is presently searching for unrelated bloodlines to pair with our existing flock. The RSP is also in need of funds to move and purchase fresh bloodlines. Those who have Red Siskins or interested in providing sponsorship or donations are asked to contact the Project.

AFA Office

P.O. Box 7312,
N. Kansas City, MO 64116,
(816) 421 - BIRD,
Email: afaoffice@aol.com

or

Paula Hansen, Director, Red Siskin Project

(503) 581-8208 (evenings PST)
Email: phhansen@earthlink.net

The Red Siskin Project encourages bird clubs, commercial, private companies, and merchants to join us and sponsor these beautiful birds in order to successfully continue breeding and sustaining the RSP or other like consortiums in United States. Contributions are recognized by the Internal Revenue Service. You must state that you want your funds to be targeted to support the Red Siskin Project (RSP). You will receive a written acknowledgment from the AFA office for your donation and a gift CD which contains pictures of existing breeding siskins now in our project.

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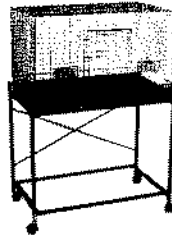
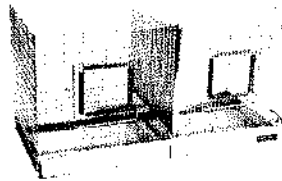
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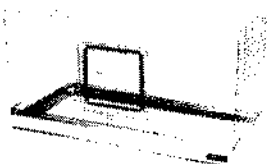
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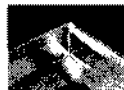
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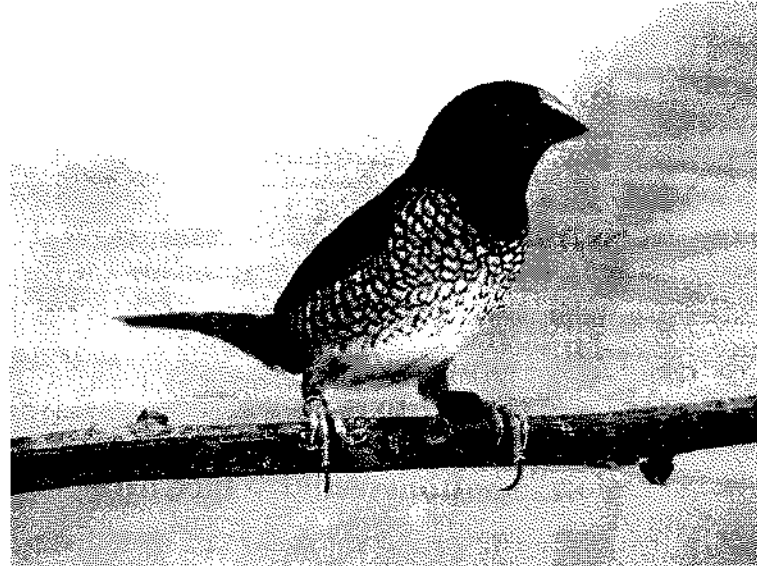
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Scaly Breasted Munia

(*Lonchura punctulata*)

By Mark Shipway

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Scaly Breasted Munia or Spice Finch (*Lonchura punctulata punctulata*)

Photo Courtesy ©Roy Beckham

So you haven't heard this name before! Its actually the ornithological name of the Spice Finch which is really a munia, of course. I have to "spice" up the heading to draw your interest as discussions of this bird usually makes the reader turn the page...but wait read on!! As my preference is for muniyas I often ponder at their marketing problem, ie no bright colours and plain sounds, however, I assure you that there is much to learn from this class of bird. In this article I will be discussing the various subspecies of the Scaly Breasted Munia, their history and where they can be found.

Whilst there have been a few foreign finch species establish themselves in Australia's unique environment for a period of time, it appears that the Scaly Breasted Munia, has been the most successful so far. In fact they are so successful that their invasion threatens the long term survival of the Chestnut Breasted Munia. I remember the abundant flocks of Chestnuts that lived on the banks of the Nerang River on the Gold Coast in the Early to mid 1980's but by the mid 1990's when I visited the area again all I could find were Scaly Breasted Muniyas and today it is the same. If it could happen there it could happen anywhere.

When did you last see a wild Chestnut Breasted Munia? Curiously, ornithological literature has, to date, paid little attention to this threat. Whilst they may be a problem in the wild, they are no threat to other finches in captivity, and are on the contrary, a pleasurable co-habitant.

Unlike any other finch in Australian Aviculture, its survival in our aviaries owes itself to those few escapees all those years ago. Had it not established itself in the wild here and been legally captured since, it undoubtedly would have gone down the same lines as the Bronze-wing Mannikin, Indian Silverbill and the Grey Headed Munia except that the Scaly Breasted Munia would have probably gone first.

This species is also remarkable in that it is the most widespread Asian munia with at least 12 races and possibly more as further research is undertaken. A brief description of these subspecies is as follows:

Punctulata

From India and Nepal. This race is regarded as the most attractive as it is reddish brown (rather than plain brown) with dark, squared and well defined belly flecks, a black bill, variable striations on the back and the only race with orange upper-tail coverts. I have found that this race is usually the subject in photographs taken of Scaly Breasted Munias in Europe (see an example in Harman et al, *All About Finches* TFH, p.92, 1978, and for a better shot: Vriends M F, *The MacDonal Encyclopedia of Cage and Aviary Birds*, Plate 59). I have seen this race in the wild in India feeding near nesting Yellow Crowned and Baya Weavers and Red Strawberry Finches.

There is evidence that this race was probably imported into Australia prior to the ban. In such a case it would probably have been added to shipments of Tri Coloured Munias (*Lonchura malacca malacca*) to make up the numbers. This is not the race which established itself in the wild here and whilst it is attractive in itself it would not have attracted attention against competing

species and consequently has probably died out. Check your aviaries for reddish brown birds.

Subundulata

From Bangladesh, northern Myanmar and South West China. This race is like the above race but with upper tail coverts, olive-yellow and less variable striations on the neck and back. It is very unlikely that this race has been the subject of aviculture given the political nature of the countries in which it is found.

Yunnanensis

From a very limited area encompassing the northern tip of Thailand and Southern China. This race has "warm straw" uppertail coverts and has probably never been exported from its range.

Topela

From South East China, Taiwan, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, most of Thailand and the northern tip of Peninsula Malaysia. This race exists in feral populations on the east coast of Australia and would appear to be the race in our aviaries. It is distinguished by its olive-yellow upper tail coverts and poorly patterned belly flecks. I have seen this bird on the Mekong river at Vientiane, Laos, and on the Nerang River, Gold Coast, Australia, in captivity at the Hanoi bird markets and in Australian aviaries. It was probably imported together with Black Headed Munias, as current evidence would suggest that our aviary Black Headed Munias were from Thailand (probably race *sinensis*). Race *topela* has also been introduced by man into Hawaii, Mauritius and Reunion.

Restall (1996) points out that an excellent photograph of this race is in *Readers Digest Book of Australian Birds* (1976). A pair can also be seen at page 411 of Russell Kingston's *Complete Manual for the Keeping and Breeding of Finches*, 1994.

Whilst it has now been accepted that the Scaly Breasted Munia has played no part in the ancestry of the Bengalese, if it

were so, then it is this race which would be the most likely contributor.

Cabanisi

From Phillipines etc. This bird is unique in that the bill is all grey up their second year, after which, the upper mandible darkens. It has cream underparts and yellow uppertail coverts. Since Green-faced and Red Collared Parrot Finches, the true White Bellied and Black Headed Munia (race *jagoni*), are very rarely seen outside the Phillipines. I think it would be safe to assume that this race has never been kept in Australian aviaries and may also be absent from European collections.

I recall that I was recently reading a European publication on Finches from the 1960's and noted a photograph of a pair of White Rumped Munias or Self Bengalese (which are virtually the same thing) which were described incorrectly as "Phillipine Nutmeg or Spice Finches". The error aside, it indicates a familiarity with the Scaly Breasted Munias from the Phillipines which suggests that they may have been exported from that country after all.

Baweana

Restricted to the small island of Bawean in Indonesia, North of Java and South of Singapore. It is distinguished by its white underparts and having a grey lower mandible. Nothing else seems to be known about this race.

Fretensis

Sumatra and Peninsula Malaysia and recently inhabited Singapore. This race is distinguished by its two tone bill colour (grey below, black above) and pale straw uppertail coverts. It is distinguished from race *nisoria* by the striations on its neck and back, particularly on those from peninsula Malaysia. They can be seen in the bird markets in Kuala Lumpur and I've seen in the wild in the grass fields in Malaka city, and at Bukitinggi, Sumatra. The January 2000 Finch News edition on page 5 shows a curious photograph of a "Spice Finch" which I initially took as being of race *niso-*

ria. However, on closer examination, the striations on its cheeks and nape indicate that it may be of race *fretensis* or be a hybrid of the two or others. In either case, if this photograph was taken in Australia (which I suspect it wasn't), it's clear evidence that a race other than *topela* survives in our aviaries.

Holmesi

Restall named this race as recently as 1995. It is from Southern Borneo and little is written about it at the present time. It is distinguished by being the only race with an all grey bill, though the upper mandible is slightly darker grey. From Restall's (1996) sketches, its belly flecks appear to be similar to race *punctulata*.

Nisoria

From Java, Bali and Lombok. This race has a two tone bill colour, black above, grey below, has warm straw upper tail coverts and has no striations on its back or nape. Its belly flecks are more like those of race *punctulata* than *topela*. It is abundant around Kuta Beach in Bali as it can be seen swarming in huge flocks to rest in the palm trees by the beach at dusk. It regularly nests in trees in the gardens around Bali and on the rice fields around Ubud.

An ideal photograph of this race is the bird (which appears most naturally coloured) just right of centre at page 414 of Russell Kingston's *Complete Manual...* (1994). Note the lack of striations on the cheek and nape when compared to the photograph at page 5 of January 2000 Finch News. Further, note the bill colour and belly flecks when both of these photographs are compared to the photograph of race *topela* on page 411 of Russell's *Complete Manual...*

It is very likely that this race was imported into Australia with White Headed and Javan munias and Java Sparrows many decades ago. It just so happens that it was not this race which established itself in the wild in Queensland, so it is unlikely that it survived the popularity contest. It is

possible though that some still exist here so you should check your birds. The sure giveaway will be the two tone bill colour and the lack of striations on the nape and back.

Fortior

This race occurs only on Sumbawa. I have been fortunate to be one of the few people to have seen this race in the wild and in captivity both on the island when I was there in 1998. It is distinguishable from the above race by its striations on the neck and nape and its cream belly flanks and ventral area. Probably never seen outside Indonesia.

Sumbae

This race occurs only on the rarely visited island of Sumba near Timor. Whilst I was on this island I did not happen to see this race. It is the only race with warm-olive uppertail coverts. It is otherwise similar to *nisoria*. Probably never seen outside Indonesia.

Particeps

From Sulawesi. Whilst I have travelled all throughout this island I have not been fortunate to see this race. It apparently has

more yellow on its uppertail coverts than the above race and has striations on its nape and neck. There is a small possibility it has been exported to Europe possibly amongst shipments of Pale Headed Munias and Moluccan Munias but exist in Australia, as far as I am aware.

Blasii

From Timor, Flores and Tanimbar Islands. The belly flecks would appear to extend to the undertail coverts in this race. It has no striations, cream underparts and yellow uppertail coverts.

Conclusion

In light of the information above, take a look at your "Spice Finches" and if they don't conform to the *topela* race, well you might have something special. I'd also like to know, so please write in.

References:

Kingston R "A Complete Manual for the Keeping and Breeding of Finches" Indruss, 1998

Restall. R , *Munias and Mannikins*, 1996, Pica.

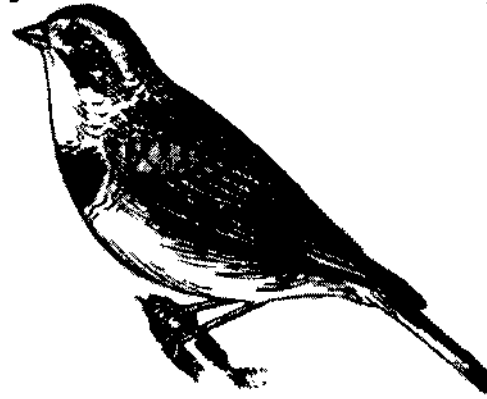
Update to Proposed NFSS General Standard

As a result of comments received from the NFSS membership this summer, this change to the Proposed NFSS General Standard (published for your and comment in the May/June 2003 issue of "The NFSS Journal") is submitted here for your consideration. Please contact NFSS Judges Panel Director Martha Wigmore this month with your feedback. And my thanks to you, in advance!

In the "Presentation" section of DEPARTMENT AND PRESENTATION in the Proposed Standard, the last sentence in the third paragraph will be changed to read as follows:

"Box cages should be black or white on the outside and white, off-white or powder blue on the interior."

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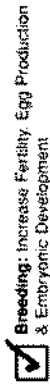
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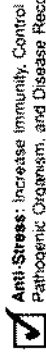
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Showtime in Biloxi

By Ginny Allen

One of the most exciting aspects of being Liaison Officer of NFSS is having the opportunity to work with groups either trying to organize clubs or plan shows. Early this spring, I received a call from Jo Reaves of the National Cockatiel Society. She said that a club in Mississippi was having a show at the Imperial Casino in Biloxi, MS on May 17 and thought NFSS might be interested in staging a Finch/Softbill Division. During the next few weeks, emails were flying between Alabama and Mississippi and NFSS had a new affiliate.

The South Mississippi Cage Bird Society had held very successful fairs for fifteen years, but had never staged a show. When they were able to secure the fantastic venue of the Imperial Palace Casino with its large convention space for their fair, they knew they also had room for a show. It doesn't take long for news to travel and by mid-April, NFSS, NCS, NAPS, and ABS were planning sanctioned shows. Their first venture into hosting a show was a resounding success! What a wonderful group of people...anxious to learn and anxious to continue with this tradition. Kim Dunaway and Joyce Webb could not have done more for the groups.

Not only had the SMCBS not held a show, but few members had ever participated in one or even been to shows. They just knew they had the funds and the space to begin the show tradition. At this point, they turned all the details over to each of the species groups who made all arrangements for the individual divisions.

NCS and the ABS had show benches.....NFSS did not. However, quick emails to the Gulf South Bird Club of Houma, LA and the Canary and Finch Club of New Orleans and we had a show bench! We were in business.....we thought. What we didn't realize was that NFSS needed to provide show tags and registration forms. Ooops..... but the NCS came to our rescue for show tags and we used a legal pad for registration of birds. I did have secretary sheets for NFSS preprinted and in the secretary book. The club had ordered a set of rosettes but I had to get class stickers from NCS.

Judging the 60 entries was Cecil Gunby who spent a great deal of time informing the gallery of the various species, judging points, and general information about finches and softbills. The gallery was large and really appreciated his efforts. It was definitely Aviculture 101 in its entirety.

Cecil had volunteered to judge parrots for NAPS after the NFSS division finished. The awards were there but no registration forms, etc. and no secretary. I learned very quickly about the world of exhibiting parrots and all their various divisions. I can honestly say that our system is easier.

I doubt that I need to mention that the venue provided lots of non-bird entertainment. It is safe to say that everyone who attended the SMCBS Spring show plans on being in Biloxi again for next year's show!



FALL 2003 Finch/Softbill List

Floyd Barnett, College Park, Georgia, 404-768-0697
Shipping Available -10% discount for NFSS Members

Purple Grenadier	\$300.00/pr	Fawn-Breasted Waxbill	\$150.00/pr
Red-Headed Finch	\$100.00/pr	Blue-Faced Parrot Finch	\$225.00/pr
Blue-capped Cordon Bleu	\$100.00/pr	Red-Faced Parrot Finch	\$250.00/pr
Blue-breasted Cordon Bleu	\$100.00/pr	Parson Finch	\$180.00/pr
Peter's Twinspot	\$180.00/pr	Fawn Parson	\$200.00/pr
Star Finch Red-Face	\$110.00/pr	Cuban Melodious	\$300.00/pr
Yellow-Face	\$130.00/pr	Diamond Firetail	\$180.00/pr
Red Munia (Strawberry)	\$100.00/pr	Silver Diamond Firetail	\$600.00/pr
Forbes Parrot Finch	\$350.00/pr	Chestnut Breasted Mannikin	\$150.00/pr
Sidney Waxbill	\$280.00/pr	Zanibar Weaver	\$69.00/pr
Owl Finch	\$190.00/pr	Masked Weaver	\$69.00/pr
Yellow-Bellied Waxbill (Swee)	\$100.00/pr	Golden Weaver	\$75.00/pr
Giant Green Singer	\$120.00/pr	Cardinal Quelea	\$50.00/pr
Grey Singer	\$120.00/pr	Crimson Rumped Waxbill	\$40.00/pr
Masked Grass Finch	\$200.00/pr	Abyssinian Crimsonwing	\$100.00/pr
Grey-Headed Silverbill	\$100.00/pr	Gouldian finch	\$150.00/pr
Silverbill	\$50.00/pr	White Breasted	\$200.00/pr
Scaly Crown Weaver	\$80.00/pr	Oriole Finch	\$250.00/pr
Gold-Breasted Bunting	\$140.00/pr	Pintail Non Pariel Parrot Finch	\$150.00/pr
Red-Face Crimson Wing	\$120.00/pr	Yellow Pintail	\$250.00/pr
Cherry Finch	\$140.00/pr	Superb Starling	\$600.00/pr
Fawn Cherry Finch	\$180.00/pr	Wattled Starling	\$400.00/pr
Shaftail Finch	\$110.00/pr	Blue-Eared Starling	\$500.00/pr
Isabel Shaft-tail	\$180.00/pr	Gold-Breasted Starling	\$800.00/pr
White Shaft-tail	\$240.00/pr		

Coming Attractions

Leafbirds, Hardwick, Greater, Lesser, Golden-Crested Mynahs, Crimson Blood,
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...On the NFSS 2002/2003 Census Report

The NFSS 2002/2003 Census Report generated much discussion on the NFSS Finch/Softbill Forum. Since not everyone participates on this forum, we thought you would be interested in reading the comments and ideas. If you have access to a computer and are not a part of the Forum, please join us! <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/NFSS/> Hope to see you there!

I received my 2003 census in the mail today. Great job! I'm really impressed by the effort they put out to get it published.

However, I was disappointed in the number of people who are raising Parson finches. I knew our numbers were limited, but the turn-out was WAY lower than I expected.

Lisa Miller, New Jersey

I just received my Census today and I just wanted to say "Well Done!" The time, effort and thought that went into this really shows. Thank you,

Candice Cranmore, Ohio

Well, Yea! Excellent job Kerri, Harry, Martie, et al. The labor of love is very evident in this important work. Singularly superlative. Thank you for your dedication.

Clint and Cathy Harris, Texas

Here! Here! Now that is what an NFSS Census should look like! Excellent job!

Randy Taylor, Texas

Yes, Randy...some folks are really working hard and need to be acknowledged.

Someone mentioned how disheartened he or she was to see so few people breeding Parson's finches. This person made it sound like only two or three people total in all of U.S. were breeding Parson's. I suspect this person knows otherwise, since in reality, of course, there are more people breeding Parson's than are listed, and some of those folks may be NFSS and Finch Save members.

The only thing that disheartened me was the low turn out of submitters. I look forward to

the day when we have turned the stats around. Rather than the mere 14% of NFSS members participating in Finch Save: I'd like to see that drop to 14% who are not participating. Then we have something to really sink our teeth into.

Nonetheless, such a low turn-out only goes to show how dedicated and hopeful the volunteer organizers truly are.

Raspberry, Oregon

Yes, Harry, Kerri and Martie did an excellent job. I applaud them! Each participant also deserves a big 'thank you'. You are right about the low number of aviculturalists participating in the Census. I believe that this turnout is only a fraction of the numbers actually keeping and breeding finches and softbills. Hopefully in subsequent years, there will be more participation. It is disheartening that birds once found in fairly large numbers are now so poorly represented. Actually, each one of us (aviculturalist) has a responsibility to attempt to raise as many birds as we can from the species that we have in our possession. Advertising this is a different matter, however. I know of some enthusiasts that have had bad experiences in losing birds to thieves when they had advertised their birds and gave out too much information about their addresses. The way that the Census and FSS handles that is to let each decide what information is released in the Census. I think that once some non-participants realize this that there may be more participation in coming years.

Randy Taylor, Texas

Raspberry is/was correct: It was really a statement, to wit: "[disappointing to note]

how few people who breed Parsons took part in the census." Many Parsons breeders have not taken part, for sure.

Raspberry is correct in making the goal to get more participation by VOLUNTEERS who understand how it benefits everyone to participate. It is equally important to note that not everyone joins NFSS to participate in a census, and must, on their own, see some benefit for them by participating. Perhaps, if the person looking for diverse Parsons would write a paragraph or two on how his birds 'suffer' because of the lack of contact with other breeders, other Parson people might then participate in order to help themselves.

Whatever we do, as 'interested people', we can not ever cause someone to feel 'wrong' for not participating because they are busy raising children, shoveling snow, taking care of an aged mother, and working 60 hours a week to make a living to buy bird seed et al. -Parsons (or any Finch) being asked to take a back seat for time. at this time. Remember, this was the first published census in over two years. That is a 100 percent improvement over last year.

Vince Huntington, California

It was my post about the low turn-out of Parson's breeders. You hit the nail on the head - my assumption is that there are a lot more breeders who didn't register. The intent of my post was to try to coax these folks out of hiding. We need their bloodlines. Some people think that you have to be an "active" breeder to get in the census. In reality, even if you're not currently breeding your birds, but just have a pair or two for your own enjoyment, we still need those numbers. Another breeder might be interested in buying or trading for your birds to expand bloodlines, or even considering loaning your birds to a breeder for a season or two just to get the offspring. Zoos do this a lot to keep the gene pool viable.

Lisa Miller, New Jersey

HEY I was very impressed with the census report. It made my day.... plus. A job very well done. Thanks all!

Ray Slemok, Pennsylvania

Lots of data and lots and lots of data entry. Good idea putting the election ballot in with this annual mailing.

One question though. A census is a count. What happened to all the numbers that we painstakingly collected? How can one determine how well a species is established without figures indicating a total number? I'm not advocating that a total beside each individual be placed, but for the species as a whole. Perhaps indicating if the birds are part of a breeding program next to the individual (it was the last question on the census). Is there a reason that the figures were not included?

Also, I have discussed this with some, but wonder how others feel about the way that mutations are handled? Gouldians have over four pages listed partly because nearly every possible combination of mutation is listed. Do others actually feel this is of value? I would list only the mutations in order of rarity and members pick only one category to place the bird. So a White breasted, Blue back gouldian would be placed in the Blue-back column, and not the White breasted column. Also, show type birds should not be listed separately. Gray Zebra and English Gray are meaningless classifications.

What do others think?

p.s. I still admire all the long hours of work by Harry and Martie and any others who participated on the project.

Roy Beckham, California

I have not gotten my census yet and am beginning to wonder if I am since lots of people in my area already have had theirs awhile. I did get to hear about it and wondered why the questions were asked as far as if a species was in a breeding program or not if the responses were not going to be listed in the census. To me that creates alot of potential wasted time possibly calling someone only to find out they are NOT breeding

the species you want. Also, we had to list the number we had of each species. why are no totals shown anywhere as mentioned above in Roy's post?

Janis Clark, Ohio

While total number of birds is valuable to know. knowing how many of those birds are actively contributing to the captive gene pool is also important. How can one determine how well.

Simplifying the terms a bit with species that have mutations (Zebs. societies, and goulds, mainly) may make it easier to gather more data on non-mutation species of finches where there is more immediate danger of irreparable damage.

And while these things are valuable suggestions. it all takes work and I am just glad to get what we have.

Raspberry, Oregon

The reason for doing the Census is to get some kind of an idea of how many of what species people are working with. By having this information FSS can push to have those species that are lacking to be represented in its program, along with setting up Consortiums for them.. As important as FSS. is Randy's email about ...for all species of softbills and finches. "Species Profiles and Husbandry Guide-lines for each specie" for all species of softbills and finches. From my view we should not be separating any birds by mutation, unless the mutation is:

1. dominant
2. occurs naturally in the wild (such as the goulds head color.).....

I am glad to see the census is making everyone think..... My.02 worth.....

Roland Cristo, California

I have to also agree with some of this. Although I also appreciate all the time and effort that went into this project and this is not a criticism, just my thoughts.

I don't see why all the different categories of goulds, it was crazy. the goulds should have only had a few categories. like normals, blues, yellows. if more have to be added

they should be thought out well because too much is just too much. I almost didn't even fill out the census just because of this one factor. Much more importantly than amounts of each mutation would be are you seriously breeding a certain species or mutation. Like with goulds. a person may have tons of mutations that they breed. but at any given time they will only have certain ones so you will still have to make lots of contacts to find what you are looking for.

The same could be said for some other common species like the societies and zebs. Well, something to consider anyway for next time is to simplify. simplify. simplify. Thanks.

Betti Fletcher, New Jersey

I'm one of those that didn't fill out the census, and that was mainly due to all the break down in goulds, societies and zebs. Also, if I hadn't gotten babies from them. like my goulds, star and owl pair, and OC's. I didn't feel I would contribute anything to the census. I vow to do better this year and fill it out, even if I don't have babies from them.

We received the Census today..... My hats off to those people who worked on the FSS program this year..... THEY ALL HAVE DONE A SPECTACULAR JOB!!!!!!! With all the members participating next year it should even better.....

Roland Cristo, California

I do not agree with thoughts to 'simplify the census ref Gould's' without the census 'workers' getting together to decide what 'simplify' means. I've yet to meet two people within NFSS who are in to birds for the same exact reason. What might be one person's 'simplify' could be some one else's rejection.

Vince Huntington, California

Perhaps there could be a column for total goulds (total societies and total zebs) and then the breakdown. That way those with hundreds of birds that just cannot justify going around breaking down all those birds by head. chest and body color can choose to put the total. Or even total of the 3 head col-

ors. the 3 chest colors and the 4 main body colors without having to subtotal individual combos.

Of course the census workers have to decide how to organize the census just like they did this year, but update it to reflect recommendations of the group as a whole. A group is only as good as its members.

Betti Fletcher, New Jersey

Can someone explain to me why the census lists all the Gouldian color morph/mutations?? Is their concern over their captive management? Seems a great deal depends on the genetics of the birds...that is the coloration of the adults may not indicate the color of the young as it depends what its past lineage had....I am not saying its not a good idea to list them just want to know why.

Roy, You're right: a census is a count. What NFSS has always reported as a "census" is not a census. It is an informational "survey". It reports nothing more than "who has what". I believe the first few may have actually provided the grand total of all birds tallied, but counts of individual species have never been reported.

Each year we are expected to count the number of males, females, and unsexed of each species and/or color mutation. Why? If all that's ever going to be reported is "who has what", we could all sit on the couch and placed a check mark next to each species and/or color mutation that we own. It sure would be a lot easier, and the end result would be the same.

After voicing criticisms of all previous census which requested information and counts which were never shared or published. I was assured that this would not be the case with the current census. Unfortunately, it was.

I believe participation would increase if results were furnished only to those who participate. Non-participating members should pay \$5.00 if they wish a copy. This would offset the costs of printing and mailing.

Regarding your comments on gouldian and zebra mutations, perhaps check marks

would suffice for common species such as gouldians, zebras, and societies where many color mutations exist. Actual numbers could be recorded for all other species. This would greatly simplify the tabulation process and provide meaningful counts of those species which are less commonly kept and bred.

It's undoubtedly a huge amount of work which is performed on a voluntary basis. Perhaps in the future it should be performed by a census committee so that the tabulation work may be divided among many. I realize that it may not sound like it, but I do greatly appreciate the incredible amount of work performed by those who provided this one.

It's nice to know "who has what". but it's not a census.

Larry Baum, Ohio

I like the idea of checking off what species and mutations we breed and leaving out the exact number count. If numbers are important, we could even check boxes to give an average - Like less than 5 birds, 5-10 birds, 5-10 pairs, more than 10 pairs.

Raspberry, Oregon

For me, the advantage of seeing mutations listed is that it helps give us information about the rarity of a mutation. Like for example, penguin zebra finches are virtually unseen in Oregon. If a "census" report tells it is rare in other states, too, then it could be a red flag to breeders who may wish to prevent the mutation from getting entirely lost from the gene pool.

Raspberry, Oregon

I agree. I just don't think we need to have a listing for Penguins, Black Breasted Penguins, English Penguins, Orange Breasted Penguins, Black Breasted Orange Breasted Penguins, Crested Penguins, Grays split for Penguin, Fawns split for Penguin ...Just Penguin.

Roy Backham, California

Getting a count, a fix on the status of the various species was the only reason I filled out the census. If I had realized that I would only

be listed in a "phone book" of who's who with what. quite frankly I would not have filled out the census.

There is good data in there. Sex ratios. number of birds being bred, year to year changes, etc. A contact list is very different from a census. I realize that people put a lot of work into it, but that was on both ends. I spent a fair amount of time counting birds and filling out the census. It would be a shame if this work did not result in something more useful than a contact list.

I think more people would fill out the census if it were reporting numbers and not people. It seems a fair number are concerned about being listed with what species they do have. I'm more interested in how many Painted Firetails there are and what the sex ratio looks like than who in particular is breeding them. If I'm interested in a species, I'll begin some sort of inquiry into who has them. If someone is interested in selling birds, there are outlets in the NFSS for that as well. Perhaps the NFSS could offer this information like they do with band data.

Roy Beckham, California

I would like the survey/census to list minimal number of bloodlines. If our goal is to maintain / improve the birds we keep, this is crucial information to avoid breeding our birds to extinction. I am not saying it has to be sophisticated, just number of breeding pairs/diversity of species kept. Please do not take any of the suggestions as criticism as I am very impressed with NFSS. Our journal exceeds a journal I get from an organization that has over 11,000 members and out sources its production.

Robert Mehl, Maryland

It would be an extreme chore to list blood lines on the census.... But this can be done with the individual species by members of the FSS.

Roland Cristo, California

I disagree..The more information you can get to the general membership ,the more apt they will participate. It is my belief that all

data from FSS program as far as keeping and breeding should be made available to the general membership... our concerns here should be for the survival of the birds in captivity.... For the the people supplying this information (the participants in the FSS program) we need to come up with another "perk"

Roland Cristo, California

With Gouldians. wouldn't body color alone provide sufficient information to accomplish this?

John Wilson, California

Since I "inherited" the census program when the 2nd VP resigned. I'll try to take a stab at some of the questions that have been asked the last several days.

Q-1) "One question though. A census is a count. What happened to all the numbers that we painstakingly collected? How can one determine how well a species is established without figures indicating a total number? I'm not advocating that a total beside each individual be placed, but for the species as a whole. Perhaps indicating if the birds are part of a breeding program next to the individual (it was the last question on the census). Is there a reason that the figures were not included?"

A-1) My understanding was that the numbers were being collected for "in-house" use. I am entering them into a database for future study. There was never any intention that I was aware of to publish them at this time. At the time everything was compiled I had to make a "judgment" call. and I decided to leave them out. The census is intended as a list of species that are kept by our members. Whether someone has 2 or 14 is sort of irrelevant if you are contacting someone for "new blood", because the number has changed by the time the census is printed.

Q-2) "Also. I have discussed this with some, but wonder how others feel about the way that mutations are handled? Gouldians have over four pages listed partly because nearly every possible combination of mutation is listed. Do others actually feel this is of value?"

place the bird. So a White breasted, Blue hack gouldian would be placed in the Blue-back column. and not the White breasted column. Also, show type birds should not be listed separately. Gray Zebra and English Gray are meaningless classifications."

A-2) This is always a "no-win" situation. If we leave some out. people complain, if we list them, people complain, people make suggestions on what mutations to list, and other people complain There was a row for "normal" gouldians, societies and zebras on the census form that you could have checked if you didn't want to list all your various mutations. As far as whether having them listed is "of value", the answer is "no" if you are looking at the list in terms of what is "rare", but the answer is "yes" if you are using the census as a purchasing guide, and are looking for that pair of purple striped zebras!

Q-3) "I did get to hear about it and wondered why the questions were asked as far as if a species was in a breeding program or not if the responses were not going to be listed in the census. To me that creates a lot of potential wasted time possibly calling someone only to find out they are NOT breeding the species you want."

A-3) This is a good point and we will certainly include a "breeding" column in the published census next year. I would say that over 90% of the people listed are breeding (or trying) the species listed.

In the near future I will be listing a census report on the website, which will show the species, the total number reported, and the states where the members having them are located. There will be no personal information listed on the website.

Hopefully, this has answered most of the questions you had. Please feel free to continue discussing the census and any suggestions you have. I personally think we did a pretty good job with what we had, and I only see it growing bigger (and better) next year.

Harry Bryant, Ohio

You deserve a round of applause.....
Thanks Harry!!!!!!!!!!!!

Roland Cristo, California

"Whether someone has 2 or 14 is sort of irrelevant if you are contacting someone for "new blood". because the number has changed by the time the census is printed"

Like the national census. they are snap shots in time. So if the census is conducted at the same time each year. we can begin to get an idea of what the populations of the various species looks like from year to year. It need not be "real time". It would be interesting to see the census figures for Green Singing finches for example. 10. 5 and 1 year ago. How is CITES affecting the population in the U.S.? We can make guesses, but the figures would be more tangible. Then what will the census show in 5 years? I've heard comments from many who would concentrate on a species if they knew which species needed the most help. The figures would might help make that determination.

Roy Beckham, California

John. I am not a breeder of Gouldians nor do I fully understand Gouldian genetics to know what is important info and what is not. So I will leave that decision to the breeders of Gouldians.

As for societies and zebras. though, the most valuable information the "census" could tell me is if a mutation is in danger of being lost to breeders.

However that is done is up to those who are compiling the data, of course. But that is the greatest value in it for me.

Raspberry, Oregon

This is great! Members of the list getting mojoed and expressing their passions. The NFSS, and by proxy our birds, will not survive in the long term if we do not have proactive, passionate people.

Before I forget, Harry. you did not do a good job on the census. You did a damn good job. I suspect that few of us can imagine the mind numbing tedium that went into crunching the numbers and the names. Regardless of our

individual thoughts on what the Census Report should have or should not have contained, let us not forget that the NFSS Census is a one of a kind in all of aviculture. There is nothing out there like it that I am aware of. It is a forward thinking, far reaching document intended to unite breeders and birds. It is a major conservation tool and I know it will get better each time it is published.

I really thought Dr. Larry's comments were sterling. Very well written. Perhaps many of us had expectations about what the census would look like or what it would contain. Thoughtful comments and carefully worded constructive criticism is a healthy thing.

The former 3rd Vice President and FSS/ Census director deserves no small amount of praise also. I am not speaking for Kerri McCoy, but I will say that Kerri has faithfully served the NFSS for a decade and as the former Journal editor she rejuvenated our publication setting very high standards for those who followed after her. She has written many insightful articles that have been published in numerous national and international publications. She has succeed in parent raising some of the most challenging waxbills and other species. Kerri is the very definition of an aviculturalist. I hope that she is just taking a much deserved sabbatical.

Good comments all around.

Clint and Cathy Harris, Texas

I for one would also like to see the numbers on the different species as well. I have limited space (my zebras have to come first sorry) I do have two small flights and a bank of six cages which i am going to try with a species of finch preferably one that is not so commonly bred. I have yet to make up my mind which one so the numbers would help when making my choice

I must confess that upon receiving my Census my gut reaction was identical to Raspberry's- "You gotta be kidding". In the most recent Journal Martie (God bless you dear) reports that there are 775 members in the NFSS and John Wilson reports that there

are 225 participants on the list. Harry tells us that 102 NFSS members participated in the Census- 14%. I would be very curious as to what percentage of those on the list participated compared to the overall membership. I turned my census information in last December and I recall that all winter and spring various folks would remind us to please fill out the census. Harry states that the last minute emails proved to be a real difference.

Other than the bi-monthly Journal, the majority of our members have little to no contact with others. Yeah, private emails, bird shows or marts, but nothing like the passionate nuts and bolts interaction that takes place on this list. I have long believed that in a very real way we have a membership within the membership. Not elitists, but people who are just more connected. If people feel like they "belong" to something, they tend to be more proactive in it. I think it was Roy who stated that a 50% participation should be our goal, and I agree.

Finally, I wish to state that I am in no way criticizing those who did not participate. Brother Vince's sagacious remarks about the commitments and stresses in peoples lives can impact their ability to participate. Some will likely have concerns about security, but I thought that the Census provided a safe and clever way of protecting breeders. Some may have thought their collections were too small and what did another shafttail matter in the big scheme of things. Some may have seen the gazillion pages and thought the task too daunting. There are likely many very good reasons why some stayed out. Perhaps it will be a future lesson. The Census may not be effective if too few people participate. It has to be user friendly. Perhaps inviting the entire membership to comment in a future Journal will prove useful. I have stated this before, and to the chagrin of some I will say it again. Every single person is important to our organization. We need your thoughts, your comments, your participation, your enthusiasm. This is a people organization and people make it run.

Clint and Cathy Harris, Texas

Harry. You and everyone who worked with you did a great job on the census. There is no question there. I'm sure long hard hours were put in. But some suggestions if I may: For future reference, if the space for "Normal" goulds (normal societies, normal zebras) is a spot that could have been used for listing total goulds, then in the future perhaps label it as such. I could not in clear conscience fill in my blues, yellows, dilutes etc in that column, but if it was labeled as such, then I happily would have totaled them there and left the rest blank. I don't think very many of us had the knowledge that all that classifying was for "in-house" use only and not for sharing. And if someone is looking for new bloodlines. I think they would be more likely to contact the person who had 14 as opposed to 2 of that species as the likelihood of the person with 14 successfully breeding seems mathematically more likely.

Please understand that this is not criticism as much as thoughtful suggestions. No malice intended and we love you guys for all the work you did and I'm sure most of us know that you all had only the best intentions and did the rest of us a great service. I wonder if more feedback should be sought from the members of NFSS so that the needs and desires of the members would be better known. Perhaps a poll could be taken before a huge project like this BEFOREHAND to avoid misunderstandings and confusion. How much nicer it would have been for you guys to have known how your members felt and what would make NFSS better for us BEFORE you did all this hard work, rather than AFTER.

Do you think something along these lines can be discussed at the next officers meeting?

Betti Fletcher, New Jersey

Why wait until it is not available thru importation? Remember when Pekin Robins were 12.00 apiece and Red Crested Cardinals cost 17.00.... No one worked with them, now see what they sell for. Work with a bird species you like.....Even if it never becomes "rare" the protocols that are developed for that species may be used on a

closely related species that is rare in aviculture.....

Roland Cristo, California

Perhaps we should publish a few choice quotes from this list in the NFSS Journal to get the entire membership up to speed on the situation and maybe elicit reactions from some not on the list??

Randy Taylor, Texas

"someone is looking for new bloodlines. I think they would be more likely to contact the person who had 14 as opposed to 2 of that species as the likelihood of the person with 14 successfully breeding seems mathematically more likely"

This sort of listing is going to discourage participation in the census. I don't feel that this should be a major focus of the census. I personally do not want a listing of what and how many of anything that I have. While it might be helpful for those looking to purchase birds, it's also extremely helpful to those who might help themselves to the birds I have listed. "Now where are those 4 Pekin Robins he listed?" the burgler asks...

If someone has birds for sale, we have the classifieds. That works for both selling birds and birds wanted. The census should be about counts and the status of aviculture in the U.S.

Roy Beckham, California

I don't disagree with what you just said. But right now the census does list who has what (not numbers true, but species). And I believe it always has. I was just questioning the reasoning behind that statement. So if it is decided by the majority that they don't want such listings the whole focus of the census will have to change. Personally I wouldn't mind if it didn't list who has what. Just my own opinion. I don't care either way really. Maybe that information should only be given out to those who make a request to know, and then a record kept. So that if there are thefts at least there is a list of inquiries. Or maybe this kind of thinking just complicates matters to the point that makes the whole project unworkable. That would be a

shame because it is a worthwhile project. I think getting back to a poll or questionnaire to the group as a whole as well as the email section as to what is important to each of us is still a good idea. It will give the people who are doing all the actual work and making the ultimate decisions some feedback.

Betti Fletcher, New Jersey

I agree with folks who want to see the numbers published, but I also agree with Roy that this kind of person-with-how-many-birds listing might scare some people off. Actually, I think even the current system probably scares people off who want to maintain their privacy. Honestly, I would prefer a listing of how many birds of each species are being kept and bred without any names attached (maybe just by region). People can advertise or join FSS to contact other breeders. No?

From where I sit all that has to be added is a total no. for each species in each column.... We did the Lory Society census several times that way.....

Roland Cristo, California

I know we have talked about the census quite a lot... but I received mine later than most so I have a few more thoughts about how to improve the census for the next time.

1. Separate the doves/pigeons & quail from the softbills and give them their own section as they are really so different.
2. Add the numbers of males/females/unknown as this is too invaluable to leave out.
3. State the number of participants for each section (Finch, Softbill, Dove/Quail) as well as for entire census.
4. Double check info for accuracy. - I am not sure how the data collected and was recorded, but I found six errors alone in my entries.
5. Resurvey and publish the census each year at the same time. - make it something

that the membership can always count on.

Things that I felt worked well:

1. the format was concise, easily understood, attractive, and well organized
2. scientific and common names were included
3. members could withhold any part of the info, even their name, if uncomfortable.
4. the results were mailed to all members

All in all, I was extremely impressed by the census and applaud the people who put this together as I know what an undertaking this is. I believe that there will be a huge improvement in participation next year because of seeing this published. I know I, myself, have never participated in the past because nothing ever seemed to be done with the info. I almost didn't "waste" my time doing it this year, because I figured it would be the same old thing.

Someone earlier asked why the membership hadn't been asked about census details before it was done. I feel the hardest thing to do is to complete a project if you get too much input at the beginning, because it becomes overwhelming and easy to let the details keep you from actually completing it. It is far better to do the project to the best of ability first and then to critique and tweak the details. It is always easier to criticize details on a completed project instead of an idea.

This census is also invaluable as a tool to show the country and the world that aviculture is important. We need to show that we are proud of what we are doing and that we out there in large numbers. This record is hard evidence that we (aviculturists) are organized and feel our "hobby" is important. It can also be used to get new people interested in aviculture by showing them that they are not going to be alone. There is power in numbers (and in data!).

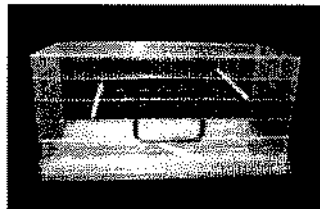
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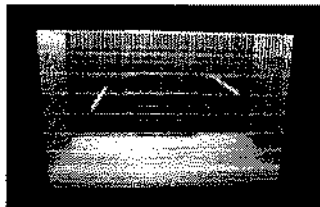
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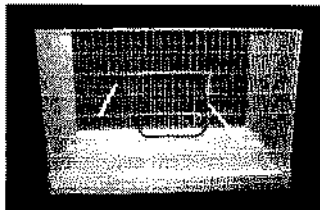
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NFSS Legislation News

September, 2003

By Harry Bryant, NFSS Legislative Director

NFSS is a member of the recently formed National Avian Welfare Alliance (NAWA), and I would like to update you on their recent activities:

"An informal information sharing session"
NAWA Meeting, San Antonio, TX
August 10, 2003

The session opened at 8:00 pm with a welcome from Dr. Gallaway. He soon turned the chair over to Steve Duncan. Steve indicated he was hopeful the group would glean as much as possible from the meeting and move forward with drafting minimum operating practices that would be used for birds not bred for research.

Introductions of 24 NAWA attendees (representing 16 NAWA organizations) and staff of the USDA/APHIS who attended the AFA convention. Participating organizations present included the following: American Federation of Aviculture, Amazona Society, American Pheasant and Waterfowl Society, American Racing Pigeon Union, Avicultutral Society of America, Bird Clubs of America, Eclectus Group, Hanging Parrot and Fig Parrot International Conservation, International Association of Avian Trainers and Educators, International Conure Association, International Parrotlet Society, National Finch and Softbill Society, National Parrot Research and Preservation Foundation, Parrotlet Alliance, Pyrrhura Breeders Association, Pionus Parrot Research Foundation, and the Tanygnathus Society.

Collectively, the group asked the USDA representative if the NAWA concept

of the task before us was in line with the contemplated regulations of birds under the AWA.

USDA representatives explained that there are two types of standards:

Performance standards - which are based on results: Is the animal healthy, comfortable, etc. These are observable welfare outcomes.

Engineering Standards - specific requirements for cage size, temperature range, etc.

The USDA representatives indicated most inspections will be concerned with performance standards. Many questions were asked from various individuals representing specific species. These questions mainly focused on the broad range of different species indicating the concern for different requirements.

The USDA inspectors indicated they had vast experience with many animals which they regulate. It was suggested listing as many performance standards as possible. The USDA representatives indicated they do not regulate ethical practices. Their focus is the welfare of the animals.

The question was asked: Who will be inspected and who won't be inspected?

USDA representatives explained that no decision had been made as to the scope of activities that would require inspection, and welcomed input from the group.

Session ended 10:00 p.m.

** NAWA was created to address regulatory issues imposed by the recently amended Animal Welfare Act; and to create a strong network that can respond to additional issues and problems that affect bird owners in the US.



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News from NFSS
Judges Panel Director
Martha Wigmore

Looking for Companionship? Renewed Vigor?

Hey, no, this isn't the Personals!! Just an invitation to you ALL to gather at the NFSS Shows near you - for friendship with like-minded finch and softbill lovers and inspiration from the birds on display all around you! NFSS is NOT just about showing - and you should use these hard-won gatherings to discover this for yourself. Meet and greet others and drool over the birds. Come out for the day - stay for the weekend! You'll leave pumped up for a new year of aviculture at your home!

Resignation of NFSS Panel Judge

NFSS is losing one of its most distinguished aviculturists from the NFSS Judging Panel. Former NFSS President Stephen Hoppin has submitted his resignation as a Panel Judge. Steve, who served NFSS in many capacities since its inception, including as Judges Panel Director and Regional V.P., has sent on the following note to his many NFSS friends:

"Following many years of political involvement with NFSS and success raising, exhibiting and judging finches and softbills. I have recently made the decision to retire from the NFSS Judge's Panel.

"Approximately four years ago my passion in life started shifting from the avian to plant kingdom. Since retirement last year, much of my free time and energy has been devoted to the world of plants: specifically growing,

exhibiting and judging bromeliads. I have been spending my days renovating my gardens. I have also become deeply involved with the local society, The Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society, and the Bromeliad Society International. I am at this time a BSI student judge.

"Although I will no longer be active in the caged bird hobby, I will of course continue birdwatching on travels in the U.S. and abroad. Still, nothing compares to that of hearing and viewing a magnificent Green and Gold Tanager in its native rainforest of Venezuela or the feral populations of beautiful Shama Thrush, Brazilian Cardinals or Java Rice Birds on Oahu. To study and observe finch and softbill species in the wild remains exhilarating to me!

"Before closing and giving up NFSS #42 (obtained in 1984), I would like you to know that whether it be raising Black Crested Finches for ten years, winning Best in Show at the huge National or Great American Bird Shows, or judging finches and/or softbills across the U.S., Canada and Puerto Rico, I have been blessed to have shared all my avian successes with some truly wonderful friends.

"To you, I express a world of thanks and only hope this genuine friendship lasts a lifetime. Passion, isn't it wonderful?!"

Thank you, Steve, for your years as an excellent NFSS Panel Judge. Another job well done....

Society Standard Update Underway

A note of appreciation to the members of the committee established recently to update the NFSS Society Finch Standard: co-chairs Julie Duimstra and Clarence Culwell, Roy Beckham, Dennis Burhans, Matthew Dingemans, and Michael Marcotrigiano. NFSS is grateful to have the contributions of these fine society finch aviculturists on this revision.

Looking for Gouldian Aviculturists

In the same way that NFSS is getting current with its formal standard for

Society Finches, we need to update the NFSS Gouldian Finch Standard for newer mutations. Please contact me if you are interested in working with others this year on a Gouldian Standard update.

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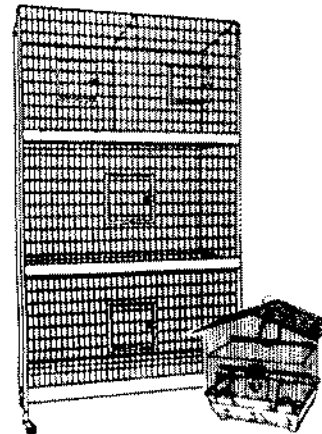
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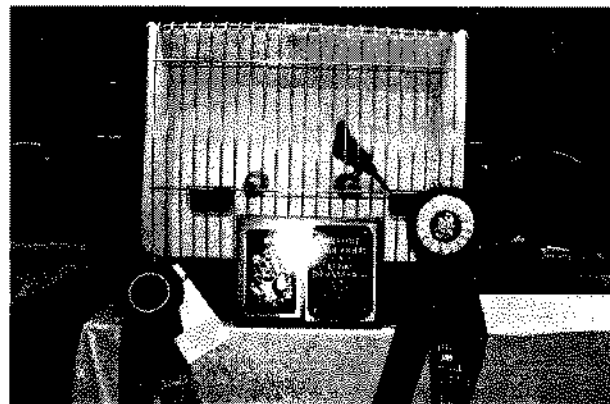
NFSS Judge Dr. Al
Decoteau working on his
final placements....

Photo courtesy ©Ron Castaner

NFSS Judge Dr. Al
Decoteau speaks to the
gallery as Dale Laird
(background) takes a
closer look....



Photo courtesy ©Ron Castaner



And the winner is.....
A gorgeous Emerald
Starling owned by Bonnie
Lewis.

*Our thanks to Ron
Castaner for sharing
these photos with us.*

Photo courtesy ©Ron Castaner

News from the FinchShop

FinchShop Talk

by Sue Haberkorn, FinchShop Manager

The best laid plans . . . I believe that if an idea is a good one, it will take on a life of its own. Well, regarding the finch and softbill cookbook, it turned out to be not such a hot idea after all. The project has been cancelled after receiving only one entry. Although disappointed with the outcome, I am very pleased to share that one recipe with you. Thanks to Bert Spear for graciously permitting us to publish his recipe here:

Egg Food for Everyone

by Bert Spear

Most birds will like this mixture. but I can say from experience that it is really enjoyed by finches! It is simple, inexpensive and an easy way for our birds to get the protein they need for good bone, muscle and feather development. I feed this food to my finches every day when they are molting, breeding or feeding young, and every second or third day otherwise. The following makes approximately 1 kilo, but you can adjust it for whatever quantity you wish.

- 8 Medium Eggs
- 7 oz. Grated Carrots
- 8 oz. Dry High Protein Cereal - if you can find it!
I use Labeber's finch granules.
- 2 oz. Petamine

Boil egg for 20-25 minutes and cool thoroughly. Chop to approximately the size of green peas (I chop shell and all when feeding adults, but peel eggs if they are feeding young). If egg is chopped too fine, it becomes very sticky and entire mixture will be sticky and very moist.

Then just mix ingredients and refrigerate. I divide into portions that will be used in no more than three days and freeze (for feeding just a few birds, try using ice-cube trays and then just thaw a cube when ready to use). When ready to use, I add a couple of heaping tablespoons of soy protein powder, shake it up and serve to the guys. I give them only enough that they can eat in about 4 hours, and then remove it.

I hope you will enjoy using this recipe and if you have ideas to improve it or just general comments on the fun of raising birds. I can be contacted via e-mail at ladygouldian@hotmail.com.

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Macedon, NY 14502
(315) 524-7768
mlauster@
rochester.rr.com

Moderator,

**NFSS Finch/Softbill
Forum**

Mr. John Wilson
San Francisco, CA
94110
jwilson153@aol.com
Forum Address:
http://groups.yahoo.
com/group/NFSS

NFSS Panel of Judges 2003

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kconline.com

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NFSS Panel Director
18913 Boston Street NW
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newdlwig@mindspring.com

Paul S. Williams

703 Donegal Drive
Papillion, NE 68046
Phone: 402-592-5488
paulw@sarpy.com

NFSS-Affiliated Clubs/Events

NATIONAL/REGIONAL CLUBS	CANADA
<p>Neotropical Finch Breeders Association (San Antonio, TX) <u>Contact:</u> Jack Eitnear (210) 828-5306 jce@estbinc.org</p>	<p>Durham Avicultural Society of Ontario (Pickering, Ontario, Canada) <u>Mtgs:</u> 2nd Tue. - Rotary Park Pavillion Lake Driveway W., Ajax <u>Contact:</u> John Zerafa (905) 355-5542 showmanager@birdclub.ca <u>Website:</u> www.birdclub.ca</p>
<p>Southeast Bird Fanciers (AL, AR, GA, FL, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN) <u>Mtgs:</u> Quarterly at the Atlanta Farmers Mkt. 1st Sat. - Mar/ Jun/ Sep 2nd Sat. - Dec <u>Contact:</u> Ginny Allen (334) 749-7168 gndallen@earthlink.net <u>Website:</u> http://members.tripod.com/sebfg/sebfg.htm</p>	<p>Essex-Kent Cage Bird Society (Ontario, Canada) <u>Mtgs:</u> Last Sun. in Members' homes. <u>Contact:</u> Julianne Mion (519) 948-6398 julianne@mnsi.net</p>
ALABAMA	COLORADO
<p>Central Alabama Avicultural Society (Montgomery) <u>Mtgs:</u> 2nd Sun. - 2:30 pm - Prattville City Library, Prattville <u>Contact:</u> Margie Lanier (334) 567-4073 margielanier@yahoo.com</p>	<p>Rocky Mountain Society of Aviculture (Denver) <u>Mtgs:</u> 2nd Fri - Lakeside Center, Denver <u>Contact:</u> Lisa McManus (303) 341-1239 conurecare@attbi.com <u>Website:</u> www.rmsa-birds.org</p>
CALIFORNIA	FLORIDA
<p>Central California Cage Bird Club (Modesto) <u>Mtgs:</u> 3rd Sun. - Mancini Hall <u>Contact:</u> Ed Gecsek (209) 529-0663 <u>Club E-Mail:</u> jones7110@aol.com</p>	<p>Florida State Fair Exotic Bird Show (Tampa) <u>Contact:</u> Dale Laird (407) 657-7989 dalel2@prodigy.net</p>
<p>Capitol City Bird Society, Inc. (Sacramento) <u>Contact:</u> Roland Cristo (530) 823-1677 cristo@lanset.com <u>E-Mail:</u> dlaviaries@aol.com</p>	<p>Aviary & Cage Bird Society of South Florida (Davie) <u>Mtgs:</u> 2nd Sun - 2pm - Flamingo Gardens <u>Contact:</u> Carrie Efstathion (954) 432-3349 carrie3@aol.com <u>Club E-Mail:</u> ruth.eusick@att.net <u>Website:</u> www.feathers.org</p>
<p>Santa Clara Valley Canary & Exotic Bird Club (Santa Clara) <u>Mtgs:</u> 2nd Sun - 1 pm Potluck - 1:30 pm Mtg. - Peninsula Conservation Center <u>Contact:</u> (408) 739-3995 <u>Club E-Mail:</u> scveebe@yahoo.com <u>Website:</u> http://www.geocities.com/siliconvalley/15701 <u>Show:</u> Dec. 6 - S.F.V. Hall, Mountain View <u>Judge:</u> Brian Mandarich</p>	<p>Treasure Coast Exotic Bird Club (Fl. Pierce) <u>Mtgs:</u> 4th Sun - 2 pm - Port Salerno Civic Center - Stuart, FL <u>Contact:</u> Jim Dunn (772) 344-8374 jdunn3@adelphia.net <u>Club E-Mail:</u> jim.dwyer@netzero.net</p>

NFSS-Affiliated Clubs/Events

<p style="text-align: center;">Exotic Bird Club of Florida, Inc. <i>(Palm Bay)</i></p> <p><u>Mtgs:</u> 2nd Sun - 1275 Culver Rd.-Palm Bay <u>Contact:</u> Ginny Heptig (321) 952-9780 yngathrtt@aol.com <u>Website:</u> www.homestead.com/ exoticbirdclubofflorida</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Greater Chicago Cage Bird Club <i>(Chicago, IL)</i></p> <p><u>Mtgs:</u> 3rd Fri.- American Legion Hall 310 W. Butterfield Rd. Elmhurst, IL. <u>Contact:</u> Sharlan Toby (847) 217-4751 or (837) 700-6260 secretary@gccbc.org <u>Club E-Mail:</u> president@gccbc.org <u>Club Website:</u> www.GCCBC.org</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Tri-State Avian Society <i>(Tallahassee)</i></p> <p><u>Mtgs:</u> 3rd Sat. - 2 pm - Havana, FL <u>Contact:</u> Barry Laster (850) 668-0908 barry17523@earthlink.net <u>Website:</u> www.tristateaviansociety.org</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">IOWA</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Sun Coast Avian Society <i>(St. Petersburg)</i></p> <p><u>Mtgs:</u> 1st Sun <u>Contact:</u> Joseph Ventiniglia (727) 392-9391 acs651@aol.com <u>Website:</u> www.suncoastaviansociety.org</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Mid America Cage Bird Society <i>(Des Moines)</i></p> <p><u>Mtgs:</u> 4th Sun - 2 pm - Des Moines Botanical Center <u>Contact:</u> John Thielking (515) 278-9159 <u>Club E-Mail:</u> larry884@mchsi.com <u>Website:</u> www.seffera.net/macbs/news.html</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">GEORGIA</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">KANSAS</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Georgia Cage Bird Society <i>(Marietta - Atlanta area)</i></p> <p><u>Mtgs:</u> 4th Sun - 2:30 pm - Smyrna Community Center - Smyrna, GA <u>Contact:</u> Pat Miller (770) 425-9455 jandpmiller@mindspring.com</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">MO-KAN Cage Bird Club (See MO)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">ILLINOIS</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">LOUISIANA</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Illini Bird Fanciers <i>(Springfield)</i></p> <p><u>Mtgs:</u> 4th Sun <u>Contact:</u> Patte Montgomery (217) 787-0399 illinibirdfanciers@yahoo.com <u>Club E-Mail:</u> ibf-birdsongs@insightbb.com</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Gulf South Bird Club, Inc. <i>(New Orleans)</i></p> <p><u>Mtgs:</u> 1st Sun. - 1 pm 1409 Bayou Blue Road, Houma, LA <u>Contact:</u> Danny Chauvin (985) 876-7966 cajunpride@mobiletel.com</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">National Institute of Red Orange Canaries <i>(Westchester)</i></p> <p><u>Mtgs:</u> 1st Fri. - Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church - Bristol & Devonshire <u>Contact:</u> Steve Hopman (815) 469-8455 hopmansv@bp.com <u>Show:</u> Nov. 29-Raddison Hotel, Arlington Hts. <u>Judge:</u> Laura Bewley <u>Show Mgr:</u> Nancy Serchuk (847) 437-5704</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Cajun Canary and Finch Club <i>(Metairie)</i></p> <p><u>Mtgs:</u> 2nd Mon.-7:30 pm - 3412 Haring Rd. <u>Contact:</u> Meade H. Phelps (504) 887-0724 NEWORLEANSMEADE@cox.net Show: Dec. 13 (Finches & Canaries) Dec. 14 (Budgies) VFW Hall Judge: Armando Lee</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">MARYLAND</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Baltimore Bird Fanciers <i>(Baltimore)</i></p> <p><u>Mtgs:</u> 3rd Sun.- Towson Public Library <u>Contact:</u> Barbara Shannon (410) 356-5850 <u>Club E-Mail:</u> raymondreter@aol.com</p>

NFSS-Affiliated Clubs/Events

MICHIGAN	Missouri Cage Bird Club <i>(St. Louis)</i>
<p style="text-align: center;">Great Lakes Avicultural Society <i>(Grand Rapids)</i></p> <p><u>Mtgs:</u> 2nd Mon. - 7pm - UAW Hall 4269 Alpine NW, Grand Rapids</p> <p><u>Contact:</u> Diana Hugo (616) 842-0163 pdhugo@charter.net</p> <p><u>Club E-Mail:</u> pdhugo@charter.net or noahbird@ameritech.net</p> <p><u>Website:</u> www.angelfire.com/mi4/glas</p>	<p><u>Mtgs:</u> 1st Sun - Maplewood, MO</p> <p><u>Contact:</u> Dennis Burhans (636) 980-8569</p>
Society of Canary & Finch Breeders <i>(Livonia)</i>	NEW HAMPSHIRE
<p><u>Mtgs:</u> 3rd Sat - 6:30 pm - Wixom, Michigan</p> <p><u>Contact:</u> Patrick Vance (248) 443-0643 spartanfinchman@cs.com</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Birds of a Feather Avicultural Society <i>(Manchester)</i></p> <p><u>Mtgs:</u> 2nd Mon - 7:30 pm - Villa Crest Retirement Center</p> <p><u>Contact:</u> Ray Schwartz (630) 362-6106 prismsdad@aol.com</p> <p><u>Club E-Mail:</u> editor@boaf.com</p> <p><u>Website:</u> www.boaf.com</p>
Motor City Bird Breeders, Inc. <i>(Warren)</i>	NEW YORK
<p><u>Mtgs:</u> 1st weekends in member homes.</p> <p><u>Contact:</u> Patricia Piekarz (586) 296-2957 dpiekarz1@comcast.net</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">International Canary & Finch Society <i>(Western NY State and So. Ontario, Canada)</i></p> <p><u>Mtgs:</u> One Sun/Mo. 2 pm. Alt. Locations - Galleria Mall, Cheed, NY or St. Theresa's Church, Niagara Falls, NY</p> <p><u>Contact:</u> Mary Ellen Sacca (716) 825-8271 sacca@net.telsearch.com</p> <p><u>Website:</u> www.3.upatsix.com/ics</p>
MISSISSIPPI	New York Finch & Type Canary Club <i>(New York City)</i>
<p style="text-align: center;">South Mississippi Cage Bird Society <i>(Ocean Springs/Biloxi)</i></p> <p><u>Contact:</u> Joyce Webb (228) 875-2704 spdrwebb123@yahoo.com</p> <p><u>Club E-Mail:</u> litdebee@155.com</p> <p><u>Website:</u> www.smcbs.org</p>	<p><u>Mtgs:</u> 2nd Sun - 1 pm - Averill Blvd Park Elmont, (L.I.), NY</p> <p><u>Contact:</u> Stan Kulak (718) 967-6899 barstand@aaahawk.com</p> <p><u>Website:</u> www.newyorkfinch.com</p>
MISSOURI	NORTH CAROLINA
MO-KAN Cage Bird Club <i>(Columbus, KS)</i>	Raleigh-Durham Caged Bird Society <i>(Raleigh)</i>
<p><u>Mtgs:</u> 2nd Sat - 7 pm - Granny Shaffers Dixieland Chicken, Joplin, MO</p> <p><u>Contact:</u> Doug Willis (417) 358-5189 dwillis71@cox-internet.com</p>	<p><u>Mtgs:</u> 3rd Sun.-2:30 pm- Glen Eden Pilot Pk</p> <p><u>Contact:</u> April Blazich (919) 851-8079 aprihb@bellsouth.net</p> <p><u>Website:</u> www.rdcbs.org</p>
Greater Kansas City Avicultural Society <i>(Independence)</i>	OREGON
<p><u>Mtgs:</u> 2nd Sun - 2 pm - Trail West Library</p> <p><u>Contact:</u> Anthony Day (816) 356-0533</p> <p><u>Club E-Mail:</u> membirdsetcmichel@kc.rr.com</p> <p><u>Website:</u> www.GKCAS.org</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Eastside Finch Connection <i>(Portland)</i></p> <p><u>Mtgs:</u> 1st Mon. - 7 pm - Clackamas Comm. Club Hall - 15711 SE 90th</p> <p><u>Contact:</u> K.J. Brown (503) 266-7606 jeeperpeepers55@aol.com</p>

NFSS-Affiliated Clubs/Events

PENNSYLVANIA	
<p>Greater Pittsburgh Cage Bird Society, Inc. (Pittsburgh) <u>Mtgs:</u> 2nd Sun. - 2 pm - Faith Community Church - Jefferson Rd. - Penn Hills <u>Contact:</u> Margie Jonnet (412) 795-1904 mjonnet@katz.pitt.edu</p>	<p>Alamo Exhibition Bird Club, Inc. (San Antonio) <u>Mtgs:</u> 4th Sun - 2 PM - Becker CPA Center <u>Contact:</u> Nathan Durbin - (210) 433-1840 tak@stic.net</p>
<p>Chester County Bird Club, Inc. (Malvern) <u>Mtgs:</u> 2nd Sun - E. Whiteland Twship Bldg. <u>Contact:</u> Maria Rosenberger (610) 469-6402 Duckybathtime@aol.com</p>	<p>Texas Bird Breeders (Temple) <u>Mtgs:</u> 2nd Sat. - Noon - Feb/May/Aug <u>Contact:</u> Clarence Culwell (817) 220-5568 culwell5@flash.net</p>
PUERTO RICO	
<p>Asociacion' Criadores Del Finches, Inc. <u>Contact:</u> Jose R. Diaz (787) 747-7947 <u>E-Mail:</u> criadores_finches_este@hotmail.com <u>E-Mail:</u> Juan Santos (787) 875-0679 jsantos2269@msn.com</p>	<p>Canary and Finch Society (Pasadena) <u>Mtgs:</u> 2nd Sun - 2pm - Community Room - Pasadena Towne Square Mall <u>Contact:</u> Harold McBrayer (281) 338-2814 haroldmcbrayer369@hotmail.com <u>Website:</u> http://canaryfinchsociety.tripod.com</p>
TENNESSEE	VIRGINIA
<p>Tennessee Valley Exotic Bird Club (Knoxville) <u>Mtgs:</u> 1st Tue - UT Vet School <u>Contact:</u> Sondra Ott (865) 573-2381 sondradott@bellsouth.net <u>Website:</u> http://www.Kornet.org/tvebc</p>	<p>Peninsula Caged Bird Society, Inc. (Hampton) <u>Contact:</u> Bea Rogers (757) 484-6001 <u>Club E-Mail:</u> dickivy@two-rivers.com <u>Club Website:</u> www.vapeninsulacagedbirdclub.org <u>Events:</u> See the web site - several each year.</p>
<p>Southeast Tennessee Avicultural Society (Niota) <u>Mtgs:</u> 2nd Sun.-2 pm -Niota Elementary Sch <u>Contact:</u> Janet Burrell (423) 472-1306 jgb2202@aol.com <u>E-Mail:</u> jgb2202@aol.com or</p>	WASHINGTON
<p>Middle Tennessee Cage Bird Club (Nashville) <u>Mtgs:</u> 3rd Sun.-2 pm-108 Donelson Sr. Ctr <u>Contact:</u> Lisa Mellies (615) 789-0002 yui02@bellsouth.net</p>	<p>Cascade Canary Breeders Association (Seattle) <u>Mtgs:</u> 3rd Sun. - 2 pm - Leisure Estates Clubhouse - 201 Union Ave SE - Renton <u>Contact:</u> Janel C. Johnson (425) 226-8899 katbird57@aol.com</p>
TEXAS	WISCONSIN
<p>Fort Worth Bird Club (Fort Worth) <u>Mtgs:</u> 3220 Botanic Garden Dr. <u>Contact:</u> Clarence Culwell (817) 220-5568 culwell5@flash.net <u>Club E-Mail:</u> circlm@swbell.net <u>Website:</u> www.fwbc.org</p>	<p>Badger Canary and Finch Club (Milwaukee) <u>Mtgs:</u> 3rd Sat - members' homes <u>Contact:</u> Susan Feldstein (262) 965-5362 bneathhiswings@yahoo.com <u>Club E-Mail:</u> DEvanornum@aol.com</p>
	<p>Wisconsin Cage Bird Club (Oshkosh) <u>Contact:</u> Dave Bluma 920-428-4595 davidbluma@aol.com</p>



Membership Application

Name: _____

Dual Membership 2nd Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ Country: _____

Phone #: _____

E-Mail: _____

New Member? _____ Renewal (List NFSS #) _____

How did you hear about us? _____

Annual Dues	
Select One:	
Single: \$30.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dual: \$35.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
Junior (under 16): \$22.50	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foreign: \$35.00	<input type="checkbox"/>

Mail Application and Check
Payable to NFSS:

Ms. Martie Lauster
4581 Lincoln Road
Macedon, NY 14502



NFSS FINCH/SOFTBILL SAVE Information/Application Request

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ Country: _____

Phone #: _____

E-Mail: _____

Mail Request to:

Mr. Harry Bryant
37212 Butternut Ridge - Elyria, Ohio 44035

2003 AFFILIATION AGREEMENT



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

Mail to: Ginny Allen, Liaison Officer
 307 Brookwood Court
 Opelika, AL 36801
 e-mail: gndallen@earthlink.net
 Phone: (334) 749-7168

Club Name: _____

Club City/State: _____

Club Meeting Dates/Location: _____

Club Delegate: _____

Address: _____

*Phone: _____ *E-Mail: _____

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

Delegate's Signature: _____

Club Officer: _____

Address: _____

*Phone: _____ *E-Mail: _____

Club E-Mail Contact (Important): _____

Club Web Site: _____

Show/Event Date: _____ Panel Judge: _____

Show Location: _____

Send NFSS Journal to: _____

Please list other fairs or events hosted by your club for listing in the NFSS Journal. Please include dates, locations, and a contact member with phone number and/or e-mail address: _____

**2003
NFSS Awards
Order Form**

Please use a separate form
For each individual show!

Mail with payment to:
Darla Dandre, P.O. Box 1231, Lisle, IL 60532
815-729-9789 or e-mail a copy to:
Dbirdbranch@aol.com

This information must reach the Awards Manager as soon as possible but no later than two months BEFORE show date. Awards are sent Priority Mail to the designated person.

PLAQUES: All plaques are \$25.00 each. They are walnut finish with the engraved NFSS logo on brass over black plate on the left and the club information on brass over black plate on the right. All are 6" x 8".

Please circle how you wish your plaques to read: Best in DIVISION or SHOW
If you do not make a selection, plaques will be engraved "Best in Division".

Club Name to be Engraved: _____
 _____ 1st Place Plaque _____ 2nd Place Plaque _____ 3rd Place Plaque
 _____ Best Finch in Show _____ Best Softbill in Show
 _____ Service Award/Breeder Award (please provide engraving information).

Sub Total _____ Plaques @ \$25.00 per Plaque = \$ _____

ROSETTES: The basic set of rosettes for finches and softbills consists of eleven rosettes with the NFSS logo on the button. This includes 1st thru 10th place and Best Unflighted. Unflighted birds are those banded with current year (2002) bands.

_____ Basic Rosette Package (1-10 + Best Unflighted) \$45.00
 _____ Unflighted ribbon add-on (2nd & 3rd Place) \$10.00
 _____ Novice Ribbon \$ 7.00
 Rosette and Ribbon Sub-Total = \$ _____

Affiliation Fee (if you haven't already issued a separate check) = \$ 25.00 .

Total Amount of Check PAYABLE TO NFSS: \$ _____

SHIP AWARDS TO: Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

SHOW INFORMATION: Date: _____ Judge: _____
 Location: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 NFSS Club Delegate: _____
 Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____
 Show Manager: _____
 Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Can this information be published in the NFSS Journal? Yes _____ No _____

NFSS MEMBER and NON-MEMBER ORDER FORM

Split Plastic Band Choices: Red, Dk Green, Lt Green, White, Pink, Black, Purple, Yellow, Orange, Dk Blue, Lt Blue **MINIMUM ORDER \$5.00**

SPLIT PLASTIC BANDS - \$1.50 PER STRING OF 10 BANDS

INDICATE QUANTITY BELOW AND COLOR

XF	XCS	XCL	XB	X3	SUBTOTAL

NFSS MEMBERS ONLY *Closed traceable aluminum bands available in only the NFSS color of the year. Aluminum bands are engraved with initials NFS. Size Code. Year. and Number. There is no choice of number. All aluminum bands are recorded for permanent reference. Bands are ordered in strings of 10, same size. New members may order before receiving their membership number. Write "New" for an NFSS Member #. Orders are processed weekly as received. Please, no mail requiring signatures.*

The banding and marking of wild birds is very tightly regulated by the Federal government. It is illegal to use ANY band on a bird that is released to the wild except a Federal band issued by US Fish and Wildlife.

ALUMINUM BANDS - \$3.25 PER STRING OF 10 BANDS

INDICATE QUANTITY BELOW

A	B	C	D	E	G	J	K	L	M	R	S	T	SUBTOTAL

If you choose not to include this sum, NFSS will NOT be responsible for replacements.

POSTAL INSURANCE
 Under \$50.00 - \$1.30
 \$50.00 to \$100.00 - \$2.20
 Over \$100.00 - \$3.20 _____

HANDLING FEE \$1.00 _____

PLASTIC & ALUMINUM SUBTOTAL _____

TOTAL _____

BANDS FOR YEAR: _____ **NFSS MEMBER #:** _____
NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____
CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____
E-MAIL: _____

PAYMENT PAYABLE TO NESS
MAIL TO: Paula Hansen, 2234 Juneau Ct. S., Salem, OR 97302

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

- Size A: Gold-breasted Waxbill, Orange-checked Waxbill, Owl (Bicheno) Finch, Quail Finch, Red-eared Waxbill, Strawberry Finch, and other small waxbills.
- Size B: Black-cheeked Waxbill, Cordon Bleu, Cuban Melodious Finch, Fire Finch, Olive Finch, Rufous-backed Mannikin, Timor Zebra, Peales Parrot Finch.
- Size C: B&W Mannikin, Violet Eared & Blue-capped Waxbills, Purple Grenadier, Bronze-winged Mannikin, Cherry Finch, Green Singing Finch, Grey Singing Finch, Heck's Shafttail, Lavender Finch, Painted Finch, Pileated Finch, Pytilias, Red-headed & Forbes (Blue-Breasted) Parrot Finches, Shafttail Finch, Silverbills, Star Finch, Red Siskin, Society (Bengalese) Finch.
- Size D: Blue-faced Parrot Finch, Lady Gouldian Finch, Chestnut-breasted & most smaller mannikins, most other Parrot finches, Pictorella Finch, Pintailed Nonpareil, most Twinspots, Yellow-rumped Finch, Zebra finch.
- Size E: Black-crested Finch, Diamond sparrow, European Greenfinch, Golden Song Sparrow, Nuns, Peter's Twinspot, Siskins, Spice Finch, European Goldfinch.
- Size G: Magpie Mannikin, Siberian Goldfinch, most larger mannikins, small tanagers.
- Size J: Pekin Robin, Silver-eared Mesias, most small softbills,
- Size K: Java Rice Birds, Red-crested Cardinal, Saffron Finch, Shama Thrush
- Size L: Diamond Dove, Mousebirds, other small doves, quail, softbills.
- Size M: Leaf Birds, Pagoda Mynah, large Sunbirds, Superb Starlings.
- Size R: Green/Purple Starlings.
- Size S: Indian Hill Mynah, Java Mynah, Ring-necked Dove, Toucanettes, White-tailed Jay.
- Size T: Small Hornbills, Phush-capped Jay, small Toucans, small Touracos.

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