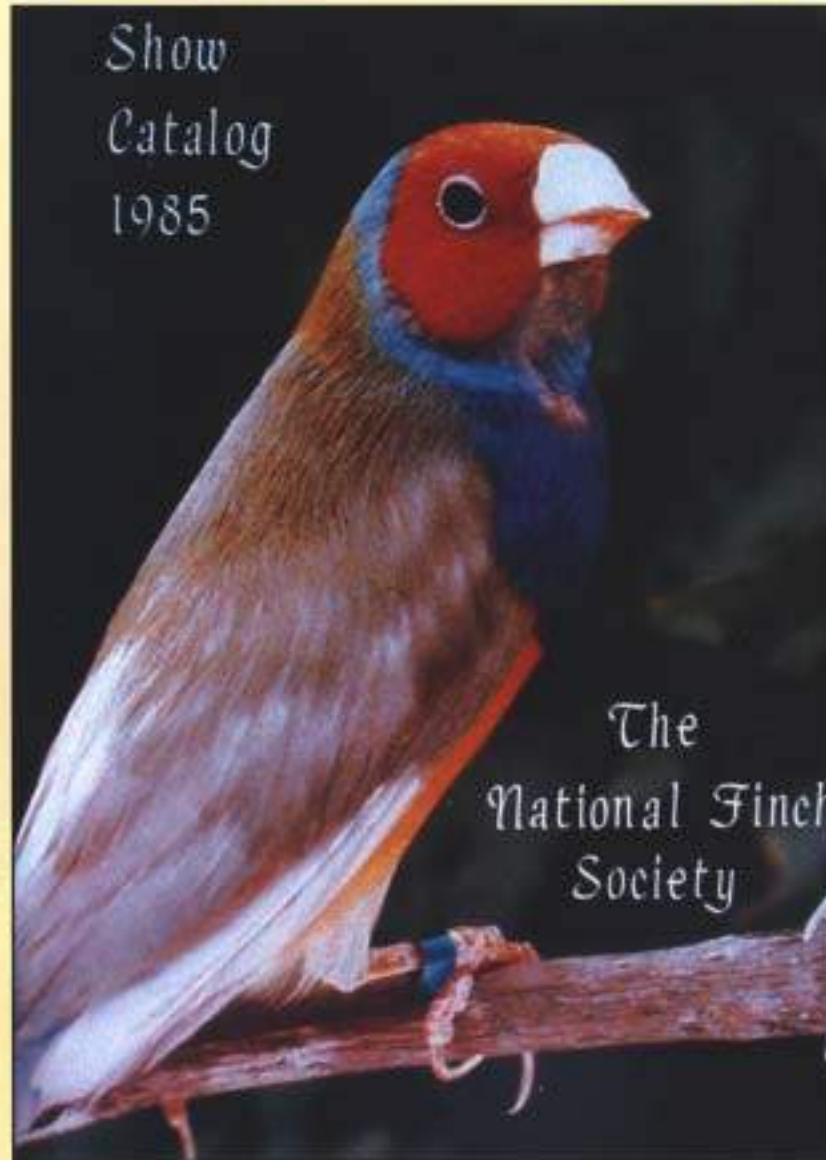


Journal of the
**National Finch &
Softbill Society**

Volume 21, No. 2

March/April, 2004

Show
Catalog
1985



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

On the Cover....

Our thanks to NFSS President Emeritus, Bill Parlee, for providing this photo of the first NFS National Show catalog cover to commemorate our 20th anniversary year. This was a folded 8 x 10 Kodak color print stapled as the cover to a black and white catalog. 100 of these were produced and paid for by advertising in the catalog. This was the first color show catalog cover ever produced by any U.S. bird organization and was done to commemorate NFSS' first show. The show was held in November, 1985 in Harrisburg, PA. Cover photo by Terry Dunham.

Journal of the National Finch and Softbill Society

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In this Issue...

NFSS President's Message - Sally Huntington 4
 NFSS - The Beginnings - Bill Parlee, NFSS President Emeritus 6
 Letters to NFSS 7
 Happenings: Finch and Softbill Save/Census - Randy Taylor 8
 Our Feathered Friends' Feathers -
 Michael Marcotrigiano, NFSS Science Editor 14
 The Violet-Eared Waxbill - Randy Taylor 17
 A Better Mousetrap? - Martie Lauster with photos by Dr. K.d. Bergen, Phd. . . 28
 Finches vs. Softbills - Sally Huntington 31
 Frizzles in the U.S.A. - John Gikas 32
 Exotic Finches in a Sun Porch Aviary - Nancy D. Ingram 36
 The Florida Fancy Zebra Finch Mutation - Robert Fairchild 40
 The Blackheaded Greenfinch - Tim Roche 42
 Pet Finch Report Card - Sally Huntington 45
 Keeping your Show Cages in Blue Ribbon Condition! - Darla Dandre 47
 Raising Mealworms the Easy Way - Roy Beckham 48
 What is an NFSS "Sanctioned" Bird Show? - Darla Dandre 52
 NFSS 1st Quarter, 2004, Board Meeting Minutes 55
 NFSS Board of Directors/Judges/Affiliated Clubs 60
 FORMS!! Membership/FSS/Affiliation/Awards/Bands/Finch Shop 65
 Classified Ads 72

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NFSS President's Message

March, 2004



THREE GENERATIONS...

Our NFSS is 20 years old. Next year, we'll be old enough to drink!

We're already old enough to vote and I sincerely appreciate that so many members do vote their feelings and opinions.

Looking back, it seems like the general life expectancy of a finch is seven years. Therefore, we NFSS members are now working with our third generation of birds.

Because imports were plentiful, the first generation birds (1984-1991) were bought cheaply at nearby pet stores - sometimes for as little as \$2.00. As NFSS drew together, it was not unusual for a member to pay a few dollars for a bird on Monday, show it at one of the dozen or so annual area shows that Saturday, and sell it off or trade it to someone the next week. We slowly began to talk about what made up a 'good bird' and why, etc.

The second generation of birds, (1991-1998) became scarcer and more expensive as international export controls, animal welfare concerns, increased feed costs and national policies slowed imports and caused the NFSS person to realize that if we wanted birds, we must breed them ourselves. The \$2.00 dollar bird was now \$20.00.

By the third generation, (1999 to today), NFSS has become one of the major centers of avian welfare, breeding, husbandry, exhibiting and TEACHING about birds. Our 'newsletter' has truly become a 'journal'. Because bird clubs are so well run, there are occasionally again the 'in-club' \$2.00 bird, but we now identify special, 'difficult to breed species', 'show quality' lines, 'beginner's birds' and such. As we learn more, our birds are healthier, better classified, better understood and more interesting and fascinating.

Come on, fourth generation!

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Sally Huntington". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sally Huntington, President, National Finch & Softbill Society

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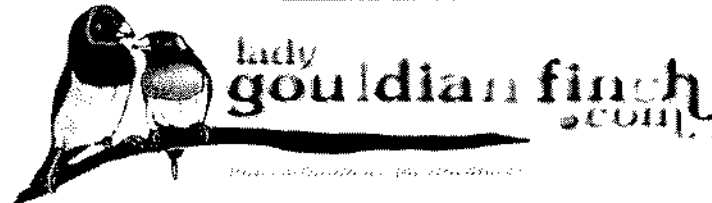
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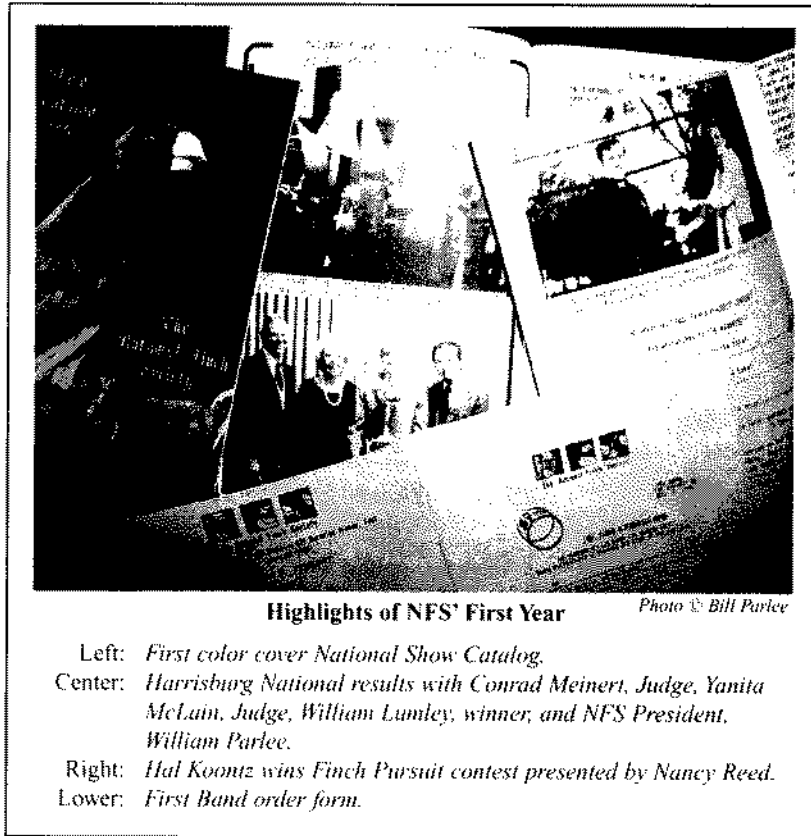
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NFSS - The Beginnings

by William Parlee,
NFSS President Emeritus



Highlights of NFS' First Year

Photo © Bill Parlee

- Left: *First color cover National Show Catalog.*
 Center: *Harrisburg National results with Conrad Meinert, Judge, Yanita McLuhn, Judge, William Lumley, winner, and NFS President, William Parlee.*
 Right: *Hal Koontz wins Finch Pursuit contest presented by Nancy Reed.*
 Lower: *First Band order form.*

The first formation meeting was in January 1984 and included Bill Parlee, Russ Armitage Jr., Kelly Dahill, Jerry D'Agata, and Nancy Reed. What we were forming was the Northeast Finch Society, primarily to gain some respect for finch breeders and exhibitors. I published a small article in the American Cage Bird Magazine which was read by Dr. Val Clear. He urged us to go national rather than regional. After much consideration, the National Finch Society was formed - publishing its first journal

in April of 1984.

Within the first year, membership grew to nearly 100 members - mostly from the Northeast. My total focus was to engage finch fanciers from all parts of the United States. We set up information booths at shows all over the country and within two years had grown to over 500 members throughout the country. We set up committees for a Judges Panel, Education Department, and Standards Committee - and wrote an original Society handbook.

With permission of the Board and with the help of Hal Koontz, I traveled to California to hold a judges' seminar and a process to accredit judges for the west coast. This process completed our desire to become a truly national organization representing finch breeders and exhibitors nationwide. By the time of my election to a third and final term as president, we had over 25 affiliated clubs and a thousand members and began work on a revolutionary new program called Finchsave. Original founding members worked long and hard and sometimes even took money from their own pockets to keep the society fluid.

Within the first two years NFS established a journal, offered bird bands, embraced the American Federation of Aviculture, had a Judges' Panel of 20 judges with an apprenticeship program, produced a Handbook, a Finchshop, affiliated bird clubs, and created a bird breeding and awards pro-

gram. In 1986 NFS associated with the National Cage Bird show holding its first truly national show in Chicago. In 1987, upon the urging of many, we became the National Finch and Softbill Society.

Through the years Presidents Bill Parlee, Brenda Geesey, Steve Hoppin, Frank Hudson, Ron Castaner, Dale Laird, and Sally Huntington have guided the society for the benefit of members with few politics and a great concern for finches - propagation and conservation in a world of ever lessening species. One of the newest accomplishments of the Society has been the new website - www.nfss.org. The National Finch and Softbill Society is what it is today due the hard work of many members too numerous to mention. The late Dr. Val Clear and the late Philip Shaw, among others, have been awarded the Founders Award for accomplishment in Aviculture and their hard work on our Society's behalf.

Letters

To Vince & Sally Huntington - Pet Finches

Wanted to write quickly and commend you, Vince and Sally, for your hand feeding inserts in recent magazine issues. I have been raising birds for 20 years and last May I handfed a little zebra. I never took time before. Jimmy-Jimmy is the spark of our family. He flies to me when I clap my hands and says, "um-hmmm" all the time since I always said that as he was eating. He loves to be surprised and I always act like I will walk away from him and turn quickly yelling "BOO" he flies to me cussing ecstatically. I have nine younger siblings and out of the hundreds of birds here, when they come,

they run into the house to see him first. He eats treats from everyone's hands and rings his little bells when we aren't paying him enough attention. He is A PART OF MY FAMILY, and your handfeeding strategies and advice are surely worth recognition so that others will fall in love with finches in a more personal way as I have. Feel free to pass this on and even put it in the journal if you would.

Jason Beck

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



Happenings: Finch and Softbill Save/Census

by Randy Taylor
NFSS 3rd Vice President

In the last column, I referred to some changes that were coming about in the FSS Program Guidelines and Requirements. I have received only favorable comments about these changes. Everyone has been extremely supportive and encouraging. Several of our members have requested for me to publish the FSS participants' names and the species that have been registered, so I will do so in this edition. Most felt that this would give others encouragement to enter their particular species into the program where that species was not represented or that several participants with the same species could readily give support to each other. Some FSS members desire to remain anonymous and they will remain as such per the FSS Guidelines. I will, howev-

er, include the species and numbers of birds that the anonymous members have registered. We even have some NFSS members that have sent in membership fees in a purely supportive role and have not registered any species into the program. In looking back at some of the past publications of the FSS program, I quickly noticed that the practice of publishing the participants and species was quite frequent. I also noticed that in the past, some species were placed on 'priority' lists. This is also something that our members have asked to have and the FSS committee will be working toward this goal for our current situation and the results will be reported later in this regular FSS column.

As of February 1, 2004, we have the following numbers to report:

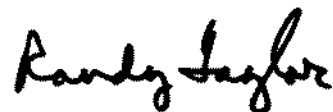
Participants: 31 Species: 50 Specimens: 598

Nizam Ali	South American Seed-eater
Larry Baum	Violet-eared Waxbills
Christopher	
McCaffrey-Boss	Timor Zebra Finches
Doti Browning	Forbes Parrot Finches
Harry Bryant	Painted Finches, Chestnut-breasted Mannikins, Masked grass-finches, Forbes Parrot Finches
Christina Eichner	Parson Finches
Kim Ettleman	Star Finches, Bronze-wing Mannikins, Indian Silverbills, Owl Finches, Orange-cheeked Waxbills
James Felix	Cutthroat Finches, Heck's Grassfinches, Star Finches, Owl Finches
Clara Gontero	Turquoise Tanager
Paula Hansen	Black Hooded Red Siskins
Clint Harris	Diamond Fire-tails
Sally Huntington	Pekin Robins

Cameron Key	Supporter
John Kilmer	Superb Starlings
Cathy Mackay	Heck's Grassfinches. Forbes Parrot Finches. Rufous-bellied Nltavas. Yellow-legged Honeycreepers. Silver-eared Mesias. Pekin Robins. Forbes Parrot Finches. White-rumped Shammas
Sergio Marrero	Cuban Melodious
Lisa Miller	Owl Finches, Red-headed Parrot Finches, Parson Finches
Robert Mehl	Blue-capped Cordon Bleu. Red-headed Parrot Finches. Blue-faced Parrot Finches. Owl Finches. Star Finches
Lisa Murphy	Swee Waxbills. Crimson-rumped Waxbills, Fawn-breasted Waxbills, Red-cheeked Cordon Bleus, Dybowski Twinspots. Peter's Twinspots. Strawberry Finches. Blue-capped Cordon Bleus
Deloy Pack	Supporter
Jess Power	Violet-eared Waxbills
Raspberry	Timor Zebra Finches
Robert Schmidt	Owl Finches
Fumi Takeda	Blue-breasted Cordon Bleus. Grey Singing Finches. Saffron Finches. Madagascar Green Singing Finches. Green Singing Finches. Gold-breasted Waxbills. St. Helena Waxbills. Red-headed Parrot Finches
Randy Taylor	Violet-eared Waxbills. Blue-capped Cordon Bleus, Red-billed Fire Finches. Black-crowned Waxbills. St. Helena Waxbills. Peter's Twinspots. Black-cheeked Waxbills. Crimson-rumped Waxbills
Patrick Vance	Purple Grenadiers. Blue-capped Cordon Bleus. Melba Finches
Douglas White	Red-cheeked Cordon Bleu
# 1831-FSS-6	Red-headed Parrot Finches. Strawberry Finches. Purple Grenadiers. Dybowski Twinspots, Cherry Finch. Black-capped Waxbills
# 484-FSS-8	Silver-eared Mesias
# 3780-FSS-21	Blue-billed Fire Finches. Orange-cheeked Waxbills, Blue-capped Cordon Bleu. Peter's Twinspots

Owl Finches and Blue-capped Cordon Bleus lead the way with five participants each. Forbes Parrot Finches and Red-headed Parrot Finches are in a close third and fourth place with four participants each. There are four participants that tie with the number of eight registered species. The participant with the largest registration has entered 73 birds and there are several participants with 2 birds entered. I am very

encouraged by the number of participants and the number of species that we have represented in the program. I believe that we have a very strong foot-hold and we also have the overwhelming support of the NFSS Board of Directors. Things can only get better for our future if we persevere and we will continue to grow in our joint endeavor of saving finches and softbills.



**Randy Taylor, NFSS 3rd Vice President,
Finch and Softbill Save Program (FSS) and Census Manager**

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Club Contact Information

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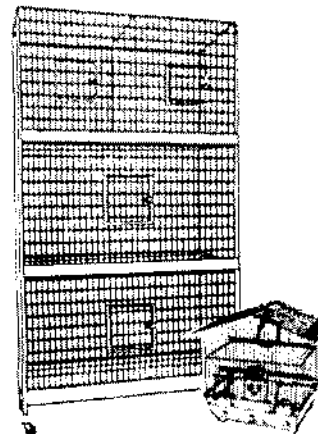
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Our Feathered Friends' Feathers

by Michael Marcotrigiano,
NFSS Science Editor

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I must admit that the thought of feather evolution hardly comes to mind when I am chasing feathers with my vacuum cleaner the day I clean the bird room; and when I rest my head on my goose down pillow at night. I may be thinking of which birds to pair up this season - but never do I think about how feathers came about. For decades scientists, while knowing the benefits of feathers on birds, have wondered where they fit in the scheme of evolution. Recent discoveries have shed important light on this interesting question. As is true with most scientific inquiries, they are surrounded by controversy. Reviewing all theories is well beyond the NFSS Journal, so I present here what is considered one of the more believable scientific opinions.

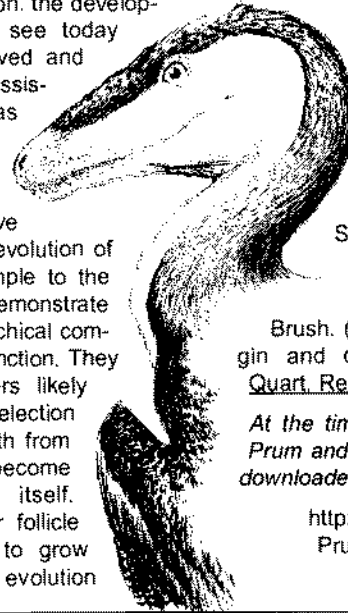
It has been with discoveries in the last ten years of fossilized primitive feathers on non-avian theropod dinosaurs in China that the dinosaur ancestor of birds has gained one more line of support. These dinosaurs pre-date flight and birds, making scientists ponder about the reason these structures evolved. Arguments against the belief that birds evolved from theropod dinosaurs are becoming less valid and it is with the assumption that birds evolved from dinosaurs that feather study is making progress. A current topic that remains unresolved is whether structures found in other dinosaur classes are feather pro-

genitors and if this is so, did the "feather" pop up at different times in evolution in unrelated dinosaur lines. After reading several papers, my inclination is to believe a single evolutionary "feathered" line descended from one theropod group. Future studies will resolve this issue.

To understand more about feather evolution, the chemical and developmental structure of feathers is studied. Feathers are branched filamentous keratin (a type of protein) structures which form a cylindrical invagination around the emerging "feather bud". So, feathers begin as a tube of protein. It is believed that the recently discovered fossils show enough homology to modern feathers to be considered primitive feathers. The "early feathers" are found along the back ridge, face, and belly of these dinosaurs. Interestingly, there are mutants in current day poultry that display primitive feather morphology which may hearken back to the day of primitive dinosaur "feathers". Such developmental mutants will be critical to study feather evolution because they may represent genetic and developmental steps that predate the modern complex feather.

Much of the conflict among scientists discussing feather origin and function is that some scientists did not think to study feather development by breaking it into stages that could be accommodated by a sequence of evolutionary

events. The "sexier" line of thought was to think of flight as being the sole reason that feathers evolved. This narrow line of thought hinders evolutionary study. According to Prum and Bush (2002). "Concluding that feathers evolved for flight is like maintaining that digits evolved for playing the piano." Instead, most serious evolutionary biologists are looking at a series of plausible functions like thermal insulation, thermal shielding, water repellency, tactile organs, or defense. These would not require that flight ever evolved but would still explain early function that predates flight. With only fossil records available it is unlikely that the early purpose or purposes for feather evolution will be resolved. Prum and Bush (2002) believe that if feather evolution had been under strong selection for a single function, the developmental plasticity we see today would not have evolved and the function of flight assistance, which was dependent on continuous structural evolution, might not have occurred. They believe that by studying the evolution of feathers from the simple to the complex, one can demonstrate an increasingly hierarchical complexity in form and function. They conclude that feathers likely originated by natural selection for a protein outgrowth from the skin that did not become part of the dermis itself, resulting in a tubular follicle that could continue to grow outward. Subsequent evolution



led to novel shapes, forms, and function. Had flight not evolved, there is a good chance that feathers would still have evolved for other functions. That flight evolved is one of the most remarkable evolutionary events. Not only does it assist birds in invading new habitats and escaping predators, but it humbles man to see this effortless form of travel only accomplished by humans with the less elegant airplane. Flight, however, came at a cost for birds, since they have lost digits on two limbs. They have adjusted remarkably to this and live happy lives. But what happens in death? The question comedian Steven Wright poses remains unanswered – "Do bird angels have four wings?"

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At the time of press a reprint of the Prum and Brush 2002 paper could be downloaded at:

http://www.mcorriss.com/Prum_&_Brush_2002.pdf

NFSS member and Journal Science Editor, Michael Marcovignato breeds and exhibits show-quality Society finches and a limited number of Zebra finches. He is a faculty member in Biological Sciences and the Botanic Garden Director at Suffolk College in Massachusetts. To learn more about his birds see www.exoticfinches.com.

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The Violet-Eared Waxbill

Granatina granatina

by Randy Taylor

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DESCRIPTION

Granatina granatina is a rather slender waxbill with a quite large bill and strongly graduated long tail. It measures 5 1/2 to 6 inches in length. A cobalt blue band goes across the front of the forehead and extends into the upper lores. Lores are black. Cheeks and ear coverts are a bright but delicate shade of violet. Wings are a dull grayish brown with faint reddish brown fringes to most feathers. The lower belly and undertail coverts are black. Lower rump and upper tail coverts are a deep shiny bright cobalt blue. The tail is black tinged with blue on fringes of the feathers. The remainder of the upper and under parts are a deep reddish-chestnut brown. The bill is bright red or orange. The eyes and eye ring are red or dark orange. Legs and feet are slate gray or blackish.

The female is much paler than the male with an overall buff appearance. She retains the violet cheek patches and cobalt rump, but her colors are subdued in comparison to the male. However, she is still exceedingly beautiful.

Juveniles are very similar to the female but are much duller with gray-brown on head, face and wings - lacking the bright facial tones of the adults. They do have a small amount of dark blue over the rump. Their bill is black. The eyes and eye ring are a blackish brown.

The young nestling has blackish skin and long, white down. Its palate is largely orange and its tongue orange or yellow crossed with a black band. The palate pattern is of the five-spot type but with the two lower spots small - or even

absent in some cases. It has blue gape tubercles.

There are two races beside the nominate that are not recognized by all authorities. These are *Granatina granatina siccata* and *G. g. retusa*. Very few differences exist between the races, but *retusa* is smaller and paler with a shorter tail. *Retusa* is found only in southern Mozambique and *siccata* is found in western Angola through Namibia to northern Cape Province, South Africa.

DISTRIBUTION AND HABITAT

It is common or fairly common over most of southern Africa. It inhabits dry, semi-arid desert thorn scrub, tangles of thorn and other cover along streams and dry river beds, open Acacia and other woodland, usually with thorn undercover, and often in waterless country. It sometimes occurs on the edge of cultivated land.

FEEDING HABITS

Feeds mostly on the ground under bushes or in other vegetation. Takes seeds of many grasses and weeds, termites and soft bodied insects. Often it will hold a grass panicle with the foot while eating. Goodwin reports that Immelmanns found that termites were the main food during the dry season and that they habitually went without drinking water for many weeks. They are one of the most delicate waxbills requiring a varied assortment of animal food at ALL times.

SOCIAL

Usually found in singles, pairs or small family groups. Often in company

with the Blue breasted Cordon Bleu and other waxbills when not breeding. Breeding pairs usually keep within an area of several hundred square yards and defend this territory, driving out intruding conspecifics and others such as the not-so-closely related Cordon Bleus and any other small birds that might venture into their territory.

NESTING

The male often will display with the stem of a seeded grass head in his beak during his courtship ritual - the female often joining in with singing of her own. The nest is usually two to six feet above ground in a thorn bush or other scrub. It is rounded with a side entrance and often has a slight "porch" projecting above it. It is built of green grass stems and lined with feathers. The male does all the col-

lecting and the majority of the building of the nest. Two to five eggs are laid and both sexes incubate and brood in turn with the female on the nest at night. Young hatch in 13 to 14 days and fledge at 16 days. They are regularly parasitized by the Shaft-tailed Whydah. As many as a third of the nests in the wild have been found to have been parasitized by this Whydah.

SONG

The male has a twittering melodic song which ends in fluting tones and he is particularly prone to sing at dusk. During courtship, the male sings quite frequently all during the day. The female also sings. They have a variety of short contact notes. (Goodwin, Clements, Restall, Bates)

When I first became interested in breeding the African waxbill finches during the mid 1970's, I lived in sunny Southern California and had plenty of room in my backyard for some outside aviaries. I had bred several color varieties of Zebra finches for several years prior to this. After I had finished the planning and building of my aviary, I had five large separate flights - each with its own section inside a large shelter. The flight that I had reserved for the Violet Ears measured 16 feet long by 8 feet wide and 7 feet tall. Back then, imported finches were a little easier to find and also less expensive to obtain. I was successful in raising a few broods of the Red Eared Waxbill, Red Cheeked Cordon Bleu, Senegal Fire Finch and Melba Finch in this set-up. I purchased my first pair of Violet Ears for \$85.00. The flight itself was heavily planted with different grasses, honeysuckle vines and privet hedge; and also had some large "tumble weeds" in the back corners. This was all prepared before I introduced the Violet Ears to the flight. I fell in love with their coloration and body type first - but it was their personalities that did me under. I had studied all I could find that was written about them, but it did

not prepare me for their real beauty. Being wild-caught birds, I had expected them to be as nervous and flighty as the other waxbills with which I already had some experiences. Much to my surprise, they were the calmest finches that I had ever owned. Even the domesticated Zebras and Societies seemed to think that I was going to kill them every time I went in to change out their feed and water dishes - but not the Violet Ears. Within the first few days after introducing them to the flight, they were coming up to the front of the wire whenever I approached.

There were no other birds except one pair of Silver Button Quail in the flight with them. I offered them freshly picked seeding grass heads every morning. They would start eating the seeds before I could get my hand away from the wire. No matter the amount of grass heads that I offered, they always seemed to want more. The male would often display with one in his beak. After about the first two weeks in the flight, I realized why they wanted these grass heads so badly - they were already building a nest with them in one of the privet hedge plants!

Violet Ears are very active birds and these would fly around the flight so fast that I could barely keep up with where they were at any given time. The male would chase the female all around but never really "catch" her. At first, I thought that he was being overly aggressive, but I really think that the female enjoyed this activity as much as he did. I believe that it is a large part of their courtship ritual.

It was at about this point that I gave them some feathers just to see what they would do with them and sure enough, they seemed to want them as badly as they did the grass heads. The nest itself was a tightly compacted ball that measured approximately five inches in diameter with a side entrance. They built it within two feet from the front of the aviary wire. It was made entirely out of the seeding grass heads - even though they had access to a variety of nesting material - and the inside was lined with white feathers. I could not actually see into the nest due to the amount of feathers they had used and they always managed to put one over the opening itself upon entrance or exit from the nest.

The time of year was August so that the days were long and dry. I would position the water sprinklers so that all the aviary plants would manage to get a drink every two to three days, but keep the nest dry. The bermuda grass and honeysuckle were getting tall and I had hoped that all of this vegetation would encourage insects to visit the aviary, but I offered them free choice of mealworms and also had several fruit fly cultures in five pound coffee cans inside their flight just in case. The mealworms were in a large plastic container that had about two to three inches of bran in the bottom. I would place 5,000 small ones into the container at a time. With the amount of bran in the container, the birds had to search through it to find the worms. I also offered them free choice of finch seed mixture, cuttlebone, crushed eggshells, fresh grass heads every day and bits of apples or oranges two to three times a

week. Fresh water was available in an eight-inch crock dish. They seemed to thrive on this diet.

The pair seemed to really enjoy my company when I sat in the yard near the aviary observing them. They would exchange places on the nest and didn't seem to mind that I was sitting so close to them. I really believe that they trusted me.

One afternoon, I heard faint cheeping noises that seemed to come from the nest and I knew that they had hatched out some young ones. At this point, I cut down on my observations to allow them more privacy. This may have been a mistake. One morning, I noticed a bird that was hanging half way out of the nest and I could tell that it was dead. It was about the same color as the female - only a little darker in coloration - and my heart sunk. I just stood there for a few minutes and looked around the flight. There were both the male and female flying around and making a stir with very loud calling. I knew then that it was one of the young birds almost ready to fledge. I observed them for quite sometime and neither bird would even go close to the nest. I couldn't imagine what had happened to the young bird. I decided to go in and check it out. Much to my surprise, upon entrance to the flight, two Red Cheeked Cordon Bleus were startled out of the honeysuckle vines and started flying about. There were not supposed to be any other birds in the flight with the Violet Ears. How in the world did these Bleus get in there? I soon answered my own question. The flight shared a common side-wire with the Bleus flight and I found part of the wire mesh had a slightly larger space than the rest of the wire. The wire that I had used to build the aviaries was half-inch hexagon aviary netting. The Bleus must have found this enlarged hole and had somehow squeezed through into the Violet Ear flight. I still don't know if the parents themselves or the Bleus did the damage, but four young Violet Ears almost ready to fledge had

been pecked to death! I was just sick. The pair never seemed to recover after this and did not go back to nest again. They still acted as a pair, however, except for the nesting part.

It wasn't long after this that I got homesick and moved back to my home state of Texas and did not keep any finches for a number of years.

Since that time, I had yearned to try my luck with them again but work or family seemed to be an obstacle. Then, about two years ago, I went to a local bird mart to look around and then and there decided to start breeding finches again. I had spent the last ten years breeding bantam chickens, but something seemed to be missing until I obtained the finches. I knew then that I really loved the excitement and beauty that the finches brought to my life.

It took me a while working with the Fire Finches and Cordon Bleus again, but I finally got up the courage to try the Violet Ears another time. I found and purchased some from a reputable dealer in California and had them sent to me via the U.S. Postal Express Mail Service. The birds were just beautiful upon arrival and very active. I placed them in quarantine cages and just couldn't wait to be able to set them up for breeding. Although, my set-up was now inside my home and no large flights, I hoped that I would have a good chance to 'cage' breed them. I originally purchased four pair but within the first week I lost all but two males and one female. I thought, "This isn't going to work - they need more than I can give them inside". However, I persevered with them and the three surviving Violet Ears remained in great health. All of them would sing almost constantly, so I gave it a shot and placed the female and what I thought was the best one of the two males together in a box-type breeding cage in my bird room. This was during the spring and I knew that their usual breeding season coincides with our winter, but I was willing to give it a try.

The cage measured four feet long by two feet deep by two feet tall. Two full spectrum bulbs in four foot shop lights are mounted above each of my breeding cages and are on timers to provide 14 hours of direct lighting. I also have black lights in the bird room. The cage was heavily furnished with silk plants on the end where the nest box was attached.

I waited and watched. These three birds became just as trustful of me as the pair I had years ago! After about two months of being together, the pair began to build a nest in the wooden box that I had mounted on the outside of the flight. They really went after the fresh seeding grass heads I offered them. From everything that I've observed, the grass heads are a strong stimulus for them to breed. They also use a large amount of white chicken feathers.

I use chicken feathers that I gather from my Bantam White Leghorn chickens. I 'sanitize' them by putting them into a large container with about a gallon of warm water and one tablespoon of bleach. I let them soak for 25 to 30 minutes and then thoroughly stir them all around getting out all the visible dirt and chicken poop. Once I am sure they are clean, I rinse them thoroughly at least twice and lay them out on a towel to dry.

By my mounting the nest-boxes on the outside, I had thought that I could check on things when both birds were off the nest and they would never know that I had checked - yeah, right! They knew OK, but it didn't seem to matter to them at all. One day I saw both birds off the nest and thought I'd take a peek. Much to my surprise, the female had sneaked back into the nest without me knowing it and there she was when I opened the lid - waiting on me. She never even moved a feather, she just stared back at me and wasn't moving come he** or high water! This really surprised me. I thought she would have darted out of the nest never to return. I did notice that there was at least one egg in the nest with her and decided to not disturb them again for

awhile. I tried to gauge the time for the eggs to hatch and got it on the money.

The incubation period for Violet Ears is 14 days. The day I thought they would hatch, I had to stay quite late at work and rushed home to find three dead hatchlings on the cage floor - Another disappointment! I thought again that this was just not meant to be for me. But I wasn't ready to hang up the towel just yet.

The pair did not show any more interest in breeding until about six months later when I noticed that the female had been spending a lot of time inside the nest box. I had not removed any of their old nesting material, so they already had one built. I did give them some more sanitized white chicken feathers and they immediately started incorporating them into the nest. Frequently, the male will bring a feather each time he returns to the nest to relieve the female, so these seem to play an important role in their behavior also. This time, I thought that I would let them incubate for a few days and then move their eggs to a Society pair that I had which was at about the same point in nesting. My reasoning included thinking that if I could get some young Violet Ears raised without any live food that it would make it easier to raise some parent-raised Violet Ears from these fostered birds. The female Violet Ear laid five eggs but had broken one by the time I moved the eggs to the Society nest. After about six days of incubation I candled the eggs and all four were fertile! I really had a good chance this time!

All four eggs hatched on schedule and the Societies were feeding them! GREAT! Then on the fifth day, I came home to find all four babies dead in the Society nest. I hadn't really thought about the dry seed that I had been giving to the foster Societies, but I think that the dry seed was my mistake this time. All four baby VE's had full crops of seed only and no egg food at all. Although the Societies had started feeding the egg food, they must have stopped and switched to the

seed! Very young nestling waxbills cannot digest hard seed. Another disappointment! By this time, I was even more determined that I was going to raise some Violet Ears one way or another.

Less than three weeks after the female had finished this last clutch, she started laying again. This time I removed the eggs on a daily basis and kept them in a small covered container in the bird-room. She ended up laying a total of seven eggs until one day she didn't lay an egg. She had managed to break and eat two of the eggs before I could remove them from the nest. Other breeders have reported to me that they too have had a problem of their Violet Ears breaking and eating their own eggs. I do not know why my birds do this as they are given plenty of crushed egg shells and are never without it. They also have cuttlebone and I give them Calciboost in their water. Some hypothesize that they are eating the infertile eggs. Could it be that they are trying to get more protein into their diet? Whatever the reason, my female and/or male eats the entire egg and leaves very little evidence behind.

I set the five eggs I had saved under the same pair of Societies that I had used the clutch before as I knew they would feed the Violet Ear hatchlings. I just needed to change their diet - they no longer received any dry seed! They now got soaked seed that I sprinkled a little ProBoost Super Max over. On the sixth day of incubation, I candled them and there were four eggs that were fertile.

In the meantime, the female Violet Ear kept laying after only missing one day (sure am glad they make Calcium supplements!). This time she laid three eggs and stopped but still managed to break yet another egg before I got to remove it. I did the same thing and removed these eggs too on a daily basis and placed the two that were left under another pair of virgin Societies that I had set-up with Fire Finch eggs the day before. Again the VE female missed only one day between laying and she began

another clutch. This time I left the eggs in her nest and decided to give them another try at raising their own young.

Everything went along just fine and on the day I thought the first fostered clutch would hatch, lo and behold, all four eggs hatched! Four days later, the other fostered clutch hatched but this pair of Societies had already hatched the Fires about three days before and had smashed them down into the nesting material. Oh NO! I couldn't let this happen to the Violet Ear babies. I went ahead and placed these two Violet Ear hatchlings in with the first pair of Societies so they now had a total of six Violet Ear young to care for. It didn't seem to bother them at all that they had two more mouths to feed. By the fourth day after hatching the oldest nestlings had tripled in size and I was beginning to be able to hear faint begging noises from them. On the seventh day, all six nestlings had stuffed crops when I checked them. Was I finally going to have success even if it was with fostering?

The diet that I was providing to the Violet Ears consisted of a high quality finch mix called EM (Elaine Miller) Special Finch that I get from Herman Brothers Seed in Detroit, Michigan. This blend has a combination of 12 different seeds and millets. The birds also received soaked and sprouted seeds, fresh greens (usually Romaine lettuce), millets growing in containers, dry 30% protein gamebird starter crumbles, hard boiled egg, crushed eggshells, charcoal, cuttlebone, fresh water with Daily Essentials 1 Vitamins, Calciboost and Saniclens, a flightless fruit fly culture and between 25-30 small mealworms per day. I also use the gamebird starter as my softfood for all my waxbills. I mix three tablespoons of the gamebird starter with two tablespoons soaked seed and one half teaspoon crushed eggshells. I add only enough water to make it crumbly - which is usually about one teaspoon or less. This combination is thoroughly

mixed until crumbly and so it is not wet at all. It dries out quickly so that bacteria do not have a chance to multiply in this rich mixture. I make it fresh every morning. The Societies received the same diet as the VE's except without the dry seed, the fruit flies or the mealworms.

On the ninth day after hatching, the smallest and youngest nestling was found dead when I came home from work. It had food in its crop so it wasn't from not being fed. I thought it could have been something bacterial so I started mixing a small amount of probiotics into their water every day. Otherwise, I give the probiotics on a weekly basis to all my birds. I have never treated any of my birds with antibiotics. Over time, exposure to small amounts of everyday bacteria helps the birds to build up a natural immunity to these bacteria, resulting in healthy birds. As long as the cages and feeding/watering utensils are kept clean, the birds should be able to handle exposure to an assortment of everyday bacteria and be healthier for it.

All five of the remaining nestlings were growing fast. I banded all of the VE young at the age of 10 days with size 'C' NFSS closed bands and this is the size band that I would recommend for them. I have never found anything written about the size of bands that are recommended for Violet Ears, but that size works out just great for me. On the 16th day after hatching, one of the older nestlings fledged and slept on the perch next to the nest box for it's first night alone. On day 17, two more of the older nestlings also fledged, but the smallest one stayed on the bottom of the cage. The 18th day saw the last of the older nestlings fledge and the only one left from the second clutch fledged 16 days after it hatched. The older one that stayed on the bottom of the cage died on the third day after fledging. It never got off the bottom of the cage and was never as active as the others. It never even tried to fly. This left me with four fledged Violet Ear juveniles! All four of these remaining fledglings

seemed to be extremely small compared to my Blue Caps at fledging. It could be due to their fledging a couple of days earlier than the Blue Caps. My Blue Caps usually fledge on the 18th or 19th day after hatching. The VE juveniles quickly made up for this size difference, however, and were now begging quite loudly of their surrogate parents. None of the fledglings ever returned to the nest after leaving it - even though the Societies tried to coax them to the nest at night. The fledglings were quite tolerant of me changing feed and water dishes and never flew about in a panic as the young Blue Caps and Fire Finches seem to always do when first fledged.

About two weeks after fledging, I noticed that the base of their beaks were beginning to turn a fleshy color. It wouldn't be too much longer and they would moult their head feathers so that I could sex them! Juvenile Violet Ears go through a partial moult at around five to eight weeks of age with only their head and neck feathers being replaced by adult colorations. They do not moult their remaining juvenile plumage until several weeks after this.

It was about this time that I began to feel sorry for my lonely unpaired Violet Ear male and began to search for a mate for him. I received some good advice from the NFSS e-mail list and found someone willing to "split" a pair with me from a dealer that had some available. Once I began to think about getting another female, I also started thinking about the future and if I was going to establish a strain of domestically raised Violet Ears. I needed more than two pair as my foundation. I decided to purchase the female plus another pair of Violet Ears. This wouldn't increase the cost of the airline shipping; however, they are quite expensive themselves as far as finches are concerned. I now had three adult pair of Violet Ears. Although three pair would not assure me of not having to do some line-breeding, I will still need to get some different unrelated birds to use

farther down the road in my breeding program.

A couple of days before I thought that the third clutch of eggs was going to hatch, I started giving the VE pair more mealworms and made a special effort to pick out the white newly moulted ones for them. The morning that the eggs were due to hatch, I found two hatchlings on the bottom of the cage. I tried giving them to a pair of Societies, but they died two days later. Guess I wasn't going to be successful in getting them to raise their own young. Most likely I wasn't giving them the kind of insects that they wanted to feed their young. I just don't know where to find termites and would really have to think long and hard about giving them to my birds. I wouldn't want my house to fall down around me just to breed some birds!

About two weeks later, the VE pair began another clutch and again, I removed the eggs on a daily basis. She laid a total of five eggs this time and I placed them under the same pair of Societies that had already hatched two VE eggs but hadn't raised any yet. I didn't have any other birds to use to foster. So, I took a chance with this pair of Societies. All five eggs were fertile when I candled them on the sixth day of incubation. My fingers were crossed hoping that this pair would feed the young when they hatched. After 14 days of incubation, four of the eggs hatched. I watched them carefully for the first two days to make sure that they didn't get smashed and that the Societies were feeding them. I also left the unhatched egg, hoping that this would help keep the Societies from smashing the small hatchlings down into the nesting material like they had done with the baby Fire Finches. Every time I checked on them they had food in their crops and would open their mouths and move their heads side to side in typical waxbill fashion. By the fourth day, the nestlings had tripled in size just like the first fostered clutch had grown so quickly. This pair of Societies

had turned out to be great fosters for the VE's just like the first pair. The young birds were closed banded on day ten. They grew steadily and on day 18 after hatching, all four birds fledged early in the morning. All of them were very active and begged for food ferociously. They all slept side by side on a perch next to the nest box with their heads tucked under their wings for their first night outside the nest.

By this time, I was able to sex the first four fledglings for sure and had one male and three females. The young males begin to get some dark rust colored feathers around their napes and a few black feathers on their chins at between five and eight weeks of age. You can also begin to see the violet colored patches on both males' and females' cheeks at about this same time. Shortly after this, the males begin to get their dark chestnut colored feathers on their breasts. This continues to expand and looks like a "V" on their breasts for several weeks. All of them were beginning to practice singing including the females.

I had been told by another breeder of VE's that the young birds can get pretty hostile with their siblings once they had been weaned and the juvenile pair bonds begin to form. They can even kill each other! I removed the juvenile VE's from their foster parents as soon as I was sure that they were weaned and placed them as "pairs" into separate cages - placing the male in the same cage with one of the females and the other two females together. I never noticed any aggression among them at all. The young were seven weeks old when I removed them from their foster parents.

All four of these young VE's eat everything that I offered to their foster parents. They really go for the hard-boiled egg and gamebird starter. They also seem to be particularly fond of the sprouts that I give them. They come to the front of the cage while I am perform-

ing my chores as if they are interested in what I am doing.

The last four young birds were continuing to move right along and at about seven weeks old, I could tell that there were three males and one female - exactly the opposite numbers of sexes than from the oldest four juveniles. I removed them from their fosters at this point. I ended up having a total of four males and four females that my Societies raised for me from my one pair of breeding Violet Ears.

One thing that I have noticed about two of the females, is that they have adopted part of the Society vocabulary and sometimes call just like the Societies, but they sing like the Violet Ears also. As far as I can tell, they only do this while I am in the room with them. I hope that this learned, unnatural vocabulary does not become entrenched into any subsequent birds that I might raise. I have not noticed any of the fostered males making these calls, so maybe it is only a "female" thing.

When the young VE's are about three months old, the females look much like an adult female but the males still have light buff colored feathers on their lower belly and undertail coverts and are still a little "spotted" on their lower breasts. At this age, their beak colors are the same as the adults. By the age of six months, the males have usually attained full adult coloration.

I have been in contact with another Violet Ear breeder who has had similar results in raising them by using Societies. I am aware of at least four other breeders of Violet Ears here in the U.S. I am hoping that we can trade some of our young, domestically-raised birds later so we will have unrelated pairs to set up for breeding once they attain breeding age. Keeping their genetic background varied is very important in developing a breeding strain of Violet Ears.

My hope is to be able to get these beautiful waxbill finches to raise their

own young successfully and consistently in captivity and help to produce a genetically stable domestic population. I am attempting and hoping to get my other two adult pair interested in breeding. I have been giving them lots of small mealworms which they take almost immediately. I have run out of the grass heads I saved last Fall, so I can't wait until Spring arrives and can pick some more fresh green ones for them. The male in my second pair has been singing quite frequently lately - even with me in the bird room doing my "chores". I will foster any eggs that either of these two pair may lay to the same Society fosters that were successful with raising the first pair's young. If there are no results with the other two adult pair by the time the fostered VE's reach breeding age, I will most likely break up the pairs and try pairing them with these juveniles. I will not let either of the two pair of Societies raise any of their own young, just to make certain that they don't become confused and will continue to raise the VE young. Once (if) I get some fostered birds from these other two Violet Ear pairs, then I will attempt to let them raise a clutch of their own.

My future plans include building an outside structure that will house at least 30 singly caged pairs of breeding waxbills with flights for around 120 juveniles and cages for six pairs of foster Societies. Currently I am breeding four species of waxbills with no plans of adding any species. All cages/flights will have access to outside flights and it will be an all-season facility. All of the waxbill breeding cages will be of the box type and will be four feet long by two feet deep and two feet high - with the same amount of space in the attached outside flights. All the nest boxes will be mounted outside the cages, but inside the shelter, to aid in checking their progress and in banding. I am hoping that this facility will help to dramatically improve my breeding results with the Violet Ears and also some of my other species. It will give me the opportunity to offer them a more var-

ied live insect diet which I think will improve the odds of the Violet Ears successfully breeding. I am also planning on incorporating an automatic watering system in the new building using the small bird system manufactured by Ag-Select. Once I get it completed, I will post some pictures on the NFSS web-site for all to see.

On another note, in addition to close banding my young finches with the NFSS closed bands, I band them with split colored numbered aluminum bands to identify families easily at a glance so I don't make a mistake and pair up birds that are related. The plastic colored bands just didn't work out at all for me and they would fall off very easily from all my birds. I use a different color aluminum band for each family. In the past, I was using bands that were made for canaries and these were really too large, but were the smallest ones I could find. I usually placed both bands on the same leg with the split band above the NFSS band. This has caused some problems in that the split bands go down over the closed ones just enough to allow them to rub together and eventually scrape off the color and some of the identifying information on the closed band. They were even falling off some of my Fire Finches and Black Crowned Waxbills! I have since found that Red Bird Products now manufactures a split aluminum band that is labeled for "American Zebras and Siskins". It is approximately the size of the NFSS size "C" band and works out much better than the former canary band. I have thrown away all the larger ones and will use these exclusively from now on to identify the different families within each species. They come in eight different colors. You must order a minimum of 25 bands of the same color and can have two initials, your choice of consecutive numbers - and even the year stamped on the bands if you want for no additional charge. They require the correct size of application pliers to apply but are very easy to put on the birds. I would recommend them for anyone wanting to

specially identify their birds in some way.

I am very excited about the Finch and Softbill Save Program. The program offers finch and softbill breeders new hope of being successful with their chosen species by having contact with other breeders and to exchange ideas with each of them - learning and sharing together. Aviculturalists participating in "Finch and Softbill Save" will have the opportunity to contribute to the domestic populations and also to trade birds so that we can establish lasting domestic sources for Violet Ears and many other species of finches and softbills. I strongly encourage everyone who is working with some of the rarer or harder to obtain species to join FSS. With enough dedi-

cated aviculturalists working with these beautiful birds we are sure to be successful at our endeavors.

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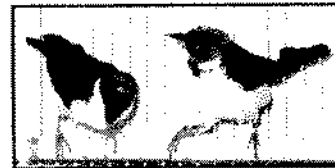
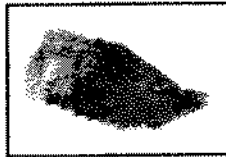
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A Better Mouse Trap?



Many many moons ago, an old bird breeder (who has passed away now), told me I would never get any mice problems if I kept a Guinea Pig or two on the floor of my aviaries. I thought he was mad. A few years ago, I did get a mouse problem, tried all sorts of traps, poisons, etc, but the mice were too clever. Then I remembered old Bert's advice and got myself some Guinea Pigs. Lo and behold, the mice moved out immediately and I haven't seen them since. ...Something to do with odours or scents I think. ...Just thought I would share this amusing photo with you.

Photo & Comment Courtesy © Dr. K.d. Bergen, PhD, Edinburg, Scotland

Editor's Note: I have heard this before from various sources and decided to do some checking to see if there is, in fact, any validity to this idea. Mr. Tracy Iverson, President, American Cavy Breeders Association, told me that while he "...would like to think that cavies hold another duty in life as guards against rodents...", he had never heard of them being put to such use. He said he maintains a large shed of cavies and has had mouse problems there in the past - even when cavies were loose on the floor. Mr. Iverson saw no harm in trying, but did caution that there may be cross-species diseases to consider.

Larry Baum, D.V.M., concurs that cross-species diseases need to be considered.

Dr. Baum said, "Guinea pigs are susceptible to infection with many bacteria which may also infect finches. Klebsiella would be one example. Likewise, finches are susceptible to infection with many bacteria which may also infect guinea pigs. Maintaining clean water dishes and a dry



Photo Courtesy © Dr. K.d. Bergen, PhD

aviary floor seem especially desirable in this situation. Continual exposure of one's finches to a healthy guinea pig certainly seems preferable to continual exposure of one's finches to mice of questionable health. Whether a guinea pig will, or will not, keep mice out of one's aviary is something I cannot answer since



Photo Courtesy © Dr. K.d. Bergen, PhD

I have not previously heard of using guinea pigs for this purpose."

So - armed with the knowledge that it may not work as intended (although it does seem to work for some) - here's an idea to try for those of you who may have rodent problems from time to time.

If it works for you - Wonderful! If it doesn't - no harm done - I'm sure there are many among us who would enjoy a Guinea Pig or two to add to our pet collections!



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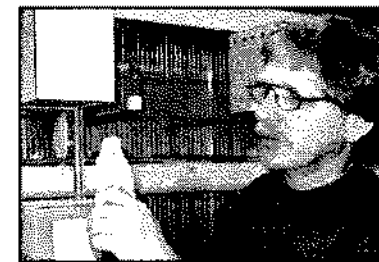
Torben & Jurgen Hoeveler, Germany, many finch and softbill wins



Michel Veya, Switzerland, three gold and two bronze medals at 2004 World Show (colour canaries)



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Leading the way - naturally

Finches vs. Softbills

In a recent interview with BirdTalk magazine, NFSS President, Sally Huntington, offered the following observations on the differences between young finches and softbills.

Softbill cycles are faster than finches'. The softbill cycle - from first egg laid to juvenile bird independent of parents - is approximately 35 days; while the cycle for finches is approximately 49 days.

In general, softbills have fewer eggs, although similar incubation time, (14 days), but fledge (leave the nest) very quickly; while finches have more eggs, and take longer to fledge. For example, if you were to compare two well-known species - the Pekin Robin (a softbill) to the Zebra finch - the Pekin Robin lays 3-4 slightly blue, mottled eggs. The incubation time is 14 days and the babies fledge, partially feathered, in an additional 14 days. They will continue to be fed by parents still another week, for a total of 35

days start to finish. On the other hand, the Zebra finch will have 3-7 white eggs; incubation takes the same 14 days and the baby finches do not fledge until fully feathered at 21 days. The finch parents will continue to feed for an additional two more weeks, for a total of 49 days start to finish.

Generally, in regard to parenting, they are similarly good parents (there are always exceptions). Both sexes of softbills and finches usually incubate and feed chicks, and teach their chicks where to find the food cups and water. The diets vary greatly, though. Zebra finches can rear chicks on seed only. Softbills, however, cannot rear their chicks on seeds - usually needing special diets of live food and/or fruit.

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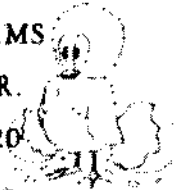
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Frizzles in the U.S.A.

By John Gikas

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While stopping in at a local pet store one early Summer day in June almost two years ago, I took a look in the bird section - not expecting to find anything out of the ordinary - just your basic Zebras, Society finches, Budgies, and maybe a Canary or two. Upon looking into the Zebra cage, I noticed this most unusual Zebra hen. She had feathers sticking straight

up off her back, her sides, chest and all over. She was the most unusual sight I had ever laid eyes upon - unlike any Zebra finch I'd ever seen before! When I asked the owner about her and commented on her unique look, he told me she was just in a bad molt. He claimed she was dropped off by a breeder along with the rest of the Zebras in the cage. All the other Zebra finches were normal-feathered, so I assumed the breeder must've thought this hen was a defect that needed to be unloaded. I've seen many types of birds go in and out of molts for all the years that I have raised birds and I honestly have never witnessed such a Zebra finch. So, I purchased this bizarre little bird, knowing I



Frizzle Zebra Hen

This bird is the foundation hen, discovered in a pet store, that began the development of the Frizzle in the U.S.A.

Photo Courtesy ©Christine Kumar

had in my possession something special.

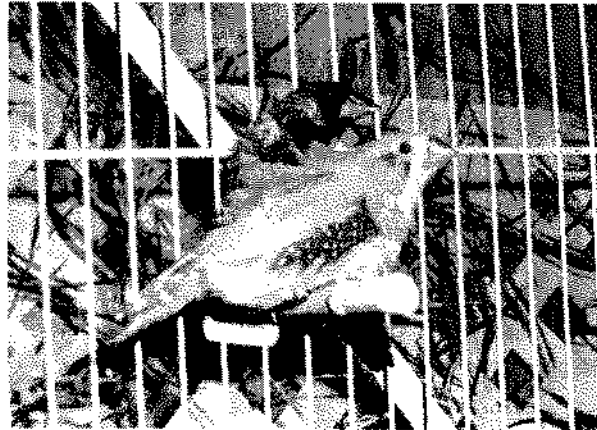
After taking my new charge home, I decided to search the web extensively - typing in every word I could possible think of in the search field describing the odd hen. I came up with nothing. I then asked various bird enthusiasts about her to no avail. Most people had never heard of, nor seen, such a mutation within the Zebra finch. I finally came across a few who had heard of such a bird and I was told this bird was nothing but an oddity - a freak of nature that was a very rare phenomenon - and in each rare case, the bird had never bred true. Being a little discouraged by the information I was given, I decided I was going to prove to myself and others that these attributes

the bird possessed were inheritable and not an oddity. If I failed, at least I would know for myself and I would still have a unique looking bird in my collection.

After gathering some information about this mutation, which was not much, I found out the mutation had a name - "Frizzle". There are some doubts of it's existence by a small few. I set off to find out as much as I could about the genetic make-up. I knew crested Zebras where a dominant trait so I assumed Frizzles would be as well. I paired her to a show type black cheek Zebra cock that was given to me by a friend, as I had long been out of Zebra finches since I first started the hobby. The first clutch was a disaster. All four chicks were starved to death - so, I decided to foster the next clutch to some very helpful Society finches, who successfully raised three chicks - no Frizzles among any of them. I then let the parents raise the next clutch and noticed they tended to all the chicks but the pink chick with the red eye sockets. I later came to realize this was a Continental chestnut-flanked white, since the black cheek cock was split for it and Continental chestnut-flanked white (CFW) is sex-linked. All of those chicks turned out to be normal-feathered as well. Between the pair raising their own and fostering the chicks out, I had many normal greys and one Continental CFW chick from the pair (all normal feathered). I was a little discouraged and started to doubt the mutation and what I was doing, so I started giving in to what I had been told about the mutation - that it was just an oddity - a freak of nature that has never bred true. Luckily, I stuck to my gut feeling and continued on.

Once the progeny were fully mature, I started phase two of the project in hopes that the Frizzle mutation was recessive. since I had produced what appeared at the time to be all homozygous, normal-feathered birds. I started pairing the siblings together to see if, in fact, they weren't heterozygous - carrying the Frizzle gene. At this point, I wasn't as hopeful, since this would be the last phase (or so I thought) of my project. I did get a clutch of three and aside from some loose feathers, they looked normal. So, I put the project to rest in my mind and eventually transferred the juveniles into a large cage with other juveniles until their adult molt. I got a few more from that pair and started pairing the other F1 progeny of the original frizzle hen to unrelated birds since I no longer thought the mutation was true.

One day, as I looked into the juvenile cage, I noticed some of the young F2 Zebras, from the F1 sibling pairing progeny of the original Frizzle hen, had just finished their adult molt and all their feathers where sticking up off their bodies all over like crazy. I thought to myself,



Frizzle Male

This is a photo of one of John's F2 Frizzle Males. Note the Chiyoda Society sitting behind it - John says he can't get enough of those frills!

Photo Courtesy: John Gikas

"Could it be?" With careful observation, it was confirmed they were young Frizzles. Ha! I had finally done it! As the blood rushed back down from my head, I realized I had successfully bred Frizzles in the U.S.A.!

I have established that the Frizzle mutation is recessive - unlike the crested, which is a dominant trait - although there are more genes involved as well that I am not fully aware of as of yet. The F1 split birds paired with normal birds not

inheriting the frizzle gene have produced progeny that resemble the frizzle appearance at first - only to lose the frill as they mature. I have ruled it out as a sex-linked gene as both sexes have shown these attributes. I need to pair these birds together to see if the mutation will, in fact, manifest itself fully amongst their offspring.

Now that the F2 Frizzle progeny are of breeding age, I am in the process of pairing them to unrelated birds so I can

out-cross for unrelated stock that I can eventually work with to establish more bloodlines. I am also working on combining the Crested with the Frizzle mutation - should make for an interesting bird.

Stay tuned!



**F2 Gray Frizzle
Zebra Hen**

Photos Courtesy of John Gikas

NFSS Member, John Gikas, is a breeder of 10 years and has worked with many of the Grassfinch, Estrildidae, Lonchura, Softbill, and Dove species. John is founder and owner of ParrotFinchFancy and Finch_Softbills_Metropolitan on Yahoo Groups. His goal and dream as an avid aviculturist is to preserve the rare and harder to breed species through conservation and education in hope of continuing to keep these precious species within the private sector of aviculture for years to come. If you wish to correspond with him on the Frizzle Zebra finch or any other topic having to do with aviculture he may be reached at johngika@prodigy.net.

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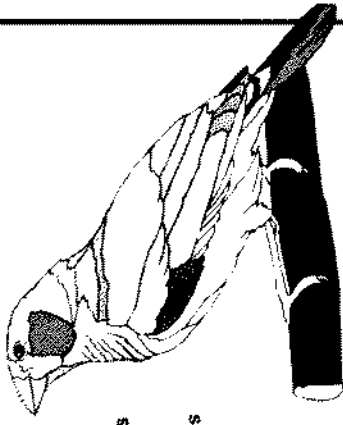
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Exotic Finches in a Sun Porch Aviary

by Nancy D. Ingram

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Exotic Finches are like little jewels - beautiful, colorful, and expensive. They are expensive because their importation has been restricted and they are difficult to successfully breed in captivity. In their natural environment, they have adapted to certain conditions over thousands and thousands of years. Perhaps we need to more closely duplicate these conditions.

I wanted to create an environment in which they could raise their own young, fly, and forage for protein. I consulted weather statistics for my location and became aware that my birds would not do well in an outdoor aviary even in the Summer. Several years ago, we attached a sun porch to our house and I decided to incorporate this into my hobby Finch breeding program.



*A view of six self-contained cages
on the Sun Porch*

Photo Courtesy © Nancy D. Ingram

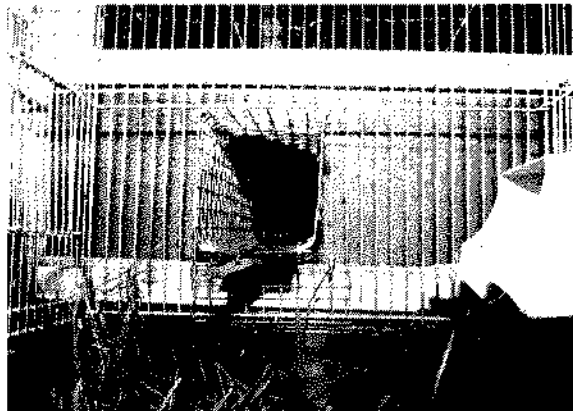
My sun porch is 21' x 15'. The only available place to put it was on the west side of our house. This is not an ideal exposure for a sun porch, but different heating and cooling problems exist for every location. I try to keep my sun porch between 60° F and 90° F. This brand of sun porch (Vegetable Factory, Inc.) has a rather complicated series of modifications to control the temperature (roof screens, ceiling blankets, plastic wall panels,

etc.). My husband welded some roof frames to which he attached a greenhouse vent opening system. These frames open automatically when the inside porch temperature reaches a certain point.

We have one door from the house into this space and a door on either end

of the porch. The first thing I did was hang netting in each vertical window section so my birds would see the clear plastic windows and not fly into them. I weighted the bottom edge of the netting with lengths of hose.

I have six cages inside the house connected by passageways to six cages outside on the sun porch. These passageways are made of 1/4" x 1/2" welded wire bent to measure 2 1/2' x 3 1/2' x 16" long. I've attached 16" lengths of used sandpaper 2" wide from a belt sander on the "floor" of each passageway. The ends of the sandpaper are held down with a clothes pin. If it were to



*Passageway from inside cage to cage on the Sun Porch
Photo Courtesy ©Nancy D. Ingram*

get too hot or too cold on the sun porch, the birds can get inside.

My collection of plants on the sun porch seems to be as challenging to keep healthy as breeding Finches. I chose plants that are happy at the temperatures I can maintain. (It's too extreme for African Violets in the Summer, but warm enough for Citrus in the Winter.) Most of the plants are in pots on casters so I can move them. Initially, I tried growing vegetables whose raw leaves are high in calcium and magnesium. I didn't pay quite as much attention to plant toxicity with my house plants because Finches, unlike Parrots, don't

seem to chew on most plants. About the only thing they regularly chew on are Carrot tops and Dandelion greens, which I try to have available in gallon pots year round. I placed trees (bushes and vines on trellises) around the perimeter so the birds would have something to land on and possibly nest in.

The plants are susceptible to all sorts of rampant infestations in an enclosed environment. I was determined not to use any pesticides. One year, I got tiny white flies on some plants. The birds would land on a branch and a dust-like cloud would disperse. The birds loved this infestation and I now grow some plants just to maintain a constant background level of these insects year round. There are fruit flies and aphids on the sun porch and I raise mealworms, tubifex worms, and waxworms.

I have two compost piles in the sun porch in plastic wading pools hidden behind some plants. This provides more than enough protein for my Finches. I thought at one point that they might actually be eating too much protein and flushing the calcium from their systems. I throw plant debris, spent bird seed, sand, fresh dirt, etc. in the composts. I have to be careful what and how much I add to these compost piles because the odor can permeate the house. The compost piles support an incredible number of tiny sprouts and small insects. I take a hoe and stir each surface weekly. I have seen the birds in this, but usually they hop around on the cement floor and eat insects from plant leaves and in the dirt around individual potted plants. They always have plenty to eat and can be selective about what they choose.

The average low temperature where

I live is 55° at night in the Summer and these birds do best above 60°. This brand of sun porch comes with a system of insulation, vents, and screens to which I have added or modified. In the Winter, I install the "winter blankets" in the ceiling. Since our sun porch gets so little direct sunlight in the Winter, I added a layer of bubble-wrap to some of these "winter blankets" to help hold in the heat. I glued closed cell foam over any single thicknesses of metal in the porch framework and stuffed strips of it in grooves around the windows. In the winter, we have to heat the sun porch. I set an electric wall heater on 70° F during the coldest months and try not to let the temperature dip below 60° F. I monitor the temperature with a greenhouse thermometer that records the high and low temperature. These are available in large horticultural supply stores and vary from simple mercury readings to digital displays.

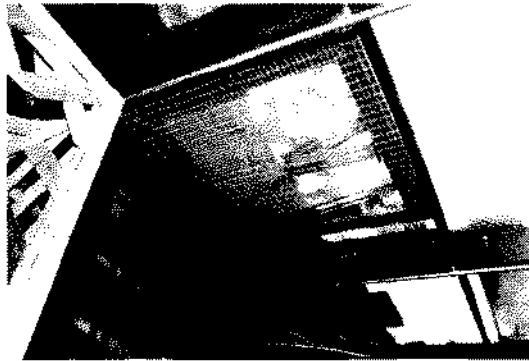
Spring is the most difficult time to regulate the temperature in the sun porch because the outside temperatures can reach 80° F, but go down below freezing at night where I live. This is the time of year the birds want to start nesting. All climate control modifications for this brand of sun porch are manual. My husband welded large aluminum vent frames to replace three of the small, manually-operated ones in the eaves. I glued a 3/8" thick sheet of Lexan into each frame. He attached a greenhouse vent opening mechanism designed for orchids and screwed a box-like screen over the opening. I also mounted six spring-sensitive vents in the lower door panels and in one lower wall panel to draw in air on a warm day. I completely seal these in the Winter. This brand of sun porch is designed to be a screened porch in the Summer. I open all manual roof vents and remove most of the plastic wall panels, leaving the screens. The winter blan-

kets are removed and shades slide into place over the roof. In the Summer, if it is 100° F outside, it is the same temperature on the screened porch.

I put a fountain near the middle of the space and surrounded it with plants. The pump is on a timer which goes on for an hour several times a day. The fountain cascades over a natural looking form that I filled with rocks so my birds can bathe in it, but not drown. I clean the filter monthly and remove any slugs I find underneath the fiberglass form. The fountain gets an infusion of fresh water daily from a drip system on a timed program. I have a wall-mounted fan on a covered heavy-duty timer that goes off several times a day. Covered, three-prong, heavy-duty timers seem to work in humid locations.

I am constantly refining a calendar to take advantage of optimal times for breeding and maintaining my birds. It doesn't make sense in my situation to rush the "natural" season that the birds nest in. They seem to respond to the length of the day and the temperature. It's too expensive to heat the sun porch in the winter much above 60° F. In January, I start a lot of millet and transplant dandelions into gallon containers.

I've observed that if the birds are confined to tandem cages, they always "escape" through the connecting pas-



Large aluminum vent frame with greenhouse opening mechanism

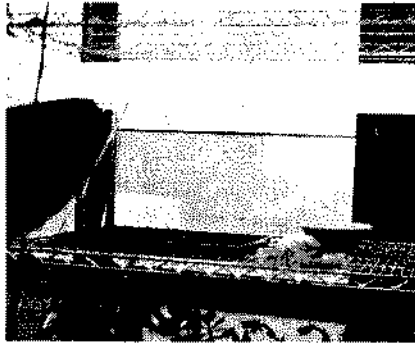
Photo Courtesy © Nancy D. Ingram

sage to the other cage to get away from people. They don't seem to panic when they are flying in the sun porch and I am out there. In early April, I select four to six pairs of different compatible Finches to breed. I confine one pair of Finches to a tandem cage (one inside cage connected by a passageway to a cage on the sun porch). Each cage is self-contained with water, seeds, cuttlebone, mineral/eggshell mixture, etc. I remove extra pairs of birds and single individuals to another bird room. I hang white privacy curtains over the cages inside.

Over the years, I've tried to incorporate or try ideas I've heard about. This Spring, I added a little wheat germ oil and cod liver oil to the seeds. Just before the breeding season, I block the male in the indoor cage and the female in the outside cage with access to the sun porch flight. This short separation cuts down on feather plucking, harassment by the male, and allows the female to fly around the aviary. I scatter crushed egg shell on the cement floor.

I try to make many conditions redundant. For example, to satisfy their need to feel safe, not only do I

install "privacy curtains" over the inside cages, but I cover several nests with "artificial thorns" (hair or scrub brushes) to duplicate a common Finch nesting site in the wild. Currently, I am experimenting with a shelf from which I introduce specialty foods, fresh dirt, nesting materials, minerals, etc. I've hung full-spectrum

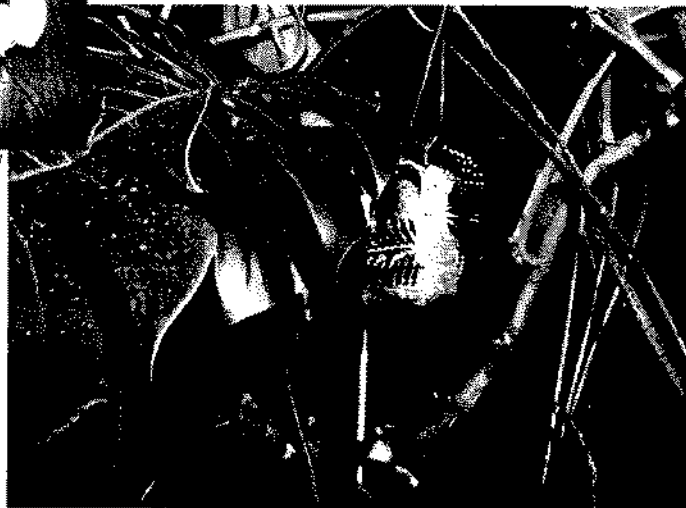


Specialty Food Shelf
 Photo Courtesy ©Nancy D. Ingram

lights over this shelf to compensate for a percentage of sunlight that can't get through the plastic roof. I've connected my drip system to rinse sprouted seeds in a couple of plastic boxes below this shelf. The options on my sun porch give the birds a wide variety of food sources.



"Thorn" covered nests and tools used to create them.
 Photo Courtesy ©Nancy D. Ingram



Nest Placement
 Photo Courtesy ©Nancy D. Ingram

The Florida Fancy Zebra Finch Mutation

By Robert Fairchild

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A Brief History

There are several theories as to the origins of where the first Florida Fancies came from, but the best known source of information says that the mutation was in the mid 1970's in the State of Florida. The original person to give the mutation the designation of Florida Fancy was Hazel Kipp. At the time, Hazel was located in Tarpon Springs, Florida.

According to Mr. Garrie Landry, the markings of these individual birds were the same as those of a friend's birds he had obtained in Lafayette, Louisiana in 1973. There have also been numerous reports of similarly coloured individuals over the years being produced in lines that are supposed to have been Florida Fancy free. It is apparent that this mutation has been produced in more than one location over the years.

The Art of Breeding

The way in which one goes about in the breeding of a Florida Fancy (FF) will determine the degree of colour in the offspring that are produced. It is important to understand that this mutation is inherited co-dominantly and, as such, comes in two distinct "classes". The two classes that are available are the Single Factor (SF) and Double Factored (DF). The class of offspring that are produced is dependent on how the breeding pair is set up. Also, one will want to keep in mind the SF FF that one uses to breed with as they will ultimately determine the colour quality in the DF FF offspring that are produced.

One aspect of breeding the FF that is often overlooked is the background colour that individual bird(s) are bred from. The background colour refers to the individuals in a breeding line being either Grey series or Fawn series. When you breed the FF through a line of Grey individuals, the SF version tends to slide more to the darker side of the scale and produce a more "dirty" looking FF and individuals that look almost like Normals. When one pairs the FF into a Fawn, the resulting offspring come out with a cleaner and crisper look to them. The Fawn series SF FF can look nearly identical to the DF FF - sometimes as much as ninety percent. The females of the Fawn SF FF line that I have produced look identical to a Fawn DF FF hen. The only way in telling sometimes if your birds are SF or DF is by their parents - or by performing test-breeding pairs and checking the results to a T-Square. The main difference in the SF vs. the DF male is that in the SF they will retain some of the breast bars and have a thinner line of Orange in the wings. The DF male will not have a breast bar and also has a heavier look to the Orange lines on the wings.

The Florida Fancy can be bred with many of the other mutations:

<u>Ok To Breed With</u>	<u>Not Ok To Breed With</u>
Black Breast	Black Cheek
Orange breast	Pied
Fawn	Chestnut Flanked
Penguin	White

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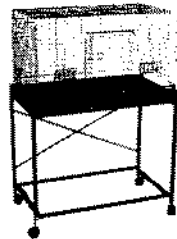
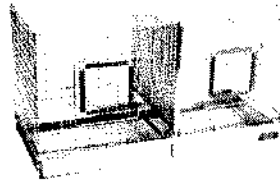


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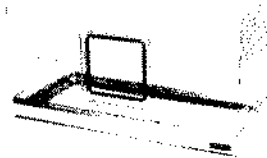
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The Blackheaded Greenfinch

Carduelis ambigua

By Tim Roche

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The Blackheaded Greenfinch is a bird common to the forests and open scrubland of China and the northern regions of Vietnam. It was my association with the European Greenfinch which initially led to my interest in the Blackhead, which is a close relative. As luck would have it, birds were imported in the mid to late 90's which allowed me to obtain two pairs. I have always tried to procure two pairs of wild caught finches when sourcing a new species, as more often than not, one of the partners either fails to breed or does not make it through acquisition and acclimatization. As my main interests were Carduelian finches whose ranges extended into the colder climates, and where my accommodation and maintenance were tailored towards their need, I was a little apprehensive about introducing a bird from a more heat and moisture laden environment. When I first received the pairs, I was immediately struck as to how small they were in relation to the size of their exhibition European cousins, their slender bodies barely touching 5 inches in length. The pairs were dimorphic, making the choosing of partners an easy task. The males wore a jet black head covering reminiscent of a masked intruder, with an olive green body enlivened with a little yellow towards the belly. The wing and tail feathers were predominantly black with yellow bars and flesh coloured legs and beak. Hens had the same body patterns but had a mottled brown head covering and were duller in the body, almost heading

towards a brown rather than the olive of the cocks.

Unfortunately, one of the hens perished not long after, leaving my hopes pinned on one pair who seemed completely disinterested in each other. I decided to treat the birds as I did my European pairs. The birds were maintained through the months preceding breeding on a hard seed diet that consisted of a canary seed mix to which I added a little extra Safflower and small striped Sunflower at a rate of 10% of the volume of the canary mix. Greenfood was fed once a week at this time in the form of Romaine lettuce. At the start of February, I introduced an eggfood/soaked seed mix that was greeted with scepticism initially. The sprinkling of a few safflower seeds on top was the trigger that induced sampling, and the birds soon got a taste for the eggfood. A soaked pigeon conditioning mix, to which I added extra Safflower seed, was eagerly devoured, with even the bigger peas being eaten. Mealworms were offered but never seemed to be a big favourite, and even now are ignored more often than not. I offered the birds an insectivorous mix which was accepted by the pair, as were Broccoli florets. After three weeks of this diet, I noticed the cock begin to turn his attention towards the hen, dropping his wings with crown feathers erect, and walking the perches whilst delivering a nasally wheeze followed by a canary-like twittering. They were, at the

time, housed in a double breeding cage measuring 32in x 14in x 12in, so I introduced a wicker canary style nest to which I had stapled small conifer twigs as cover. The available light at the time was 13 hours.

The hen constructed a nest of fine twigs and grass and lined it with animal hair. The cock seemed to be extremely interested in the nest building, being continually seen with material in his beak, and perching on the nest's rim. The arrival of the first egg was laden with disappointment, after a partially eaten shell was spotted in the corner of the cage. Viewing the nest's interior revealed the hair lined bottom to be covered in dry egg yolk. The second egg met the same fate, leaving me with no option but to try and rescue the remainder of the clutch and try to foster them. As I arose early the next morning in an attempt to outwit the egg bandit, I unsettled the hen, who refused to go to the nest and instead laid the egg from the perch onto the cage floor. No other eggs followed in this clutch, so I decided to remove the pair from the cage and place them in a small flight in which I had prepared a nest site with conifer branches and the same wicker nest basket. A perfect nest was constructed in about 14 days, and a clutch of 5 white speckled eggs followed. The hen appeared to commence incubation after

the third egg, and to my delight, all proved fertile after mid-term inspection. The first of four chicks hatched on the morning of the 14th day, and were fed a combination of eggfood, Romaine lettuce and the soaked pigeon mix by both parents. Livefood in the form of mealworms was again ignored - the birds preferring the dried insectivorous mixture. The youngsters were banded at ten days with NFSS size E bands and fledged at 18 days, becoming fully independent at a month old. The adult pair continued on their breeding cycle, the hen laying 4 more fertile eggs which again all hatched. Unfortunately, upon returning from work on the second evening, I found all four young strewn over the flight floor and the cock on the nest rim with a beak full of nesting material. This bird's black mask did indeed conceal a bandit.

Since then, I have been consistent with their breeding, obtaining 17 birds from 2 pairs in '03 - one being a pied hen. I am fortunate enough to have aviculturists within the area who bought stock from the original quarantine releases and have thus been able to source outcrosses in order to maintain stock strength, fertility and vigour. I am now a fan of the Blackheaded Greenfinch and would encourage others to find the dedicated parent and endearing nature that lies beneath this masked marauder.



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Pet Finch Report Card

Editor's Note: In the Nov/Dec, 2003, issue of the Journal, a part of the Pet Finch Report Card included in Vince and Sally Huntington's article, "Meet the Companion Finch" was omitted. It is included here in its entirety with apologies to all.



Photo - Vince Huntington

Finger-Sitting
Shoulder-Sitting
Maintains Connection
Enjoys Dining
Sings to you
Talks to you
Voice Recognition
Sight Recognition
Will Raise Babies
Life Span (Years)
Compatible w/ other Species

	Finger-Sitting	Shoulder-Sitting	Maintains Connection	Enjoys Dining	Sings to you	Talks to you	Voice Recognition	Sight Recognition	Will Raise Babies	Life Span (Years)	Compatible w/ other Species
Red-Headed Finch	A	A	A	B	A	A*	A	A	A	7-12	D
Gouldian Finch	A	A	A	B	A	C*	A	A	D	5-8	C
Chestnut Breasted Mannikin	A	A	A	A	A	C*	A	A	A	6-8	A
Society Finch	A	A	A	A	A	B*	A	A	A	6-8	A
Tri-Color Munia	A	A	A	A	A	A*	A	A	?	7-10	B
English Zebra Finch	A	A	B	A	A	D*	A	A	A	6-14	C
Blue-Capped Cordon Bleu	C	B	C	C	A	F	A	A	C	7-10	C
Orange-cheeked Waxbill	C	A	B	C	B	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
Red-Faced Parrot Finch	F	F	F	F	F	F	D	D	A	5-8	C

Copyright © Sally Huntington

*Only the males.

**Most likely the males have this capacity (so far the author has only raised hens).

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.



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Keeping your show cages in Blue Ribbon Condition!

By Darla Dandre

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Show season is over and all the birds have been set up to breed. Now is the time to repair, repaint or replace those show cages!

Keeping your show equipment in good condition will insure a smooth preparation for the coming show season ahead! The first thing that needs to be done is to take out all the cups and perches and clean them. If you have parrots that tend to chew the perches while in the show cage, you will have to throw the overly chomped perches away and replace them with new ones.

The second thing that needs to be done is to remove any bedding or seed that has been left in the bottom of the box. If it has gotten wet, it will be like cement and will rot the bottom of the wood box out, so everything needs to come out and the whole inside of the box needs to be wiped down with a damp cloth and dried.

Once the box is dry, you can take a look at it to see if it needs to be repaired in any way. Some show cages will need a coat of paint on the outside because they have been scratched during transport. Some cages will need to be painted on the inside. You must use non-toxic paint on the inside of the box and you must allow it one month to thoroughly dry. The color of the inside of the box depends on which division you are showing in. Most parrot and finch boxes are painted a very light sky blue on the inside to maximize the light, but any color is allowed. Check your division regulations to make sure that they do not call for a specific color on the interior of the box.

Look for any broken or damaged hardware. Check the door hinges to make sure they have not been loosened. Add a padlock or key lock to your cage for added security. Very importantly, check the HANDLE and make sure it is fastened securely to the rest of the show cage. If it is loose, you will want to take it off and refasten it with some wood glue and some screws. Check the show cage bars and make sure that they fit securely in the cage. You will have to replace cage fronts that have broken bars.

Once your show cage is all fixed up, put all the cups and perches that you will need for show season inside. This way you will not take a chance of losing them. Put each show cage in a plastic garbage bag to protect it from dust and spiders and then store it in a cool dry area.

If you have to replace your show cages with new ones, or buy more show cages or show cage fronts, you can get new show cages from many different vendors in the USA. Go to the Bird Show Club Yahoo Group at:

www.groups.yahoo.com/birdshowclub/

for more details. Show cages and their parts are NOT SOLD IN PET STORES. Each cage that you see is handmade by dedicated bird fanciers all over the USA.

Keeping your show equipment in good condition will make getting ready for next years show season a snap and a smart turnout with a beautiful show cage makes a presentation that is guaranteed to catch a judge's eye! Remember, ANY bird can be a show bird! Plan on taking your bird to a show near you!

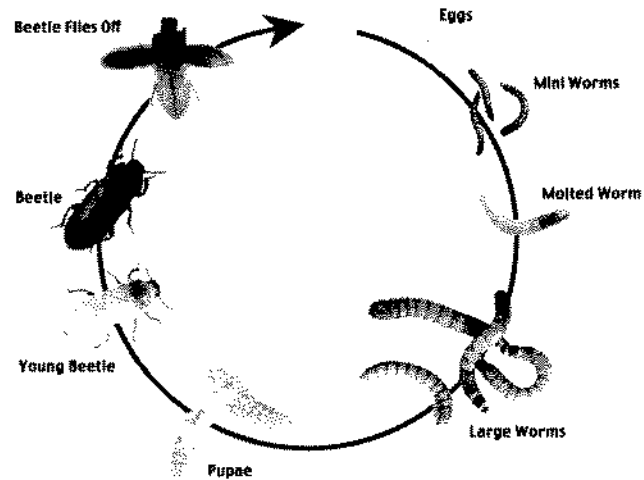
Raising Mealworms The Easy Way

By Roy Beckham

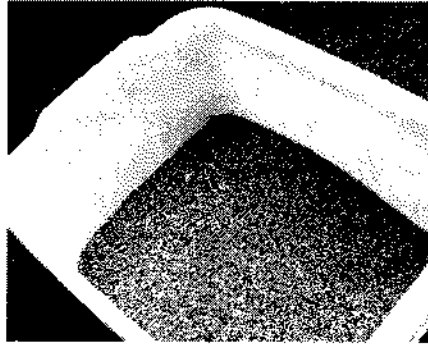
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Life Cycle of the Mealworm Beetle

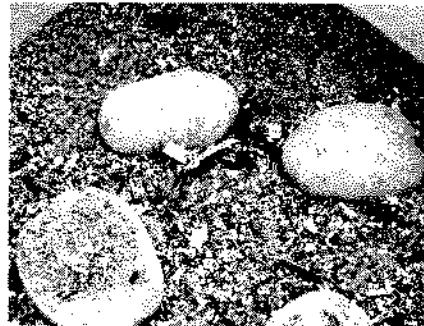


Start with a plastic or metal container - smooth, straight sides to keep the worms and beetles in. I use a large plastic dish pan - nothing special.



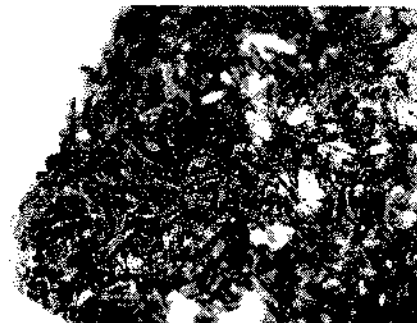
Fill the pan with a couple of inches of Chick Crumbles or some other high protein poultry meal. Don't fill it to the top. You'll need the room as time goes by.

If you're starting a new colony or just need to increase the size of an old one, add in your new worms now. Here some new mail-order worms are unpacked. They're shipped in crumpled paper.



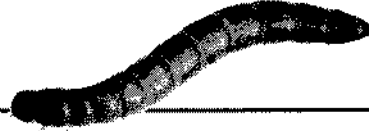
Place some moisture food on top such as potato, banana peels, carrot slices or apple. Put in the worms, beetles, pupae and any dried up vegetable remains from a previous colony on top as it may contain eggs.

As the mealworms grow and shed their exoskeleton, they will leave behind a paper-like hull. These can easily be blown away.





To maintain the colony, just add some more poultry crumbles on top as well as adding more moisture food every now and again. Eventually it will fill up with a sand-like substance (mealworm poop) and it's time to start a new colony. Here they have just about finished some of the potato added earlier.



Tips

When selecting a moisture food, pick a fruit or vegetable that does not have a lot of water. Something too soggy sitting on top will promote mold. I also do not like to use a sealing top as it will trap moisture and again, promote mold growth in the crumbles.

Adult beetles can fly. To keep them from leaving the culture, use a screen top.

While I have no evidence that the antibiotics are transferable from feed to the worms, why take the chance. Use a poultry feed that does not contain antibiotics commonly used in many chick starters.

The growth rate of the worms is dependent on the temperature. Warmer weather results in a faster growth rate. Cooler weather retards their growth.

Rotate several colonies at different stages of development and you'll have a steady supply of worms

You'll usually find plenty of worms under the moisture food on the top of the crumbles.

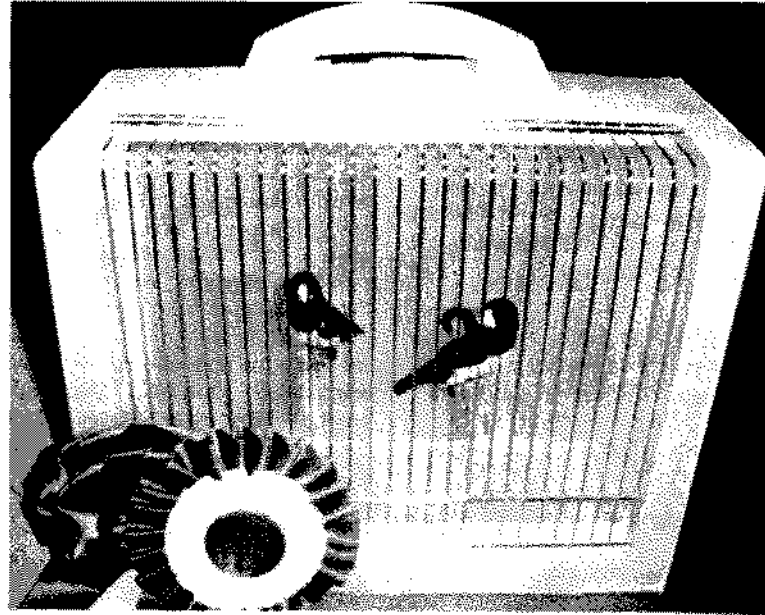
Birds often find the freshly molted worms (white color) easier to eat since they do not yet have a hard exterior.

Some birds also like the pupae and they have the advantage of not being able to crawl away.

Please visit Roy Beckham's website at www.cfinch.com. In addition to all the information presented here on raising mealworms, you will find lots of other interesting facts, a large number of truly incredible photos, and valuable avicultural information and ideas.

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What is an NFSS “Sanctioned” Bird Show?

by Darla Dandre

A sanctioned show simply means that the local club holding the show has paid their affiliation fee with NFSS and they have hired an NFSS Judge. By being an NFSS affiliated show, this ensures that the entries will be judged in the proper procedure – using the NFSS show classifications – and that points will be awarded to the top NFSS exhibitors and exhibits!

The NFSS Affiliation Fee is only \$25.00 per year. This fee includes a one-year subscription to the NFSS Journal, privilege for the local club to list any show and fair events in the NFSS Journal and one voting ballot.

NFSS Judges are schooled, tested, and serve an apprenticeship before obtaining the title of NFSS Judge. They all follow the same judging procedure and adhere to the NFSS Show Standards for Finches and Softbills. They are made aware of any changes by Martha Wigmore, NFSS 4th Vice President, Chairperson of the Judges Panel – Standards – Research. More information about NFSS judges can be found at:

<http://www.nfss.org/Depts/Jdgs-Exb/JPanel2k.html> .

The NFSS Show classifications are the listings of classes set forth by NFSS to divide the species into groups. There are ten groups or “sections” that make up the division. Inside the sections, are the individually numbered classes where the birds are entered. A listing of the NFSS show classifications can be found at:

<http://www.nfss.org/Depts/Jdgs-Exb/Class/98class.html>

All NFSS Sanctioned shows must

use the show classifications in order to uniformly compare exhibits all over the USA.

The NFSS Show standards are written descriptions of the perfect species of birds. NFSS has several specific species standards and a general standard that covers finches and softbills without a specific species written standard. Standards cover conditioning and conformation ratios and point out what to look for while judging. The show standards are located in the NFSS Judges handbook available for purchase through the NFSS Finchshop. For more information about NFSS Show standards go to:

<http://www.nfss.org/Depts/Jdgs-Exb/IntroStd.html> .

For the top exhibits at an NFSS Sanctioned Show, Points are awarded to the NFSS members and NFSS close rung banded birds. The accumulation of these show points leads to further awards such as Champion Exhibitor, Champion Bird and NFSS Exhibitor of Excellence. Points are awarded on a sliding scale as determined by the total number of entries in the division. The more entries, the more points will be awarded for each placement 1st thru 10th place. For a listing of past NFSS Champion Exhibitors, Champion Birds and NFSS Exhibitors of Excellence you can go to:

<http://www.nfss.org/Depts/Jdgs-Exb/Judge-MN.html>

and select from the title box. Accumulated points are tallied by Martha Wigmore, NFSS Judges Panel Chairperson.

Any local show can have a finch and softbill division, however, if the club is not

affiliated with NFSS and has not hired an NFSS judge, then proper records can not be kept. This kind of show is usually referred to as an "OPEN" show. Open shows are great for getting involved and introducing people to the wonderful hobby of showing birds. I would recommend that ALL local bird clubs hold an informal "OPEN" bird show with lots of member participation and explanation of what to do and what to look for. Have members fill out cage tags and find their classes in a show catalog and fill out show forms. This makes the first showing experience a lot less confusing and sparks interest in the hobby.

The NFSS is divided into eight "Regions". See the map on the NFSS web page at:

<http://www.nfss.org/Depts/AboutNFS/about.html>

and scroll down to find your region. Each year, one local club from each region will host the NFSS Regional Show. Although not much different than a regular local sanctioned show, this show is designed to be a special event. The NFSS Regional VP should hold a meeting just after the show ends to inform the members what the NFSS Board of Directors has been doing and to take any information that the members want addressed back to the Board for discussion. There may also be a special auction, raffle or other fund raising event for NFSS as well. These activities are up to the NFSS Regional VP to plan and carry out. You

can find the contact information for the NFSS Regional VP in your area at:

<http://www.nfss.org/Depts/BdofDIR/BofD-2003/BDofD-03.html>

Once a year, NFSS has its national competition in conjunction with The National Cage Bird Show. The NCBS is held in different locations each year and is generously hosted by local clubs. In most cases, the local club replaces their yearly show with the NCBS. This grand event tries to represent ALL Exotic National Specialty Show Clubs in one competition. Currently, everyone can compete at the National – even beginners! You do not have to qualify at a regional or local show first. The NFSS Division winner at this show is named the Best Finch or Softbilled Bird in the USA. All the Division winners at the NCBS are then are judged against each other in competition for "The Scannell Award" which represents the champion of champions and the Best bird in the USA as well as the Best in Show! To find out more information on The National Cage Bird Show check out www.ncbs.org.

Bird showing is a great hobby and I encourage everyone to attend an NFSS sanctioned show near you! To locate an NFSS sanctioned show, go to:

<http://www.nfss.org/shows/showmenu.html> and keep checking back each month as more and more shows for 2004 are added to this list!

Good luck! Hope you win the blue rib-



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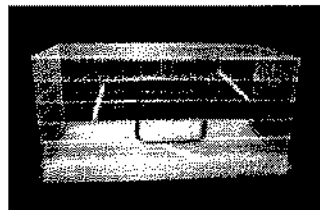
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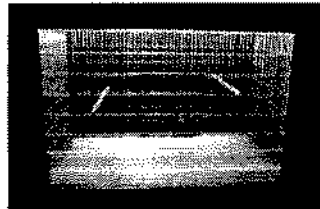
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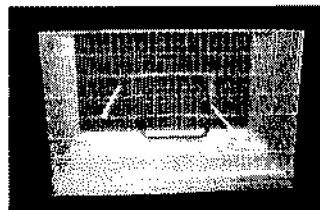
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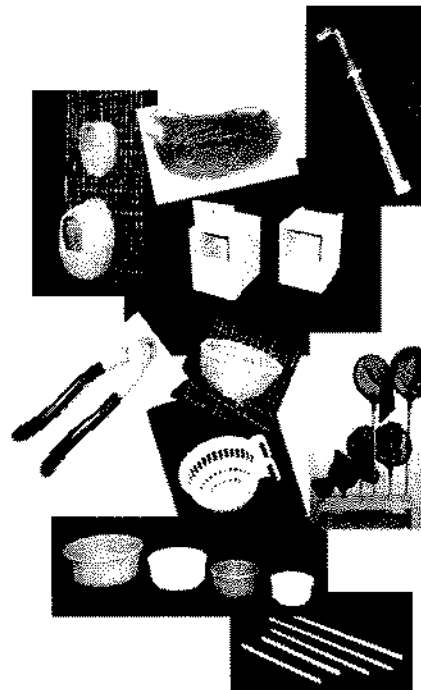
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NFSS 1st Quarter, 2004 Board Meeting Minutes

The NFSS 1st Quarter, 2004, Board meeting was called to order by President, Sally Huntington on February 1, 2004.

There were several discussions during this meeting. The first centered around the concept of Regional Shows. A proposal was put forth to make each region's regional show the only NFSS show in that region on that day. This was not deemed a matter to be further pursued by the board.

Martha Wigmore presented the proposed General Standard for Finches and Softbills to the board for approval. There was much discussion about the standard and the following modifications were proposed:

1. Change the wording in the General Standard on page 3 paragraph 3:

From: "In pied mutations, symmetry of markings is desirable, but secondary to a pleasing degree of contrast and proportion of pied markings to ground color."

To: "In pied mutations, a high degree of pied markings is most desirable. A bird where markings are symmetrically pleasing will take precedence over a bird of unequal markings when the percentage of pied markings to ground color is equal."

2. Add the following sentence to the end of the 4th paragraph page 3 of the General Standard:

"In the case when all attributes being equal a bird in full color or nuptial plumage, will take precedence over a bird that is in eclipse plumage."

3. Add the following sentence to the end of paragraph 1 page 3 of the General Standard:

"Birds with a high degree of difficulty that have achieved the highest degree of perfection may take precedence over similar birds with a

lesser degree of difficulty, when all other attributes are considered equal."

Martha Wigmore will follow procedure for consideration of these proposals and will return to the board with any revisions at a later date.

Motion 2004-1: Patrick Vance made a motion that a separate section be created for Gouldian finches in the NFSS show classifications.

Motion Seconded by Raspberry.

Motion Passed: 5 Yes 4 No 0 Abstain

Respectfully submitted,
Martie Lauster, NFSS Executive Secretary

1st Quarter, 2004 NFSS Officers' Reports

NFSS 2nd Vice President (Publications, Legislative Director)

Publications Update - NFSS website
Updates have been made for all of the newly-elected officers on the NFSS website, and new illustrated information pages on the different softbill & finch species have been added to the website.

Legislative Update

Proposed legislation that would affect bird-owners, and the never-ending assault on aviculture by the "animal-rights" groups are being followed, and information on all of these matters can be found on the "Legislative" pages of the NFSS website.

Regards,
Harry Bryant, NFSS 2nd Vice President & Legislative Director

NFSS 3rd Vice President (Finch/Softbill Save Program and Census Manager)

FSS: As of 2/1/04 - 31 members, 50 Species, 598 Specimens.

Changes in the FSS membership fee and application process have been made. I still need to send these to Harry for the

website.

We still need Group Managers for Indo-Pacific, African, European and Waxbills.

I have had two NFSS members send in the FSS membership fee without registering any birds because they just wanted to help out monetarily!

The 1st Quarter 2004 FSS NL was mailed out the last of January and I have had many positive comments and many requests for copies. Ron has scanned the NL into Adobe format so that I can more easily send copies to those that request it via e-mail. I printed ten extra copies to try and stimulate interest and it seems to have really stirred that interest!

Martie has graciously allowed me to have a regular column in the Journal and I have sent in articles for the Jan/Feb and Mar/Apr issues. I entitled the column as: Happenings: Finch & Softbill Save/Census.

I am in the process of updating the Census Forms for the web-site.

I am all EXCITED about the program!!

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Taylor, 3rd VP

NFSS Membership Director

As of March 5, 2004:

Total Single Memberships = 675

Total Dual Memberships = 97

Total Affiliated Memberships = 11

Total Membership = 783

Respectfully Submitted by,

Linda Hughes, Membership Director

NFSS Treasurer

There is nothing of any great significance to report, however we have had a rash of checks being returned unpaid for various reasons. Everyone (so far) has made good on these "bad checks", but please be careful when writing checks to the NFSS...if they bounce, money we thought we had disappears.

Please don't be alarmed by the financial figures shown below. It does seem like we are in serious trouble, but we knew going into this year that there would be some large checks going out in the first month (payment for two Journals and payment for the second part of the 2004 band order). These numbers should look a lot better by the time I make my first quarter financial report at the end of March.

For the period 1/1/04 to 2/15/04:

Cash in Accounts - \$16,093.42

Income - \$6,963.31 (\$45,081.00 budgeted for 2004)

Expenses - \$14,210.74 (\$45,245.00 budgeted for 2004)

Net Loss - \$7,247.43 (told you it looked bad...\$344.00 loss budgeted for 2004)

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Phelps, NFSS Treasurer

NFSS Band Secretary

Band Sales Est Quarterly Report (as of 1/22/04)

November, 2003: 17 pay pal/31 mail in
\$1,193.00

December 2003 26 pay pal/44 mail in
\$2,202.55

January 2004 28 pay pal/ 46 mail in
\$2,070.00

Respectfully submitted,

Paula Hansen, NFSS Band Secretary

NFSS Regional Vice President, Region 4
(IA, KS, MN, NE, ND, OK, SD, TX)

I received an invitation to speak at the Alamo Bird Club in San Antonio, TX 2-22-04. I accepted the invitation and will give an abbreviated version of my AFA Convention talk. I plan on taking several birds, sharing some of the extra journals Martie sends, as well as application forms. I cannot say with absolute authority since I do not have any official records, but I will wager that the state of Texas has enrolled a significant number of new members in 2003. We are very fortunate to have so many elected and

appointed officers in our State and this translates into very proactive, enthusiastic NFSS members who are beating the bushes and spreading the word. This is very exciting.

I am in the process of contacting all of the affiliated club secretaries in the other states in Region 4. Like all the regions, Region 4 is large and I hope to find consistent ways of creating dialogue and communication with folks in other states. I have posted the same to the NFSS Forum list and FinchBreeders as well. I encourage any kind of constructive feedback. I would really like to see NFSS members dialogue more often through the Journal, via letters to the editor.

Several bird marts are on the near horizon throughout the state, and I plan on attending as many as I can. I cannot say enough about the positive impact our professional Journal has on new comers and potential members. Super job Martie. I believe we have an extremely skilled, turbo-charged BOD, and while I am new to this fold, I am very proud to be a part of the NFSS in what can only be described as exciting and dynamic times.

Respectfully submitted,
Clint Harris- Region 4 VP

NFSS Regional Vice President, Region 6
(AK, CA, HI, OR, WA)

The VP has begun a youth bird club at his place of work, Mount Tabor Middle School. The kids meet for one hour, twice a month, 10 kids between the ages of 8 and 14 are members of the club. All but two have birds. The ones who don't have birds at home do not because they have house cats. However, they care for the birds in the classroom and have just as active an interest as those who have birds at home.

Cages were donated for the initial cause. Birds, Societies and Zebras, were also donated. Donations were given on the honor system. One year of active participation in the club - and the birds and the cage are the kids' to keep.

Already, several students have bought their own cages and have returned old cages for redistribution.

Topics covered so far include general care, banding, nest box construction, egg food, and hand feeding an eager Java finch (also a donation.)

Pitfalls include having to re-teach some participants not to hold their birds regularly like they would a puppy, and having to move the club meeting day to accommodate the school's homework club.

Future immediate goals include, 1) getting the kids to attend the adult bird club in the area, 2) getting them to join NFSS, 3) recruiting NFSS Membership within my local club and 4) getting myself acquainted with NFSS members throughout Region 6.

Respectfully submitted,
Raspberry

FinchShop Manager

The FinchShop management was transferred from Sue Haberkorn to Robert Mehl at the end of December. Thanks to Chris Fairchild, the Husbandry Video has been converted to DVD format. The new format will be offered at the same price as the video and the website should be updated to reflect this soon. I am currently investigating some new items for the FinchShop to carry. The first new product that will be added is an Egg Candler. I am in the process of doing a tri-fold that will explain candling and will show various stages of development as well as eggs that have gone bad. This along with a cool high intensity light will be offered starting March 1st for approximately \$22. We have very few copies of the cage plans left and have sold the remaining Gouldian pins so these items will be phased out. I am currently working with vendors to find a show cage bag (that would be NFSS logo monogrammed), a new pin with the NFSS logo, and logo polo shirts. There will be a limit on how fast we can add products as most ven-

dors require a minimum number of items to be ordered and the expenditures for the FinchShop is limited. In fact, given the limited funds available and the required minimums on most items, I am unsure what if anything can be added. Either we need to realize that for the FinchShop to expand, we may have to take a loss (in order to add inventory) or realize that the impact of the FinchShop will be minimal. On February 1st, Chris Fairchild staffed a FinchShop Table at the Hampton Roads bird Mart. Income from that show was \$73.00 against expenses of \$109.81. Although the expenses did provide for stock of DVD's none have sold. I showcased the FinchShop at the Tyson's Corner Virginia Bird Mart. Although we just broke even it was a lot of PR for NFSS. I will be promoting NFSS at the Baltimore Pet Show Feb. 7 & 8. Although I cannot sell any products I will be handing out membership applications and FinchShop catalogs. Chris Fairchild has secured a donated table for NFSS at the Virginia Bird Clubs convention in late March. Sales for the FinchShop so far this year are ~189.00 with expenses of ~140.00 (not included the figures above). The reason for the approximation is that some items are invoiced directly and not included. The inventory of Judge Handbooks, Husbandry videos/DVD, and screensavers has been significantly increased. I was able to reproduce the handbooks,

videos and screensavers at less than half the previous cost, but the DVD production was twice the original video and six times the current video cost.

I would like to see the FinchShop offer more educational materials. The husbandry profiles being developed by the FinchSave program I believe would be an excellent item to offer. Naturally FinchSave members would receive these in the Newsletter but non-NFSS members or non-FinchSave members could purchase them at a nominal fee. I would also like to see the FinchShop develop a video showcasing various members' set-ups from the pet owner to the serious breeder. I plan to launch this project in the summer when I am off of work (public school employee). Please contact me if you are interesting in helping or donating footage for this project. Lastly, I have been asked by several members to upgrade the screensaver. I am awaiting information from the original developers and then will consider what we can do to expand it and make it more compatible. (There have been several complaints that it does not work with all operating systems.) I am putting considerable effort into trying to make the FinchShop profitable and offer items of interest to our members. I am always open to suggestions and comments

Respectfully submitted by:

Robert Mehl - FinchShop Manager

2003 END-OF-YEAR TREASURER'S REPORT

Please find listed below the final figures for the year 2003. I am happy to report that we lost less money than we had planned for, but there are a few things that actually skew this result:

Band sales were way above expected levels. Paula Hansen has done a wonderful job keeping up with a department that has gotten 65% bigger and busier in the last three years, processing close to 500 orders this year.

We published our census separate from our Journal. This was an un-budget-

ed (but extremely worthwhile) expense.

We are still experiencing slow processing of invoices from our Journal printer. The Nov/Dec 2002 Journal was paid for in this year, instead of in 2002, and we have yet to receive final invoices for the Sept/Oct or Nov/Dec 2003 Journals. These will now have to be paid in 2004 and will skew the 2004 final figures.

If we were to make adjustments for the two missing Journal Invoices and back out the one that should have been

paid in 2002. then we would have finished the year losing about \$3,500.00. Deduct the amount paid for the Census. and we end up having lost about \$500.00.

So. in English. we did OK. we are doing just fine, and we will be in excellent financial shape going into the year 2004!

As always. the numbers shown in parenthesis. are the 2003 Budget figures for the actual numbers shown. If anyone has any questions or concerns, or wants to see the "books" (in Microsoft Excel). please feel free to contact me. Nothing of what I do is a secret and every member of this Society is welcome to review any aspect of the handling of our money.

Financial Report for the period 1/1/03 to 12/31/03:

Cash In Accounts:

Checking - Main & Bands 4,311.41
 Checking - Membership 2,082.40
 Checking - FinchShop 242.66
 Savings 15,404.38
 Advances 1,300.00
 Total Cash In Accounts - 23,340.85

Income:

Bands 12,281.45 (6,500.00)
 Membership 19,702.50 (22,095.00)
 FinchShop 2,965.86 (4,950.00)
 Affiliations 1,200.00 (1,500.00)
 4th VP/Judges Panel Fees 260.00
 (260.00)
 Journal 1,854.21 (1,500.00)
 Awards 2,625.00 (2,500.00)
 Finch/Softbill Save 150.00 (0.00)
 Advertising 0.00 (0.00)
 Misc. 1,154.10 (0.00)
 Total Income - 42,193.12 (39,305.00)

Expenses:

Bands 8,986.11 (7,703.75)
 Membership 794.91 (1,084.00)
 FinchShop 1,514.99 (3,706.00)
 Affiliations 274.75 (350.00)
 4th VP/Judges Panel 121.82 (175.00)
 Journal 26,119.11 (22,600.00)
 Awards 2,007.29 (2,500.00)
 Finch/Softbill Save 108.22 (200.00)
 Advertising 262.50 (750.00)
 Misc. 2,121.86 (2,530.00)
 Total Expenses - 42,311.56 (41,598.75)
 Total Gain/Loss - -118.44 (-2,293.75)

Respectfully submitted.
 Mark Phelps. NFSS Treasurer

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5634 Carnegie Street, San Diego, CA 92122 (858) 452-9423 sallych@san.rr.com

1st Vice President

Regional V.P., Education
Mr. Armando J. Lee
306 S.E. 22nd Street
Cape Coral, FL 33990
(239) 242-7675
alee@swfla.rr.com

2nd Vice President

Publications
Mr. Harry Bryant
Elyria, OH 44035
utuweb@aol.com

3rd Vice President

*NFSS Finch/Softbill Save
Program/Conserv. Mgr.*
Randy Taylor
17801 Robin Road
Canyon, Texas 79109
806-655-4398
taylor_finches1@a.
cox.net

4th Vice President

*Judges Panel/
Standards/Research*
Ms. Martha Wigmore
18913 Boston St. NW
Elk River, MN 55330
(763) 241-0071
newdlwig@
mindspring.com

Membership Director

Ms. Linda Hughes
P.O. Box 499
Rhome, Tx 76078
(817) 638-9006
finchlady@
bracketrysystems.com

Executive Secretary

Ms. Martie Lauster
4581 Lincoln Road
Macedon, NY 14502
(315) 524-7768
mlauster@
rochester.rr.com

Treasurer

Mr. Mark Phelps
P.O. Box 1231
Lisle, IL 60532
(815) 729-9789
softbilboy@aol.com

Liaison Officer

Club Delegates/Show Dates
Ms. Darla Dandre
P.O. Box 1231
Lisle, IL 60532
(815) 729-9789
dbirdranch@aol.com

Band Secretary

Ms. Paula Hansen
2234 Juncau Court SO.
Salem, Oregon 97302
(503) 581-8208
phansen@
earthlink.net

President Emeritus

Mr. William Parlee
631 Talcottville Rd.
Apt. 4N
Vernon, CT 06066
(860) 569-0200
billhtfdet@aol.com

Regional Vice Presidents

Region 1 V.P.

(Northeast)
*CT, DE, MA, ME, MD, NH, NJ, NY,
PA, RI, VA, VT, WV*
Robert Fairchild
P.O. Box 4395
Virginia Beach, VA
23454

Region 2 V.P.

(Southeast)
AL, FL, GA, MS, NC, SC, TN
Mr. Ron Castaner
13396 58th Court North
Royal Palm Beach, FL
33411
(561) 792-6794
finches@bellsouth.net

Region 3 V.P.

(Mid-Central)
*AR, IL, IN, KY, LA, MI, MO, OH,
WI, Australia, Bermuda, England*
Mr. Patrick Vance
18175 Avilla
Lathrup Village, MI 48076
(248) 443-0643
spartanfinchman@cs.com

Region 4 V.P.

(Midwest)
IA, KS, MN, NE, ND, OK, SD, TX
Mr. Clint Harris
Temple, TX
254-770-1986
charris@vvm.com

Region 5 V.P.

(Mountain)
AZ, CO, ID, MT, NE, NM, UT, WY
Ms. Anna Sinclair
2430 San Marcos
Colorado Spgs. CO
80910
(719) 634-6404
bill&annasinclair@
citystar.com

Region 6 V.P.

(Pacific Coast)
AK, CA, HI, OR, WA
Raspberry
Raspberry@europa.com
Portland, Oregon

Region 7 V.P.

(Caribbean)
Puerto Rico, Caribbean Basin
Mr. Julio Mateo Soto
RR5, Box 8418, Ste 72
Bayamon, PR 00956

Region 8 V.P.

(Canada)
Mr. Alfred Mion
1619 Pilette Road,
Windsor, Ontario,
Canada N8Y 3C4
(519) 948-6398
julianne@mnsi.net

Appointed Officers

FinchShop Manager

Robert Mehl
11108 Hollowbrook Rd
Owings Mills, Md
21117-1379
(410) 581-7955
Robert.Mehl@
verizon.net

NFSS Editor

Ms. Martie Lauster
4581 Lincoln Road
Macedon, NY 14502
(315) 524-7768
mlauster@
rochester.rr.com

NFSS Website Mgr.

Ms. Myra Markley
Cedar Rapids, IA
(319) 362-9390 (Eves)
seffera@seffera.net
Web Site Address:
www.nfss.org

Awards Manager

Ms. Darla Dandre
P.O. Box 1231
Lisle, IL 60532
(815) 729-9789
dbirdranch@aol.com

Advertising & Promotions

Ms. Brenda Josselet
PMB 279
6705 Hwy 290 West,
Ste. 502
Austin, TX 78735
(512) 288-0891
bjosselet@austin.rr.com

Moderator.

NFSS Finch/Softbill Forum

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

NFSS Panel of Judges 2003

Nizam Ali

135-11 114th Street
South Ozone Park, NY
11420

Charles Anchor

12384 Laurel Lane
Huntley, IL 60142
Phone: 847-515-1090

Laura Bewley

3538 S. 65 W. Avenue
Tulsa, OK 74107
Phone: 918-446-3999
lbewley@yahoo.com

Harold Bowles

230 College Circle
Cedartown, GA 30125
Phone: 770-748-4627
Fax: 770-748-3969

Clarence Culwell

250 Horseshoe Drive
Springtown, TX 76082
Phone: 817-220-5568
culwell5@flash.net

Dr. Al Decoteau

P.O. Box 369
Groton, MA 01450
Phone: (603) 672-4568
spbe1@aol.com

Daren Decoteau

89 Pleasantview Avenue
Stratford, CT 06497
Phone: (203) 378-4777
greateagle@aol.com

Julie R. Duimstra

4201 NE 125th Pl #163
Portland, OR 97230
Phone: 503-261-8788

Cecil Gunby

8121 Route 1, Hwy. 54
Sharpsburg, GA 30277
Phone/Fax: 770-254-1261

Annette Howard

P.O. Box 404
Salem, OH 44460
Phone: 330-337-7654
bluehaven@voyager.net

Sally Huntington

5634 Carnegie Street
San Diego, CA 92122
Phone: 858-452-9423
sallych@san.rr.com

Joseph Krader

2910 Alps Road
Corona, CA 92881
Phone: 909-272-6525

Dale Laird

P.O. Box 2459
Goldenrod, FL 32733
Phone: 407-657-7989
jlaird2@cfl.rr.com

Armando Lee

306 SE 22nd Street
Cape Coral, FL 33990
Phone: 239-242-7675
alee@swfla.rr.com

Dennis J. Lewis

7446 Glasgow Road
Brooksville, FL 34613
Phone: 352-596-3376
dennis_14519@msn.com

Brian Mandarich

4743 E. Hedges Avenue
Fresno, CA 93703
Phone: 559-255-6508

Teri McAuliffe

269 Thames Drive
Colorado Springs, CO
80906
Phone/Fax: 719-576-9009
juglprds@aol.com

Conrad Meinert

1212 E. 300 South
Warsaw, IN 46580
Phone: 574-269-2873
Fax: 574-269-3142
BirdmanofWarsaw@
kconline.com

Marion (Miki) Spartzak

945 Rosedale Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21237
Phone: 410-687-8915
mjs5295@comcast.net

Laura Tinker

31 Grape Hollow Road
Holmes, NY 12531
845-855-2662
laura.tinker.b@bayer.com

Patrick Vance

18175 Avilla
Lathrup Village, MI 48076
Phone: 248-443-0643
spartanfinchman@cs.com

Christine Voronovitch

38 Liberty Street
Manchester, CT 06040
Phone: 860-649-8220
lbtybeagle@aol.com

Ms. Jerri Wiesenfeld

2379 Water Bluff Drive
Jacksonville, FL 32218
Phone: 904-714-2133
jerrisjvas@aol.com

Martha Newman Wigmore NFSS Panel Director

18913 Boston Street NW
Elk River, MN 55330
Phone: 763-241-0071
newdlwig@mindspring.com

Paul S. Williams

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

NFSS Affiliated Clubs/Events

2004 SHOWS & EVENTS BY DATE (See Club Listings for more information)

April 4	Event	Grand Rapids, MI	Great Lakes Avicultural Society
17	Event	Live Oak, TX	Alamo Exhibition Bird Club, Inc.
25	Event	Oshkosh, WI	Wisconsin Cage Bird Club
25	Show	La Mesa, CA	Finch Society of San Diego County
May 15	Event	Parkville, MD	Baltimore Bird Fanciers, Inc.
16	Event	Milwaukee, WI	Badger Canary & Finch Club
June 13	Event	Elmont, NY	New York Finch and Type Canary Club
26	Show	Oshkosh, WI	Wisconsin Cage Bird Club
August 29	Event	Oshkosh, WI	Wisconsin Cage Bird Club
September 25	Event	Live Oak, TX	Alamo Exhibition Bird Club, Inc.
October 16	Show	Parkville, MD	Baltimore Bird Fanciers, Inc.
16	Show	Grand Rapids, MI	Great Lakes Avicultural Society
16	Show	Brooklyn, NY	New York Finch and Type Canary Club
16	Show	Oshkosh, WI	Badger Canary & Finch Club
16	Show	Windsor, Ont, CAN	Essex-Kent Cage Bird Society
23	Show	Niota, TN	Southeast TN Avicultural Society
25	Event	Live Oak, TX	Alamo Exhibition Bird Club, Inc.
November 6	Show	Brooklyn, NY	Astoria Bird Club
6	Show	Pittsburgh, PA	Greater Pittsburgh Cage Bird Society

REGIONAL CLUBS

Southeast Bird Fanciers (SE U.S.)

Contact: Ginny Allen (334) 749-7168
gndallen@earthlink.net
Meetings: 1st Sat. in Mar, Jun, Sep, and 2nd
Sat. in Dec. at the Atlanta Farmers Market
Website:
<http://members.tripod.com/sebfg/sebf.htm>

CALIFORNIA

Finch Society of San Diego County

Contact: Sally Huntington (858) 452-9423
sallych@san.rr.com
Meetings: 4th Sun of ea. month except Dec.
7849 Tommy Dr. La Mesa, CA
Club E-Mail: onedeergranny@aol.com
Show: Bird Show - Apr. 25, 2004
7849 Tommy Dr. La Mesa, CA
Judge: Sally Huntington
Show Contact: Cathy Metivier
(619) 579-6414 onedeergranny@aol.com

CANADA

Essex-Kent Cage Bird Society (Ontario, CANADA)

Contact: Julianne Mion (519) 948-6398
julianne@mnsi.net
Show: Annual Show - Oct. 16, 2004
Fogolar Furlan Udine Complex
Judge: Cecil Gunby
Show Contact: Alfred Mion
(519) 948-6398 or julianne@mnsi.net

MARYLAND

Baltimore Bird Fanciers, Inc.

Contact: Barbara Shannon (410) 356-5850
Meetings: 3rd Sun. - Towson Library
Club E-Mail: drhaynesq@yahoo.com
Website: www.angelfire.com/mi4/glas
Event: Bird Mart - May 15, 2004
Show: Show - Oct. 16, 2004
Location for both: Tall Cedars Hall, Parkville
Contact for both: Dorothy Haynes
(410) 256-9326 drhaynesq@yahoo.com

NFSS Affiliated Clubs/Events

MICHIGAN

Great Lakes Avicultural Society (Grand Rapids)

Contact: Diana Hugo (616) 842-0163
pdhugo@charter.net
Meetings: 2nd Mon. of each month - UAW
Hall, 4269 Alpine, Grand Rapids
Website: www.angelfire.com/mi4/glas
Event: GLAS Fair - Apr. 4, 2004
Contact: Sue Rosin wrosin@i2k.com
Show: Show - Oct. 16, 2004
Judge: Paul Williams
Contact: Diana Hugo (616) 842-0163
Location for both: The Delta Plex
2500 Turner NW, Grand Rapids

NEW YORK

Astoria Bird Club (New York City)

Contact: Dan Griffin (718) 994-1614
dgriffin1@optionline.net
Meetings: 3rd Sun. of each month
23-18 29th St. Astoria, NY
Club E-Mail: AstoriaBirdClub@aol.com
Show: Annual Show Nov. 6, 2004
St. Jude School, Brooklyn
Judge: Dennis Lewis
Show Contact: Ivica John Begonja
(718) 423-8506 mostina@aol.com

New York Finch and Type Canary Club (New York City)

Contact: Stan Kulak (718) 967-6899
barstand@aahawk.com
Meetings: 2nd Sun. of each month except
Jul. & Aug. 1:00 p.m.
Averill Blvd. PK. Elmont
Website: www.newyorkfinch.com
Event: Feather Show - June 13, 2004
Averill Blvd. Park Elmont
Show: Annual Show Oct. 16, 2004
St. Jude Church, Brooklyn
Judge: Laura Tinker
Contact for both events: Stan Kulak
(718) 967-6899 barstand@aahawk.com

PENNSYLVANIA

Greater Pittsburgh Cage Bird Society (Pittsburgh)

Contact: Jim Felix (412) 462-0969
justuff1@comcast.net
Club E-Mail: mjonnet@katz.pitt.edu
Show: Show Nov. 6, 2004 Holiday Inn
RIDC Park, Pittsburgh
Judge: Martha Wigmore
Contact: Margie Jonnet
(412) 795-1904 mjonnet@katz.pitt.edu

PUERTO RICO

Asociation De Criadores de Finches Del Este

Contact: Victor Cordero 893-7723

TENNESSEE

Southeast TN Avicultural Society (Niota)

Contact: Janet Burrell (423) 472-1306
jgb2202@aol.com
Meetings: 2nd Sun. of each month 2 pm
Niota Elementary School
Show: S.T.A.S. Show & Fair Oct. 23, 2004
2 Shows in One-Day Special Event
Niota Elementary School
Judges: Clarence Culwell
Paul Williams
Show Contacts:
Theresa Burnette tjburn@compixnet.com
Marilyn Massey mklmass@cs.com
Janette Burrell jgb2202@aol.com

TEXAS

Alamo Exhibition Bird Club Inc. (San Antonio)

Contact: Nathan Durbin (210) 433-1840
tak@stic.net
Website: www.aebc.org
Events: Fairs - Apr. 17 and Sep. 25, 2004
Live Oak Civic Center, Live Oak, TX
Just NE of San Antonio on Pat Booker Rd.

NFSS Affiliated Clubs/Events

VIRGINIA

Peninsula Cage Bird Society, Inc. (Hampton)

Contact: Bea Rogers (757) 484-6001
Meetings: 3rd Sun. of each month at 2 pm
Club E-Mail: dickivy@two-rivers.com
Website: www.vapeninsulacagedbirdclub.org
Events: Bird Marts - Spring & Fall, 2004
 Annual Bird Clubs of Virginia Convention

WISCONSIN

Wisconsin Cage Bird Club (Oshkosh)

Contact: Dave Bluma (920) 428-4595
 Davidbluma@aol.com
Meetings: 3rd Sun. of each month.
Events: Spring Bird Fair Apr. 25, 2004
 Fall Bird Fair Aug. 29, 2004
 Columbus Club, Oshkosh, WI
Contact: Jack Vater (920) 206-8831
Show: 27th Annual Bird Show - June 26, 2004
 Ramada Inn, Oshkosh, WI
Judge: Dennis Lewis
Contact: Bernie Rahmlow (920) 231-8606

Badger Canary & Finch Club (Milwaukee)

Contact: Sue Feldstein (262) 965-5367
Meetings: 3rd Sat. of each month - No meetings in Dec. or Jan.
Club E-Mail: devanornum@aol.com
Club Website:
 www.badgercanaryandfinchclub.org
Event: All Bird Fair - May 16, 2004
 Marshfield Fairgrounds
Event Contact: Marlene Minor
 (715) 884-2659
Show: Annual Bird Show & Fair -
 Oct. 16, 2004 Ramada Inn Oshkosh
Judge: Martha Wignore
Contact: Ewon Van Ornum devanornum@aol.com



NFSS

the National Finch
and Softbill Society

www.nfss.org

Visit the NFSS website regularly! It contains a wealth of up-to-the-minute information about NFSS, Finches and Softbills, and current news. Our website also offers the opportunity to join or renew NFSS memberships, order leg bands, and order items from the FinchShop directly on-line. An excellent resource for all members!

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: _____

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

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 \$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 Shaftail, Lavender Finch, Painted Finch, Pileated Finch, Pytilias, Red-headed & Forbes (Blue-Breasted) Parrot Finches, Shaftail 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 Nonparcil, 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 Toucacos.

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, Cuthroats, 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 (Buton) Quail, Budgies, Grass Parakeets.
- Size X3: Lovebirds, Rosellas, Many Softbills.



NFSS FINCH SHOP



NFSS Tots bag: Pressure applied NFSS logo in color on one side. Great for bird events or just shopping. 100% cotton washable denim in a neutral color...very sturdy. 14" high X 16" wide and 4" deep with two 22" heavy web handles. **\$9.00**

Qty _____ Amount _____



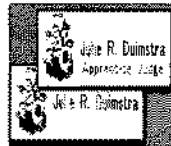
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Qty _____ Amount _____



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Qty _____ Amount _____

_____ Magnetic fastener - Add **\$2.50**

Name

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Check style desired:

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___ Hinged Top Lid with hole in front and

___ Side Mnt ___ Rear Mnt ___ Front Mnt

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"Nature's Jewels" - Gouldian Finch Poster: Beautiful poster (24" x 36") depicting the many mutations of the Gouldian. Thanks to the generosity of NFSS member, Laraine McGinnis, all proceeds from this product go to further the goals of NFSS. **\$20.00**

Qty _____ Amount _____



NFSS Show Cage Plans \$4.00 ea.

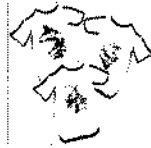
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NFSS FINCH SHOP



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Select Size: ___L ___XL

Select Art: ___Gouldian ___Society ___Zebra



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Qty _____ Amount _____



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Specify: ___VHS ___DVD



NFSS Finch Nets: *5 1/4" spring steel hoop with vinyl binding to prevent trauma. 100% dark nylon netting with secure seams - 5" hardwood handle. Perfect for use in catching finches in cages. **\$8.00***

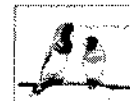
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NFSS Judges Handbook & Official Standards:

Select: ___Full Handbook **\$13.00** ___Update Only **\$3.00**

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Total Order: _____

Send completed order with full name and address along with check **Payable to NFSS** to:

Robert Mehl, NFSS FinchShop Manager
11108 Hollowbrook Road Owings Mills, MD 21117



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Hughes
P.O. Box 499
Rhome, TX
76078**



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Phone #: _____

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Mail Request to:

Mr. Randy Taylor

17801 Robin Road, Canyon, TX 79015

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Avian Publications



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Dr. Rob Marshall..... **24.95**



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Joan Lewis..... **24.95**



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by Peter Clement..... **29.95**



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