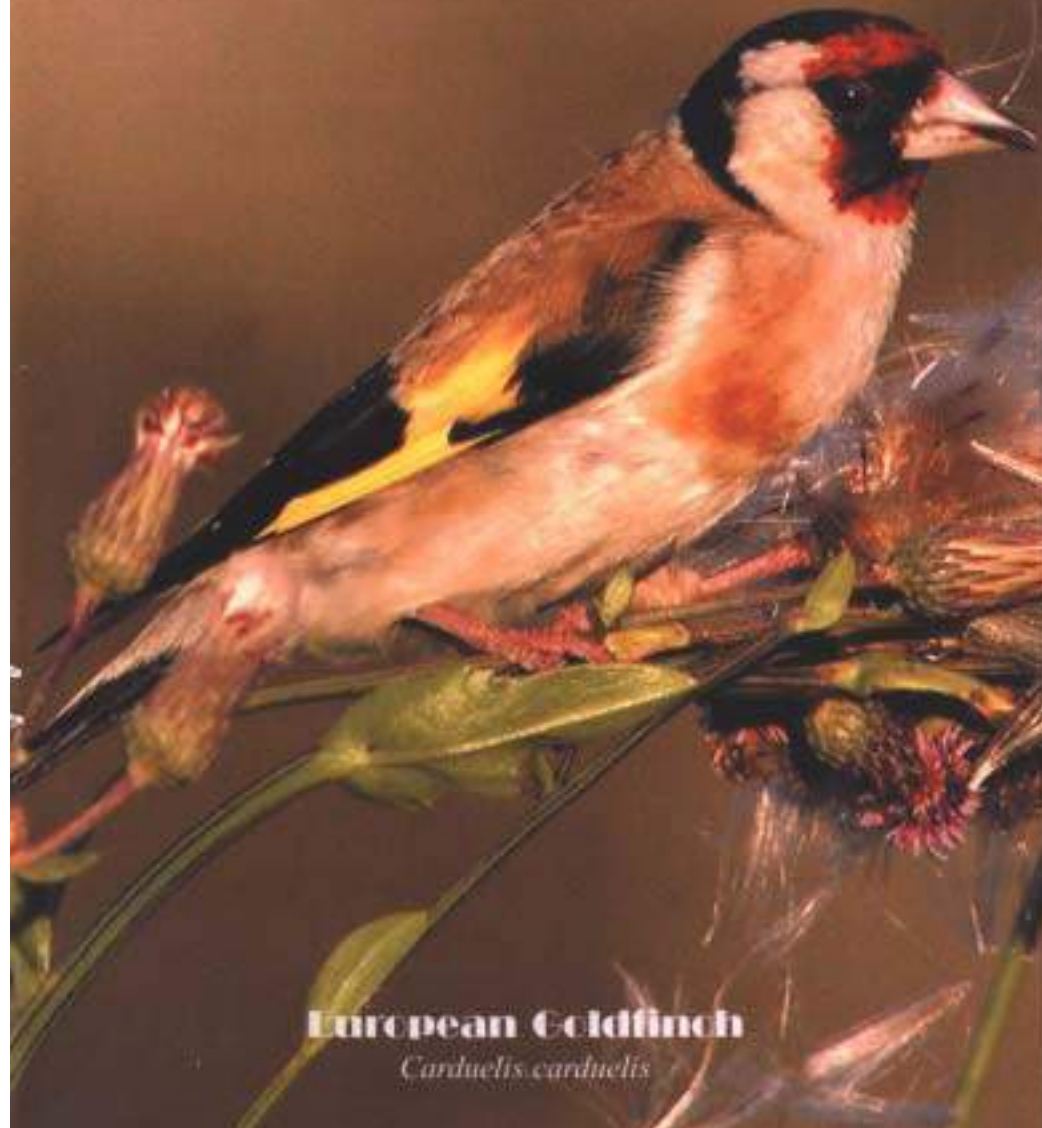


Journal of the
**National Finch &
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Volume 20, No. 6

November/December, 2003



European Goldfinch
Carduelis carduelis



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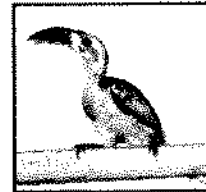
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NFSS Mission Statement

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....

European Goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*).

Jarmo Holopainen is an Academy Research Fellow at the Academy of Finland and Docent in the Department of Ecology and Science at the University of Kuopio. His research/teaching concentrations at these institutions are in the fields of Ecology and Entomology. He also works in Ornithology and Photography. Visit his website at www.uku.fi/~holopain/.

Other Jarmo Holopainen photographs may be seen at www.pbase.com/holopain/.

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Journal of the National Finch and Softbill Society

Home Office: 4581 Lincoln Road, Macedon, NY 14502 mlauster@rochester.rr.com
<http://www.nfss.org>

Publisher: The National Finch and Softbill Society; Editor: Martie Lauster

Editorial Policy/Disclaimer: The Journal of the National Finch and Softbill Society is published bi-monthly by NFSS. The following deadlines normally apply to all aspects of the journal:

Deadlines for Submissions: 1st day of Jan, Mar, May, July, Sep, Nov.

Mailed to Subscribers: 1st day of Feb, Apr, Jun, Aug, Oct, Dec.

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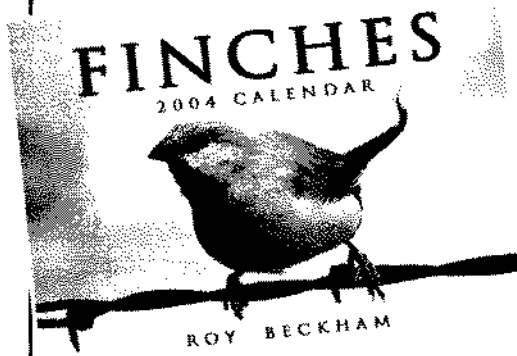
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Finally a Finch Calendar!

Full-color twelve month **2004 calendar** featuring a different finch that we know and love every month. Owl finch, Masked Grassfinch, Spice, Parson, Java, Star, Cutthroat and more. Measures 11" x 17" on 100# glossy paper. See the monthly images on line at www.eFinch.com/calendar.htm



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NFSS President's Message

November, 2003



ELECTION RESULTS

Thanks to all who participated in the election!!

Congrats to those who won and thanks for your support of NFSS for those who did not win this time.

The new board beginning January 1, 2004 ...

President:	Sally Huntington <i>(re-elected)</i>
1st VP:	Armando Lee <i>(re-elected)</i>
2nd VP:	Harry Bryant <i>(re-elected)</i>
3rd VP:	Randy Taylor <i>(New Officer)</i>
4th VP:	Martha Wigmore <i>(re-elected)</i>
Membership Director:	Linda Hughes <i>(New Officer)</i>
Executive Secretary:	Martie Lauster <i>(New in this office)</i>
Treasurer:	Mark Phelps <i>(re-elected)</i>
Liaison Officer:	Darla Dandre <i>(New in this office)</i>
Band Secretary:	Paula Hansen <i>(re-elected)</i>
Region 1 VP:	Robert (Chris) Fairchild <i>(New Officer)</i>
Region 2 VP:	Ron Castner <i>(re-elected)</i>
Region 3 VP:	Patrick Vance <i>(New in this office)</i>
Region 4 VP:	Clint Harris <i>(New officer)</i>
Region 5 VP:	Anna Sinclair <i>(re-elected)</i>
Region 6 VP:	Raspberry <i>(New Officer)</i>
Region 7 VP:	Julio Mateo Soto <i>(re-elected)</i>
Region 8 VP:	Alfred Mion <i>(New Officer)</i>

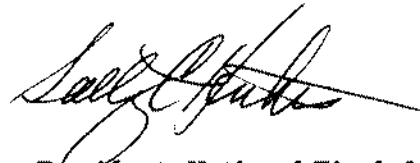
FAREWELL to two very dedicated women officers and helpers, **Ginny Allen** and **Kerri McCoy**, both of whom gave many years of original thinking, devotion and good old hard work. We will miss these two very popular faces on our board.

And for the four board members, **James Felix**, **Harold McBrayer**, **Vince Huntington** and **Vince Moase**, who opted to pass their jobs to someone new, I personally thank you and extend a sincere invitation for you to return.

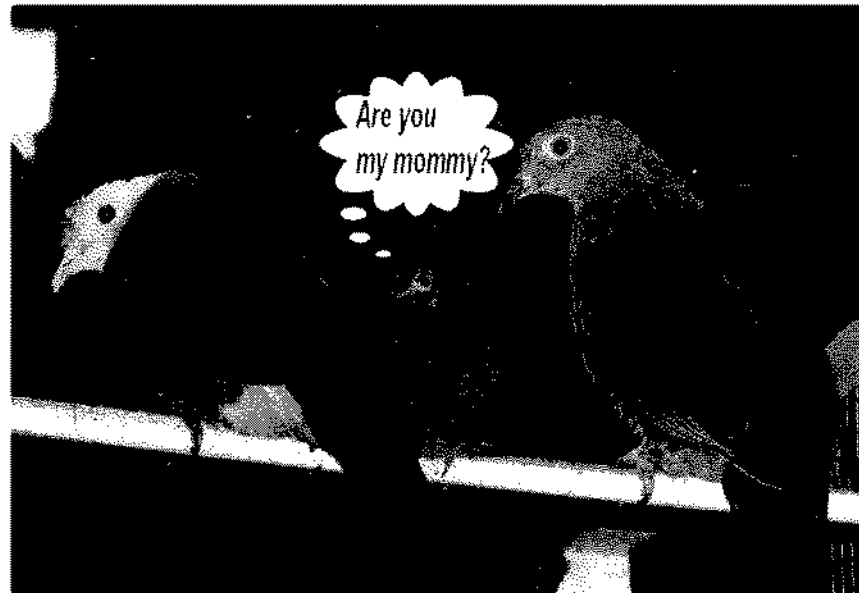
EXCELLENCE regarding the Afternoon of Aviculture Program: Thank you, Jim Hardin, for your most informative talk on the Red Siskin. Thank you, Michael Marcotrigiano, for your enlightening presentation on the society finch... and also, for Michael; Congratulations for winning Best Finch/Softbill at the GABS with his beautiful marked-white pied society finch.

GREAT STUFF for the 2003 Silent Auction was donated by Julie Duimstra, Tom Voges, Janis Clark, Darla Dandre, JC Cages, Steve Hopman, Kateri Davis, Skipio's, and LadyGouldianFinch.com. Thanks to all the folks who so generously donated merchandise for the Silent auction to help make it such a profitable fund raiser.

Have a great holiday season!



Sally Huntington, President, National Finch & Softbill Society



Black-Naped Fruit Doves (*Ptilinopus melanospila*)

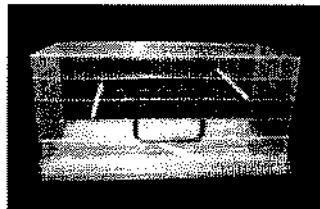
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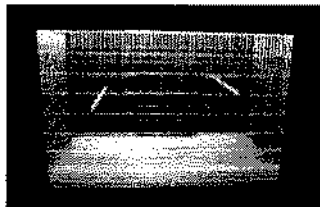
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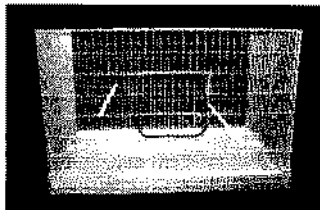
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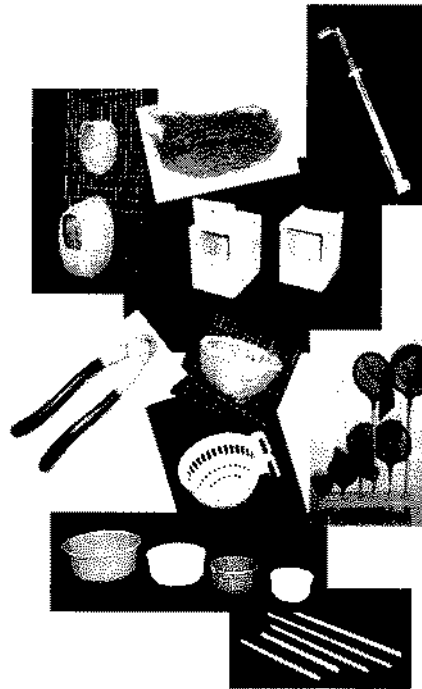
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From the Editor...

Hello to all of you. I hope you will all allow me to interrupt the Journal with this once-a-year message. I have so enjoyed this year of work on our Journal and hope you have enjoyed the results of this effort. I continue to learn and explore more, but sure need all of you to help with your opinions, suggestions, and ideas for our Journal. I really need to know what you like, what you don't like, and what you'd like to see us offer. So - please - let me know your thoughts. I can't do this alone and am so appreciative of all the help, advice and suggestions from so many of you. I welcome and truly want to hear all feedback - both positive and negative.

I would like to welcome Michael Marcotrigiano, our new Science Editor. Michael's first contribution is in this issue and I hope you will enjoy it as much as I did. While Michael mentions in his article that I badgered him into doing it, he has actually been very enthusiastic and I hope you will join me in thanking him for sharing his considerable expertise and experience with all of us.

I also ask you to join me in extending sincere and heartfelt appreciation to Roy Beckham. Roy has not only provided us with the many professional photographs we have enjoyed for so many of our cover shots and illustrations, but has also been my mentor. He has guided me in providing a fair and equitable offering for the many advertisers you now see in our Journal and has provided much encouragement and advice throughout the time I have been privileged to be your editor. Thank you, Roy. Your presence and guidance have been invaluable.

To our advertisers - Thank you all for your confidence in and support of NFSS. We are very grateful for your presence in our Journal and our members so appreciate knowing about you and your offerings.

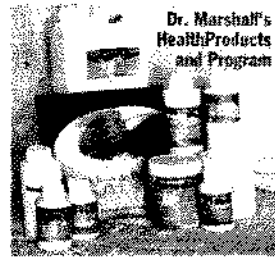
And to all of our contributors - who have given so freely of their time and energy - thank you all. Without you - there would be no NFSS Journal.

I wish you all a happy and fun-filled holiday season!

Martie Lauster

Editor, NFSS Journal

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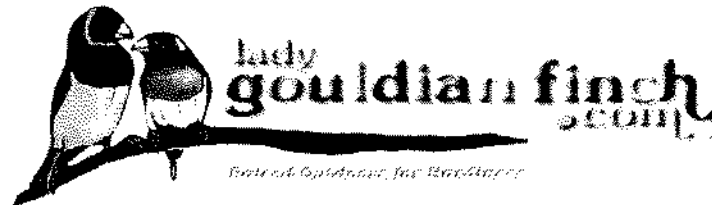
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Notes From the Science Editor...

by Michael Marcotrigiano

I have accepted the role as science editor (Martie begged me) and have agreed to review any controversy that deals with the genetic and other biological aspects of submitted finch articles. In the meantime, I'll try to add some interesting notes to each issue of the NFSS Journal (being prodded bi-monthly by Martie). Below is my first submission.

Sex Ratio Research Reviews

If you are like me, you are perpetually frustrated that your birds give you more males when you want hens and more hens when you want males. In my case, I've had a ratio of 2:1 male to female in my society finches for years and no "old wives tale" remedies seem to change this. I breed year round, have tried black (aka UV) lights here and there, and have naked pictures of both male and female birds hanging in each nest box ☺. It appears that bird sex determination is more interesting and complex than you would ever imagine and still an area of active research. For example, consider these findings published in well respected journals.

In *Animal Behavior*, (Volume 56 pages 155-164), R. Kilner reports that how much food zebra fledglings receive may have a profound impact on reproductive success. When food was restricted rather than unlimited, clutch ratios were significantly more male biased. Within clutches, daughters hatched sooner than sons and first-hatched chicks fledged at higher weights than last hatched chicks. Chick mortality

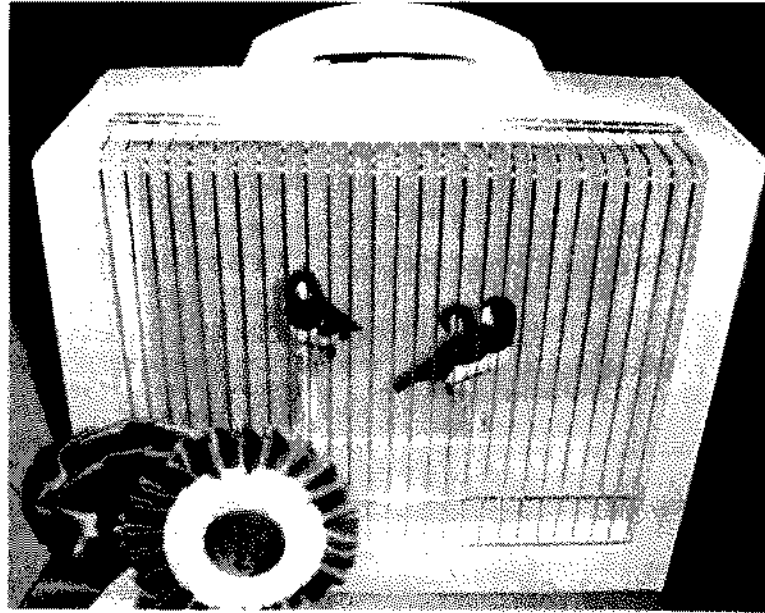
was female biased when food availability was low but male biased when food availability was unrestricted. The author suggests that the combined effects will manipulate sex ratios and this can have an adaptive advantage for the species.

In the prestigious journal *Nature*, Ben Sheldon and colleagues report (Volume 402, pages 874-877) that ultraviolet color variation influences blue tit sex ratios. Blue tits are sexually dimorphic primarily in the UV (A) color range having blue structural color in the males. Interestingly, females can skew the sex-ratio of their clutches in response to UV (A) plumage ornamentation of males. When they experimentally masked the male ultraviolet output they effectively altered sex ratios in subsequent clutches. UV (A) reflectance also predicted male survival to the following season suggesting it may serve as a viability indicator. The importance of this finding (and no news to me from my years of skewed sex ratios) is that chromosomal sex determination may not constrain the sex ratio in some birds. As a side note, I am wondering if this explains why UV light does not seem to have an effect on my sex ratios. Society finches do not have structural blue color whereas gouldians, e.g., do. So when you read Robert Black's testimony to UV light treatments take in mind he generalizes and gives no explanation as to why it works. Any one out there that can tell me how to alter my sex ratios in societies gets two boxes of chocolates if it works!

NFSS Member and Journal Science Editor, Michael Marcotrigiano, is a breeder and exhibitor of top show-quality Society finches as well as a small number of amazing Zebras. He is a faculty member in the Department of Biological Sciences at South College in Massachusetts as well as Director of its Botanic Garden. To learn more about Michael and his birds, please visit his website at www.exoticfinches.com.

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Keeping and Breeding European and Siberian Goldfinches

by Salam Hasenin

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Introduction

The European and Siberian Goldfinches (EGFs and SGFs) are one of the most misunderstood birds in the U.S. Very few people keep them and/or understand their nutritional and environmental requirements. They are beautiful birds and excellent songsters. I am only a novice at keeping and breeding these birds. Most of the information below is based on extensive reading, assistance from other more experienced bird keepers, and my own experience. Although I kept EGFs as I was growing up, this is only my second year breeding them.

In the Middle East, Europe, and parts of Africa, the GFs are the main pet bird singer. Many people keep them, but never attempt to breed them. In those countries, more people are interested in cross breeding them to a canary hen than to their own kind. The reason is simple; there has not been a reason to breed GFs in captivity as there are plenty of them all around at very cheap prices. In 1934, the Buckmaster Bill was passed in England. Among other things, the bill prohibited the catching of these birds or the taking of the eggs from the nest during the breeding season. So for the first time, breeding of these birds started in England, but until now, in many countries in the World, they are still caught and exported in the tens of thousands.

Acquiring Goldfinches

It is important to know that most GFs for sale in the U.S. are wild caught and imported from other parts of the world. In addition, most of these imported birds have gone through months of horrible conditions. They are being caught, medicated, put in crowded and unhealthy conditions, transported in these conditions to the U.S., quarantined, medicated again, and then being sold to the pet or bird shop.

I always recommend to my friends to purchase several pairs and hopefully they will be able to end up with a couple of nice pairs. I have been lucky as I bought my birds from a good pet bird store in San Diego. They have a 7-day health guarantee and a 6-month trade-in policy. So if the bird is sick, I return it and exchange it for another one - Or if I did not like the bird within the first few months, I traded it for another one. A lot of these birds are beat up and exhausted by the time they come to us bird lovers. In addition, we do not know their age and breeding status.

If somebody claims that they have captive bred birds, one must make sure they are closed banded with the right size band. I use size E band for my EGFs, the brittanica race, and size G bands for my SGFs. It is always better to acquire captive bred birds as one would be able to tell their age and also captive bred are more adapt-

able to captivity conditions, which results most of the time in a better singing bird and better breeding possibilities.

Nutrition and Environment

Nutrition is a very important, if not the most important, element in the well-being of GFs. They require fatty seeds in higher quantities than other finches and seem to never get too fat on them. Throughout the year, in addition to a good canary seed mix, offer the GF some hemp, hulled sunflower seeds, safflower seeds, and/or niger. They need fatty seeds or otherwise they will not survive for long. I have seen some bird stores that offer them finch seed alone!

They need fresh water every day with multi vitamins and probiotics added a few times a week. I add probiotics almost every day. The love leafy greens such as kale and dandelions and should be offered these a few times a week. I will talk about the nutrition requirements during the breeding and molting seasons in their respective sections.

Regarding their environment, one can keep a single male in a box canary type cage if the purpose is just to keep one bird in the cage for singing only; not for breeding. However, it is preferable to keep wild caught GFs in bigger cages. The cage should be hung as high as possible in a relatively quiet room. They feel more secure this way - especially wild caught birds. One can also use solid sides and back for the GF's cage to offer it more privacy and security.

What I meant by a relatively quiet room is that if you place the cage on the floor in a room bustling with kids or visitors every day, the GF will not survive for long. S/he will catch a disease from being over stressed and will die. A home office about 4' or 5' high is ideal. For captive bred, you can flex these stringent requirements a bit.

Breeding

Patience and persistence on the part of the hobbyist are necessary to successfully breed EGFs and SGFs. You can

breed these birds in an outdoor aviary, indoor aviary, or a flight cage. Outdoor aviary breeding is the best way to breed these beautiful birds. I have tried an outdoor aviary this year and thankfully it has been a success for me. The second best alternative is an indoor aviary or a large indoor flight cage. Maybe indoor aviaries or flights are the best alternative for people who have nasty weather and mosquitoes that carry diseases. At least, one can control the indoor environment by keeping cool and free of nasty flies and predators.

The third method is flight cages and is my widely used method. I breed my birds in an outdoor aviary measuring 4' X 4' X 6' high and also in double breeder flight cages measuring 30" X 18" X 18". I've heard of people breeding them in flight cages as small as 24" X 15" X 15". The bigger the flight cage is, the better. Wild caught GFs will not breed in a small box canary-type cage.

Flight Cage Breeding

1. Pick a nice size, as recommended above, double breeder flight cage. The wire divider is a must and I will explain why later.
2. Place the cage as high as possible in the room without constantly moving or changing the cage or location. They like stability.
3. They need peace and quiet in the room. A home office would be ideal. They will not breed in a bedroom or a family room with people moving in and out constantly. I have my birds in a bird room specifically for them. I used to have them in my home office and they did fine there.
4. Pick strong and young birds that do not have problems. If they are wild caught, one must wait 1-2 years before attempting to breed, especially for the female. The female needs privacy and cover when breeding and incubating eggs.
5. If they are captive bred, one does not need to wait. It will take them only a few

months to get used to you and your place and get down to the business of breeding.

6. Nutrition prior and during the breeding season: They will require the following:

- a. Dry seeds as described under the nutrition section.
- b. Soaked/sprouted seeds and eggfood on a daily basis, one tsp per bird.
- c. Leafy greens everyday.
- d. Weeds such as dandelions and sow thistle. Give them the whole plant, leaves, flowers buds, and roots. They love to work the flower buds for the seeds. That is why they have long pointy beaks.
- e. Fresh water every day with multi vitamins and probiotics.
- f. Cuttlebone.
- g. I do not use grit, oyster shell, or charcoal. Other experienced breeders that I know give their birds oyster shell and charcoal.
- h. Apples, carrots, and broccoli are good. Do not over-feed your birds. Remember they are tiny creatures and will only need very little to eat as long as it is the right food.
- i. Breeding food should be offered gradually, maybe once a week in February, until it is offered every day sometime in March.

7. Separate the male from the female with the wire divider in the double breeder cage.

8. They require 14-16 hours of daylight or artificial lighting. Start increasing your lighting gradually in late February or early March. They come into condition in April or May. They are late breeders.

9. Offer an open cup like nest (canary type) to the female. Hang it in one of the corners on the highest point.

10. Nesting Material: I have noticed that GFs prefer burlap to anything else. One

should also offer them cotton-like material. Avoid strings no matter what others may tell you. I got burnt this way and lost a female this way and also almost lost her babies. Her feet got tangled with the string materials.

11. Signs of Coming into Breeding Condition: The male will be singing to the female and displaying to her. He will sing and sway his tail back and forth with the wings drooping on the sides. The female will also be swaying her tail back and forth. Both of their beaks will turn into pinkish white with the black color almost gone. Some males will feed the female through the wire. Many GF males will not feed their mate or babies in a cage.

12. When all the above signs are noticed and the female has built her nest, remove the wire divider between the two. Sometimes one will see the mating happen almost immediately. Just like magic!

13. Hopefully, eggs will start being laid in the nest. Every morning, take the egg out and replace it with a plastic egg. The hen will lay 3-5 eggs. When the 4th egg is laid, give her the real eggs and let her sit on them. Make sure at that time that you put the wire divider between the male and female. GF males are known to break or eat the eggs in cages. About 13-14 days later, the eggs will hatch. Continue doing what you have been doing and let the female raise her babies.

14. Make sure you band the babies between 6-9 days old depending on how fast they are growing.

15. At about 10 days of hatching, one can let the male in by removing the wire divider. Some will feed their babies.

16. The nestlings will fledge at about 13-15 days of age. They will become self sufficient at approximately 28 days. Do not rush it so you won't lose any babies this way.

17. Offer the hen a nest on the other side of the cage when the babies are about 3 weeks old. She will likely go to nest again. Do not be greedy - two clutches a year are enough.



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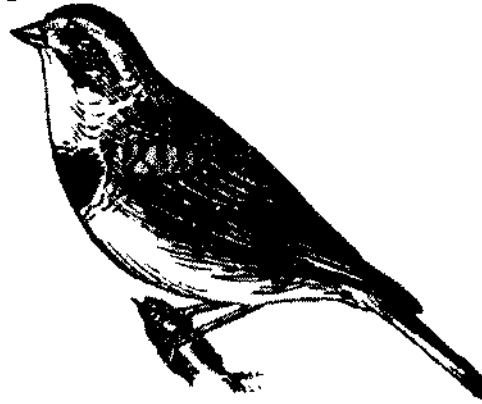
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Meet the Companion Finch

by Vince & Sally Huntington

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If you had a hand-raised companion finch, it would be sitting on your shoulder as you read, perhaps after having supervised your shower and sharing part of your breakfast. As you read, it would flutter down to each page, inspect its colors and, with its varying song or chirp, offer its noisy opinion. If it could read the subject of this article, I am sure it would retreat to perch on the earpiece of your glasses and sit quietly while you take in the information on what it is like to select, hand-raise, and enjoy the company of a companion finch.

A Companion Finch?

Hand-raised finches will lounge on your finger, shoulder, nose, or other bump or lump, and appear genuinely interested in whatever you are doing. They are dining companions, will sing for you, talk to you (sometimes in real words), and cuddle against your neck or in your pocket. They will also often successfully reproduce and, in many cases, be excellent parents themselves, even with non-hand-raised birds of their species.

Hand-raised finches expose their individuality by responding to your voice and presence. You'll pick them out of a crowded aviary, and they'll come to you in a crowded room. You get back in loyalty and adoration what you give in attention and care. While the zebra finch from Australia is reported to live about seven years, a woman from Indiana recently telephoned me looking for a zebra finch to replace hers that had lived for 14 years. Overall, finches live from seven to 15 years, with a mean age of around 10 years - so you'll have a lot of time to spend with your hand-raised companion finch.

When to Hand-Raise

Our hand-raised finches are the product of "nature's mishaps". They say 80 percent of human children are unexpected but welcomed. It looks like a small percentage of chick hatchings are unexpected but ignored. Rumor for years was that chicks were "thrown away" by parents because of some inherent parental wisdom that the chick was flawed, and abandoning it would spare the world a defective bird. Wrong theory, folks. The term "flighty" is used for a reason. Finches are small, helpless and only have quick-flight to save them from harm. This flight is often panic, and they simply forget they are parents.

At other times, an only-chick is ignored when its solitary presence is not enough to stimulate the parents into effective nurturing. Others are abandoned (or thrown or fall out of the nest) when some first-time parents hatch babies, get confused, panic and ignore them - often to begin a new nest across the aviary.

Those who have aviaries know to check some nests often to see what is hap-

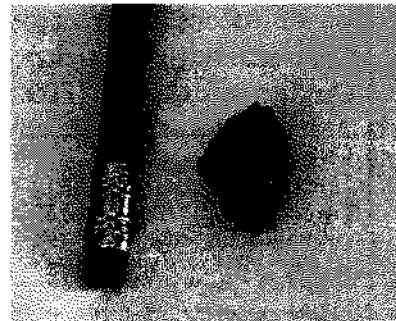


Photo Courtesy ©Vince Huntington

pening in the private world of birds. Some finches will not tolerate nest checks. They'll fight you off or abandon it if they even think you are going to check them. This makes even more abandoned babies. If you reach in and feel a cold chick, chances are it has been abandoned by panicky dumb luck. Nonpanicked parents keep chicks warm. In other words, while dumb luck gives us these companion finches; a little common-sense attention brings them to the companion stage.

Keys to Successful Hand-Raising

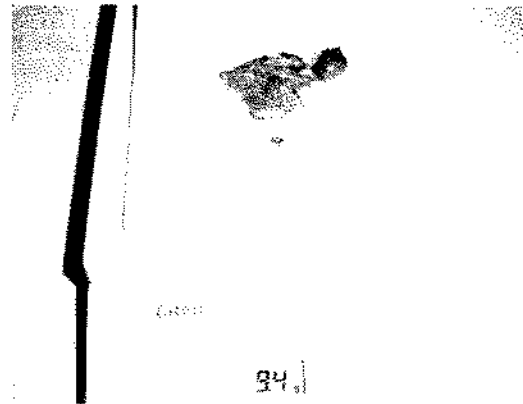
The three keys to a successful and happy hand-raised baby finch are pretty much as they are for a "hand-raised" human. While there are many valuable ways to hand-raise finches, here's what worked for me in getting the hand-raised baby to thrive, connect and, depending on the type of finch, become a companion bird. Hand-raising requires warmth, digestible food and a clean vent.

The ideal is when the baby is "found" at about 10 days. A 10-day-old finch is strong, usually has some down feathers, and is experienced at begging to be fed. However, idealism is not what we find. At times, I have brought in a cold, unmoving chick that is hours old. This is when I strictly apply the three rules: warmth (first), digestible food (second), and a clean vent (always).

Sadly, the success of raising an abandoned chick to the companion state is about 50/50, like gambling heads or tails. No matter how quickly we get there, we cannot tell the depth of the damage of early chill or lack of food and fluids by looking. However, the death rate of abandoned chicks that are not nourished by hand is 100 percent.

Warmth

Warm the baby to approximately 100 degrees Fahrenheit. I use a simple electric



Chestnut Breasted Mannikin Baby on a Scale

Photo Courtesy ©Vince Huntington

reptile rock (or heating pad set on low) available from pet stores. To keep the chick from being against the direct heat, place the heater under a ceramic dish or bowl (or box, cage, or shelf - whatever works for you). Above the heat source, in the bowl, place a pad of two to three layers of folded Kleenex-type tissue that is changed after each feeding. Place the chick on the pad. To hold in the warm air cover the chick and all with more tissues.

A small thermometer, with the "business" end next to the chick, will give you peace of mind about the 100-degree temperature. However, I have found the above heat sources, plus dish, plus tissue pad, plus cover, equals 100 degrees of warm, happy chick. Use this warm source until the chicks fledge.

Nourishment

Don't be in too much of a hurry to feed an abandoned chick. A freshly hatched baby will not have to eat for 24 to 48 hours after hatching, having assimilated the fat from the egg sac. Warm the chick as described above. Never feed a baby finch until it is warm. Once the baby finch is warm, think of digestible food. Digestible food is eyedropper soft, the consistency of cream of soup. And - keep what goes in, cleaned off coming out.

A good hand-feeding formula comes

to the rescue. We use Zupreem® Embrace™. Its instructions parallel my experience, i.e. a newly hatched chick will empty its crop in one to two hours and should be fed every two hours in order to



Baby Zebra Finches at Feeding Time
Photo Courtesy ©Vince Huntington

stay hydrated and grow. Some aviculturists feed chicks every two hours, 24 hours a day. Observing that finch parents in the wild and in aviaries stop feeding when it is too dark to do so, I stopped feeding at night. Their last meal is around 10 pm. The first morning meal is no later than 8 am.

I have documented consistent gram weight increases when this 14-out-of-24-hour feeding schedule is followed. To feed, I use a relatively standard eyedropper available from drug stores (funny it's not called a beak dropper). There is a choice here between the standard syringe used to feed some hand-raised birds, especially hookbills, and the eyedropper. I get a better feedback of the chick's resistance to opening its throat (or crop) to my fingertips with the glass or plastic eyedropper than I get with a bird-feeder syringe.

For the eyedropper, mix the hand-feeding formula per directions, 1 part formula to 4 parts warm water. The idea is to get the chick to beg for food, a skill it usually has when it is only hours old. Wait until the chick is warm and active and responds

by begging when touched on its beak with the filled dropper tip. Remember, the three rules are: warm the chick, then offer digestible food, then make sure the vent is clean.

So, even if it does beg when cold, do not feed a cold chick, ever - as the food will sour in its crop. Sour food is not digested - hence no fluids, no food, no growth, and, I might as well say it - the bird will die.

The goal is to get the warmed chick to open its beak and beg. Then quickly, but gently, insert the dropper tip into its mouth between its upper and lower beak, and squeeze very slowly. Watch as the chick learns to "suck" on the feeder, taking in no more than an amount of food the size of its head. After four to five feedings, the chick learns how to take the dropper into its entire beak, with the tip of the dropper resting against the bottom of its throat at the crop.

Build a Relationship

Remember to change the tissue pad, and check the bird's vent for cleanliness after each feeding. Picking the bird up with warm hands, holding it gently while you let the food flow into its crop, placing it back onto the warmth - its belly (crop) full - and returning it to the safe covered warmth, is what makes this a different relationship. This builds the companion in the companion bird.

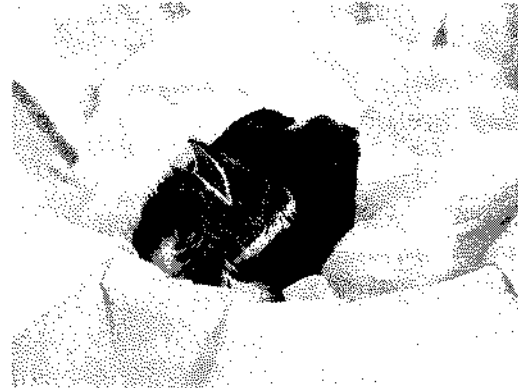
By the second or third day, if it is getting sufficient nourishment, its droppings will resemble those of an adult bird in terms of texture, color and form. Never give more food than the amount of the size of the chick's head at each feeding, even though it begs for more and makes you feel like you are a cruel parent for not stuffing it full. A primal drive moves the chick to get all the food it can, whenever it can. You and I know you will be back when the crop is empty, but the chick doesn't know that yet. It learns over time.

Stay close, and talk. The baby birds

feel your warmth, hear your voice and see your face. This connects them to being safe - your world becomes their haven. Companionship is building.

Build Trust

Parental birds shove the young out, it seems, as quickly as they can. How often do we hear wild baby birds on the back



Young Brazilian Cardinal Begging to be Fed
Photo Courtesy ©Vince Huntington

fence, leaning over, beaks open and up, screaming for food while Mom and Dad bird ignore them? The parents seem to even peck in the dirt at something for themselves in celebration of the "kids leaving", giving them back chick-free lives. Within hours, the young get the message. Off they go, to disconnect from the parents into a world of autonomous existence.

Hand-taming avoids the pushing away that parent birds often do. Retaining that parent-child connection, the safety of being cared for, the structure of being gently touched and offered food and warmth is what makes the companion bird a companion. As long as it has that sense that is getting the "good stuff" from you, it stays and gives back.

Don't Rush Things.

After four days of feeding the 1-to-4 gruel, gradually over a day, thicken the formula to 1 in 3 parts

warm water, about the consistency of baby applesauce. Continue the holding and talking. Give the bird a name, and repeat it often.

At 14 days, slowly thicken the formula to 1- to 2-parts water, until the birds fledge. For a connected companion bird, don't "force the fledge".

After about two weeks of feeding, they begin wing-practice - standing in one place, flapping away, often knocking themselves off balance in the process. Move them to larger quarters at this time.

At around 18 to 22 days, the wing practice becomes more serious. They'll fly out of the safety of the warm box, container or cage to crash here and there. Be alert to safety during these crucial flying practice days. If your house isn't already bird-proof, make it so now. They'll fly into anything they shouldn't fly into. If it is dangerous, they will find it. They will crash into glass windows and mirrors, onto the frying pan on the stove, into the hot cup of tea at your side, down onto the cat, and wherever else there is trouble. Some prefer to ride on your head, in a pocket, under a blouse collar, between the collar and your neck. Whatever works for you and your bird works.

Basic Needs

As the baby birds start to perch and fly about when you feed them, they are

A Talking Finch?

I hand-raised an abandoned red-headed finch on Thanksgiving Day and, so I'd given it the name Turkey. I said his name often - as he was fed, warmed, cleaned, tucked in, breathed on and talked to. To this day, he says clearly, "Turkey-Turkey" whenever he is near me.

- Sally Huntington

becoming adults. Ensure that there is always finch seed available, a millet stick, and separate water. Previously, they received fluids from the formula. As they draw away from the formula, they will require hydration from a predictable water source. Also begin to provide an egg food, which can be found in pet stores. Adult finches also need cuttlebone and grit. As an occasional treat, they enjoy small amounts of hard-boiled egg, with shell, an apple or some other fruit, and a lettuce leaf now and again.

They love bathing often and sunning themselves. If you set their cage in the sun, be sure half of it is shaded, and let the finch choose between sun and shade.

Natural sunlight is necessary for birds to process Vitamin D.

A minimum cage size rule-of-thumb is five flaps of the wings from one side to the other. Continue to hand-feed as long as they will take it. I have 5-year-old birds that will swoop in to a nesting station where I am raising young to get a sip of the familiar formula, often leaning over and begging for it as if they were a hatchling again.

Which Finch for Me?

the Report Card below grades A through F on how finches I have raised compare with others I've raised and traits we wish all companions had. Take a look. Because they vary some in "maintaining

	<i>Finger Stirring</i>	<i>Shoulder Stirring</i>	<i>Maintains Connection</i>	<i>Enjoys Dining</i>	<i>Sings to you</i>	<i>Talks to you</i>	<i>Voice Recognition</i>	<i>Sight Recognition</i>	<i>Will Raise Babies</i>	<i>Life Span (Years)</i>	<i>Compatible</i>
Blue-Capped Cordon Bleu	C	B	C	C	A	F	A	A	C	7-10	C
Orange-cheeked Waxbill	C	A	B	C	C	F	A	A	C	6-8	A
Owl Finch	B	A	B	B	C	F	A	A	A	5-7	A
Red-Cheeked Cordon Bleu	C	B	D	D	B	F	A	A	D	7-10	C
Black-Capped Waxbill	C	A	B	B	C	F	A	A	?	7	A
Red Crested Cardinal	A	B	B	A	A	F	A	A	C	15-25	F

Report Card Key

A = Excellent, Seems to enjoy.	D = Seldom will do the behavior.
B = Great - Often does the behavior	F = Flunked this category.
C = Sometimes, but not reliably.	? = Unknown

connection", select the closeness or loyalty that is best for you. A red-headed finch (*Amadina erythrocephala*), the Gouldian finch (*Chloebia gouldiae*) and others are extremely dedicated and loyal. They will sit on your shoulder and share your cookie crumbs as you watch TV. Others, such as the blue-capped Cordon bleu (*Uraeginthus cyanocephala*) and orange-cheeked waxbills (*Estrilda melpoda*) will be more likely to sit on a nearby lampshade, keep its bottom out over the warmth of the light bulb and make only occasional trips to the top of your head.

Finches are about as noisy as you let them be. They're less noisy than a male canary and about the size of a garden sparrow. The orange-cheeked waxbill is the smallest at 2 1/2 inches long with a perky little squeak of a song. The red-headed finch is 3 1/2 to 4 inches long with a warbling song much softer than a canary. The sweetest and clearest pleasant ring of

a song comes from the blue-capped waxbill and the red-cheeked cordon bleu. When they sing, most listeners say, "Wow!".

In order to learn which finch is which, take a look at the NFSS website (www.nfss.org) where you can see more pictures of finches.

Sally Huntington has actively bred finches and softbills since the mid-1980's. She and her husband, Vince, have made numerous presentations on hand-raising finches and softbills, and their articles have appeared in several publications. Sally Huntington is the current president of the National Finch and Softbill Society (NFSS), life member of the American Federation of Aviculture and the Finch Society of San Diego County and is MAP-certified. Her watercolors of finches and softbills are reknowned.

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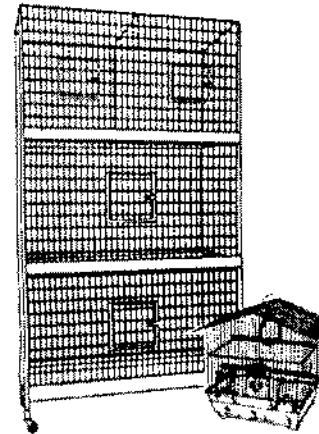
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Finch Self Medication

by William Astor

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Introduction

I always marvel at birds flying about in the countryside because they always seem to be healthy, tight-feathered and active. Several years ago when I first started with Gouldians, my birds more often than not became fluffed. As to why wild birds seem so healthy and captive birds become ill so easily was a complete mystery to me for a long time. Bacteriology tests of my sick finches' droppings revealed that they had bacterial infection. But in that case, I reasoned, why don't wild finches catch bacterial infection as well? After all, there are far more bacterial pathogens out in the wild.

One answer to this is that sick birds in the wild simply die because of bacterial infection or whatever bug happens to go inside their system and only the ones with stronger immune systems remain. But the sheer number and diversity of the pathogens that wild birds are exposed to, make this explanation unlikely because if this were the case, the birds' immune system is not likely to be able to handle all those bugs and the birds would all end up dead. Something must be protecting the wild birds from all those bugs.

As it happens, there is increasing evidence to indicate that animals in the wild make use of substances that we do not class as food, yet are vital for their health and wellbeing. I call them self medicating substances or SMS's for short. I will explain more about them later.

According to Dr. Cindy Engel, animal self medication is the way "many species (birds, insects, and mammals) use plants, soils, insects, and fungi as 'medicines' in ways that guard against future illness (preventive medicine) and/or relieve unpleas-

ant symptoms (curative or therapeutic medicine)."

Two years ago, I hit on the idea of converting a spare room into a free flying birdroom with the purpose of studying the behaviours of several different finch species. But when I bought finches of various species I found that quite a few were sick and more started to become sick. After a lot of trial and error using antibacterial herbs and solutions, the breakthrough came when I e-mailed an Arizona Gouldian breeder called Debbie Myers and inquired about the dose of grapefruit seed extract [an antibacterial liquid] she used to treat a sick bird. She told me of how she cured a plump fluffed Gouldian hen by giving her two drinks. One with GSE in it and one of plain water, and the hen preferred to drink the GSE solution to plain water. She advised me to do the same with my sick finches. I supplied GSE solution of various concentrations and found what concentration the birds preferred. I did the same with apple cider vinegar solution as well. I also started to supply herbs on their own rather than mixed with eggfood as I was doing previously.

I group all known medicinal herbs, seeds, inorganic substances that I give to my birds under the name of self medicating substances or SMS's for short. I always supply each SMS in its own clean plastic container. For cages, I use 4 ml plastic finger drawers, narrow enough to be fitted in between cage bars. For my free flying birdroom, I use 40 ml plastic D-cups that I hook onto a wire rack. Occasionally I also use plastic ice boxes which I place on shelves, each compartment filled with a different item.

Examples of medicinal herbs are garlic and sage. Examples of medicinal seeds are milk thistle seeds and perilla. Examples of inorganic SMS's are diatomaceous earth and clay.

The effect of SMS's is to prevent pathogenic micro organisms, worms or protozoa in the finches' gut from thriving. SMS's also relieve unpleasant conditions in finches whether internally (e.g. as in diarrhea) OR externally (e.g. as in itches caused by mites). I am of the opinion that it is SMS's that enable the immune systems of birds in the wild to maintain their good health. Otherwise the many pathogens constantly ingested by wild birds will overwhelm their immune system in no time at all.

Birds tend to hide sickness until it is too late for us to save them in most cases. The beauty of SMS's is that this late stage is less likely to come about because the birds will be able to do something about it themselves by consuming the medicine they need before it becomes a crisis.

It is important to realize that these substances are not a cure-all but serve merely as a first line of defense against internal pathogens or parasites that the birds ingest or against external parasites.

Drinking dirty water and looking the picture of health.

Some people say that their grandma's canary used to be kept in a cage and fed just seed, water and lettuce, and it lived for years in good health WITHOUT any self medicating substances.

The explanation for this is domestication. After hundreds of years of selective breeding, the canary's immune system has been fairly well adapted to the germs in a human environment. If however, you

released captive bred canaries in the wild again, it is likely some will die due to the germs in the wild environment being different to the ones they have been used to or adapted to, in captivity.

The same thing happens when people travel. Even if they immunize themselves with vaccine injections before travelling, they could still end up with stomach upsets for the same reason that I mentioned above.



Comfrey
© 2002 www.chipart.com

BUT, even after having adapted fairly well to the germs in their environment, wild animals are observed to still make use of self medicating substances. Without these substances, the many pathogens that wild birds consume daily will overwhelm their immune system in no time. This is a very important point. Next time you go for a walk in the country, observe how birds are constantly browsing amidst "dirt" (soil) and drinking "dirty" water and yet looking the picture of health !!!!

I give all my finches self medicating substances AT ALL TIMES separately in a clean plastic container, whether the finches are sick or healthy.

You can either buy the herbs in dried form from health food shops or you can pick your own and dry them yourself. Always pick them up when they are dry and not wet, otherwise they will go mouldy. Let them dry, then place in a paper bag and use metal paper clips to keep it shut. Then I usually pick up the leaves and put them in a coffee mill to grind. Never attempt to mix any herbs in with the normal eggfood. I have tried doing this with several antibacterial herbs and finches which were ill died for me as a result. Herbs must be supplied separately, in individual containers and kept well away from water sources. I go through the herb containers every week

with a clean knife in order to remove the odd dried dropping from the herb containers and replenish where necessary. Another reason why it is necessary to check the containers every week is because of what a good friend of mine, Christine Kumar, has rightly pointed out when keeping dried herbs exposed to air all the time. Some herbs, like for example garlic, tend to absorb more moisture from the atmosphere than other herbs do. You will know this because the powder or bits will become a solid mass. If left like this, this can lead to molds developing of course. I find that it is better to give a little fresh dry clean herb each week, then a whole lot every month.

It is important to supply each herb on its own and not serve it as a herb mix because each herb has a particular effect on the bird. You have to let the bird choose what herb it needs at the time. If you supply an herb mix, you are robbing the birds of making their own choice.

Do not buy the tablets or capsules or tinctures because you pay much much more. The only exception I will make here is Grapefruit Seed Extract which is itself a tincture that is made of GSE dissolved in Glycerin. Shop around until you find an outlet that sells dried herbs. These are normally kept in large transparent plastic bottles with a wide diameter lid. Dried herbs are very cheap when purchased this way.

It is important to bear in mind that the therapeutic or toxic effects of herbs on humans may or may not appear in our finch species. The reason for this is that each animal species absorbs and metabolizes nutrients differently and can show different toxic reactions to a certain food.

For example, it has long been known in the Mediterranean, that the volatile oils found in oregano have an important role in preventing the spoilage of food and in reducing the risk of ingesting harmful bacteria, fungi, and parasites. Pizza traditionally contains oregano sprinkled on it. I must

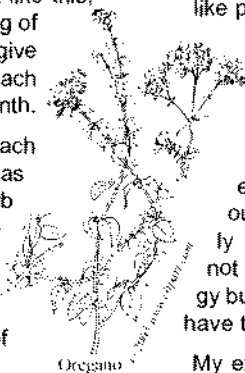
stress here that these claims have not yet been scientifically proven.

It is also found that oregano oil works in chickens against *Salmonella*, *E. coli*, *Staphylococcus*, and *Campylobacter* to mention but a few. When this oil was mixed in feed at a certain dose, this led to reduced diarrhea, increased growth and improved feed conversion. But even so, few scientific studies have been published on the therapeutic effects of herbs in general on even economically important birds like poultry and turkeys.

A product based on oil of oregano is indeed available for pet birds. Does this mean that the effect that was observed in humans and chickens is going to be the same for our finch species? Not necessarily because each finch species do not have exactly the same physiology but it is likely that oil of oregano will have the same basic effect.

My experience of mixing antibacterial herbs with eggfood has been a very negative one. Healthy finches seem to be able to cope but sick finches in most cases can easily be killed due to a toxic reaction [anaphylaxis] or become worse. That is why it is safest not to mix any antibacterial herb with eggfood. The strangest thing that I have seen is that finches of various species seem to be able to sense whether a herb or plant is toxic if it is not mixed in eggfood and will consume otherwise very dangerous herbs or substances like GSE with perfect safety if it is provided optionally and on its own. If you try mixing GSE powder with eggfood and feed it to a sick finch, that finch will in most cases become worse or die within a few days. On the other hand, if you supply that sick finch with an optional solution of GSE, it will quite safely drink the amount that it requires.

I would like to add that some herbs may serve not only to suppress pathogens or stimulate the immune system or help regenerate the liver but to act as food for the gram-positive bacteria which keep the



gram-negative, potentially pathogenic bacteria from spreading and causing ill health in birds. These are known as prebiotic herbs.

Apart from herbs and other self medicating substances mentioned in this article, I would like to stress the importance of providing probiotics that will adhere to bird intestines. Many probiotics that are on the market are not good enough because they cannot adhere to the interior lining of birds' intestines. The Lactobacillus strains they contain are derived from cows or pigs and *not* birds.

Lactobacillus strains that are derived from bird guts will adhere to bird intestines and for this reason are called avian derived probiotics. Linda Hogan, a canary breeder, has found avian derived probiotics not only safe but highly therapeutic. She wrote: "I have long been a proponent for use of avian-derived Lactobacillus (probiotics) in canaries. In my experience over 16 years, I have been able to prevent diseases which I attribute to use of avian-derived Lactobacillus and good nutrition."

Linda Hogan recommends that avian-derived probiotics are fed to sick birds by medicine dropper or crop tube. A concentrated amount is vital in order to bring the bird around. Scientists have found that merely adding it to the bird's drinking water is useless. You should also add the dry probiotics to eggfood and not add any water to it.

Self Medicating Substances

This section will explain SMS's in more detail and will show a link that seems to exist between daily consumption of acidic drinks, probiotics or sour yogurt and herbs and keeping fit to a ripe old age, an observation that we could use to our birds' advantage.

Here is a list of the various types of SMS's that can be made available optionally.

Antibacterial SMS's

Antibacterial SMS's are mostly herbs

that destroy or suppress the growth of bacteria, whether they are pathogenic or otherwise. Some can kill fungi, yeasts and viruses as well. The best seem to be grapefruit seed extract, [GSE for short. NOT grape-seed extract], apple cider vinegar [ACV for short], garlic, sage, marigold, echinacea and wormwood. These are followed by acacia, aloe, cryptolepis, eucalyptus, ginger, goldenseal, honey, juniper, licorice, myrrh, thyme, thuja, usnea and wild indigo.

ALWAYS REMEMBER that antibacterial herbs are to be given optionally in their own separate plastic container i.e. with plain fresh water in a separate drinker available at all times and NEVER mixed in with eggfood otherwise dead finches will be the result. This at least was my experience with sick finches. Healthy finches tend to cope somehow but not sick ones.

Antibacterial SMS's that I found to be excellent are GSE and ACV. Sick finches drink several times more of these drinks than healthy ones do.

Grapefruit Seed Extract (GSE). I found that healthy birds seem to prefer 0.4 mls GSE nutrbiotic grade and sick birds prefer either 0.4 mls or 0.7 mls GSE nutrbiotic grade per 100 mls of water depending on the species.

Apple Cider Vinegar (ACV). I found that healthy birds seem to prefer 0.6 mls ACV and sick birds prefer 12 mls ACV per 100 mls of water.

For the record, so far I have used GSE, ACV, garlic, sage, marigold, echinacea, wormwood [*Artemisia pontica*], thyme and licorice.

Anthelmintic SMS's

Anthelmintic SMS's are mostly herbs that kill or suppress the growth of worms but they are not as effective as chemical wormers e.g. Ronidazole, praziquantel, moxidectin etc.

Examples of anthelmintic SMS's are Diatomaceous Earth, Wormwood [*Artemisia annua*], Pumpkin Seed, Garlic, Thyme and Quassia.

Diatomaceous Earth (DE) is a fine powder made from the shells of sea creatures called diatoms. It can only kill by contact with the bug and so cannot kill air sac mites which are in the lungs. It cannot kill gizzard worm which is deeply embedded in the gut tissue. It cannot kill tapeworm because tapeworms bury their heads into the intestinal walls and feed directly off the tissues - therefore, their mouth parts are never exposed.

Only use Food Grade Diatomaceous Earth. Do not use the Diatomaceous Earth manufactured as a swimming pool filtration material on your pets. Diatomaceous Earth is a very powdery kind of dust, so make sure that you do not create any dust clouds when using it, otherwise it could cause eye and lung irritation. Remember that even whole wheat flour dust can cause eye and lung irritation if you breathe enough of it.

Pumpkin seed that is ground up is much liked by finches. It acts against tapeworm and roundworm.

Wormwood [Artemisia annua] is a powerful herb for parasitic infections of the gastrointestinal tract. Test tube studies suggest artemisinin, the active ingredient of the herb, can kill malarial and other parasites [protozoa and worms] and bacteria.

Garlic and Thyme are good at expelling ascarids and hookworms.

Quassia can be made into a tea and then left to cool. You can use it externally on your birds using a cotton swab to treat the mite infested areas.

For the record, so far I have tried Diatomaceous Earth, Artemisia pontica. [I have not been able to buy Artemisia annua as a dried herb yet.]. Pumpkin Seed, Garlic.

Antiprotozoan SMS's

Antiprotozoan SMS's are herbs which



Wormwood



Quassia

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kill or suppress the growth of parasitic protozoa. Examples are Wormwood [Artemisia annua] and maybe Diatomaceous Earth. I am sure that there are loads of these antiprotozoals in nature. I just do not know what these are yet. (Bear in mind that some parasitic protozoa embed themselves deep inside the gut tissue so Wormwood and DE may not be able to kill them.)

Bitter SMS's

Bitter SMS's are herbs that taste bitter and contain bitter compounds in the leaves and or root which help stimulate digestion and are mild laxatives. These bitter substances also increase bile production in the gallbladder and bile flow from the liver. For this reason bitter herbs are recommended for those with sluggish liver function due to poor diet. The increase in bile flow may help improve fat metabolism in the body as well.

Examples of bitter herbs are Barberry, Blessed Thistle, Buckthorn, Chamomile, Dandelion, Golden Seal, Osha, Quassia and Wormwood.

For the record, so far I have tried barberry, chamomile, dandelion, Wormwood [Artemisia pontica].

Demulcent SMS's

Demulcent SMS's are herbs that fight diarrhea and soothe irritated mucus membranes. Examples are Marshmallow Leaf, Slippery Elm, Burdock, Licorice, Linseed, Saw Palmetto, Comfrey, Thyme and Mullein.

For the record, so far I have tried Slippery Elm, marshmallow leaf, licorice, thyme.

Hepatic SMS's

Hepatic SMS's are herbs that strengthen and tone the liver as well as stimulate the flow of bile. Many birds suffer

from liver problems because their diet is often inadequate when compared to what they enjoy in the wild.

Examples of hepatic herbs are Artichoke, Barberry, Blue Flag, Buckthorn, Celery, Cleavers, Culver's root, Dandelion root, Fennel, Fringetree, Golden Seal, Milk Thistle, Motherwort, Oregon Grape, Poke Root, Prickly Ash, Wahoo, Wild Indigo, Wild Yam, Wormwood and Yarrow.

Milk Thistle is by far the most effective and scientifically proven to help regenerate the liver and much more. I buy milk thistle seeds which I grind up in a coffee mill and the waxbills love it. I also love the nutty taste of milk thistle seed.

For the record, so far I have tried milk thistle, barberry, wormwood [*Artemisia pontica*], yarrow.

Immune boosting SMS's

Immune boosting SMS's are mostly everyday vegetables such as broccoli, cauliflower, brussels sprouts, cabbage, kale and turnips. They also include herbs such as astragalus, barberry, red clover, echinacea, garlic, shiitake mushrooms, Ginkgo biloba, panax and Siberian ginseng, rishi mushrooms, milk thistle, pine bark.

Shred the raw fresh vegetables in a blender until they are thoroughly shredded. You can then mix them with stuff that you know your finches like e.g. mealworms, mashed hard boiled egg or soaked seed. Christine Kumar told me to present soaked seed as flat as possible on a clean plate. Laying soaked seed or mashed hard boiled egg AS THINLY AS POSSIBLE on a clean plate stops the food from going off. It simply dries up. Whereas if you pile it up deep inside a food cup, you are going to have that food smell bad in no time due to bacterial activity.

Elderberries also boost the immune system and are specially recommended by

Frank Woolham, a British expert who told me that of all wild berries in England, it is elderberries which cage birds love most of all. He has kept scores of bird species in his life. I buy dried elderberries and grind them up in my coffee mill.

Spirulina is an edible blue green alga and looks like a dry blue green powder. It deepens feather color. Charlie Loukeris told me that since he has fed spirulina to his European Goldfinches, they have produced proper red masks where normally they would have an orange mask when kept indoors. Many scientific studies show that Spirulina seems to have immune enhancing and liver protecting properties.

For the record, so far I have tried elderberries, spirulina, kale, garlic, echinacea, red clover.

Inorganic SMS's

Inorganic SMS's supply trace minerals. One thing to keep in mind regarding inorganic trace minerals - only 10 per cent of these will be assimilated by the body, but when combined with amino acids, a process called chelation, the assimilation of these chelated minerals is three to five times more efficient.

Some inorganic SMS's have a detoxifying effect. One aspect of disease is the toxins that pathogenic bacteria and viruses



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Elderberry
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produce. The toxins give rise to pain, e.g. the pain you feel when you have a stomachache. Clay and charcoal bind the toxins to themselves and thereby lessen the toxic effects on the bird.

Soil is not strictly speaking inorganic because it contains organic humus and micro-organisms, but I list it here purely for convenience.

Soil contains trace minerals, clay, and INCREDIBLY bacteriostatic and bactericidal substances produced by a group of bacteria called Actinomyces that dwell in it. I have been feeding my finches of several different species, dry brown sieved soil for the past year or so and it always amazes me that they like it so much. As with other self medicating substances that I use, sick finches consume more soil than healthy ones do. I have also observed lots of wild birds eating or sifting through soil, especially chaffinches, wagtails and starlings. It really seems as if soil is Nature's own medicine chest.

Trace minerals have extraordinary importance in maintaining health in animals. They are basic to keeping the chemical reactions going inside the body, [metabolism]. Enzymes which are crucial in these reactions, need minerals in their formation. Minerals are crucial for the transmission of electric current through the body for the nervous system to work and muscles to move.

For example, one of these trace minerals is Arsenic. **Arsenic** has been shown to stimulate growth and egg production as well as control coccidiosis in battery chickens. Animals such as goats, sheep, cows and antelope have been observed to selectively graze on forage contaminated with arsenic. Bird feathers have arsenic in them which indicates that it is needed for proper feather formation. It turns out that normal soils contain up to 40 parts per million of Arsenic. Compare this to 2.6 - 9.1 ppm in fishmeal, 1.5 - 4.1 ppm in cod, and less than 0.5 ppm in most fruits, vegetables, cereal grains, meat and dairy products ! This makes soil a very rich source of

Arsenic indeed. [Note, ppm means parts per million which means 1 milligram per liter.]

Clay is an effective binding agent as its chemical structure allows other chemicals to bond with it and so lose their reactivity. Clay is an effective deactivator of toxins contained in ingested food or toxins produced by pathogenic bacteria inside the gut. It is eaten by many parrots and animals of the Amazon in order to counter the toxin contained in the plant leaves, nuts or berries that they have to eat.

Bacteriostatic and bactericidal substances are needed by all wild animals to suppress the growth of or kill the many disease organisms that they ingest, otherwise their immune system will be overwhelmed in no time.

My way of collecting soil is to take a bucket, wallpaper stripper and a 20 cms diameter plastic sieve having 5 mm squared holes. I try to pick a spot where people do not walk their dogs and which does not show signs of human activity, which could mean weedkiller or pesticide in the soil. I first mark out a 30 cms squared patch of soil. I remove any turf or scrape off any dry leaves on top. I then hoe this patch of soil with the wallpaper stripper until it is nice and loose and remove the large stones. I then scoop up this brown loose soil and put it in the sieve. I shake gently so that the small soil particles collect in the bucket. A bucketful of soil lasts for months. I would not advise you to put this soil in a container with a tight fitting lid otherwise mould may appear. I just cover the bucket with a lid but keep a gap to allow air to go inside. I always TEST OUT any new soil that I gather one or two birds for at least a week before I make it available to the rest of my birds. This is of crucial importance as pesticides or industrial processes can contaminate small areas.

Same goes when picking wild seeding grasses. A longstanding breeder of Goldfinches wrote that he had been collecting seeding grasses for his finches from a certain spot for years but one year his

birds all died after he fed them the grasses which he had just picked from that spot. It turned out that some agricultural workers had sprayed the area nearby with insecticide !!! So this shows that you cannot be too careful.

Baked soil is useless. Wild birds do not eat baked soil. Do not mix soil with anything. Put it in a plastic container for the birds to eat. Store the soil in a plastic container but cover it with a clean cotton cloth so that it can breathe.

Charcoal deactivates toxins contained in food or toxins produced by pathogenic bacteria inside the gut. I grind it up in a coffee mill and many birds love eating this. In an odd way, I found that when I supplied charcoal granules, the birds did not seem to touch it. In powdered form, they were very keen at sampling it !

Eggshells. Of all calcium sources, my finches voted this as Number One. Before I discovered eggshells, I used to give cuttlefish bone as a calcium source. One day I casually threw in an eggshell. The finches literally climbed on top of each other in order to eat it ! I stepped back and laughed my head off because I really was not expecting the birds to react like this over a mere eggshell !!!

And there I was thinking that all that cuttlefish bone was such a rich source of calcium!!! These birds reacted like a really thirsty man in the desert would react to a glass of clean water !!! I never saw them do this with any other calcium source.

Oystershell grit. All my finches love this.

Cattle mineral powder or any inorganic bird mineral powders having calcium, phosphorus, magnesium, sodium, manganese, copper, zinc, selenium, iodine and cobalt.

Diatomaceous Earth (DE) is extremely rich in trace minerals because it is made from the shells of sea creatures called diatoms. There are many reports of animals producing shinier feather or fur when given DE.

Only use Food Grade Diatomaceous Earth. Do not use the Diatomaceous Earth manufactured as a swimming pool filtration material on your pets. Diatomaceous Earth is a very powdery kind of dust, so make sure that you do not create any dust clouds when using it, otherwise it could cause eye and lung irritation. Remember that even whole wheat flour dust can cause eye and lung irritation if you breathe enough of it.

Self medicating Substances, antibiotics and wormers.

If you have a long lived parrot which is insured, it is fine going to see a vet that specializes in parrots. But this simply is not practical with finches for most people. When I buy finches, I quarantine them for 3 months. I have found that I do need antibiotics and wormers at the correct dose during the quarantine period to reduce the amount of bugs inside the birds. I have found so far that if the birds end up with bugs outside their gastro intestinal tract, then the self medicating substances that I have used did not fully cure my finches.

Many times the birds ignore or eat very little of most of the self medicating substances that I have mentioned but rather focus on only a few. However when the need arises, they will start consuming. The finches in my free flying birdroom do this and they stay healthy. They do get fluffed occasionally but they get tight feathered again within a couple of days. It is best to record what you observe into a bird diary otherwise you will forget useful findings such as what herbs are eaten by different finch species, sick or healthy. I encourage you to write articles about your findings because this could also be important for human health issues as well.

I would also like to draw your attention to two facts from widely different cultures. Belgian, German and British pet animal companies nowadays sell herbal products aimed at suppressing bacteria, fungi, coccidia and worms in birds or to nutritionally support the gram-positive bacteria in the gut of birds.

Centenarian data from Azerbaijan in

Central Asia that I have read confirms to me the importance of supplying optional acidic drinks, avian derived probiotics and herbs at all times to our finches. It is amazing that there are thousands of centenarians in Azerbaijan who remain fit to the end. They do not become bedridden invalids like we are used to seeing in geriatric wards in the West. And what they consume is sour yogurt and garlic on a DAILY BASIS. Sour yogurt of course contains probiotics and weak acids. Garlic is an all-around health boosting herb. I myself have incorporated this knowledge into my diet.

Conclusion

If you have a long lived parrot which is insured it is fine going to see a vet that specializes in parrots. But this simply is not practical with finches for most people.

I have found that when I bought finches, half of them would be sick and I learnt that herbs did not save them but antibiotics and antiprotozoal drugs did. The reason for this I found is because herbs are very slow acting compared to antibiotics and antiprotozoal drugs.

But afterwards, with the aid of natural probiotics contained in insects, greenfood and seeding grasses and my SMS's, the finches became quite fit.

If disease does hit the birds again, I found that this was always due to a water hygiene problem and *Trichomonas*, a water borne parasitic protozoan, was the most difficult pathogen to deal with. I must emphasize that I consider water hygiene as being ESSENTIAL to keeping finches healthy. Any vessel containing water must be replaced every few days with another one which has been scrubbed clean, rinsed and soaked overnight in mild bleach solution to eradicate any pathogens. I also emphasize that access to bathing is ESSENTIAL to keeping finches not only

looking like show birds but psychologically happy.

Unfortunately I do not know how much of what I am saying will apply to hookbills. I can only pass on what I have found out with finches of about 20 different species from all over the world, captive bred as well as wild caught. I just love finches. They are very cute :)

Special thanks to Debbie Myers, the Arizona Gouldian finch breeder who gave me the vital clue of giving GSE solution as an optional drink thereby letting the birds choose the amount of antibacterial solution to drink and medicate themselves. I later extended this idea to all other self medicating substances that I use now.



This article was first uploaded on the internet at Holistbird.com in the Files Section on Monday, 16 December 2002 and this was acknowledged in Message 19210.

Essential reading.

http://www.geocities.com/canarytales_lindahogan/research.htm#Research2 (on avian derived probiotics)

<http://www.birdsmways.com/wisdom/vw37ev.htm> (on normal and abnormal bacteria in birds' intestines)

http://www.colostate.edu/Depts/Entomology/ceourses/en570/papers_2002/buchanan.htm (on animal self-medication)

http://www.azer.com/aiweb/categories/magazine/23_folder/23_articles/23_centenarians.html

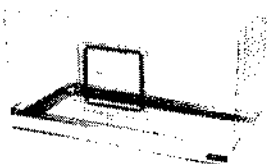
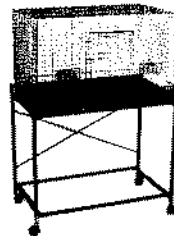
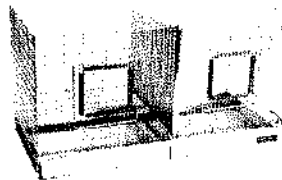
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The Tanimbar, Tri-coloured or Forbes Parrot Finch

(*Erythrura tricolor*)

By Gary McCrae

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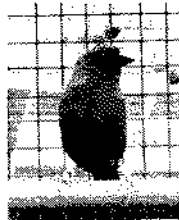
Introduction

A full colour picture of an adult Tri-coloured parrotfinch in an avicultural magazine was all it ever took to promote the species to my wish list. One day they would be mine, I thought. one day!

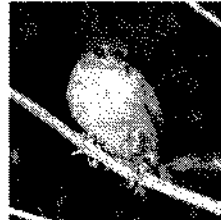
Well, that day duly arrived and still today the Tri-coloured parrotfinch holds a special place in my aviaries. Its beauty, its hardiness and its willingness to breed, all combine to make the species a must-have for those aviculturists wanting to take that next step.

Description and Sexing

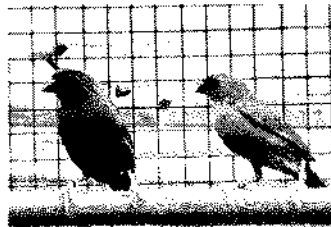
Rather than subject you to my attempts at describing this species and the sexes, I will allow the pictures to speak for themselves!



Forbes Male



Forbes Juvenile



Forbes
Pair
(Male on
Left)

Photos
©Gary
McCrae

Editor's Note: I regret that we are unable to provide color photos which would be so helpful here. Forbes are sexually dimorphic, but wide variability in hen coloration and the fact that the blue breast color intensifies and spreads with age in both males and females can make sexing them problematic. Some hens can develop color almost equal to that of a male. The male has a gorgeous blue color extending completely over the underparts, up and over the head and well down the nape. The blue color on the female occasionally does not extend as far, but can with age and under some lighting equal that of some males. Both sexes have green backs, with red on their tails. Juvenile Forbes are completely dull shades of green often with a blue wash under some lighting. Thank you to U.S. Forbes breeder, doti Browning for providing this description for us.

Housing

In my aviaries the Tri-coloureds are currently housed in single pairs as part of a mixed collection. The aviaries are nominally 5 metres long by 1m wide and approximately 2 metres high. Generally the two metres at the front of the aviary is wire with the remaining three metres being a sheltered section, which remains open only at the front. The sheltered section is lined with plywood and has insulation batts wedged between the ply and the external corrugated iron walls in an attempt to overcome our stifling summer heat (>40°C) and winter chills (<0°C).

Nesting sites are supplied in the form of Budgerigar type nest boxes and dried brush, which is firmly fixed to the walls of the sheltered section. Natural plant growth is virtually non-existent. Floors consist of natural earth.

Aviary or cage size should not be a deterrent to anyone wishing to keep and breed this species, for significant numbers of birds are produced each year from cages as small as the standard canary breeding cabinet!

The Tri-coloureds are housed with many different species including Blue-capped cordon blues, Red-cheeked cordon blues, Orange-cheeked waxbills, Red strawberries, White-eared masked finches, Yellow-rumped munias, Double bars and Painted firetails. I have even housed them with Red-faced parrot finches at times, and have never seen the cocks of either species show the slightest interest in the hens of the opposite species.

One species I would not house with the Tri-coloured parrotfinches would be the Blue-face parrotfinch, for I feel crossbreeding would definitely occur. Another species I am reluctant to house them with would be Dybowski's Twinspots. My attempt at housing these species together in an aviary of dimensions 5-metres by 5-metres square almost ended in disaster with the cock Twinspot immediately latching onto the Tri-coloured parrotfinch hen's wing and heaving her from side to side until my timely intervention. Whether or not other pairs of Tri-coloureds and Dybowski's Twinspots would have co-existed in harmony I do not know, but I decided that it wasn't worth the risk!

Feeding

All the finches in my aviaries are fed a premium finch seed mix supplied by a local seed merchant. Each day all birds are fed Lebanese cucumber, mealworms, maggots, and soaked seed to which is added a mix of John Alers soft food mix and Passwell's finch soft food. Green food, in the form of Couch grass seeding heads, is fed whenever available.

This diet is fed pretty much all year round but the amounts fed vary according to the goings-on in the particular aviary. Aviaries with birds doing very little in terms of breeding are fed greatly reduced quantities whereas aviaries with birds feeding young are fed increased quantities.

In listing all the various feeds my birds are given, I believe the Tri-coloured would rear young on just dry seed, such is their willingness to reproduce! However, I believe that the rigours of nesting would soon take its toll on the parent birds limited to such a dry seed diet, eventually resulting in a greatly reduced willingness to nest and produce young.

Breeding

The sight of the male pursuing the hen is the sign that all keepers of the Tri-coloured parrotfinch love to see. Without it the keepers will remain just that, keepers and not breeders!

In typical Parrotfinch fashion, the male commences his mating ritual by regularly pursuing the hen until, in an ideal world, he catches up with her, hangs onto the back of her head or neck and then copulates!

However, more often than not, the chase ends with the male losing interest and waiting for another opportune moment. This regular chasing is not entirely fruitless as it also serves the purpose of giving both the hen and cock birds the necessary exercise to bring the birds into prime breeding condition.

Once the male has either formed a bond or mated with the hen he commences nest building. For my birds this occurs in either a typical Budgerigar nest box or in brush, predominately in the higher areas of the aviary. The cock bird continuously carries nesting material, which in my aviaries, consists of couch grass, coconut fibre, shredded Pampas grass heads and Emu feathers, to the nest site. Here, he either passes the material to the hen that sits inside the nest or places it inside the nest himself. Typically a nest is completed within two to three days.

Egg laying usually commences a couple of days after the nest is completed. One egg is laid each day for up to six days, with young and older hens tending to have clutch sizes of three to four eggs. Incubation, I believe, commences after the laying of the fourth egg and continues for approximately 13 days.

An interesting note with Tri-coloured parrotfinches is that for the three to four days preceding the hatching of the eggs, both parents sit tightly in the nest until the young hatch, with the birds then reverting to the one-off, one-on method of most non cup shaped nest building finches. In my experience this has proven to be an excellent guide as to when the young have hatched. Fertility and hatching rates in some pairs is exceptional and on occasions all six eggs have hatched whereas other pairs regularly hatch only two or three chicks.

Nest inspection, including egg and chick handling has never, to my knowledge, resulted in nest desertion.

The chicks are fed in typical finch fashion and leave the nest at between 18 and 21 days. Upon fledging, the young quickly become used to their new surrounds and within a week are scooting about the aviary with the agility of adult birds.

Weaning takes approximately three weeks, during which time the parents are usually back on eggs. In some cases I have had the parents feeding two lots of young - those newly hatched and those nearing the completion of weaning. The young, once fully weaned, are removed to the holding cages where they are left to colour up to maturity.

Young birds attain adult plumage at 2 to 4 months of age and I have had them reproduce successfully at 6 months of age. Breeding can, and does, take place at any time of the year.

Tips and Hints

Obesity

The first real problem I encountered

with the Tri-coloured parrotfinch was one of obesity. Being my prized gems I felt obliged to give them lots of the best of everything. A silly mistake as it turned out to be. Mature birds in the prime of their lives laying nest after nest of infertile eggs. There had to be a reason for it!

Close inspection of the cock and hen birds revealed the telltale sign of obesity - a yellow coloured fat deposit just above the vent. Whilst not posing too much of a fertility problem in the hen birds, in the cock birds it prevents the necessary cloacal contact to fertilize the eggs. In addition, the obesity problem reduces the cock bird's propensity to pursue the hen to submission as well as suppressing his nest building desires.

Initially the yellow coloured fat deposits proved very difficult to eliminate. Dieting, by placing the birds on a white millet and red panicum seed mix and water, worked for the odd bird but not the majority. The problem of obesity was finally eliminated by flying all the Tri-coloureds together in a colony whilst they were maintained on the white millet and red panicum seed mix along with some greens and, of course, fresh water. As the diet took its toll, the birds became livelier and began harassing each other, further accelerating their weight loss program! The birds were put back into aviaries as single pairs once the area above the vent had returned to its natural dark flesh colour.

Hatching and Rearing

Once one comes to understand the nature of the Tri-coloured parrotfinch it can be said that they make excellent parents. Being a bird of the tropics, where nights are quite temperate, they cease to brood the chicks at night from as early as eight to ten days of age. When my first pairs commenced breeding in September and October, the nightly temperatures rarely dropped below 15 degrees. The chicks were reared successfully giving me the impression "How easy is this?!"

Summer came with its hot temperatures and low humidity and away went the

hatch rates of the eggs. The eggs were fertile but simply the chicks were not getting out of the eggs. After consultation with several prominent Parrotfinch breeders, it was suggested that approximately 3-4 days before the eggs were due to hatch approximately 3ml of water be placed down the side of the nest but within the nest box to increase the humidity. The results were excellent with hatch rates back up to what they were before the onset of our hot dry summers.

The next problem reared its head upon the commencement of winter. The birds continued to nest and hatch young only to lose them at 8-10 days of age. They were found dead in the nest, stone cold with full crops. Clearly the parents had done their job and reared them as their natural instincts dictated, but the Mother Nature where the birds now resided was not the Mother Nature of their ancestors! With the birds wanting to breed over winter the options were to split the pairs up or devise a reliable, easy and cheap system of providing some form of heating once the parents had ceased brooding.

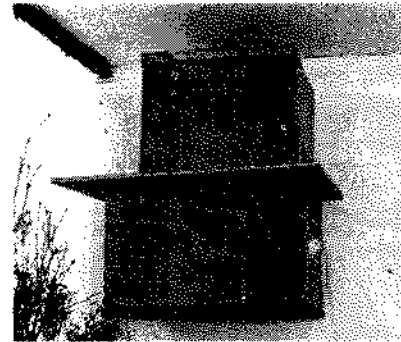
After some trial and error, I found that the best method was to fit a 25W globe into a typical down-light holder and then fit this to the base of the nest box constructed from 8-9mm MDF. This light system was then hooked up to an electrical timer switch and programmed to come on as required. For nest boxes made from 15mm pine a different method was required to increase the temperatures within the nest box to one which would see the chicks survive the cold nights. This involved the construction of a box of similar dimension to the nest box, which housed two 25W globes and could be attached to the nest box in question. Again the lights were hooked up to an electrical timer switch and programmed to come on as required.

Disadvantages with such systems are that the electrical timers can lose time should the power be switched off and light globes do fail! The second system of two 25W globes alleviates this to an extent by having two globes but I am doubtful that a



Supplemental Heat Box - Inside View

Photo ©Gary McCrae



Supplemental Heat Box - Assembled

Photo ©Gary McCrae

25W globe would provide sufficient heat through the two layers of 12mm pine (i.e. bottom of nest box and top of "light compartment"). My recommendations would be to construct something along these lines and then enhance it as deemed appropriate for your individual situation.

Hybridisation

It is generally considered that the purchase price of a hen Tri-coloured parrotfinch is approximately 80-90% of the purchase price of a pair. With cocks being relatively common a number of unscrupulous and desperate breeders have resorted to putting cock Tri-coloureds to Blue-faced parrotfinch hens resulting in worthless hybrids. These birds then often find their way onto the bird market and are purchased by newcomers to the species. Fortunately these hybrids appear sterile and so cannot pollute our pure strains of Tri-coloured parrotfinches.

When purchasing birds, buy from reputable sources or involve someone who knows what they are looking at. That was the way I approached it, and not once did I acquire a bird of dubious origins.

Mutations

Tri-coloured parrotfinch mutations are

beginning to appear in Australian aviaries. Ones which I have been able to verify include pastel, lutino and a black-eyed yellow. Current information of the genetic inheritance of these mutations is either inconclusive or unknown.

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- "NFS Affiliated Organizations, Delegates and Show Dates", 1st appearance 10/84, and included in nearly every issue.
- "Affiliation Agreement", 1st appearance for each year: 1986-JF86, 1987-SO86, 1988-ND87, 1989-ND88, 1990-JF90, 1991-SO90, 1992-ND91, 1993-ND92, 1994-JF94, 1995-JA95, 1996-JF96, MA96, 1997-JF97 MA97.

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- "A Survey of the Readership", ND94.
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- "Thanks, Denise!", MA94.
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 - Clark, Janis, "A Visit to NFSS Region 3 - Meet Janis Clark", JF03.
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 - Wigmore, Martha, "Potatoe Ayes", ND95.
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 - Wigmore, Martha, "A Big Welcome for a Friend in the Fancy" JF99.
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 - Hendry, P.J., "Finches I have Seen Around Brisbane", MA97.
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- "Official Cherry Finch Standard". MA94.

CORDON BLEU WAXBILL

- "Official Cordon Bleu Standard". MJ86.

CUT-THROAT FINCH

- "Official Cut-throat Finch Standard". JA97.
- "Proposed Cut-throat Finch Standard". ND96.

DIAMOND SPARROW

- "Proposed Diamond Sparrow Standard". MJ90.
- "Official Diamond Sparrow Standard". ND90.

FIRE FINCH

- "Proposed Red-billed Fire Finch Standard". MJ91.
- "Proposed Red-billed Fire Finch Standard (Revision)". MJ92.
- "Official Fire Finch Standard". MA94.

GENERAL STANDARD

- Hoffman, Jon. "Proposed Basic Standard". SO87.
- "Draft General Standard for Finches and Softbills". MJ92.
- "Proposed General Standard for Finches & Softbills". MJ03.

GOULDIAN FINCH

- "Official Lady Gouldian Standard". MA86.

GREEN SINGING FINCH

- "Official Green Singing Finch Standard". MJ86.

JAVA RICE BIRD

- "Official Java Rice Bird Standard". JAS88.

LAVENDER FINCH

- "Proposed Lavender Finch Standard". MA90.
- "Proposed Lavender Finch Standard (Revision)". MJ90.
- "Official Lavender Finch Standard". ND90.

PARSON FINCH

- "Official Parson Finch Standard". JA97.
- "Proposed Parson Finch standard". ND96.

PEKIN ROBIN

- "Proposed Pekin Robin Standard". MA93.
- "Proposed Pekin Robin Standard - Revision 2". MJ94.
- "Proposed Pekin Robin Standard - Revision 3". JF95.
- "Official Pekin Robin Standard", (approved by Board 2/95), as printed in JF95.

SHAFTTAIL

- "Official Shafttail Standard". ND87.

SOCIETY FINCH

- "Proposed Society Finch Standard". 7/84.
- "Official Society Finch Standard". 10/84.
- "Proposed Revisions to the Society Finch Standard". JF94.
- "Proposed Revisions to the Society Finch Standard - Revision 2". SO94.
- "Official (Revised) Society Finch Standard", (approved by Board 2/95), as printed in SO94.

STAR FINCH

- "Proposed Star Finch Standard". JF91, reprinted JF95.

ZEBRA FINCH

- "Official Zebra Finch Standard". 10/84.
- "Proposed Zebra Finch Standard Revision". JA97.
- "Proposed Zebra Finch Standard Final". J/A 98.

TREASURER'S REPORT see "FINANCIAL REPORT"

1986, JF86; 1990, JF90; 1994, JF94;
1987, SO86; 1991, SO90; 1995, JA95;
1988, ND87; 1992, ND91; 1996, JF96, MA96;
1989, ND88; 1993, ND92; 1997, JF97, MA97;
1988, MJ88; 1990, JF90; 1993, JF93/89, MA89
3:90, MJ90; 2/93, JF93; 6/89, MJ89
7/90, JA90/7/89, JA89
7/91, JA91
7/13/84, 7/84.
10/31/88, OND88.
10/31/89, ND89.
5/28/91, MJ91.11:7/91, ND91.
1992, JF93. 1993, MJ94.

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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@cstbinc.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/sebf.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 Gecek (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 dalet2@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.cusick@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> sevcebc@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 (Ft. 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>

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

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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@gameritech.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 (603) 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 dpickarz1@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> litdebce@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
<p style="text-align: center;">MO-KAN Cage Bird Club <i>(Columbus, KS)</i></p> <p><u>Mtgs:</u> 2nd Sat - 7 pm - Granny Shaffcers Dixieland Chicken, Joplin, MO</p> <p><u>Contact:</u> Doug Willis (417) 358-5189 dwillis71@cox-internet.com</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Raleigh-Durham Caged Bird Society <i>(Raleigh)</i></p> <p><u>Mtgs:</u> 3rd Sun.-2:30 pm- Glen Eden Pilot Pk</p> <p><u>Contact:</u> April Blazich (919) 851-8079 aprilb@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 jeeperspeepers55@aol.com</p>

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<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>Chester County Bird Club, Inc. (Malvern) <u>Mtgs:</u> 2nd Sun - E. Whiteland Twnshp Bldg. <u>Contact:</u> Maria Rosenberger (610) 469-6402 Duckybathtime@aol.com</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>	
TENNESSEE	
<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>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>	
<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>	
TEXAS	
<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>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>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>
	<p>Canary and Finch Society (Pasadena) <u>Mtgs:</u> 2nd Sun - 2pm - Community Room - Pasadena Towne Square Mall <u>Contact:</u> Harold McBryer (281) 338-2814 haroldmcbryer369@hotmail.com <u>Website:</u> http://canaryfinchsociety.tripod.com</p>
VIRGINIA	
	<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>
WASHINGTON	
	<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>
WISCONSIN	
	<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> DEvanomum@aol.com</p>
	<p>Wisconsin Cage Bird Club (Oshkosh) <u>Contact:</u> Dave Bluma 920-428-4595 davidbluma@aol.com</p>

2004 AFFILIATION AGREEMENT



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

Mail to: Darla Dandre, Liaison Officer
P.O. Box 1231
Lisle, IL 60532
e-mail: dbirdranch@aol.com
Phone: (815) 729-9789

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: _____

2004 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:
Dbirdranch@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 NFSS	
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-cheeked 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, Plush-capped Jay, small Toucans, small Touracos.

Banding instructions included with each order.

Guide to Ordering Open Plastic Leg Bands

- Size XF: Cordon Bleu, Fire, Orange-Cheeked, Red-Eared, Lavender, Blue Capped Waxbills, Owl, Cherry, Green & Grey Singers, Painted, Hecks & Masked Grassfinch, Gouldian, Most Parrot Finches, Zebra, Bengalese (Society), Stars.
- Size XCS: Nuns, Cutthroats, Diamond Firetails (Diamond Sparrows), most Twinspots, Siskins, (Canaries - Gloster, Fife, Miniature & Fancy).
- Size XCL: Red Faced Pytilia, Pekin Robin, (Canaries - Roller, Borders, Lizard, Norwich, Yorkshire, Red Factor).
- Size XB: Indian Shama, Diamond Dove, Chinese Painted (Button) Quail, Budgies, Grass Parakeets.
- Size X3: Lovebirds, Rosellas, Many Softbills.



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

Dual: \$35.00

Junior (under 16): \$22.50

Foreign: \$35.00

Mail Application and Check
Payable to NFSS:

Ms. Linda Hughes
P.O. Box 499
Rhome, TX 78078



NFSS FINCH/SOFTBILL SAVE Information/Application Request

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ Country: _____

Phone #: _____

E-Mail: _____

Mail Request to:















Mr. Randy Taylor

17801 Robin Road, Canyon, TX 79109



NFSS FINCH SHOP



Qty	Item	Price	Amt
	 NFSS Tote Bag	\$8.00	
	 NFSS Gouldian Finch Pin	\$5.00	
	 NFSS Zebra Finch Pin	\$5.00	
	 NFSS Name Badge	\$8.00	
	<i>Name for Badge:</i>		
	<i>2nd Line of Engraving:</i>		\$1.00
	<i>Magnetic Fastener (Normally comes with pin fastener)</i>		\$1.50
	 NFSS Bulletin Past Issues <i>Year & Volume:</i>	\$4.00	
	 Nest Box Kit	\$4.99	
	 Nature's Jewels - Gouldian Poster	\$20.00	
	 Finchwear T-Shirt - Gouldian Finch <i>Specify artwork: Gouldian, Society, Zebra</i> <i>Specify Size: L ___ XL ___</i>	\$16.50	
	 Finch/Softbill Photo CD/Screen Saver	\$9.99	
	 Video - Finch Husbandry	\$15.00	
	 Bird Nets	\$8.00	
	 Judges Handbook & Official Standards	\$13.00	
	 NFSS Show Cage Plans <i>Specify: NFSS #1, NFSS #2, NFSS #3</i>	\$4.00	
	<i>Set of all three NFSS Show Cage Plans</i>		\$10.00
	 Finch Note Card (<i>Artwork by Sally Huntington. See past Journal issue or web site for note card art selections</i>)	\$1.50	
	<i>Set of Ten Finch Note Cards</i>		\$13.50
Shipping/Handling Orders to \$9.99 Add \$3.85; Orders \$10.00-\$49.99 Add \$5.80; Orders \$50.0-\$99.99 Add \$7.70; \$100.00 or more Add \$9.90.		Total Item Cost:	
Send Completed Order with full name and address along with a check payable to NFSS to: Sue Haberkorn, NFSS Finch Shop Manager 1106 Hamilton Blvd. Hagerstown, MD 21742		Shipping/Handling:	
		TOTAL ORDER:	

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