

THE OFFICAL PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL FINCH SOCIETY INC.

JANUARY/FEBRUARY

1985





# The National Finch Society

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1985

Volume 2 Number 1

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1st Vice President	Dr. A.E. Decoteau
2nd Vice President	Kelly S. Dahill
Treasurer	Russell Armitage Jr.
Co-res. Secretary	Jerry D'Agata
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Publicity	Russell Armitage Jr.
Affiliations	Nancy A. Reed
Delegates	Ed Raymond
AFA Delegate	Jerry D'Agata
AFA Delegate	William G. Parlee

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

First an explanation, due to production problems, the color cover for this issue had to be dropped. We are planning to use it for the March/April issue.

The State of the Society: All is well, having just completed one year of existence, we can all be proud of our accomplishments. We are 176 strong, with a dozen affiliates and soaring interest being demonstrated in the field of finches and softbills. We have created standards for birds, banding procedures, showing standards, and are compiling educational programs for our affiliates. We are well on our way. Thank you all!

# THE NATIONAL CAGE BIRD SHOW

## NATIONAL FINCH SOCIETY MEETING

NFS Board members Bill Parlee, Al Decoteau, and Nancy Reed attended the National Cage Bird Show in Chicago, Illinois, November 15 - 17 where Bill manned an NFS booth. So much interest was generated that an impromptu meeting was suggested, arranged, and resulted with 33 people attending.

Of additional note was the outstanding entry of 182 finches and softbills in the Foreign Bird Division at the National Cage Bird Show. This was the largest entry in recollection of NCBS. It also serves as a vote of confidence to NFS, indicating that interest in finches and softbills is definitely on the increase!

The Division was judged by Dick Clarkson of Florida. Cecil Gunby of Georgia won 1st and the Kellogg trophy for his outstanding Shafttail Finch. John Bennett from Toronto, Canada won second place with a magnificent English normal Zebra cock. NFS is proud to have Dick, Cecil and John as members of our fast growing organization.

The enthusiasm shown for NFS was spectacular! Over and over we heard how the idea of forming such a specialty group had been thought of by many individuals, but intentions never became actions. Now NFS was finally a reality! We gained many new members and club affiliations at the show with the expectancy of further applications to be recieved by mail.

NFS thanks all of you who attended the NCBS Chicago show for your appreciation. Your added surge of interest and support has resulted in the snow ball rolling faster than ever now!

\* \* \* \* \*

The National Finch Society Meeting was called to order by President Bill Parlee at 12:50pm, November 17, in Chicago Ill. at the site of the 36th National Cage Bird Show.

Bill introduced the presiding NFS officers: Dr. A. E. Decoteau, 1st Vice President; and Nancy Reed, Liason officer and acting secretary for this meeting.

CHICAGO MEETING CONT'. . .

a great deal of work into our 1st National Finch Society Show catalog. Granted, this may be too extensive for some local shows where it would be out of proportion to the expected entry. Classifications are available for local clubs to use that are fashioned after the NFS National show but in an abbreviated form.

Paul Williams, of Nebraska, a National Cage Bird Show Board member, suggested we send in our classifications outline to NCBS Board approval before the March '85 meeting in San Antonio to hopefully modernize the NCBS present classifications for their '85 national show.

The meeting was adjourned at 2pm. It was a good productive meeting. Thank You!

Respectfully submitted,  
Nancy A. Reed Secretary Pro-tem  
for NFS Secretary Jerry D'Agata

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## 1984 NFS EXHIBITOR POINTS

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UNFORTUNATELY THERE ARE NO CHAMPION EXHIBITORS FOR LAST YEAR. THREE NFS MEMBERS CAME VERY CLOSE AND TIED FOR HIGHEST ACCUMULATED POINTS.

D AND D AVIARIES, KELLY DAHILL AND JERRY D'AGATA.  
CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION FOR AVICULTURE.

KENNETH AKEY JR. OF THE NEW HAMPSHIRE AVICULTURAL SOC.

STEVE HOPPIN OF FLORIDA'S GOLD COAST BIRD CLUB.

THESE MEMBERS ARE TO BE <sup>mended</sup> COMENED FOR <sup>their</sup> THERE ACHIEVEMENTS ON <sup>e</sup> THE SHOW BENCH FOR LAST YEAR. <sup>^</sup>

MANY OTHER MEMBERS ACCUMULATED POINTS LAST YEAR AND THEY CAN BE FOUND IN THE SHOW REPORTS FOUND ELSEWHERE IN THIS BULLETIN. CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL SHOW WINNERS.

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## CHICAGO MEETING CONT'. . .

All members and guests were asked to stand and introduce themselves, their resident state, and club affiliation (s).

There was no Secretary's report, as NFS to date had only held Board meetings. Bill gave a brief treasurer's report stating a balance of \$1,607.71. This did not include new memberships and affiliations brought in at the National.

The President gave a brief rundown of the National Finch Society history and goals.

Bill announced that NFS bulletins would start being published bi-monthly with the Jan/Feb 1985 issue. But obviously to continue this aim, we need material from the membership to print on all those blank pages between the covers. With increased membership we expect increased input/output from fellow fanciers.-PLEASE!

It was also noted that memberships are pro-rated. That is, we don't not run by Jan.-Dec. schedule. When you join is when your "year" begins. This procedure is made possible by all NFS membership, financial, etc. data being computerized. This we feel is an advantage so that someone does not put off joining until Jan. of each year.

Next Bill explained the advantages of Club Affiliations. Each affiliate club will receive 1st, 2nd, and 3rd NFS award plaques engraved with your club's name, show date, and placement. (These actually cost NFS more than your affiliation dues!) Your club is saved its expense for awards in the Finch/Softbill division. Club applications can be requested from: NFS 529 Burnside Ave., E. Hartford, CT 06108. Affiliation dues are \$40 per year. We also plan to soon produce audio/visual programs to be educationally useful for your local club meetings.

Judges Panel: Bill read a list of present official NFS Panel judges, those that are apprenticing, and those nominated for future judgeship.

Al Decoteau, 1st Vice President and Chairman of the Judges Panel, explained apprenticing procedures. A prospective must apprentice under two NFS Panel Judges at least one show per judge. He/She is also required to take a written examination. It does not matter the order in which these steps are made.

## CHICAGO MEETING CONT'. . .

Al stated that the next written tests would be given at the AFA convention in San Francisco, CA., in August 1985, and at the 2nd National Finch Show in Harrisburg, PA., in Oct. of 1985. There may be additional testing sites at future notice.

**SHOW CAGES:** Bill suggested three different sized show boxes small, medium, and large. Discussion followed with agreement for Bill's general suggestion. However "official" caging for showing birds will not be a mandatory ruling at this time, rather that we think towards the future; towards eventual standardization; and if someone is going to be purchasing show cages, that it would be preferable to follow the club's suggestions and direction. Specifics will be written in a future issue.

**BANDING:** The problem here is that we are talking "limes and grapefruits" - species in many different sizes. On smaller finch bands it may be impossible to print "NFS", the code of the breeder, year, and the individual band number.

John Bennett had a good suggestion of numbered bands (color coded for each year) that are recorded by an NFS Band Secretary. Example: Parson Finchly buys #21-30. The bands are bought through NFS (whatever quantity), the color denotes the year the breeder is registered according to the band numbers of bands ordered, and the bird is identified by the number imprinted on the band.

Both John Bennett and Val Clear are familiar with A.C. Hughes of England that offer many sizes of bands suitable for our use. Service is apparently excellent. This suggestion seemed to be most popular. It will mean a volunteer for Band Secretary. Not a complicated job, but an accurate job of record keeping.

While it was not mentioned at the meeting, banding birds is NOT meant to be an NFS necessity, but rather a nicety. Fine for breeders to identify Zebras, Bengalese, and other more domesticated species. For more difficult and/or rarer species, banding of young could be detrimental to the success of raising young.

**CLASSIFICATIONS:** Any avid finch/softbill fancier knows that shows presently lack the degree of breakdown in classes and sections that NFS would like to see. Bill and Al have put

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KNOW YOUR SOFTBILLS is a new column that will be featured in each issue of the National Finch Society Bulletin. The subject matter will cover many aspects of the keeping and rearing of Softbills. This interesting format will be edited by Phil Shaw of Missouri, an avid breeder of Softbills and member of the NFS Judges Panel.

Phil's notes: The keeping and breeding of softbilled birds has increased dramatically over the past few years. The number of softbills at bird shows is also increasing, however softbills remain one of the smallest of the caged bird fancies. If importation of foreign birds ended this year, many if not most of the softbills in private aviculture would eventually die out due the limited size of the current genetic pool. If we are to insure the development of domestic strains of softbills we must begin to share information, breeding stock, and encouragement. I hope everyone involved will take the time to share not only their successes but also their failures, in feeding, breeding, keeping and exhibition of softbills.

Our first article on softbills is provided by the Kansas City Zoo on the beautiful Bali Mynah. The Kansas City Zoo has experienced a number of successes with softbills and with the Bali Mynah in particular.

BALI MYNA<sup>H</sup><sub>A</sub> BREEDING. . . . . DAVE WETZEL  
KANSAS CITY ZOO

The Bali Mynah, Leucopsar rothschildi, is an endangered species that occurs in the wild only in a small section of the Island of Bali. This member of the Starling Family was one of the first birds that the AAZPA identified to be part of their species survival program.

In the past five years (see table 1), the Kansas City Zoo has hatched 29 Bali Mynahs in the Tropical Habitat building. Most of these birds have since been placed with other institutions.

Our Bali Mynahs have had clutches of one to three eggs. The eggs are sky blue in color and take 13-14 days to hatch. Both the male and female Bali's incubate the eggs. The eggs are laid in cavities with our most recent



## DAVE WETZEL CONT'

clutches having been laid in artificial wooden boxes.

After hatching, the adult birds are kept busy feeding their altricial young. Both sexes can be observed carrying insects and out insectivore diet to the nest site throughout the day and early evening. The chicks are quite boisterous and their loud chirps can be heard some distance from the nest.

Fledging occurs 14-16 days after hatching. The chicks often spend one or two days looking out the entrance of the nest before venturing out into the Habitat. The adults continue to feed the chicks for 5-7 days after fledging. During this time, the chicks develop their wing muscles and are soon flying around the Habitat with the other birds.

As Bali Mynahs can be aggressive towards each other and to other birds, we keep a single pair on display with a second pair in an off-exhibit breeding area.

In 1982, we sold off all but four of our Bali Mynahs. Unfortunately, no breeding was attempted and in 1983 we surgically sexed the remaining birds and discovered we had all males.

In late 1983 and early 1984, two unrelated females were obtained from separate institutions. Both of these birds' lineage can be traced back to unrelated wild-caught birds. Each paired off with our males and in early 1984 the Habitat pair began nesting. Since then, nine young have been produced from the two pairs (see table 2).

Unfortunately, the ancestry of our males is not well known. In order that the genetic purity of the surviving birds be kept as complete as possible, we will no longer breed our males. Instead, males whose genetic background is documented will be obtained.

This will allow us to continue breeding these endangered birds. This will give us and other zoos participating in the Bali Mynah SSP program the detailed genetic information necessary to preserve these birds in captivity.

# BALI MYNA BREEDING

Table 1:

Year	# hatched
1979	4
1980	7
1981	9
1982	0
1983	0
1984	9

Table 2:

1984 Breeding					
B733	x	201229	B456	x	201391
1.0		0.1	1.0		0.1
3	2	2		2	



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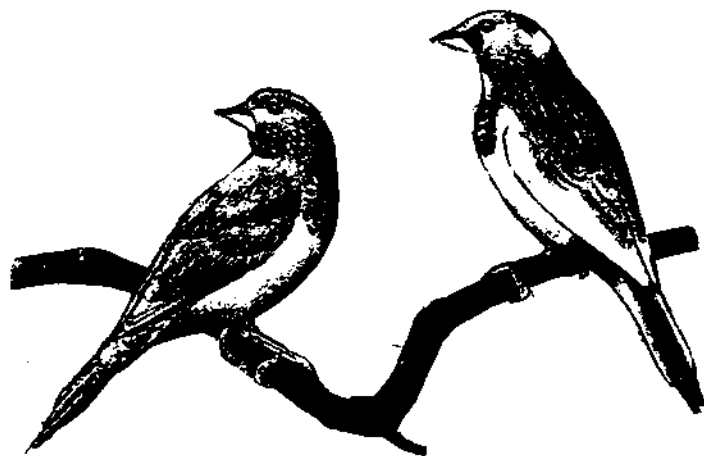
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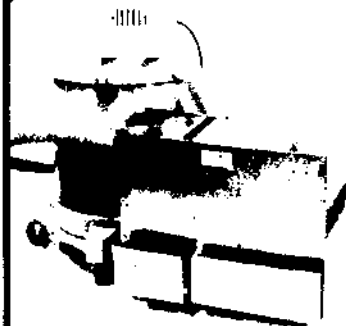
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**The National Finch Society**

# NFS BOARD MINUTES \_\_\_\_\_ Dec. 2, 1984

The NFS quarterly board of directors meeting was called to order at 4pm, December 2, 1984 at the home of Nancy Reed. Present were: Bill Parlee, Al Decoteau, Kelly Dahill, Jerry D'Agata, Russ Armitage, Nancy Reed, Tony Patterson, Ed and Tina Raymond and a few guests.

The first order of business was the reading of previous minutes and a treasurer's report. They were accepted as presented. The NFS treasurer's report shows our balance at \$1,261.97 as of November 30, 1984.

The next business was regarding the Club Bulletin. It was announced that the bulletin will be going bimonthly with the Jan./Feb. issue. A discussion was held regarding accepting advertising for the bulletin. Bill pointed out that from the letter that was sent out, we had received ads from national advertisers: Necton Products, Nutritional Research, K-T Seed, Kellogg Seed, ads from members included, ones from Nancy Reed, Al Decoteau, Bill Parlee, Russ Armitage with one time ads for this bulletin only received from Ed and Tina Raymond, Kelly Dahill and Jerry D'Agata, Ben Giordano and Red Bird Products.

The board felt that the discount for full year advertisers would encourage greater advertising participation from national bird product advertisers.

The once a year color cover for the bulletin was discussed and Ed Raymond suggested we print 100 extra issues of each issue for promotional purposes as well as to satisfy the needs of the back issue department. We all agreed.

It was also decided that the first issue of each year should include a full membership Roster and the past years' show results.

The meeting then went on to cover Club Affiliations. A letter to Jerry Jennings in California was discussed, and his swift reply to our correspondence was appreciated. It was pointed out by Nancy Reed that our club affiliations were growing and our trip to Chicago was well worth the effort in laying the groundwork for future affiliations. Al and Bill pointed out that work was under way for the completion of slide-tape programs for distribution upon request to all affiliated clubs. Target date for availability was early April.

A long discussion followed on the National Cage Bird Show in Chicago. It was announced that two NFS members won 1st and second in the finch division, being Cecil Gunby and John Bennett respectively.

Al Decoteau brought up the matter of NFS affiliating with the NCBS. This matter had been discussed before. After bouncing the pros and cons back and forth, it was decided that no action should be taken on the matter. Bill pointed to the possible loss of recognition affiliation with the National Cage Bird Show might incur and the possible compromise in the standards that we have worked so hard to develop, that might have to be made, both of these points leading to the no action vote.

Bill and Nancy reported to the board of the successes we achieved by having a booth at the combined AFA mini-convention and National Cage Bird Show. There was so much interest that we scheduled a "national meeting" at the convention. Nancy stated that our meeting was better attended than the other specialty clubs' meetings. Much was accomplished at the meeting. Bill asked Nancy if she could make a complete report on the meeting for publication in the next bulletin. Nancy agreed.

The meeting was well attended and many questions were brought up by members as well as other interested parties. Some of the items discussed were; show boxes, the popular suggestion was for there to be three standard types of show cages, one with small wire for waxbills, a Zebra type cage and a larger cage for softbills and whydahs. Al Decoteau was to handle procurement of the cages for further discussion. On a difficult subject-Banding, much discussion ensued, led by Dr. Val Clear and others. The end result was a decision to have several sized bands with a yearly "color" and a tracability factor. The particulars of how as a club to handle the administration of band issuance was left to the board to decide.

On a side note Russ Armitage entertained the idea that the president of NFS should be remunerated in some way for expenses incurred when working solely on behalf of the society. He further clarified his thoughts that this consideration probably only be given when traveling on behalf of the society. A discussion followed, resulting in a decision to, with prior board approval on a case by case basis to remunerate the president for air fare only when on society business.

## BOARD MEETING MINUTES CONT' . . .

The San Francisco AFA convention in California next August was the next matter to be considered. Al stated that he thought NFS should have a booth at the convention. We all agreed, Al stated that he would write and make the arrangements for suitable space.

The next order of business was to vote on suggested judging positions on the judges panel. The nominees for the panel were; Charles Anchor, Conrad Meinart, Clarence Cullwell and Paul Williams. A vote was taken accepting all to the panel with the exception of Clarence Cullwell. Dr. Decoteau was to receive further information from Mr. Cullwell which had not been received by the meeting time. We decided to delay the vote on Mr. Cullwell until the March meeting.

All passed out an early draft of the Judges Handbook for our consideration. Some changes and suggestions were made, Al was expecting to have the second draft ready for the March meeting. Bill thanked Al for his hard work.

A discussion was held on our specie classifications and some revisions. It was also decided to make a condensed form of our suggested classification for mailing to affiliated clubs for use in their catalogs. It was pointed out that many clubs had asked for direction in this matter including the National Cage Bird Show.

The final matter of discussion at this meeting was the revamping of the points system for exhibitors. The talk on this matter lasted almost one hour, with this result. The present system of championship exhibitor for each year with an accumulated total of 25 points would be continued, however an additional program would be offered. Conceived by Nancy Reed this program would allow all exhibitors to carry points from year to year and accumulate 100 points for an "EXHIBITORS EXCELLENCE AWARD" which would be given any member who attained the required 100 exhibition points. A NFS plaque would be awarded to such an attaine. It was felt that this would encourage exhibitors in areas where attaining 25 points in a given year would be impossible due to the proximity of shows in that area.

The next meeting of the board will be on March 10, 1985. The meeting was then adjourned, after which a fine dinner was enjoyed by all.



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delegate: Roger O'Connell
- The CENTRAL PENNA CAGE BIRD SOCIETY  
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- The CLEVELAND CANARY AND CAGE BIRD SOCIETY  
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delegate: Thomas Cauarro
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delegate: Dallas Johnson
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delegate: Shirley Eaton
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delegate: Lawrence Brandt
- THE WESTERN NEW ENGLAND CAGE BIRD SOCIETY  
delegate: Bill Patison
- The WISCONSIN CAGE BIRD CLUB  
delegate: Mary Zuidema

There are six other clubs presently being processed for affiliation and will be listed with other new affiliates in our March/April issue.

ATTENTION ALL DELEGATES: Please send in your 1985 show dates to the NFS office as soon as possible! We will publish your show and order your placques as soon as we receive this information.

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NATIONAL FINCH SOCIETY  
 JANUARY 1985  
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0103	ANEY, KENNETH SR.	NASHUA,	NH	03062
0133	ANCHOR, CHARLES	ADDISON,	IL	60101
0000	ARIDA, MARCO	MIAMI,	FL	33173
0007	ARMITAGE, RUSSELL JR.	MIDDLETOWN,	CT	06457
0025	ASTORIA BIRD CLUB	BAYSIDE,	NY	11360
0121	BAGOSY, CAROL	DOWNES,	IL	61736
0152	BAKER, LESLIE A.	ALBUQUERQUE,	NM	87109
0125	BALSTER, DAVID	SF. SAN FRANCISCO	CA	94068
0046	BECKER, LAURA		CT	
0045	BECKER, RAY	SALISBURY,	CT	06068
0112	BEELE, NANCY VANDEGRIFT	SAN PADRO,	CA	90731
0074	BENAR, LAURA	LYONS,	IL	60534
0134	BENNETT, JOHN	CANADA LOS-ITO	CN	
0107	BLOISE, DR. AUDIE, DVM	NO. WILKESBORO,	NC	28659
0123	BOSSERT, DR. J. A.		PA	15044
0016	BOSTON SOC FOR AVICULTURE	WALTHAM,	MA	02154
0077	BOUZIGARD, GEORGE	LAROSE,	LA	70373
0023	BOWEN, DANIEL	FALLS CHURCH,	VA	22046
0038	BRANDT, F. LAWRENCE	E. KINGSTON,	NH	03827
0056	BRONSON, DR. ANN	OROVILLE,	GA	95965
0024	CENTRAL PENNA CAGE BIRD	HARRISBURG,	PA	17101
0075	CHAPMAN, DEE	WILLIAMSBURG,	MI	49798
0062	CHEATHAM, BOB	MESA,	AZ	85204
0116	CHMURA, CAROL	SPRINGFIELD,	MA	01104
0065	CHRISTENSEN JOLEEV	POMPANO BEACH,	FL	33062
0138	CLARKSON, RICHARD P	BRANDOW,	FL	33511
0021	CLEAR, DR. VAL	ANDERSON,	IN	46012
0106	CLEVELAND CANARY AND CAGE	SOLON,	OH	44139
0057	CODY, JAMES	SWANNANOA,	NC	28778
0014	CONN. ASSOC. AVICULTURE	WINDSOR,	CT	06095
0130	CORNELL, LORI	CARPENTERSVILLE,	IL	60110
0006	CORRAO, JOSEPH	FLORAL PARK,	NY	11001
0129	COYLE, SUE	WESTBURY,	NY	11590
0127	CRAIG, MRS. JAMES C.	RICHMOND,	IN	47374
0072	CULWELL, CLARENCE	FORT WORTH,	TX	76114
0006	D'AGATA, GERALD	WINDSOR,	CT	06095

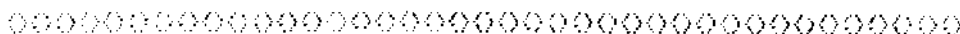




NATIONAL FINCH SOCIETY  
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0125	MOSE, DAWN	PALOS HILLS,	IL	60465
0165	MUENCH, RICHARD C.	SANIBEL ISLAND,	FL	33957
0110	NETETICH, FRANKO R.	GLEN OAKS,	NY	11004
0015	NEW HAMPSHIRE CAGE BIRD	E. KINGSTON,	NH	03827
0066	NOREEN, GEORGE W.	PORTLAND,	OR	97211
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0001	PARLEE, WILLIAM G.	EAST HARTFORD,	CT	06108
0034	PATISON, WILLIAM	W. SPRINGFIELD,	MA	01089
0002	PATTERSON, TONY M.	EAST HARTFORD,	CT	06108
0005	PERDEAU, KRISTEN	WINDSOR,	CT	06095
0010	POPA, MANUAL	BROOKLYN,	NY	11207
0143	PORTER, ANNE	MARIETTA,	GA	30062
0041	POTTER, RUTH		NJ	
0040	POTTER, WILLIAM	HAMPTON,	NE	68827
0156	RANEY, CLYDE JR.	GEORGETOWN,	TX	78626
0058	RAYMOND, TINA		CT	
0009	RAYMOND, EDWARD	NEWTOWN,	CT	06470
0004	REED, NANCY A.	WINDSOR,	CT	06095
0132	RESCH, KAY		OH	43081
0131	RESCH, KEVIN	WESTERVILLE,	OH	43081
0049	RIPHENBURG, DENNIS	SAN BRUNO,	CA	94066
0087	ROGERS, TRAVIS T.	DOUGLASVILLE,	GA	30135
0043	ROOD, THOMAS	SHELBYVILLE,	IL	62565
0020	RUBIN, LINDA	BROOKLINE,	MA	02167
0126	RUSSO, MS MONICA	BETHEL,	CT	06801
0071	RYAN, NANCY		MA	01
0144	SARTAIN, GENA	SAN PEDRO,	CA	90731
0044	SHAW, PHILLIP	KANSAS CITY,	MO	64124
0059	SKOPP, GEORGE JR.	WEST RUTLAND,	VT	05777
0162	SMITH, HARVEY A.	CHILTON,	WI	53014
0164	SNOW, MARGARET	LITTLE ROCK,	AR	72207
0078	SORENSON, CYNTHIA E.	HUDSON,	NH	03051
0053	STAM, ORVILLE	COMMERCE,	TX	78428

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0108	TURNER, ANN	VERGENNES	VT	05491
0088	UGALDE, HECTOR	MIAMI,	FL	33139
0085	UNDERHILL, SANDRA LEE	LAKESIDE,	CA	92040
	VACANT			
0115	VAN OOSTEN, JAN R.	SEATTLE,	WA	98115
0098	VERISSIMO, ESTHER	LAKEVILLE,	MA	02346
0027	W. NEW ENG. CAGE BIRD SOC.	SPRINGFIELD,	MA	01089
0102	WELLMAN, SUSAN	ORLANDO,	FL	32811
0150	WELLS, MARY	PALM BEACH SHORES,	FL	33404
0154	WIGMORE, MARTHA	COLORADO SPRINGS,	CO	80916
0105	WILLIAMS, DEWEY JR.	CHARLESTON,	SC	29407
0146	WILLIAMS, DEWEY JR/	CHARLESTON,	SC	29407
0136	WILLIAMS, PAUL	PAPILLION,	NE	68046
0157	WISCONSIN CAGE BIRD CLUB	WAUSAU,	WI	54401
0122	YOUNG, DR. C.W.	GIBSONIA,	PA	15044
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# CAGE VS AVIARY BREEDING

TERRY DUNHAM - FOR THE NATIONAL FINCH SOCIETY

"Betty" lives in teh Upper Midwest and has only an 8-by-10 foot bird room in a corner of her basement.

"Bob," her brother, lives on two acres in Southern California and has more than a dozen planted aviaries each the size of Betty's entire bird room.

It's easy to assume that Bob's finch-breeding efforts will be more successful than his sister's, but that's not necessarily the case. Their success depends upon a number of factors--several of which may be much more important than whether they're breeding in cages or aviaries.

Although your Bulletin editor, Bill Parlee, asked me to write about cage versus aviary breeding, the two are not mutually exclusive: Many breeders have both, and there are good reasons for both; even apart from their unique advantages for breeding.

Only when their birds are in aviaries can aviculturists fully enjoy the beauty and activity of their birds in a natural environment-- if their birds are not one of those secretive species that remain constantly hidden. Another advantage of aviaries is that, with large feed and water containers, daily maintenance may not be necessary as it is with most cage setups. That's an important consideration for those of us who must travel frequently. Cage breeding, on the other hand, offers increased control, maximum utilization of space, and greater safety for one's prized birds.

With those considerations in mind, let's look at the numerous variables that will determine whether Betty and her cages or Bob and his aviaries will result in the more successful breeding season.

## NATURE OF BREEDING STOCK

The most important variable is the background of the finches you're trying to breed. Finches today come from two basic "types" of backgrounds, and they couldn't be more different.

Many African and Indian finches are imported after being caught in the wilds months earlier. They're accustomed to unrestrained flight; that's why they hide or move away

from you in an aviary, or fly frantically when you approach them in a small cage. They're used to finding dozens of kinds of insects and a variable seed diet: that's why in captivity, where food choices are limited, they sometimes eject nestlings rather than raise them. And although a few species breed in close proximity to man, the majority react to human presence as a threat; that's why they build their nests in the most densely planted corners of your aviaries and sometimes abandon a nest after you've inspected it. These kinds of birds will do best in Bob's aviaries.

Australian finches, on the other hand, are captive bred, nearly domesticated species: The continent's borders have been closed to exports for several decades, and smuggling activity is nearly insignificant, so the Australian finches you get must have been reared in captivity for 20 generations or more.

That's why they no longer require live food to raise their young; that's why they breed happily and at virtually any time of the year in relatively small cages; and it's why they'll ignore being pried off their clutches of eggs so you can check for fertility. They'll do quite well in Betty's cages--perhaps even better than in Bob's aviaries, because they'll be free of some of the perils we'll consider later.

These are fundamentally important differences. Rather than trying to force birds into your system or environment, you'd be smart to consider the breeding conditions you're able to provide, and then select birds most likely to thrive in those conditions. But remember: pairs of captive-raised African waxbills may exhibit behavior more like the Australian finches just described; and Australian finches raised in large aviaries where live food was available may behave more like "wild" African finches and may be just as difficult to get to breed in cages.

## DIET

Once you've ascertained the conditions your birds were raised in, you can better emulate them. If the birds got live food, give them the same kind they were used to, if possible. Several companies now market numerous kinds of live foods. Try, too, to match the seed diet the birds are accustomed to. With wild-caught birds, the greater the variety you can provide, the better. Read all you can about the birds' diets in the wild: I've had pairs of

## TERRY DUNHAM CONT' . . .

Violet-eared Waxbills that would not breed for months at a time. Yet on three different occasions they began laying within days after being fed live termite larvae. Coincidence? I think not.

One important advantage of aviary breeding is that insects will naturally be available to your birds, providing variety and protein they might not get in a cage-breeding setup. if you can induce your birds to eat an egg food mix (a simple version: mash hard boiled eggs, yolk and whites, then stir in nestling food until reasonably dry; prepare daily) you'll be providing them with protein that's much needed for reproduction whether they're kept in cages or aviaries.

## SECURITY

Security is a double-edged sword. In a planted aviary, birds are more likely to find hiding places that will give them the sense of security necessary for them to begin breeding.

But are your birds secure in other ways? In our aviaries we found mice on several occasions, snakes (twice), and fought a constant battle with cats. In other areas aviculturists must cope with opossums and raccoons, hawks and owls, human thieves and vandals and other threatening wildlife. At the least, they can keep birds so frightened they're unlikely to breed; at the worst, they can kill your rarest specimens.

Even if you think your aviary setup is free of these sorts of hazards, it probably can't be wholly free of the threat of parasites. Almost anyone who's kept Gouldian Finches outside, for example, has seen the effects of air sac mites. Worming becomes--or should become--a routine part of your birdkeeping.

## WEATHER

It should be obvious that in almost any part of the country your birds' environment is going to be less controlled outdoors, in an aviary, than it would be indoors. That's not to say that I admire the "I keep my birds at 80 degrees and it never varies" philosophy. Far from it: That creates "hothouse" birds that can't adapt to new conditions when

you sell or trade them.

Our own birds are kept in an unheated and un-air conditioned 20 by 24 foot building. We're in a warm clime; so normal temperatures range from 50 to 98 degrees in the building. But the birds are accustomed to changing temperatures, so when a massive cold front hit us last winter, dragging temperatures in the bird building into the thirties ( and 19 outside!) our birds were unfazed. Those laying or on eggs continued laying or setting; babies in nests continued to grow; of more than 200 birds in our building at that time none died. Aviary birds develop that kind of hardiness - - if conditions aren't so extreme the birds aren't able to survive them long enough to become conditioned to them!

#### SUMMARY

Yes, there are exceptions to the ideas just outlined. You can get a wild-caught pair of Condon Bleu finches to breed in a 15" diameter cage on the kitchen table, using no live food. But the odds are against you.

Twenty years ago, Australian finches posed the same problems now posed by African and other wild-caught species. Breeders persistence paid off, however--perhaps first in aviaries and with live-food diets-- and bit by bit the birds became accustomed to captive breeding in a variety of conditions. Our goal should be to accomplish as much with the African finches as we have with the Australians. We can, but only if we recognize and deal with their special needs.

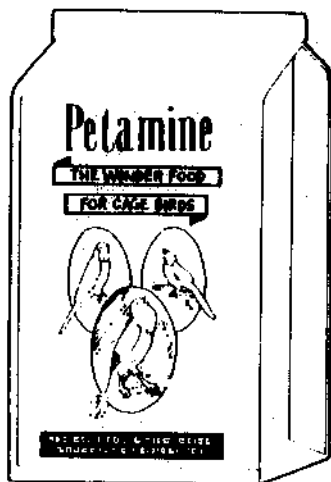
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*EDITOR'S NOTE: The National Finch Society and its' editor would like to thank member Terry Dunham for his continued support to our society in the form of informative articles as the one you have just read.*

*Many of you may have experiences well worth while sharing with our membership. The article can be on any subject relating to finches and softbills and may be of any length, send your article to: NFS, 529 Burnside Ave. E.Hartford, Ct 06108.*

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# THE NATIONAL FINCH SOCIETY

## 1984 NATIONAL SHOW

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REPORT BY TONY M. PATTERSON, SHOW CHAIRMAN

The National Finch Society 1st National Finch Show was held at the Veterans Memorial Building in East Hartford, Connecticut on October 27, 1984, hosted by the Connecticut Association for Aviculture.

The NFS had a large room in this stately old mansion. The day was a beautiful one, sunny with a crisp chill to the air. Exhibitors started to arrive the evening before the show dropping their entries off at the show site.

The morning of the show all the show officials were anxious with anticipation, this first National Finch Society show, would it be a fiasco or an event to remember. We did not have much time to think on that however, as exhibitors started to arrive with their entries. By the time the show was to start being judged there was still a backlog at the registration desk. In all 156 entries were checked in at the desk. This was great and 56 more than our hope for 100. For those of you in the Mid West or Florida, to get more than 50 entries of finches in the Northeast is truly an accomplishment.

Bill Parlee, who was to judge the Australians, Europeans, South Americans and Asian birds got started as soon as all the birds were benched. There was a break for lunch and Bill finished judging his portion of the show.

After a short break Dr. Decoteau started judging the Africans, Societies, Pairs and displays. Both judges were not as talkative as usual due to the large showing to be judged.

At about 5pm the Best in Show judging with Bill and Al making a close check of all the winners and second place birds in each Division. The final outcome was a win for Natalie Molaver with an outstanding Mynah Bird.

All this was followed by a faffle, and a sumpuous banquet with awards and great fellowship. A truly successful first National Show for all of us. Thank You all!

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*Australians ... African...*

*European ... South American*

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following article printed with the permission of Dr. Val Clear first appeared in Cage Bird Magazine eight years ago (Sept. 77), but is timeless in its avicultural value. The article is reprinted exactly as it appeared, keep this in mind when reading about government regulations and the like.

## STRAWBERRY FINCHES \_\_\_\_\_ DR. VAL CLEAR

I was pleased a few months ago to see Strawberry Finches (*Amandava amandava*) again available. They are beautiful birds with wistful song, and deserve a place in our collection of exotics in this country.

The British call them Red Avadavat. I have no idea where the name came from. They are also called Tiger Finch. But I think the term we usually hear in this country is more descriptive, because they are speckled red and anyone with a little imagination can see how they remind one of a strawberry.

One additional attraction (and aggravation) is the fact that the male goes into eclipse plumage when out of breeding condition and he looks much like the female. This can be an exasperation to the person who is shopping for a breeding pair. In the days when they sold in dime stores for 2.99 per pair it was simple to guard against this problem merely by purchasing a half dozen of the birds to be sure there was a male in the lot. Now they sell from between \$50 and \$75 per pair, and that limits the number one can buy. Nevertheless, it is fascinating to watch the annual miracle of nature as a plain little grey bird changes feather-by-feather into a striking red creature.

The song is different from the song of any other species I know. It is delicate, thin, wavering, uncertain, and musical, all at the same time. I never hear it that I am not reminded of a falling leaf.

One of the costs of a trip I took to Venezuela in January was the loss of birds in the planted aviary in our home. With the most rigorous winter in Indiana this century, and with me not there to take precautionary measures, I lost several rare birds, including two pair that were the only ones I know of in captivity. I lost a number of tropical plants, also, and since disturbing a collection of this kind is a serious operation, it seemed to be the time to clean house - something which I have not done to that

## STRAWBERRY FINCHES CONT'. . .

aviary for several years. I caught up the few remaining birds, removed damaged plants, and started all over again.

What should I put into this garden that forms a part of our family home? Certainly it ought to contain music as well as color. So I started with two pairs of Strawberry finches and a pair of Green Singing Finches, among others. Now we have music all day. The two Strawberry males provide a descant somewhere in the background while the Green Singing Finch chatters out his busy song. They all get along well together. After a few days I had to get a pair of binnoculars to identify the one sitting in a nest built deep in the giant philodendron. It was one of the Strawberry Finches. They did not lose much time in going into housekeeping, despite continued cold weather.

I had had the Strawberry Finches in cages for about a year and they had done nothing to perpetuate the species. Each pair was housed alone in a cage about 10" wide x 12" high x 36" long, which ought to be plenty big enough for them. They had been imported, so there was no way of telling how old they were. I was disappointed that they made no move to nest, but was not surprised. They do breed in cages, but are not as ready to do so as the more common species.

I have not seen any sign of life inside the nest in the planted aviary but I have not probed into it because it is so inaccessible. I would ordinarily try to band the babies in the nest, but cannot get to this without courting disaster.

The full-grown Strawberry finch is about three and a half inches long, a pretty diminutive creature. I recall how helpless I felt, the first pair I got when I discovered that none of my cages, most of which were for budgies, would hold them. Even canary cages in those days were too widely spaced for tinier finches.

In color the male is a mahogany red above, with bright red elsewhere. The tail is black. Throughout the body are flecks of white, like polka-dots. The female is a reddish-gray with a hint of green, and occasional spots. A male in color and a female are readily distinguished, but as mentioned above, the male out of color is difficult to tell from the female. During the time that the male is changing color he looks like a patch-quilt of unpremeditated coincidences.

## STRAWBERRY FINCHES CONT'. . .

Strawberries are quite easy to maintain. I have no problem treating them to the same care as the Zebra Finches, which means a good finch mixture, grit, water and greens occasionally. Strawberries sometimes will take mealworms, but the two pairs I have had this year would not even touch small ones hand picked for their palate.

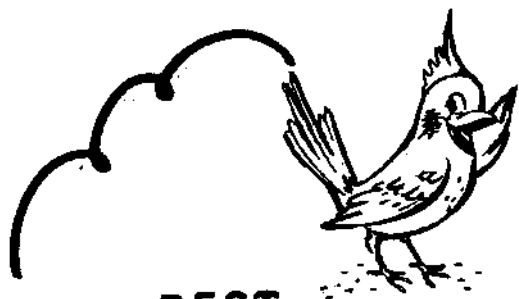
I note that both Rosemary Low and E. J. Boosey, among England's most knowledgeable aviculturists, report that Strawberries are long-lived. Boosey kept his outdoors in the winter. Low reports knowing several twelve-year old birds, and one fancier who had bred them to the twelfth generation. I know people who have had several generations in this country, but none to the twelfth yet.

As males get older in captivity they tend to get darker and darker, probably because of the absence of something in their natural diet. Nevertheless, they seem to remain healthy with captivity and the fact that they reproduce so readily supports the idea.

There are several races of the species. The Amandava Amandava ranges throughout south-eastern Asia, including India, Vietnam, Burma, Siam, Java and Assam. Other species known are: Red Munia, and Red Waxbill, Bambah Avadavat, and Cochin Avadavat. By any name, however, it is a beautiful bird to have in the collection.

One of the minor blessings of the ban on bird imports has been the disappearance of the "Painted Finch" version of the southeastern finches. To stimulate the market through the cheapie stores of the world, dealers in Calcutta and Bombay would dye the Strawberries, Sprucebirds, and Nuns with bright yellow, red and green vegetable dyes. They would catch the eye of the innocent novice, who would buy a gorgeous bird, take it home, and two months later have a comparatively colorless bird. I have not seen any of this form of desecration since the ban went on. Some dark clouds do have silver linings.





**BEST**

**WISHES**

*Nancy A. Reed*

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The National Finch Society asks that all of its affiliated clubs use Panel Judges for their 1985 shows. We do have apprentice judges available in some areas. For further information or special consideration on the above rules write to:

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1985

SECOND ANNUAL

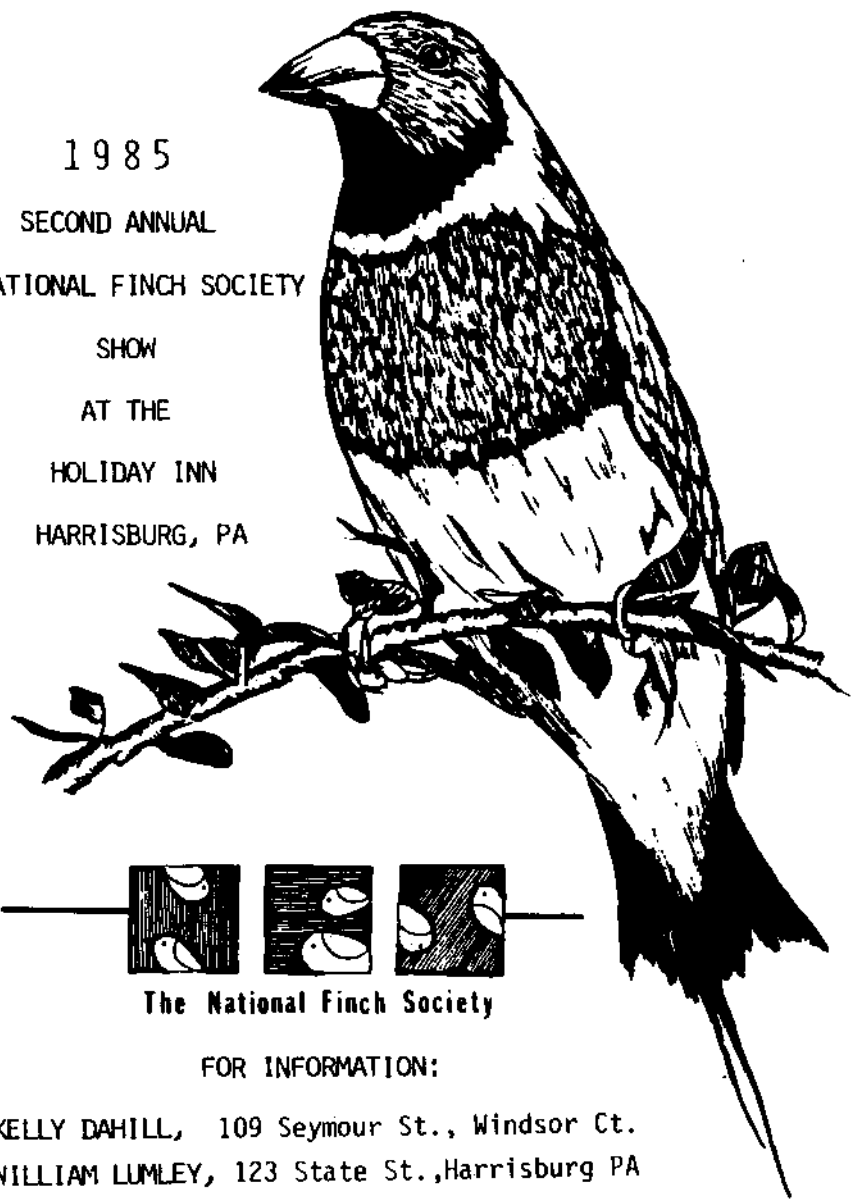
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FOR INFORMATION:

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WILLIAM LUMLEY, 123 State St., Harrisburg PA

# NFS 1984 AFFILIATED CLUBS

## SHOW REPORTS

BOSTON SOCIETY FOR AVICULTURE SHOW, Auburn, MA - entries 41  
October 5, 1984, Judge: William G. Parlee

BEST IN SHOW . . . . . Russell Armitage Jr.  
2ND IN SHOW . . . . . Carl Nurmi  
3RD IN SHOW . . . . . Natalie Molaver

Best Aust., Carl Nurmi - Best African, Russell Armitage  
Best New World, Harry Amoral - Best Asian, Carl Nurmi  
Best Softbill, Natalie Molaver

---

THE NEW HAMPSHIRE AVICULTURAL SOCIETY, Nashua, NH - (59)  
October 12, 1984, Judge: William G. Parlee

BEST IN SHOW . . . . . Kenneth Akey  
2ND IN SHOW . . . . . Russell Armitage Jr.  
3RD IN SHOW . . . . . Jerry D'Agata

Best Aust., Jerry D'Agata - Best Asian, Kenneth Akey  
Best Zebra, Jerry D'Agata - Best African, Russ Armitage  
Best So. Amer., Carmen Macchia - Best Europe, Manuel Goutro  
Best Softbill, Natalie Molaver

---

THE MASSACHUSETTS CAGE BIRD ASSOCIATION, Kingston, MA - (49)  
October 19, 1984, Judge: William G. Parlee

BEST IN SHOW . . . . . Kenneth Akey  
2ND IN SHOW . . . . . Esther Verissimo  
3RD IN SHOW . . . . . John Boyle

Best Zebra, Kay Thomas - Best Australian, Pauline Nurmi  
Best So. Amer., Joseph Seniti - Best Asian, Kenneth Akey  
Best Bengalese, Pauline Nurmi - Best African, John Boyle  
Best European, Jerry Driscoll - Best Softbill, Esther  
Verissimo - Best Display, Cynthia Espinola

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# SHOW RESULTS

## NATIONAL FINCH SOCIETY NATIONAL SHOW 1984

October 26, 1984, Judges: Dr. A. E. Decoteau  
E. Hartford, CT William G. Parlee  
entries 156

BEST IN SHOW . . . . .	Natalie Molaver
2ND IN SHOW . . . . .	Kelly S. Dahill
3RD IN SHOW . . . . .	Kenneth Akey
4TH IN SHOW . . . . .	Kelly S. Dahill
5TH IN SHOW . . . . .	Ben Giordano
6TH IN SHOW . . . . .	Bonnie Lillis
7TH IN SHOW . . . . .	Kenneth Akey
8TH IN SHOW . . . . .	Ann Turner
9TH IN SHOW . . . . .	John Boyle
10TH IN SHOW . . . . .	Ann Turner

Best Zebra, Bonnie Lillis - Best Aust., Kelly Dahill  
Best Indo-Pacific, Kenneth Akey - Best Society, Ann  
Turner - Best Mule or Hybrid, Ben Giordano - Best  
African, Kenneth Akey - Best Americas, Kelly Dahill  
Best Pair, Kenneth Akey - Best Softbill, Natalie Molaver

---

THE ASTORIA BIRD CLUB SHOW, Mespath, New York - 47 entries  
November, 2, 1984, Judge: Manuel Popa

BEST IN SHOW . . . . .	R. Deitoro
2ND IN SHOW . . . . .	Jerry D'Agata
3RD IN SHOW . . . . .	R. Deitoro

Best Australian, Jerry D'Agata - Best European, -  
F. Neretich - Best African, R. Deitoro - Best So. Amer.,  
R. Deitoro - Best Asian, Russell Armitage - Best Mule  
or Hybrid, T. Caruana

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NOTE: The Central Penna Cage Bird Show and The Balt-  
imore Cage Bird shows were cancelled due to state bans  
on bird shows in their respective states. (Avian Flu)

SHOW RESULTS CONTINUED. . . .

THE MIAMI AVICULTURAL SOCIETY SHOW, Miami, FL - 80 entries  
November 24, 1984, Judge: Marco Arida

BEST IN SHOW . . . . . Steve Hoppin  
2ND IN SHOW . . . . . Steve Hoppin  
3RD IN SHOW . . . . . Dick Muench

Best Zebra, Karl & Peggy Kline - Best Society, Steve Hoppin - Best African, Steve Hoppin - Best Asian & Pacific, Hector Ugalde - Best Australian, Steve Hoppin - Best European, John Dapas - Best American, Dick Muench

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THE LONG ISLAND CAGE BIRD SHOW, Hempstead, NY - 53 entries  
November 24, 1984, Judge: Carmen Juliano

BEST IN SHOW . . . . . Alex Grivas  
2ND IN SHOW . . . . . Thomas Caruana  
3RD IN SHOW . . . . . Alex Grivas

Best Zebra, Joe Crauo - Best Australian, Amores Elizabeth - Best Society, Alex Grivas - Best Waxbill, R. Deltoro - Best Singing Finch, Raul Thomas - Best Europe Alex Grivas - Best Mule or Hybrid, Alex Grivas

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THE WESTERN NEW ENGLAND CAGE BIRD SHOW, Feeding Hills, MA  
December 2, 1984, Judge: William G. Parlee  
39 entries Kelly S. Dahill

BEST IN SHOW . . . . . Bob & Tina  
Hemenway  
2ND IN SHOW . . . . . Dr. A.E. Decoteau  
3RD IN SHOW . . . . . Russell Armitage

Best Zebra, Al Decoteau - Best African, Bob and Tina Hemenway - Best Lge. African, Russell Armitage - Best Asian, Al Decoteau - Best Society, Russell Armitage

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## STAR FINCHES \_\_\_\_\_ BILL PARLEE

The Star finch is a lovely finch and is native to Australia. The Star is one of the first finches that were added to my original collection of finches. After breeding Zebra Finches for one year, I naturally expected that all finches would breed with ease and consistently. It did not take long to remove that thought from my head. I immediately found that my new Stars were not overly interested in the wicker nest I had placed in the cage for them.

I guess I'm getting ahead of myself here. The Star Finch is a showy finch due to its' color and pattern. Stars seem to vary considerably from bird to bird in their definition as well as coloration, which makes sexing difficult. The birds are basically olive-gray overall with varying degrees of lime green coloration of the chest. Starting from the beak and radiating outward through the cheek is bright red coloration. The cheeks and upper tail area are generally spotted with white stars, hence its' name.

The Male of the species is denoted by his more extensive and intense coloration. Again the problem of sexing. All Star Finches for the most part are domesticated for at least many generations, (Australian ban on exports 1937) the domestic babies when developing full color- at about one year of age vary dramatically. Many chests are more yellow than green. Many tails are more brown than red. Many facial areas little or no red present. It would seem that the diets we offer may lack a vital nutrient that the birds would normally get in the wild, causing this color variation. Many years ago in England it was reported that wild caught parents would very often rear less colorful chicks and they in turn would produce even less colorful young. Again we see the importance of a good diet for our birds.

The Star Finch is very pleasant to have in your aviary. They have a cheerful song that resembles a warble. The song is varied in nature and not as frequent as for instance the Green Singer. The song is pleasant and is sometimes difficult to recognize when housed with other finches.

I have found over the years, both in raising and selling, that the pretty litter Star is a very hardy bird once acclimated to its' aviary. I have found that the Star is a very social bird and generally will seem fearless. It has also been noted that they are prone to being startled, but recover quickly. In my aviaries stars have been kept at temperatures between 50 - 90 degrees with neither extreme seeming to faze the birds.

In breeding the Stars, I have found over the years and with many different setups (aviary-cage-colony) that small herbst type cages offer the best size cage for breeding. My only successes with Stars have been in small cages. I tried both aviary (single) and colony breeding, both of which were disasters. I did have one pair that would lay eggs in the flight, but they were always soft.

It would seem from this information that small cages would be best for your first attempt at breeding Stars. Now that we have that settled, let's get on to the diet. A standard mix of millets and canary seed are quite acceptable. I always feed a conditioning egg food, such as Petamine. It's a good idea to provide a fine grade of gravel either on the bottom or in a separate cup, I like the cup. A small amount of green should always be offered. I prefer spinach or collard greens. I generally offer as with all my birds, something of a treat each day, hard boiled, halved egg, carrot, nuts, fresh corn or just about anything else I have around the house that they will accept. I am a great believer in variety.

Vitamins are a must, there are many on the market, I use Necton products in the water. Sometimes vitamins are sprinkled on damp greens or corn. Three or four days of added vitamins is probably enough. Cuttlebone should be offered and mineral supplement may be advisable. Millet Sprays are a mainstay of my nutritional program. The Sprays are muti-useful, nutrition as well as nest material.

Now we have the cage and a proper diet. The nest may present the greatest frustration in your breeding attempts. I've tried several different types of nests as well as nesting materials. First I tried a typical wicker hooded nest which was rejected. In fact ignored. I tried a box which also proved unsuccessful. The only nest they would accept was one they would not breed in, the canary type of wicker nest. Finally I hit upon the secret, a broken

## STAR FINCHES CONT' . . .

fronted nest box. I needed another box for my Zebras, and going with the odds I took the Star's good box and gave it to the Zebras, putting the half fronted box in with the Stars. Surprise, Surprise, the Stars started to carry broken millet spray stalks into the nest. I guess I should point out that it was the cock who built the nest as the hen sat idly by ignoring all the activity in the cage, but once the nest was built (five days) she finally investigated. After that original investigation she went back to the perch for about 10 minutes and then retreated to the nest where she stayed for about 7 weeks.

I tried not to disturb the pair, but after about two weeks I noticed an egg in the nest (the broken front made observation an ease). Three more eggs were laid during the next 5 days. Oh! one thing I forgot to tell you. During the nest building the male Star would occasionally take a millet stalk and hit the hen with it, as if to say "Hey babe, see what I'm doing, get with it". Back to the eggs. After about two weeks the first egg hatched with the second following the next day. The other two eggs did not hatch (I have never gotten four eggs to hatch with any Star pairs). The hen did almost all the sitting although the cock was quite attentive.

During the period of egg hatching it was noticed that food consumption for the pair increased dramatically. Large amounts of petamine and millet sprays were devoured. I also offer small baby mealworms which the cock would carry to the nest. The hen would never go after the Mealworms at her own inclination. The two babies were relatively colorless when they fledged at about five weeks. I kept these two birds, both of which appeared to be hens, being quite drab. About a year later I obtained a definite male and put one of the hens with it and gave them to my father. Dad got them to breed successfully in a hooded nest. This again points out that what works for one breeder may not necessarily work for the next.

Possibly you have had experiences that differ from the ones I have written on. If so, why not write an article on your experience with Star Finches or for that matter, other finches and send them along to the editor, National Finch Society, 529 Burnside Ave., E. Hartford, CT 06108.



## The National Finch Society

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529 Burnside Avenue, East Hartford, Ct 06108



# NCS

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