



Journal of the

National Finch and Softbill Society

Vol. 30, No. 2 Mar/Apr 2013



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NFSS MISSION STATEMENT

The National Finch and Softbill Society is dedicated to promoting the enjoyment of keeping and breeding Finches and Softbills to all interested parties, enhancing our knowledge of the proper care of these birds, encouraging breeding programs, and working with other organizations for the preservation of aviculture in this country.

JOURNAL OF THE NATIONAL FINCH AND SOFTBILL SOCIETY

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Submitting Materials for Publication. All materials should be submitted to Gertrude A. Noble, Editor, at gertanoble@aol.com. Members are encouraged to submit articles and/or photographs. NFSS reserves the right to edit and/or reject all written, photographic, and advertising materials submitted. With the exception of advertising, deadlines are the 15th day of November, January, March, May, July, and September for the following issue. See page 8 for advertising deadlines.

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Journal and NFSS Dues. New memberships and late renewals (expired memberships) received by the 15th day of any month immediately preceding a journal issue will receive six consecutive issues, beginning with the issue immediately following the month they joined. For dues received after these cutoff dates, the first issue will be one issue later. Cutoff dates to receive the next published issue are as follows: the 15th day of December, February, April, June, August, and October.

PASSWORD TO ACCESS JOURNAL ARCHIVES

www.nfss.org, ENTER *clearwing2012*

Advertising Rates and Deadlines has been moved. See Page 8.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

President's Message	4-5
John Wilson	
NFSS Board of Directors Meeting	7
Advertising Rates	8
Silver-eared Mesia	9-12
Rebecca Mikel	
Black-hooded Red Siskin	13-15
Ron Castaner	
National Cage Bird Show Pictures	17-19
The Adorable Mousebird	20-25
Kateri Davis	
The Magnificent Cuban Melodious	27-32
Cheryl Burns	
The Mutation Gouldian Finch	33-37
Tiffany Park	
NFSS Band Order Form	41
NFSS Affiliated Clubs	42-46
NFSS Judges Panel	47
NFSS Board of Directors and Appointed Officers	48

COVER PHOTO

Cuban Melodious

tiaris canora

NFSS thanks Tiffany Park for sharing with members photos of her Cuban Melodious Finches. You can find an informative article written by Tiffany starting on page 27.

HELP WANTED

NFSS is looking for a conscientious volunteer to fill the ADVERTISING AND PROMOTIONS MANAGER position. Everything has been set up to make it easy for the person assuming this position to take over and not have to spend more than a few minutes weekly handling the job. If you enjoy working with people, want to join a great team of volunteers, and would like to be considered for this position, please contact Gerta Noble at
716-525-1249 or gertanoble@aol.com

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



I'M READY FOR SPRING, the warmer days, and summer—the part of the year where my day doesn't begin and end in the dark. This Journal should be arriving in your mail box just as the day lengthens and the sun rises when I get up. March 1, 2013 sunrise is at 6:41 a.m.

Most of my birds are outside in unheated flights and short days mean long and generally cold nights. It compresses not only the day length but the onset of darkness occurs more quickly. The safe window to provide an evening supplement is narrowed and more easily missed. It also means less of my time can be spent with the birds because the aviaries can't be worked in the dark or right before roosting, making outdoor breeding in winter a risky proposition; something my birds don't seem to consider.

I've reduced the soft and high protein foods to damper their libido and I expect the short days and cold nights to serve as moderators of the breeding urge. It doesn't work that way. I know many of you keep birds outside and experience far harsher conditions. I'd sincerely like to hear how you do it. It would make good reading.

We're making progress in some of our Finch/Softbill Save Species Groups (FSS) but we need to continue promoting them.

These groups represent an opportunity for the breeder new to a species to learn from others experiences and also allows the successful breeder to pass on what has worked for them. I encourage you to look thru the list of Species groups on the following page and see if the species you keep and/or have an interest in are represented.

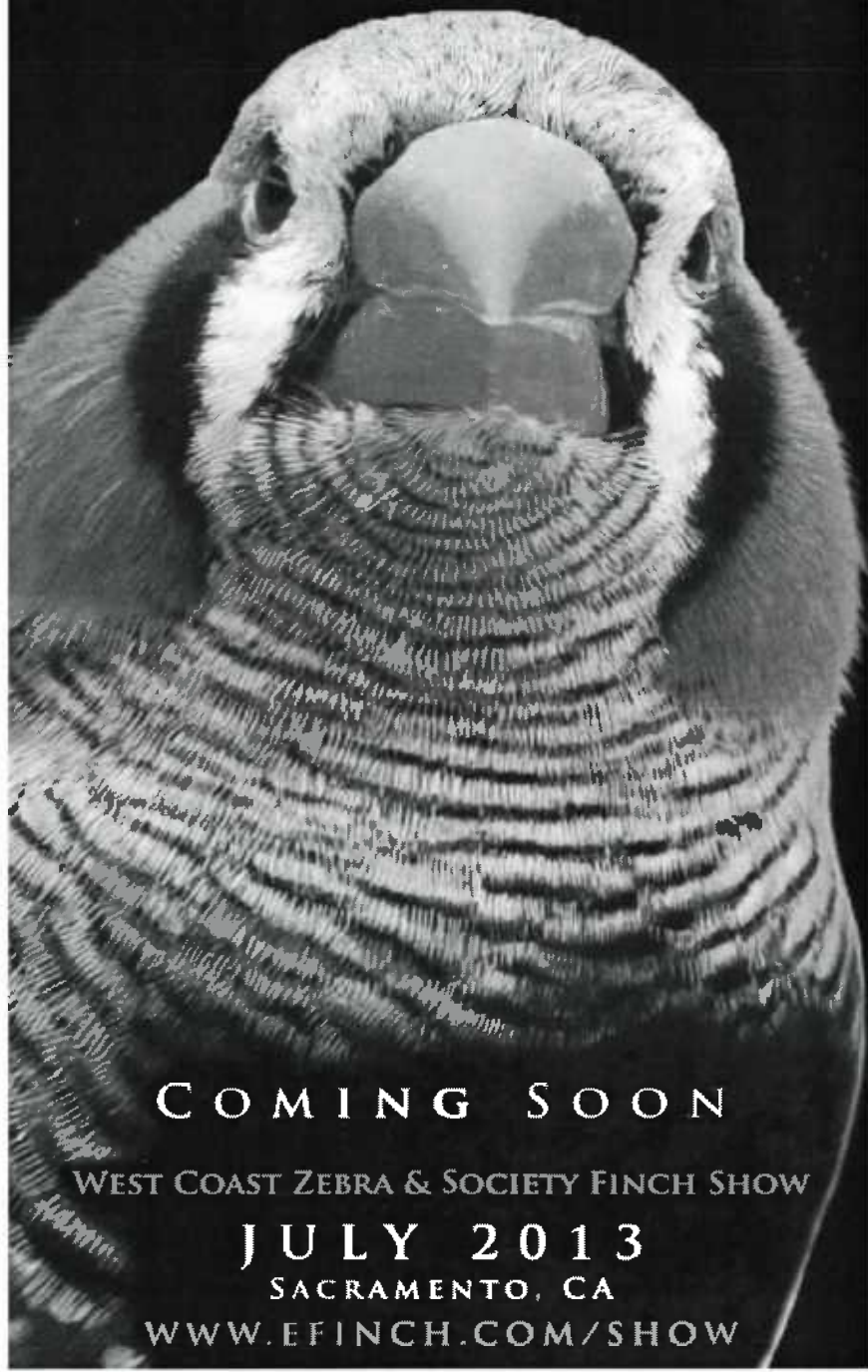
- **NFSS-FSS ERYTHRURA PARROT FINCH GROUP.** Moderated by Scott Golden this group has 29 members, including three who are on all of the group LISTSDERVs: Vonda Zwick, Finch/Softbill Save Director; Roland Cristo, Legislative Liaison; and myself.
- **NFSS-FSS AMANOAVA STRAWBERRIES/GOLDBREASTS.** Sally Porter heads up this group with 11 members.
- **NFSS-FSS URAEGINTHUS BLUE-PURPLE** Waxbills has 13 members and is headed by Vonda Zwick.
- **NFSS-FSS COLIJOA MOUSEBIRDS** with 8 members is headed by Kateri Davis. Kateri has recently published a book on Touracos and you will find an interesting article in this issue she authored.
- **NFSS-FSS PYNONOTUS BULBULS** with 7 members is headed by Sally Huntington.
- **NFSS-FSS CAROUELI CUCULLATA REO SISKINS** with 4 members is headed by Paula Hansen.
- **NFSS-FSS SERINUS** group is the NFSS Finch Softbill Save Group for Green Singers, Lemon-breasted Singers, and closely related species. This group needs a leader and if you are interested, please contact any officer.
- **NFSS-FSS EUROPEAN SOFTBILLS.** NFSS-FSS-European-Softbills needs an interested breeder willing to bring together a group working with any of the following included species: European Blackbird, European Song Thrush, European Robin, Common Nightingale, European Golden Oriole, European Roller, Tiit (**note: misspelled to bypass Yahoo censors**), Yellow-breasted Blue Tiit, BlueTiit, Crested Tiit, Great Tiit, and Coal Tiit. Do we have any volunteers?

ELECTION. 2013 is an election year for all Board of Director positions. It comes up very quickly and if you are considering running for an office speak up.

ADVERTISING DIRECTOR NEEDED. We're looking for someone interested in spending a few hours a month servicing the existing advertiser accounts and soliciting new advertisers for the NFSS Journal. See page 3.

I'm hoping to see many of you at the National Cage Bird Show in Tulsa, Oklahoma this November.

John Wilson
President NFSS



COMING SOON

WEST COAST ZEBRA & SOCIETY FINCH SHOW

JULY 2013

SACRAMENTO, CA

WWW.EFINCH.COM/SHOW

NFSS BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

4TH QUARTER 2012

All BOD members present

Michael Gravely resigns as Region 2 Vice President, Cecil Gunby will serve as Pro-Tem until Special Election held (within 180 days)

Meeting started at NCBS with review of Treasury and award pricing. Membership meeting at NCBS – question raised regarding a request for additional recognition of Zebras within exhibition at future NCBS events, it was suggested “Specialty Clubs” be contacted instead; review of selection process for NCBS Judges

See full version of minutes on website for list of award winners and 2012 NCBS placements.

TREASURY

- Bank Balance 6/30/12: \$37,260.39
- Bank Balance 9/30/12: \$30,918.92
- 2012 Budget for Bands increased by \$1600 and for Journal by \$1800
- 2013 Budget approved
- NFSS Board votes to continue financial “matching” for donations to Save the Gouldian Fund up to total of \$500/year by NFSS
- Audits of 2011 Financial records completed by Michael Gravely and Cheryl Burns

BAND SALES

- 2012 sales include 1075 strings of split bands, 2063 strings of closed bands, 30 band cutters

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP: 457

TOTAL AFFILIATES: 38

Census forms to be published in Jan/Feb Journal; census opens January 1 and runs through February

Rough drafts of Orange-cheek and Cuban Melodious standards presented to BOD for review

2012 Show Reports received, points tabulated, and summary report published in Journal

One new candidate passes Judge’s test (Laura Watkins) and prepares to begin apprenticeship

BOD informed of the passing of Dr. Richard E Baer, early AFA President and visible person in the world of Aviculture for many years

Affiliations with AFA, ASA, and NAIA renewed

Postage Scale purchased for Band Dept. eliminating need to stand in long lines at Post Office. Postage costs to increase in 2013

Rebecca Mikel volunteers to serve as Election Committee Chairperson for 2013 General Election.

ADVERTISING RATES

PLEASE NOTE AD SIZES

Cover (back, when available), 5" x 4"	\$90.00/issue; \$450/year*
Covers (inside, when available), 5" x 8"	\$90.00/issue; \$450/year*
Full Page, 4.5" x 8"	\$60.00/issue; \$306.00/year*
Half Page, 4.5" x 4"	\$40.00/issue; \$204.00/year*
Quarter Page, 4.5" x 2"	\$20.00/issue; \$102.00/year*

* year = any 6 consecutive issues; does not always run January-December

DEADLINES FOR SUBMITTING ADS

ALL ADS MUST BE RECEIVED TWO MONTHS PRIOR TO PUBLICATION

Jan/Feb issue must be received by November 1 • Mar/Apr issue by January 1

May/Jun issue by March 1 • Jul/Aug issue by May 1

Sep/Oct issue by July 1 • Nov/Dec issue by September 1

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT JOURNAL EDITOR

GERTA NOBLE • GERTANOBLE@AOL.COM • 716-525-1249

JUST FINCHES and Softbills Magazine



While focusing primarily on Australasia, this magazine incorporates what's happening with finches & softbills from many overseas locations as well, including, South Africa, America, Europe and the U.K.

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Silver-eared Mesia

Leiothrix argenteauris

by Rebecca Mikel



PHOTO BY REBECCA MIKEL

IN THE GENUS *LEIOTHRIX* THERE ARE ONLY TWO SPECIES, the Mesia and the Pekin Robin; although there are subspecies of both. They are found in several Asian locations including Thailand, south and east China, and Burma; the Mesia is also found in Malaysia and Sumatra. They are a fairly large bird, measuring an average of 7" in length.

We were given a pair of Silver-eared Mesias four years ago from a friend who was not residing in a situation which allowed him to provide housing he felt would be adequate to encourage breeding behavior. He placed them with us in hopes of our having success breeding them. Some information indicates the difference between males and females is "subjective" but the pair we received had been surgically sexed so we were assured a true "pair". We found the female visibly slighter in stature and her color was noticeably less vibrant.

While some report Mesias being occasionally aggressive with their "mate" they are, more often, good-natured and can be housed with other, smaller species. Because of their reputation for stealing the eggs and babies from other birds' nests, we've always housed them away from other species. While they can be "winter hardy", given our severe Michigan winters, we move them into heated buildings during the colder winter months.

The diet we feed consists of several combinations of insectivorous foods combined with Lory pellets, plenty of fruit (they love apple, watermelon, orange, papaya, mango, cantaloupe), carrots, tomatoes, mealworms, and other avian pellets soaked in apple juice. As a supplement we offer commercial dried egg food mixed with chopped, hard-boiled eggs.

While some people speak of the Mesia's "Singing Ability", in my opinion they don't really have a "melodious" song—although it surely is loud! In season, the male competes on a regular basis with a male European Blackbird we have in another aviary (and if you've never heard the song of a European Blackbird as the sun is just peeking over the horizon in the morning, you have not lived—GORGEOUS!).

They do love to bathe and several "large" receptacles were provided through the summer months. Because they are such avid bathers—bathing several times throughout the day—the water in all containers large enough for them to even get their heads into was quickly soiled. I provided several large containers throughout the aviary at lower levels and then smaller ones at higher levels attempting to encourage them to use one for "bathing" and another for "beverages", but they would bathe in anything they could fit any body part into!

The aviary they are housed in is 6' wide x 7' tall x 12' deep. It is first in the first of two lines of five aviaries each which are identical in size and is attached to a building on one side. The other side is ¼-inch wire mesh, as is the front. The back is solid, the roof is ¼-inch wire mesh which is then partially covered with **corrugated**, clear plexiglas®. While we have other aviaries larger in size, we felt this size was adequate for the Mesias. The aviaries are in the rear portion of our lawn, and we live in the country, so there are few disturbances by humans. Across the front of the bank of aviaries is a screened walkway, so there is no opportunity for cats, dogs, or other predators to be close enough to threaten the birds inside the aviaries. The screen also provides additional protection against mosquitoes potentially carrying West Nile.

The aviary has several potted evergreens (some real, some synthetic) and grasses. There are natural material perches and platforms at varying heights and locations throughout the aviary.

I also purchased rubber-coated "chicken wire" and constructed large tubes with zip ties; some open at the front, some open at each end. I then purchased Spanish Moss at Lowe's, which I wrapped a portion of the "tube" in. I provided imitation Ficus trees in pots with branches large enough to accommodate nest-building, a parakeet-sized nest box with wood shavings, and nesting material including coconut fiber, string, grass, hay, and feathers. There are also hanging baskets and flower pots with imitation greenery, etc.

I cannot, unfortunately, report having had any "luck" with this pair. They laid several nests, each filled with 4-6 eggs, but after having laid the eggs there was very little time spent by either parent in the nest; it was totally abandoned. Nests were constructed in the higher branches of the evergreens—open and cup-like in shape—and built of hay and the longer pieces of grasses provided. Both the male and the female were quite settled when I needed to enter the aviary to replenish food or water, yet I spent as little time as possible with or near the birds.

In November of 2011 the male competed in the National Cage Bird Show in Kansas City, Missouri and placed 1st in the Finch/Softbill Division under NFSS Panel Judge Laura Tinker and also won the Val Clear Award for "Best Softbill". He was perfectly calm and even sang a little while in the show cage those days during the competition. I watched him closely throughout the weekend for any signs of obvious distress but he surprisingly seemed quite "at home"!

Unfortunately during the late autumn of 2012 we discovered the hen dead on the floor of the aviary without any prior signs or warning of problems or illness. Until we're able to locate another female, any possible breeding programs with the Mesias is on "hold". I continue to read anything available about the species in hopes of eventually locating another hen and am contemplating purchasing an incubator into which I could place any eggs laid by the pair.

One additional problem reported as "quite common" with the Mesias is a constant cleaning of the nest—removing any item they believe shouldn't be there. This, unfortunately, can include the metal leg bands breeders might place on babies, especially if the babies are banded at an age when insufficient feathers are available to cover or disguise the leg bands. So, even if I decided to allow the pair to incubate the eggs, I would definitely plan on hand-feeding any hatchlings.

Mesias do not have crops, food moves directly to the stomach and hand-feeding will no doubt be "tricky" at best. Feedings will also need to occur at more frequent intervals with less time between feedings. While we use fosters in some instances, as necessary, we prefer to allow breeding pairs a "chance" to learn to raise their own as it obviously results in their offspring being more likely to independently raise their own young. Fostering with the Mesias, however, is not an option for us with the current species we have.

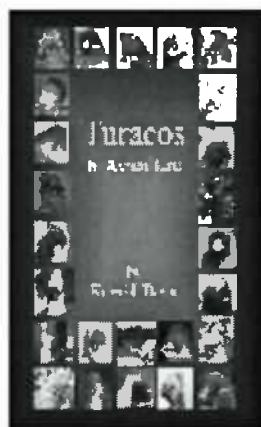
They are a lovely bird and fairly easy to care for, especially if you're already caring for other Softbills. Because of their size and the fact they are such avid fruit-eaters, in my opinion they are probably not a good option for someone keeping birds in smaller cages in their home, as they do require an enclosure larger in size and the cage can quickly become quite soiled.

I hope the NEXT article I write about this species includes experiences with a new hen and subsequent chicks! Wish me luck—I'm probably going to need it!

Rebecca Mikel

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rebecca serves as the NFSS Executive Secretary. She and her husband, Andrew, reside in SW Michigan where they own/operate Lakeside Aviaries. They keep a wide variety of Finches, Softbills, and several Australian Grass Keets. Their personal interests lie with softbills and they currently have Honeycreepers, Tanagers, Yuhinis, Mesias, European Blackbirds, European Black-capped Warblers, White Eyes, and Troupials.



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by Kateri J. Davis

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BLACK-HOODED RED SISKIN®

Carduelis cucullata

by Ron Castaner

Former NFSS President

AFA South Florida Regional Director

Email: finches@bellsouth.net



THE RED SISKIN HAS BEEN PROTECTED by the Venezuelan government since the 1940s, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) since 1975, and has been listed as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service since 1976.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service consider any captive-bred siskin (including offspring or any hybridized young) as protected under the Endangered Species Act.

In the United States it is unlawful to buy or sell these birds within or across state lines without a captive-bred wildlife-endangered species permit issued by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife. Individual states may require state-endangered species or other permits as well.

The Venezuelan Black-hooded Red Siskin (*Carduelis cucullata*) is four inches in length. The male (above) has a beautiful, visual, deep rich vermilion (red) plumage on its breast, belly, and undertail coverts.



BLACK-HOODED SISKIN MALE (L) AND FEMALE (R) PAIR

Red also appears on the male's rump, uppertail coverts, wing bars, and on the back of the neck where it blends into gray on the back. The head, chin, throat, flight feathers, and tail are black. White appears around the vent, underwing coverts, and legs.



The adult female holds all similar markings as the male with the exception of the black hood. The red coloring on the female only appears on the upper portion of the breast, and on the wing bars, rump, and sometimes the undertail coverts. Juveniles are all gray and begin to molt their plumage at 3-4 months.

As the birds age the red color deepens. No color food is needed with these birds; their coloring never fades! This is the reason they are so sought after by canary fanciers. The red gene is bred into canaries and used to enhance the color (red factor) or for colorbred lines.

Females build their nests in canary wicker baskets or freelance building in greenery. Nesting materials include dry fine grass, grass rootlets, burlap, and coco fiber. The outside of the nest would be constructed with coarse material first, and then the birds will line the inside with the softer materials. The female does all the work.

Usually 3-4 eggs are laid. The male may remain with the female through incubation and hatching. After the eggs hatch it is advised to remove the male if either bird begins to show any signs of aggression. Eggs are white in color and will hatch after 12-14 days (depending on when the female began incubation). Siskin chicks are quite small. Their begging posture is head held upright and beaks wide open. Peeps can be barely heard the first few days. Their begging sounds are more noticeable after day 4. At 4-5 days the hen stops sitting.

At this time precautions should be taken to ensure the chicks are well-fed before the lights go out and that the room remains warm (about 70 degrees). The hen does all the feeding. Egg food, rearing formula, dried canary or finch egg food, and soaked Siskin mix should be provided. At 6 days old the chicks can be closed banded with NFSS size C bands. By 12 days the chicks are fully feathered.



14-DAY-OLD BABY

After the clutch and rearing cycle is completed, remove the offspring into a free flight. Reintroduce the male and a new cycle will begin. A good standard seed mix for this species consists of Niger/Thistle Seed 31%, Canary Grass Seed 31%, Hulled Oats 15%, Perennial Ryegrass 10%, German/Yellow Millet 5%, Sesame Seed (unhulled) 5%, Flax Seed 2.6%, Canola Rape Seed 2.6%, Hemp Seed 2.4% and Teazle Seed 4%.

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National Cage Bird Show Photos

THE 2012 NATIONAL CAGE BIRD SHOW was held November 15-17, 2012 at the Millennium Hotel in St. Louis, Missouri. Due to space we are not able to include the hundreds of pictures taken but below are a few of the winners. I attempted to get all of the Top 10 in the Finch Division with an entry of 190 birds but hope everyone will forgive me if I did not manage. The first picture is the arch welcoming you to St. Louis and the second is the show room.

UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED, ALL PHOTOS ARE BY BOB PEERS



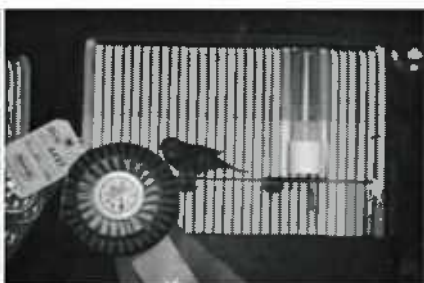
ST. LOUIS ARCH



SHOW HALL



LIGHTBACK ZEBRA, 1ST PLACE
TOP 10 FINCH DIVISION
OWNED BY SALLY HUNTINGTON



PEKIN ROBIN, 2ND PLACE
TOP 10 FINCH DIVISION
OWNED BY SALLY HUNTINGTON



PHOTO BY DANNY MALDONADO

SHAFTTAIL, 3RD PLACE, AND
BEST UNFLIGHTED SHAFTTAIL
OWNED BY VINCE MOASE



FAWN SELF SOCIETY, 4TH PLACE
TOP 10 FINCH DIVISION
OWNED BY CHERYL BURNS

National Cage Bird Show Photos

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RH GOULDIAN FINCH, 5TH PLACE
TOP 10 FINCH DIVISION
OWNED BY JULIE LAWSON



PHOTO BY **DANNY MALDONADO**
EURO GOLDFINCH, 6TH PLACE
OWNED BY JOE GAGLIO
[L] JOE, [R] LAURA BEWLEY



RED-HEADED PARROT FINCH, 7TH PLACE
TOP 10 FINCH DIVISION
OWNED BY LISA MURPHY
[L] LAURA BEWLEY, [R] LISA

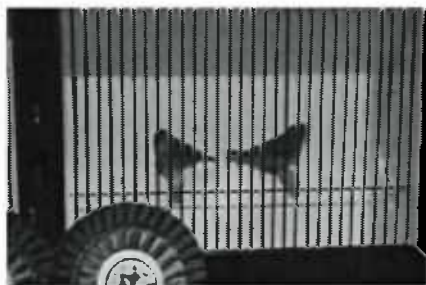


PHOTO BY **DANNY MALDONADO**
GOLD-BREASTED WAXBILLS, 8TH PLACE
TOP 10 FINCH DIVISION
OWNED BY VINCE / KENDRA MOASE



CRIMSON PILEATED FINCH, 9TH PLACE
TOP 10 FINCH DIVISION
OWNED BY REBECCA MIKEL
[L] LAURA BEWLEY, [R] REBECCA



BLACK-HEADED ZEBRA, 10TH PLACE
TOP 10 FINCH DIVISION
OWNED BY JANET EDMONDS
ROSETTES MAKE HIM FEEL NEGLECTED
AND HE WANTS YOUR ATTENTION.

National Cage Bird Show Photos

UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED, ALL PHOTOS ARE BY BOB PEERS



**MASKED GRASSFINCH
JUDGE'S SPECIAL, FINCH DIVISION
OWNED BY VINCE HUNTINGTON
[L] LAURA BEWLEY, [R] VINCE**



**MASKED GRASSFINCH, SHAFTTAIL
[L-R] KENDRA MOASE,
LAURA BEWLEY, VINCE MOASE**



**SALLY HUNTINGTON BEING PRESENTED
HIGGINS "BEST FINCH AWARD"
[L-R] LAURA BEWLEY, VINCE AND SALLY
HUNTINGTON, UNKNOWN HIGGINS REP.**



**ARE THEY HAVING FUN?
[L-R] JANET EDMONDS, LAURA WATKINS,
SALLY PORTER**



**[L-R] CHERYL BURNS,
4TH V.P. SALLY HUNTINGTON**



DENNIS BURHANS

The Adorable Mousebird

by Kateri J. Davis



BLUE-NAPED MOUSEBIRD

ALL PHOTOS BY OWNER, KATERI DAVIS

ONE OF THE SOFTBILL SPECIES GROUPS focused on in the NFSS Finch and Softbill Save Program (FSS) is the Mousebird. Although the number of participants is small at this time, all are dedicated to ensuring that these delightful birds do not disappear quietly from aviculture like so many other softbill species.

Mousebirds are truly wonderful birds and deserve a place in the future of aviculture. They make fine subjects for the aviary or home as pet birds, and they mix well with other species. Unfortunately there are only a few Mousebird breeders right now. This article will hopefully serve as an introduction to these birds and spark the interest of more bird lovers.

Another name for Mousebirds is colies, but this name, coly, is most frequently seen in older references. Six species combine to form a unique family *Coliidae*, and unique order *Coliiformes*; they are the only members.

All Mousebirds are closely related and easily recognized; all share a common body shape and behavior patterns. They are about the size of a small lovebird with brownish or grayish plumage, and very long, stiff, pointed tail. They have a crest which can be raised or lowered at will and is usually erect. They have large pamprodactylous feet, meaning they can point all four toes forward, enabling them to be quite acrobatic, even hanging upside down and twirling from one toe.

Mousebirds are not closely related to any other bird species. Fossil evidence points to a possible distant relationship to the order Piciformes (woodpeckers, barbets, and toucans).

THE MOUSEBIRD SPECIES: Four of the six species of Mousebirds are available in the United States. The White-backed (*C. colius*) (shown here) are the most commonly found. The Speckled (*Colius striatus*), Blue-Naped (*Urocolius macrourus*), and Red-Faced (*Urocolius indicus*) are in U.S. aviculture but in very small numbers. The White-headed (*Colius leucocephalus*) is extremely rare, if it exists at all, in private aviculture or zoo collections; the Red-backed (*C. castanotus*) was never imported. White-backs are small, smooth-feathered, grayish Mouse-birds with an "Oreo" black-and-white striping on the back and dark maroon rump. They replaced the Speckled



as the most numerous Mousebird in U.S. aviculture when several White-backed groups were first imported about ten years ago. Several aviculturists concentrated on breeding them and found the birds eager to cooperate, becoming more popular due to prettier coloration and larger clutch sizes. Speckled Mousebirds (*Colius striatus*), known as Bar-breasted or Striated, are rare.

SPECKLED MOUSEBIRD ↓



There are 17 Speckled subspecies, differing mainly in color of the legs, eyes, throat, and cheek patches or ear coverts. They have reddish-brown body plumage with dark barrings and a very wide, long, stiff tail. Their feathering is soft and easily damaged. They have a soft chattering call and are the most

vocal of the three species. Their fluffy appearance and shaggy crest gives them an "I just woke up" look.

Blue-naped Mousebirds (*Urocolius macrourus*) are the most colorful species with a brilliant turquoise-colored nape, deep red, bare skin around the eyes and bill, and bluish-gray plumage. Their feathering is smoother, and their crests skinnier and higher than the Speckled. Blue-Napes' tails are much skinnier than Speckleds' but just as stiff and long. Their calls are melodic, usually consisting of a delightful one-note whistle.

RED-FACED MOUSEBIRDS ↓ (*Urocolius indicus*) are closely related to Blue-



napes and look similar. Their smooth plumage has a greenish cast to it, and their crests are shaggier and not as tall as the Blue-napes'. They have more pronounced red around the face and

bill but lack the blue nape. They also have a melodic call, usually with three notes to it.



← **JUVENILE
WHITE-BACK
MOUSEBIRD
SHOWING
BACK COLORS**

There are many reasons why Mousebirds make interesting avicultural subjects as aviary birds and as pets. Their personalities, movements, and behaviors cause them to stand out in the avian world despite their lack of gaudy colors or their inability to mimic. Mousebirds, especially the Speckleds, have an inquisitive, bold nature and always need to be aware of what is going on around them. They are hardy, with few disease problems, and live an average of eight to ten years in captivity.

Their perching style is unique. Instead of standing erect on a perch, they squat on it usually with their bellies touching, and when hopping on the ground, their legs splay out, and they use their hocks for balance. They prefer to hang from branches, perches, or wire of cages. This is not the same type of hanging parrots or bats do; Mousebirds hang tail down with feet at shoulder level or higher, as if they cannot finish a pull-up.

At night, they roost in this manner and groups will cluster, belly-to-belly, for warmth. Mousebirds have a difficult time regulating their body temperatures so, in the wild, this clustering activity helps them regulate, and they will naturally go into a torpor state in lower environmental temperatures in which their metabolic rate and body temperature is severely lowered to save energy. Their metabolic rate can be reduced by an amazing 90%! If the Mousebirds are healthy and in good condition, they will revive by morning and continue normal activities. Only a few other bird species, such as hummingbirds, can enter this type of torpor state. In captivity it is wise to give supplemental heat if kept outdoors in harsher weather conditions.

Mousebirds are highly gregarious, staying in flocks year-round and forming tight bonds to other flock members. They spend a lot of time allopreening (grooming each other), allofeeding, playing, and following one another around. Because they are so social, aviary Mousebirds do best kept in pairs or groups. Their social activities are very interesting and entertaining.

Mousebirds are very aggressive to strange Mousebirds, so care must be taken by the aviculturist when introducing new birds to established flocks. Any time birds have been separated from the others for a time, they need to be carefully introduced again. If there is not enough room in the enclosure for all the Mousebirds to feel secure, especially when a pair wants to breed, they may even become aggressive to other flock members. Mousebird aggression is usually violent, bloody, and often fatal within a short time if not stopped. They will attack the toes and tails first and will often gang-up on the victim.

Rarely are Mousebirds aggressive to other bird species in aviary situations and can easily be housed with other non-aggressive species from finches to toucans. Their curiosity may cause problems with other species that want to breed as the Mousebirds will want to investigate all activities. They have a tendency to steal nesting material from other birds to make their own nests and have been known to occasionally eat small nestlings. Mousebirds that are raised as pet birds will usually stay tame if put into aviary settings, coming to land on shoulders and backs to cuddle with their human friends.

Mousebirds are undemanding breeders in captivity, and breeding takes place year-round in most areas. Nesting sites and materials used are varied, ranging from covered baskets to open boxes, grass to feathers. Two to three eggs are usually laid, and both parents incubate and raise the young, with other flock members helping as well. Two females will sometimes lay eggs in the same nest. Chicks are semi-precocial, growing rapidly and are totally feathered and weaned within a month. To hand-raise a pet Mousebird, pull the chick from the nest when it is around seven days old, about the time the chick would leave the nest naturally. Only a week or so of hand-feeding is required to have an extremely lovable pet bird.

Feeding Mousebirds is simple. They eat the standard softbill fare: chopped fruit and vegetables. Mousebirds are not picky and eat a large amount for such small birds, generally one-half a cup of food per bird daily. A variety of fresh fruits and vegetables such as pears, papaya, bananas, apples, zucchini squash, and chard should be fed with small soaked and/or dry softbill pelleted food. Live food, such as mealworms and waxworms, can be offered but it is not required for healthy birds or breeding. Being herbivores, they may destroy some live plants, but giving more greens in their food will keep this to a minimum; their reputation as plant destroyers is overblown.

HOUSEHOLD PET MOUSEBIRDS

There are very few softbills that make good pet birds, and Mousebirds are number one. Like many parrots, they make great pets for the home. They are able to live in cages in homes or apartments easily and are quiet, which makes the neighbors happy too. They do not chew on wood, plus do not have feather dust to irritate allergies.

Pet Mousebirds rarely bite, and when they do, damage is minimal and the skin is usually not broken. Mousebird prices range from \$100.00 to \$300.00, depending on the species and whether or not hand-raised. If the bird is to be a pet, it is best to purchase a young, hand-raised, well-socialized bird. Only one pet Mousebird per household is wise so the bird will transfer its need for social interaction to the human owner.

Unlike many parrots, Mousebirds generally bond to the whole family instead of just one individual, since, in the wild, they have such close relationships to their whole flock, and the human family is their flock.

Pet Mousebirds crave petting, and the favorite place for a pet Mousebird to be is hanging somewhere on its owner. They make good pets for a novice bird person or an older child (under parent's supervision, of course). Housing a Mousebird takes planning because of two things: their tails and their feces. A cockatiel-sized cage or larger is recommended because their tails are so long, stiff, and fragile that if they hit the sides of the cage frequently, they will become ragged. They naturally hang on the sides of the wire walls so they should be encouraged to perch and hang in the center by utilizing perches and toys such as strings of colorful beads. Also, hanging on the side of the cage causes feces to shoot out of the cage.

Mousebirds are softbills, and their feces are loose and voluminous. This is their worst fault! Unfortunately Mousebirds are messy birds to care for in the house. Perches can be arranged in the cage so that the bird's vent will be positioned so the feces shoot downward. They are not neat either and think nothing of jumping into their food bowl, especially at feeding time. Cages need to be rimmed with a cleanable surface, and, of course, cages must be cleaned frequently. Dealing with the feces-control problem is a small price to pay though for such a loving avian family member.



← **VERY RARE 8-DAY-OLD
WHITE-HEAD MOUSEBIRD**

Kateri Davis lives with her husband and daughter in Oregon, U.S. Together they run the Davis Lund Aviaries where they specialize in raising and breeding softbill birds, from honeycreepers to hornbills. She has kept and bred five of the six Mousebird species, and ships offspring around the United States to zoos and other private aviculturists. Kateri is the author of the books **MOUSEBIRDS IN AVICULTURE** and **TURACOS IN AVICULTURE**.

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The Magnificent Cuban Melodious

A Point of View

by Cheryl Burns



CUBAN MELODIOUS FINCH



ALL PHOTOS BY OWNER, CHERYL BURNS

MY FIRST ENCOUNTER with the Cuban Melodious Finch was in the Bird Sale Room at the 2005 National Cage Bird Show in Dallas, Texas. I was poking around through the numerous canaries for sale in search of a finch or two and discovered two little drab olive-green birds. I asked about them and was told they were Cuban Melodious hens. I was intrigued by them and something about their behavior caught my attention. By the end of the show I came home with one of the little hens for \$65 and have often wished I had bought the other as well. This was one of the best investments in my history of keeping birds and it started a love of the species that continues to this day.

From this one little bird, I have kept and raised several of the *tiaris canora* in my aviary. I am not an expert by far, but have discovered that my experience is above average in that I have kept several pairs over the years and have successfully raised a few chicks. Because I keep a small aviary, I have had the opportunity to observe the birds in my keeping and become familiar with their behaviors.

The *tiaris canora* is known by many names including the Cuban Grassquit, the Cuban Finch, Tomeguin del Pinar, and Senserenico. The popular name in the United States is the Cuban Melodious Finch but it can be found for sale under the popular Spanish name of Tomeguín del Pinar or just Tomeguín in the online classifieds.

The Cuban Melodious Finch comes from Cuba, Bahamas, and the Turks and Caicos Islands. Even though the populations have declined in Cuba and no formal counts or studies have been conducted, the species is considered of "Least Concern" by Birdlife International. In one account, I read their population decline due to capture for pets by the local people has come to the attention of local Cuban authorities. For the most part, little is written or observed about these birds in the wild and their true status is unknown.

Several commentaries describe the Cuban Melodious as being from 3.5 inches to 4.5 inches. After going to my aviary and catching a none-too-pleased Cuban Melodious male, I discovered that my selected specimen measures 3.5 inches from the tip of the beak to the tip of the tail. The species is found all over the island of Cuba in coastal shrubbery, tropical forest, pine forest, and thickets near cultivated fields and in similar environment in the Bahamas and the Turks and Caicos Islands.

These birds are quite active and curious about everything around them. Both the male and the female sing with the male's song being more elaborate. They are always busy flying about the cage and are entertaining to watch. Pairs can often be seen sitting together on a perch preening each other as they relax.

Cuban Melodious will eat a variety of foods and are easy to keep. Some of my favorite aviary vignettes are a little Cuban Melodious chasing a green pea around the cage floor on "frozen veggie day" or excitedly grabbing a piece of millet on "seed day". A quality seed mix supplemented with fruits, vegetables, greens, bird bread, egg food, and some meal worms is all they need for a good diet. I also supply calcium and mineral supplements as well as plenty of fresh water.

In aviculture these birds are kept around the world including Australia, South Africa, Europe, the United Kingdom, and throughout North America. They are hardy birds and are easy to keep in a variety of captive environments. The Australian aviculturists are some of the most successful at Cuban Melodious Finch husbandry and have kept the species in their aviaries for at least 40-50 years. The Aussies also export the species from time to time and some of these birds are in U.S. aviculturists' care now.

One doesn't read too much on the Cuban Melodious Finch before learning the species can be extremely aggressive. In the wild, male birds have been observed defending nesting territories and this natural instinct transfers into their behavior in captivity. I consistently hear how aggressive these birds are to each other and even other species. "My advice is to treat every pair as individuals whose temper must be sampled and not divined"; Robin Restall in FINCHES AND OTHER SEED-EATING BIRDS. Australian aviculturist Graham Bull echoes this sentiment in several comments in his article published in AUSTRALIAN AVIARY LIFE magazine (Nov-Dec 2009).

My personal history with the bird is that they are aggressive to their own species and relatively meek with other species. I have kept my Cuban Melodious with Society finches, a very non-aggressive Saffron Finch, and some Yellow-legged Honey Creepers. (Please note that these were non-breeding situations and might not have been effective in breeding situations.)

Cuban Melodious males will constantly bicker and fuss if they can see each other. One particularly determined male bird of mine hung himself because he could see another male by sticking his head through the bars of his cage. I had another male Cuban Melodious that killed one hen and injured another that I set him up with in a cage with Societies. My thought was that the Societies would reduce the aggressiveness but in retrospect, that aggressiveness might have increased because of the other birds in the cage.

The females also can be aggressive to each other, especially if a male is introduced in the cage. This seems to be limited to chasing and feather plucking, but I separate the hens if they begin this behavior. The trick is to manage the situation wisely and avoid any injuries. Separate cages and good visual barriers are excellent tools. The aggression is really a small part of keeping this species as long as you realize it exists, respect it and manage it. It is rarely a concern in my aviary.

Even though they are small, they prefer larger cages. I have successfully kept and bred them in 18" by 24" breeder cages, but now keep one pair in 36" by 18" cages. Once a pair of Cuban Melodious decides to lay and hatch chicks, they are good parents. Be prepared to suffer through a certain amount of egg tossing and chick tossing until they settle down.

I found that providing some greenery around the nesting area helps the birds feel safer. Some pairs never seemed to settle down and I suspect that if I had been able to provide larger cages or a flight, they might have been comfortable enough to produce.

The Cuban Melodious will build a natural nest out of coco fiber, jute and other nesting materials or they will build in a standard nest box. The nests that my pairs have built have one or two openings and two compartments. One compartment is near the door and a second is behind it. I found this to be true in both the natural nests which had two entries and the nest boxes which sometimes had only one entry. The nests stay very clean and will be used multiple times if allowed.

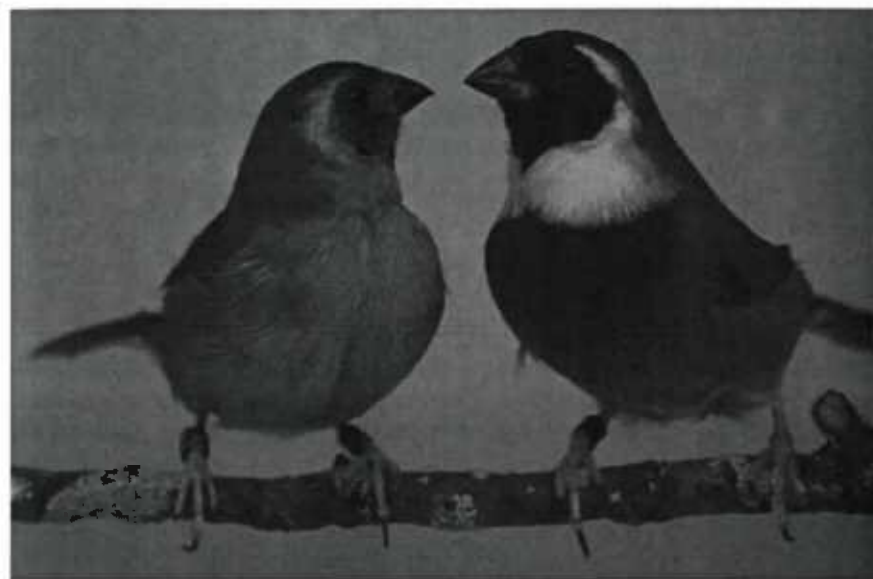
The hen lays a clutch of 2-4 eggs that are white with some brown spots on the wide end of the egg. You may not realize the pair has eggs because the hen will quickly come out of the nest when someone enters the aviary. It takes close observation to realize there are eggs in the nest. Several of my pairs tolerate me checking the nest for eggs and chicks if I wait for the hen to come out and then quickly check inside the nest. This might have been the cause for some of the egg or chick tossing, but I didn't find a regular correlation between the two because some would toss without the nest checks.

When the chicks fledge, it is critical to be very observant. I have had recent fledglings wiggle through the bottom of the cage bars and found them begging to be fed from the outside of the cage. This is remedied by putting a barrier around the inside bottom of the cage where the fledglings seem to be inclined to hang out. The other danger is to watch the parents' behavior with the just-fledged chicks. My pairs were fine with their chicks even when the male chicks began showing their adult plumage. However, many aviculturists will provide accounts of the parents, especially the fathers, trying to drive out the chicks or the male chicks starting to show adult colors.

There is much discussion between aviculturists about how long the Cuban Melodious will breed. Common consensus seems to be they breed two to four years at best. I found this to be true with my own pairs breeding well for a couple of years and my original hen having her last chicks in her fourth year. The older pairs continue to build nests and lay eggs but they have not produced any chicks.

I want to include a couple cautionary notes for anyone keeping Cuban Melodious in their aviaries. I have found two consistent dangers for these birds and hope to save others from what I learned the hard way.

With my first pairs I used the tubular woven finch nests. I since have learned these are very dangerous and not just to the Cuban Melodious. I lost a couple males that somehow caught their toenail in the nest and they beat themselves to death. I had a female with a permanently injured wing from the same situation. I never figured out how the birds did this, especially when one bird's foot easily slipped out of the woven nest when I removed his body. I simply changed over to either natural nests or a traditional nest box.



CUBAN MELODIOUS PAIR

Another thing to watch with the Cuban Melodious is toenails. I provide a variety of perches with bark, some cement perches, and other natural branches. My Societies never need a toenail trim but I have to perform Cuban Melodious toenail torture periodically in order to keep the nails at a safe length. Don't be surprised if the birds "freeze" or play dead when you catch them. This is a common Cuban Melodious reaction intended to provoke a heart attack of the person holding the bird.

I have shown several of my Cuban Melodious finches in NFSS shows and they do quite well when in condition.

A male that I raised placed on top bench several times and even one of my hens finished well although it is difficult to keep these birds in condition during warm Texas climate. They are quite soft feathered and I have had them drop every tail feather when catching one to go to the show. When in good show condition it is a bird hard to beat as they tend to adapt well to the show cage. (**Note:** the Cuban Melodious Standard is in the process of being approved and will soon be available.)

I hope this species continues to be kept in aviculture. While it can be difficult to keep pairs and offspring housed separately, it is well worth the effort. These birds are well-suited for captivity and make outstanding birds for most collections as long as their needs are taken into consideration. The rewards earned by keeping this species definitely outweigh any challenges.

I still have Mojita, the original Cuban Melodious hen that started my love of this species. I know she won't be with me much longer as she recently suffered some sort of health issue that has reduced her ability to perch. She still gets around the cage well and is carefully watched over by her faithful mate. Mojita has taken on the uncharacteristic habit of sleeping in her nest when she is tired and to roost for the night – something I never saw her do as a younger bird. I have noticed her mate joins her and I find this yet another charming characteristic that endears me to this wonderful little bird. I am so glad I found her and hope to continue Mojita's Cuban Melodious legacy for many years to come.

RESOURCES FOR THIS ARTICLE

Cuban Grassquit – The Tiaris Canora by Graham Bull, *Aviary Life*, Issue 05
Nov.-Dec.2009

(Back Issue available at www.aviarylife.com.au)

Field Guide to the Birds of Cuba by Orlando H. Garrido and Arturo Kirkconnell

Birds of the Caribbean Roger Tory Peterson *Field Guide* by James Bond

Finches and Other Seed-eating Birds by Robin L. Restall

Finches and Soft-billed Birds by Henry Bates and Robert Busenbark

About the Author

Cheryl Burns lives in Keller, Texas. She earned her B.A. from Abilene Christian University. She has been a pet bird owner and hobby breeder for over 20 years and has served as a board member or other officer in numerous organizations. She has had articles published in many publications, including *Bird Talk* and *Watchbird*. She shows in parrot and finch divisions, placing best in division on top bench numerous times and has won best in show in parrots and finches several times. She also earned the NFSS Champion Exhibitor Award in 2009, 2010, and 2011. She currently serves as NFSS Region 4 Vice President. Cheryl keeps Conures, Pionus, Caiques, show-quality Society Finches, Cuban Melodious Finches, and Saffron Finches, and had Honey Creepers in the past.

The Mutation Gouldian Finch

by Tiffany Park

MY ARTICLE IN THE NOV/DEC 2012 JOURNAL covered the Wild-type Gouldian. In this article I will discuss a variety of mutations of the Gouldian Finch that exist in captivity. *Please note: I will not be addressing mutations which are either not widely available in the United States yet (e.g. Lutino, Albino), not present in the states due to import restrictions (e.g., Australian Yellow, Australian Dilute), or not accepted yet as "heritable" mutations (e.g., "Blue-Head," "Blue-breast," "Melanistic," "SeaGreen and/or ParBlue", etc).*

In terms of possible colors, Gouldian *hens* come in four different visual body colors: Green, Yellow, Blue, and Silver. Gouldian *cocks* come in six different body colors: Green, "Dilute" Green, Yellow, Blue, "Pastel" Blue, and Silver. Briefly, the reason cocks come in more colors is due to the sex-linked Pastel gene. This will be explained later.

In an effort to maintain a modicum of consistency among Gouldian breeders and enthusiasts alike, I will use the European Standard Nomenclature when referring to Gouldian mutations. There have been a number of lay terms that have risen in the United States to describe the various phenotypes of mutations which can lead to confusion when trying to understand a bird's genotype. This breaks the mutations down into what I would consider four simple categories:

- **Pastel**
- **Blue**
- **Pastel + Blue Combinations**
- **Breast Color Mutations**

Pastel (SF Pastel Green, DF Pastel Green)

The "Pastel" gene is sex-linked (located on the Z chromosome) and incompletely dominant to the genes responsible for the green wild-type bird. You can think of "Incomplete Dominance" as the genes mixing cohesively together, with neither being dominant over the other, blending smoothly, like mixing red and white paint together to produce pink-colored paint. It is a sex-linked gene, which means cocks can be "Single-Factor" (SF) or "Double-Factor" (DF) for this Pastel gene while hens can only be SF with complete expression.

The Pastel gene works by interfering with black pigment present in the feather, called "eumelanin," so any area which would normally be black on a green bird appears smokey gray or white/off-white. This is why genetically black-headed birds fully expressing the Pastel gene appear to have white or near-white heads. The absence of eumelanin also prevents structural blue color, turning the bird yellow.

Hens, by default (being ZY genetically) can only be SF; the presence of the Pastel gene will always result in the total inhibition of melanin producing a visually yellow bird. The full name for this is "SF Pastel Green Hen", because the Pastel is taking place on a bird that is of Green body background.

SF Pastel Green Cocks with a Purple Breast are also called "Dilutes" in the United States. This can be confusing because there is a separate autosomal recessive mutation referred to as "Dilute" in other countries. PB SF Pastel Green Cocks are a blend of Green + Yellow color, resulting in a shade that varies between Lemon-Lime to Lime-Green on the back.

LEFT TO RIGHT: TWO VARIATIONS OF PB SF PASTEL GREEN COCKS, RH PB SF PASTEL GREEN HEN, BH WB SF PASTEL GREEN HEN (NOTE THE BH OF THE HEN IS ACTUALLY WHITE DUE TO THE SUPPRESSION OF MELANIN BY THE PASTEL GENE).



If a cock is Lilac or White Breast and SF Pastel Green, they will appear visually yellow in color. This is not entirely understood but it may have something to do with the Lilac and/or White Breast further interacting on feather melanins.

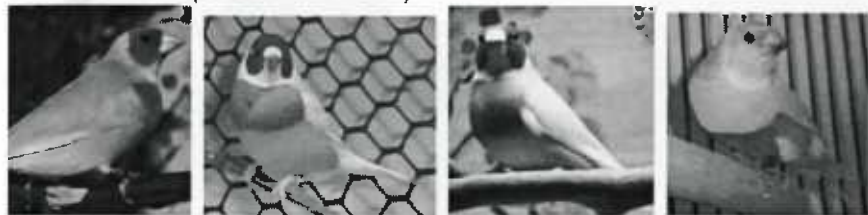
LEFT TO RIGHT: WB SF PASTEL GREEN AND LB SF PASTEL GREEN COCKS



When a cock is DF for the Pastel gene he will appear yellow in body color, regardless of his breast color. Due to the fact a PB SF Pastel Green Male is visually "dilute", it goes without saying that a visually yellow purple-breasted bird can only genetically be DF. These are generally referred to in the states as "DF Yellow Males."

Note: Sometimes PB DF Pastel Green Males will appear a little "dirtier" in color than WB or LB DFs, and maybe have more prominent coloration behind the mask, but if they're PB you can safely assume they are DF!

LEFT TO RIGHT: OH PB DF PASTEL GREEN, RH PB DF PASTEL GREEN, RH LB DF PASTEL GREEN, BH LB DF PASTEL GREEN (NOTE HEAD COLOR AGAIN)



A lot of people ask me how to tell the difference between a SF Pastel Green and DF Pastel Green that is WB or LB. You can typically make an educated guess by checking the color of his bib. In a SF male this will appear grey in color, in a DF bird it will be very nearly white because the two Pastel genes are completely blocking the expression of black pigment. Also, the turquoise band behind the mask of SF Pastel Greens tends to be much brighter/evident in SFs than in DFs.

The other question I encounter often relates to sexing WB and LB Pastel Green birds. The easiest way to do this is by looking at the beak. Mature males will have a "lipstick" kissed look at the tips of their beaks, whereas females will have color flushed throughout the beak. Compare the beaks of the males above to those of the two hens pictured earlier.

Blue Body

Blue Body is an autosomal recessive gene which suppresses the expression of carotenoid (red and yellow) pigments in the bird's feathers and beak. The elimination of yellow pigment in the feathers leaves only structural blue which is why the bird appears blue in color to our eyes, and why the normally vividly yellow underbelly is replaced with a pale beige color. The pathway doesn't appear to be wholly broken, however, because Red- and Orange-head birds still deposit some degree of pigment into their head feathers, but it is markedly reduced to where you cannot distinguish Red from Orange visually.

It appears, instead, as a Salmon to Beige or Sand color, which generally is related to breast color (PB birds will have more Salmon-colored heads, whereas LB and WB birds will have more Beige- or Sand-colored heads). Both cocks and hens can be homozygous (DF) and express the color blue or heterozygous (SF) and be "split" for blue body.

There is no reliable method of visually identifying birds that are carriers for blue. The only way to know for sure is if the bird was produced from a visually blue bird, or if the bird has produced blue offspring.

Left to right:

RH PB Blue Male, RH LB Blue Male (note lighter head color), BH PB Blue Hen



Pastel Blue (SF Pastel Blue, DF Pastel Blue)

SF Pastel Blue describes a bird that is genetically blue-bodied and carries a single copy of the Pastel gene. Since females, again, can only be SF for the Pastel gene, SF Pastel Blue females will always be visually "Silver", and this is how the general population refers to them. SF Pastel Blue cocks are exactly as their name describes: genetically blue-bodied cocks that are SF for the Pastel gene.

In the United States, SF Pastel Blues that are purple-breasted are generally referred to as "Pastel" or "Pastel Blue"; this color only occurs in *purple-breasted* cocks. Because the single Pastel gene only partially masks green body, black pigmentation, and structural blue color, the overall look of the bird is a light powdery-blue color. As with SF Pastel Green cocks, SF Pastel Blue males that are white or lilac breast will not appear "Pastel Blue" but will instead appear visually Silver in body color. They are identifiable as SF Pastel Blues in much the same way SF Pastel Greens are identified: the amount of turquoise present in the band around the mask and the color in the bib.

As with SF Pastel Greens, the normally black area(s) on the bird will appear grey (as opposed to white), so Black-headed SF Pastel Blue cocks will have grey heads, and the normally black bib of Red/Orange-headed SF cocks will be grey. Also, because the blue genes suppress the expression of red and orange, any areas of the bird which would normally be red or orange (such as the head or also yellow belly of the bird) will appear salmon or off-white, respectively.

LEFT TO RIGHT: RH PB SF Pastel Blue Cock, BH LB SF Pastel Blue Cock,
RH PB SF Pastel Blue Hen, BH WB SF Pastel Blue Hen



DF Pastel Blue - aka Silver Bodied (Males)

DF Pastel Blue refers to genetically blue-bodied cocks who are also DF for the Pastel gene. The result is an all-over Silver body color, so most people call these birds "Silver" males. It is easy to understand why these birds appear silver by going back to previous discussion of what colors suppress others. The Pastel gene masks structural blue and eumelanin and the blue gene suppresses red and orange/yellow leaving the bird with nearly all colors inhibited, and the entire body of the bird appears grey to "silver" in color. The chest color is not affected and Red- or Orange-headed birds will have salmon-colored (not white) heads. In order to achieve a bird which is all, or very nearly all-white, you would need to produce a Black-headed, white-breasted, SF or DF Pastel Blue Cock or a Black-headed, White-breasted, SF Pastel Blue hen.

RH PB DF PASTEL BLUE COCK



Tiffany Park is a graduate of Florida State University with a degree in Biological Sciences. She is a breeder and exhibitor of Gouldian Finches, Owl Finches, Blue Face Parrot Finches and Self Society Finches. She has been breeding Gouldians for the past 6 years and showing them for the past 4 years. She currently lives in Bethesda, MD.

For more information, you can visit her website at www.gouldiansgalore.com

2013 GENERAL ELECTION

Stay tuned for additional information coming in the May/June issue regarding the upcoming election process. Be thinking about whether you are interested in running for a position on the NFSS Board of Directors or other position.



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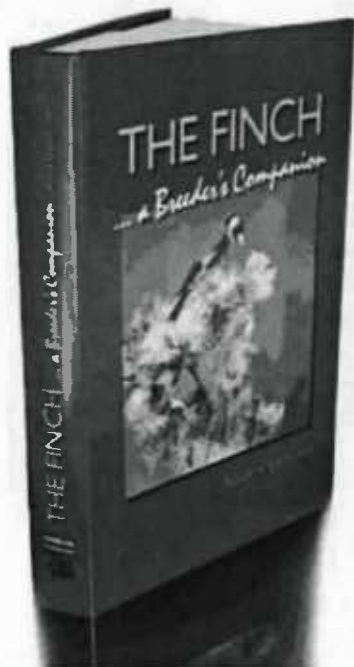
www.foreignbirdleague.com



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www.savethegouldian.org

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The National Finch and Softbill Society is proud of its affiliated clubs and societies. If you are not one of our clubs, we invite you to affiliate and become part of NFSS. A few benefits we offer are a bi-monthly journal; free listings in the journal; opportunity to join one of our programs to promote aviculture and preservation of all birds; plastic and aluminum closed bands; professional panel of sanctioned judges; and clubs can purchase Rosettes, Plaques with NFSS Logo, and show and breeder awards.

NOTICE: Affiliations Were Due March 1, 2013. Club and event information will not appear in the May/Jun issue for unpaid affiliates.

CALIFORNIA

Central California Cage Bird Club

<http://www.mycbbc.org>

Meetings—3rd Sunday at Mancini Hall Modesto, 718 Tuolomne Blvd., Stanislaus CA 95351. Contact—Janna Place: 209-862-3792.

Finch Society of San Diego*

<http://www.finchsocietyofsandiego.com>

Meetings—4th Sunday, 2-4 p.m. 12/20 at Poway Elks Club, 13219 Poway Road, Poway CA 92064. Contact—Sally Huntington: 5634 Carnegie St., San Diego, CA 92122; 858-452-9423; sdfinchsociety@gmail.com

West Coast Zebra and Society Finch Show

Meetings—No club meetings, show committee meeting in July. Contact—Richard Renshaw: 247 Grandridge Ct., Ventura CA 93003; 805-644-4156; rrenshaw@yahoo.com

COLORADO

Mountain States Avian Society

www.msasbirds.org

Meetings—2nd Saturday, 1 p.m. at Anlmal Central, 8308 Church Ranch Blvd., Westminster CO 80021. Contact—Gary Morgan, 15341 Kingston St., Brighton CO 80602; 303-659-9554; burdmn@aol.com. NFSS Delegate: Jesse Avila, 7910 Greenland Road, Franktown CO 80116; 303-664-0399, pjbavila@aol.com

FLORIDA

Colorbred Canary Club of Miami

www.colorbredcanaryclubofmiami.webs.com

Contacts—Nora Trincado, P.O. Box 441261, Miami FL 33144-1261; 305-720-4798, threefox21@aol.com; Armondo Lee, 2825 SW 36 Terrace Cape FL; 239-462-2998. ALEE21@comcast.net

Suncoast Canary and Finch Club*

Meetings—Wednesday, 7 p.m. Contact—Alexander Villarreal, 1419 Collingswood Blvd., Port Charlotte FL 33948; vetagator@yahoo.com. Show Date: 10-18 thru 10-20 2013.

FLORIDA

Treasure Coast Exotic Bird Club

Meetings—4th Sunday, 1 p.m. at Port Salerno Civic Center, 4950 Anchor Ave., Stuart FL.

Contact—Tim McCormick, 1425 SE Appomattox Terr., Port Salerno FL.

<http://www.tcexoticbirdclub.com>

Tri-State Avian Society

<http://www.tristateaviansociety.org>

Quarterly Meetings—Gentle Shepherd Metropolitan Community Church, 4738

Thomasville Road, Tallahassee FL. Contact—Barry Laster, 10508 Lake Lamonia Dr.,

Tallahassee FL 32312; 850-364-4666; barryL7523@comcast.net

ILLINOIS

Finch and Softbill Breeders and Exhibitors Club

Meetings—2nd Thursday. President—Bob Peers, 525 W 61st St, Apt. D, Westmont

IL 60559; 630-740-7389. R.peers@comcast.net. NFSS Delegate—Gail Benson, 44 N

Clyde Ave., Palatine IL 60067-0912; gailsquidians@comcast.net.

Greater Chicago Cage Bird Club

<http://www.gccbc.org>

Meetings—3rd Friday, except November and December, at Yorkfield Civic Center,

15W354 Lexington St., Elmhurst IL 60126. Contact—Robert Wild, 305 Grosvenor Ct.,

Bolingbrook IL 60440; 630-980-4416. wild@comcast.net, secretary@gccbc.org

Heart of Illinois Bird Club

<http://www.hoibirdclub.org>

Meetings—3rd Sunday, 2 p.m. (unless holiday) at Avanti's Dome, 3401 Griffin Ave., Pekin

IL 61554. Contact—Jody Lewis, 309-647-9984, balu716@yahoo.com

Illini Bird Fanciers Inc.*

www.illinibirdfanciers.com

P.O. Box 13006, Springfield IL 62791, Contact: Contact—Karen Williams, 217-391-4648.

National Institute of Red Orange Canaries (NIROC)

<http://www.niroc.org>

Meetings—4th Friday, 7 p.m. at Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, 1101 Manchester

Ave., Westchester IL 60154. No meetings— August, November. President—Joaquin

Torres. 312-259-2779, jtorres@sbcglobal.net. Contact—Joel Wojtowicz,

708-352-9319, cwojto8877@aol.com

IOWA

Mid America Cage Bird Society*

<http://www.macbs.org>

Meetings—4th Sunday, 2-5 p.m. at Des Moines Botanical Center, Swartz Room, 909

Robert D Ray Dr, Polk IA 50316. Exceptions—fairs held 3/24/13, 9/8/13 at IA State

Fairground Walnut Center, E. 30th St. and University, Des Moines IA 50317 No

President—John Thielking, 8209 Twana Dr., Urbandale IA 50322-1522; 239-851-8132.

Thielking@lowalink.com

KENTUCKY

Bluegrass Bird Breeders

Contact—Josh Perkins, 2631 Zoneton Road, Shepherdsville KY 40165; 270-234-4176,

perkinstiels@yahoo.com. NFSS Delegate—Christine Orowitz, 1776 Walter Boone Road,

Rineyville KY 40162. chrisbirdsthings@gmail.com

MARYLAND

Baltimore Bird Fanciers

<http://www.baltimorebirdfanciers.org>

Meetings—3rd Sunday, 2 p.m. at Towson Library, 320 York Road, Baltimore

MD 21204-5179. Contact—Christine Roberts, 11 Prettyboy Garth, Parkton MD 21120;

410-343-1807, compteacher@yahoo.com. NFSS Delegate: Ray Reter, 10310-L Malcolm

Cir., Cockeysville MD 21030.

MICHIGAN

Society of Canary and Finch Breeders of Michigan <http://www.scfbmichigan.com/>
Contact—Kristen Reeves, 248-543-8903, Kristen.reeves@sbcglobal.net

MISSOURI

Gateway Parrot Club <http://www.gatewayparrotclub.org>
Meetings—3rd Sunday, 2 p.m. at Kirkwood Community Center, 111 S. Geyer Road, St. Louis MO 63122. **Exceptions**—no meetings June 10, Sept 19, Dec. 9 (second Sunday), and August. **Contact**—Christine A. Kinkade, 2412 Angela Dr., High Ridge MO 63049; 636-343-8097, President@GatewayParrotClub.org

Greater Kansas City Avicultural Society* <http://www.gkcas.org>
Meetings: 2nd Sunday at Coronation of Our Lady Church, 13000 Bennington, Grandview MO 64030. **Contact**—Clay Behrman, 3523 NE 49th St., Kansas City MO 64119; 816-217-7263, birdman79@live.com. NFSS Delegate: Anthony Day, 800 S. Butler Lane, Independence, MO 64056; 816-252-1120. dayforthebirds@aol.com.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Birds of a Feather Avicultural Society <http://www.boaf.com>
Meetings: 2nd Monday. **Contact**—Ray Schwartz, 19 Olde Common Dr., Atkinson NH 03811; 603-362-6106; President@BOAF.com.

NEW YORK

Colorbred Canary Club of New York*
Meetings—1st Sunday each month, except July and August. **Contact**—Jose Zelada, 20 N. Goodwin Ave., Elmsford NY 10523; 914-345-5707.
Club Address—96-06 73rd, Corona, NY 11368.

Kings County Canary Club
Contact—Kathleen Guise Schaefer, 5 Frank Ct., Brooklyn NY 11229; 718-332-3413, kanarykate@aol.com. **Meetings**: 3rd Sunday, 5 Frank Ct., Brooklyn NY 11229.

New York Finch and Type Canary Club*
Meetings: 1-4 p.m., 2nd Sunday, except July and August. **Contact**—Stan Kulak, 17 Pembroke Loop, Staten Island NY 10309; 718-967-6899, barstand@verizon.net.

OREGON

Columbia Canary Club <http://www.columbiacanaryclub.com>
Meetings: 2 p.m., 2nd Sunday at Milwaukie Grange Hall, 12015 SE 22nd Ave., Milwaukie OR. **Contact**—KJ and Linda K. Brown, 3258 Oakcrest Dr. NW, Salem OR 97304; 503-341-8823. jeeperspeepers55@yahoo.com.

PENNSYLVANIA

Chester County Bird Club Inc.
Contact—Doris Rickards, 10 Beth Lane, Malvern PA 19355; Rickards@quixnet.net

PUERTO RICO

Asociacion de Criadores de Finches Inc.
Meetings—7 p.m., Tuesday at Las Catalina's Mall, Food Court Area. **Contact**—Juan Alicea, Mans de Cuidad Jardin Bairoa, 566 Calle La Mancha, Caguas PR 00727; 787-479-7405. juanalicea@yahoo.com

Puerto Rico Zebra Finch Club* <http://www.przfc.com>
Meetings—Wednesday, Caguas in Plaza Centro Mall Caguas, Caguas PR. **Contact**—Gene Perez Forte, Jardines Arecibo Q59, Arecibo PR 00612. **President**—Jorge Mojica, Urb Lomas Del Sol, 175 Calle Acuario, Gurabo PR 00778-8930; 787-550-3163. puchosbirds@yahoo.com.

RHODE ISLAND

Northeast Bird Group

<http://www.northeastbirdgroup.com>

Contact—Donna Rosciti, P.O. Box 50, North Scituate RI 02857; 401-641-0994,
donna@rosciti.com

TENNESSEE

Heart of Tennessee Aviculture Society

<http://www.heartofnavculturesociety.com>

Meetings—6 p.m., every 4th Friday at 1954 S. Church St., Murfreesboro, TN. 37130.

Contact—Lisa Murphy, 918 Georgia Ave., Etowah TN 37331. 423-263-0483;
wlmurphy@usit.net.

TEXAS

Alamo Exhibition Bird Club

Meetings—2 p.m., 4th Sunday at Kirby Senior Ctr., 3211 Allen Sheppard,
SE San Antonio TX. Contact—Judy Morris, 912 Bass Lake Road, Traverse City MI 49685;
231-342-3545.

Fort Worth Bird Club*

Meetings—2 p.m., 2nd Sunday at Fort Worth Botanical Garden Center, 3220 University
Dr. (north of I-30 in Fort Worth). <http://www.fwbc.org>

Texas Bird Breeders and Fanclers Association*

<http://www.texasbirdbreeders.org>

Contact—Clarence Culwell, 4211 Kelly Elliott Road, Arlington TX 76016-4607;
817-220-5568. coculwell@verizon.net. Club meetings by conference call. TBA

Canary and Finch Society

<http://canaryfinchsociety.tripod.com>

Meetings—2 p.m., 2nd Sunday at Alameda United Methodist Church, 14310 Alameda Road,
just off Sam Houston Toll. Contact—Helen Jones, 348 Magnolia Dr., Huffman TX 77336.

VIRGINIA

Peninsula Caged Bird Society

<http://www.vapcbs.com>

Meetings—3rd Sunday each month, 2:30-5:00 p.m. at Columbian Center, 12742
Nettles Dr., Newport News VA 23606. Contact—Nancy Butterfield, 101 Brook Run,
Yorktown VA 23693; 757-223-9440, navabfield@gmail.com

WASHINGTON

Cascade Canary Breeders Association

<http://www.cascadecanary.com>

Meetings—1 p.m., 3rd Sunday at 145 NE Gilmon Blvd., Issagna WA 95027.

Exception—no meetings on holidays. Contact—Brian Johansson 208 155th PL SE,
Mill Creek WA 98012; 425-743-5025, coleenandersen@gmail.com.

NFSS INTERNATIONAL AFFILIATED CLUBS

CANADA

Durham Aviculture Society of Ontario

Meetings—7:30 p.m., 2nd Tuesday at Rotary Park Pavilion, South Side of Lake, 151
Driveway West, Ajax ON. (If the entrance is dark, it is across from house #150.) No
meetings July or August. Contact—P.O. Box 4, Pickering, ON L1V 2R2.

Essex-Kent Cage Bird Society

<http://www.essexkentcbs.com>

Windsor, Ontario, Canada, 519-948-6398, julianne@mnsi.net

NFSS IS PROUD TO AFFILIATE WITH THE FOLLOWING

American Federation of Aviculture

P.O. Box 91717, Austin, TX 78709; www.afabirds.org

Avicultural Society of America

Contact—Steve Duncan, P.O. Box 3161, San Dimas CA 91773. Founded in 1927, this is the oldest aviculture society in the United States.

<http://www.asabirds.org/home.html>

National Animal Interest Alliance www.naiaonline



NFSS AFFILIATED CLUB EVENTS

NOTE: Due to space limitations, the following is only a partial listing of 2013 show and fair events received to date. All shows and fairs submitted, starting with May 1, will be listed in the May/June issue. If you need more information, please contact the clubs. This is all we received.

MARCH 24, 2013

Finch Society of San Diego County • <http://www.finchsocietyofsandiego.com>

Maureen Shanahan, P.O. Box 1297, Fall Brook, CA 92088. sdfinchsociety@gmail.com

FAIR: March Madness: Bird Mart and Auction. **Location:** Poway Elks Club, 3219 Poway Road, Poway, CA 92064. **Contact:** Antonio Rodrigues, 914-512-0632, antonio979@aol.com

APRIL 6, 2013

Texas Bird Breeders and Fanciers

FAIR Location: Mayborn Convention Center, 3303 N. 3rd St., Temple, TX 76501.

Fair Manager: Carla Crowe, 940-704-1708, whatadaffy@aol.com

MAY 29, 2013

Illini Bird Fanciers

FAIR Location: Illinois State Fairgrounds, Twilight Ballroom, 801 S. Sangamon, Springfield, IL 62702. **Fair Manager:** Gail Kefalas, 618-581-7010.

Contact: illinibirdfanciers.com

JUNE 1-2, 2013

Puerto Rico Zebra Finch Club

SHOW: All kinds of birds. **Judge:** Laura Tinker. **Location:** Coliseo Manel Petaca Iquim, Arecibo, PR 00612. **Fair Manager:** Ramon Hernandez, 787-633-1215.

All entries by May 31, 2013 until 12:00 p.m.

JUNE 23, 2013

New York Finch and Type Canary Club

FAIR Location: Averill Blvd. Park • 145 Averill Blvd. • Franklin, NY 1101.

NFSS JUDGES PANEL

4th Vice President - Judges Panel/Standards/Research — Laura Bewley

3538 S. 65 W. Avenue, Tulsa OK 74107 • lbewley@yahoo.com

INTERESTED IN BECOMING AN NFSS JUDGE?

CONTACT LAURA BEWLEY AT 4thVP@nfss.org

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Conrad Meinert

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lbyteagle@aol.com

Jerri Wiesenfeld

2379 Water Bluff Dr.
Jacksonville, FL 32218
Phone: 904-612-6896
jerrisjavas@aol.com

NOTICE TO ALL JUDGES

Please read the bottom of each show report where it says ***"Show report and copies must be mailed to ALL PERSONS NO LATER THAN 14 DAYS following the date of the show."*** Exhibitors will not earn their points until these show reports have been submitted.

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