

THE NATIONAL FINCH SOCIETY  
529 Burnside Avenue  
E. Hartford, CT 06108

# The National Finch Society



SEPTEMBER  
OCTOBER  
1986

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

As we approach the show season, I would like to take this opportunity to wish all NFB members a happy and successful exhibition season. On the Board Members of the Society hope to see many of you at the local shows, and of course at the National Annual Meeting and Show of the National Finch Society at the National Cage Bird Show in St. Louis, on November 13-16, 1986.

Also NFB Points Chairman, Tony Peterson, would like to point out that to obtain points at the shows this year, you must be a NFB member prior to a show to gain points for use. Points are not retroactive if a person decides to join subsequent to a show. Enlist your friends to join now.

# **NATIONAL FINCH SOCIETY AFFILIATION AGREEMENT 1987**

THANK YOU FOR SHOWING AN INTEREST IN AFFILIATING WITH THE NATIONAL FINCH SOCIETY. WE ARE SURE THAT THE ARRANGEMENTS WE MAKE WILL BE OF MUTUAL BENEFIT TO BOTH OF OUR ORGANIZATIONS.

THE ONLY REQUIREMENTS THAT YOUR CLUB WILL HAVE TO MEET, ARE TO PAY THE APPROPRIATE AFFILIATION FEE AND SELECT A DELEGATE TO REPRESENT YOUR CLUB IN DEALINGS WITH NFS. SUCH DELEGATE MUST BE A MEMBER OF NFS.

## **LEVEL ONE AFFILIATION**

LEVEL ONE AFFILIATION IS DESIGNED FOR CLUBS THAT ARE NOT EXHIBITION ORIENTED. THE FEE FOR THIS AFFILIATION IS \$25. YOUR BENEFITS INCLUDE ALL THE NORMAL EDUCATIONAL AND PUBLICATION MATERIALS OF THE SOCIETY. ALSO YOU WILL RECEIVE DURING THE AUGUST OF YOUR AFFILIATION YEAR A BEAUTIFUL PLAQUE FOR YOUR CLUB. THIS PLAQUE CAN BE A SERVICE OR BREEDER AWARD FOR ONE OF THE MEMBERS OF YOUR CLUB (THIS PERSON NEED NOT BE A NFS MEMBER). THE PLAQUE ALONE IS WORTH THE AFFILIATION FEE. REQUESTS FOR THE TYPE PLAQUE AND WORDING MUST BE FORWARDED TO NFS NO LATER THAN JUNE 1 OF THE YEAR.

## **LEVEL TWO AFFILIATION**

LEVEL TWO AFFILIATION IS FOR CLUBS WITH EXHIBITIONS. YOUR BENEFITS WILL INCLUDE BEAUTIFUL PLAQUES FOR FIRST, SECOND, AND THIRD PLACE IN YOUR SHOW. THE FEE FOR THIS LEVEL IS \$40, AND IS SIMILAR TO LAST YEAR'S AFFILIATIONS.

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IF YOU HAVE ANY FURTHER QUESTIONS REGARDING AFFILIATION WITH THE NATIONAL FINCH SOCIETY, YOU MAY WRITE THE NATIONAL FINCH SOCIETY, AFFILIATION DIRECTOR, C/O PAM LIDDY, 245 DRAPER ST. SPRINGFIELD, MA 01108.

CLUB NAME \_\_\_\_\_

LEVEL 1     LEVEL 2     LEVEL 3

DELEGATES NAME \_\_\_\_\_

NFS# \_\_\_\_\_     \$25     \$40     \$65

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

MAIL THIS FORM AND FEE TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS.

### NFS PANEL OF JUDGES 1987

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(203) 528-1458

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Papillion, NE 68046  
(402) 339-8772

GEORGE WARREN, 28 Chedworth Crescent, Paulsgrove, Portsmouth, England, Zip PO6-4ET. Phone: Coshae (Portsmouth) 386304.

FOR INFORMATION ON THE NFS JUDGES PANEL: Write Panel Director A.E. Decoteau, Groton St. Dunstable, MA 01827.

# NATIONAL FINCH SOCIETY AFFILIATED CLUBS

## CALIFORNIA

The Fresno Canary and Finch Society.

Delegate: Graham Southerland

Show: Oct. 31 - Nov. 2, 1986

Panel Judge: Joseph Krader

Place: Madera Cty. Fairgrounds

Reg. 6 Meeting, Nov. 1, 1986

Capitol City Bird Society

Delegate: Helen Caudle

Show: Oct. 17-19, 1986

Judge: Ray Johnson \*\*\*

Place: Rusch Park, Citrus Hgts.

Golden Gate Avian Society

Delegate: Mary Payne

Show: Nov. 7-9, 1986

Panel Judge: Brian Manderich

Place: Alameda Fairgrounds

The Aviary Assoc. of Kern Cty.

Delegate: Hal Koontz

Show: November 15, 1986

Panel Judge: Hal Koontz

Place: Kern Cty. Fairgrounds

Hall of Flowers.

## COLORADO

Rocky Mt. Society of Aviculture

Delegate: Martha Wignore

Show: October 25, 1986

Panel Judge: Paul Williams

Place: Continental Inn, Denver

Reg. 5 Meeting, Oct. 25, 1986

## CONNECTICUT

The Conn. Assoc. for Aviculture

Delegate: Jerry D'Agata

Show: October 25, 1986

Panel Judge: Conrad Meinert

Place: Vet. Memorial Bldg.

E. Hartford, CT.

Reg. 1 Meeting, Oct. 25, 1986

## FLORIDA

Gold Coast Exotic Cage Bird Club

Delegate: Karl Kline

Show: October 25, 1986

Panel Judge: William Parlee

Place: Anacapri Inn, Ft. Lauderdale

Reg. 2 Meeting, Oct 25, 1986

Sunshine State Cage Bird Society

Delegate: Ann Hurst

Show: October 11, 1986

Judge: Ray Johnson

Place: Sheraton, International

Inn, Orlando, FL

## PENNSYLVANIA AVICULTURAL SOCIETY

Delegate: Charles Richardson

Show: November 29, 1986

Judge: Juanita McInain

Place: Hospitality, Pensacola

## GEORGIA

The Georgia Cage Bird Society

Delegate: Cecil Gunby

Show: November 1, 1986

Panel Judge: R.E.Decoteau

## ILLINOIS

Gr. Chicago Cage Bird Club

Delegate: Charles Anchor

Show: October 2-4, 1986

Panel Judge: A.E.Decoteau

Place: Ramada O'Hare

Rosemont, Ill. (GABS)

Reg. 3 Meeting

Kaytee Great American Cage

Bird Show. Delegate: Harvey

Smith. Date: Oct. 2-4, 1986

Conjunction with Chicago Show.

**INDIANA**

Indiana Bird Fanciera  
 Delegate: Val Clear  
 Show: October 11, 1986  
 Judge: Wayne Thonann sst  
 Place: Ft. Wayne, IN

**LOUISIANA**

Gulf South Bird Club Inc.  
 Delegate: Evon Kruse  
 Show: October 18, 1986  
 Panel Judge: Daren Decoteau  
 Place: Clarion Motel, M.O., La.

**MARYLAND**

Baltimore Bird Fanciers Inc.  
 Delegate: Brenda Geesey  
 Show: October 18, 1986  
 Judge: Roddy Gable sst  
 Place: Essex, MD

The Maryland Cage Bird Assoc.  
 Delegate: Dallas Johnson  
 Show: November 8, 1986  
 Panel Judge: Daren Decoteau  
 Conjunction with Cent.Pa.Show  
 Place: Quality Inn, York, Pa.

**MASSACHUSETTS**

The Boston Cockatiel Society  
 Delegate: Roger O'Connell  
 Show: September 27, 1986  
 Panel Judge: Jerry D'Agata  
 Place: Weston Town Hall.

The Boston Society for  
 Aviculture Inc.  
 Delegate: Roger O'Connell  
 No Show this year.

The Mass. Cage Bird Aaaoc.  
 Delegate: Shirley Eaton  
 Show: October 18, 1986  
 Panel Judge: William Parlee  
 Place: Reed Mall, Kingston, Ma.

Western New England Cage Bird  
 Society.

Delegate: Charles Biaquinta  
 Show: November 8, 1986  
 Panel Judge: Milliam Parlee  
 Place: Christ the King Church

**MICHIGAN**

Mid-West Canary and Cage Bird  
 Society.  
 Delegate: Mary Kaszyca  
 Show: October 3-4, 1986  
 Judge: Charles Kruger sst  
 Place: Holiday Inn, Southfield

**MINNESOTA**

Minnesota Cage Bird Society  
 Delegate: Micheal Bronson  
 Show: October 11, 1986  
 Panel Judge: William Parlee  
 Place: Knollwood, Minneapolis

**MISSOURI**

The Kansas City Avicultural  
 Society.  
 Delegate: Earl Courts  
 Show: October 18, 1986  
 Judge: Dr. Roger Harlan sst  
 Place: Mo Jo's, Independence

Missouri Cage Bird Club  
 Delegate: Tom Rood  
 Show: November 13-14, 1986  
 Panel Judge: Milliam Parlee  
 Conjunction with National  
 Cage Bird Show.

The National Cage Bird Show  
 Show: November 13-14, 1986  
 Finch Division  
 Panel Judge: William Parlee  
 Place: Adams Mark Hotel  
 St. Louis, Mo.

The National Finch Society  
National Show  
Show: November 13-16, 1986  
Conjunction with National  
Cage Bird Show. St. Louis.

#### NEBRASKA

The Gr. Omaha Cage Bird Club  
Delegate: Wayne Eichelberger  
Show: November 8, 1986  
Panel Judge: Charles Anchor  
Rag. 4 Meeting

#### NEW HAMPSHIRE

Birds of a Feather  
Avicultural Society  
Delegate: Larry Brandt  
No show this year.

The New Hampshire Avicultural  
Society  
Delegate: Ken Akey  
Show: October 11, 1986  
Panel Judge: Al Decoteau

#### NEW YORK

The Astoria Bird Club  
Delegate: Alex Grivas  
Show: November 1, 1986  
Panel Judge: Kelly Dahill  
Place: Am. Legion, Meapstead

#### NORTH CAROLINA

The Charlotte Metrolina Cage  
Bird Society.  
Delagata: Patricia Gibson  
Show: Saptember 13, 1986  
Panel Judge: A.E. Decoteau  
Place: Holiday Inn - 177  
Charlotte, NC

#### OHIO

Central Ohio Bird Fanciers  
Dalegate: Kevin Resch  
Show: Oct. 17-18, 1986  
Panel Judge: Dr. Val Clear  
Place: Radisson Hotel, Columbus

#### OKLAHOMA

Bird Fanciers of Oklahoma  
Dalegata: Gene Millar  
Show: October 25, 1986  
Panal Judge: Charles Anchor  
Place: Camelot Hotel, Tulsa.

Oklahoma Cage Bird Society  
Delegate: Laura King  
Show: October 25, 1986  
Panel Judge: Juanita McLain  
Place: Camelot Inn, Tulsa

#### PENNSYLVANIA

The Central Pannsylvania  
Cage Bird Society.  
Delegata: Milliaa Lualay  
Show: November 8, 1986  
Conjunction with Maryland  
Cage Bird Assoc.

#### WISCONSIN

Milwaukee Bird Society  
Delegate: Bernard Knuth  
Show: Nov. 21-22, 1986  
Panel Judge: A.E. Decoteau  
Place: Raaada Sands, Milwaukee

The Wisconsin Cage Bird Club  
Delagate: Mary Zuidema  
Show: Sept. 26-27, 1986  
Judge: Ron Philip \*\*  
Place: Travelers Inn,  
Fond du lac, WI

#### INTERNATIONAL

New Zealand Finch Breedars  
Association.  
Delegate: Valerie Hughes

The Zebra Finch Society  
of England  
Delegate: J.A.W. Prior

\*\* Non-accredited judge (no points)

# NATIONAL FINCH SOCIETY EXHIBITION POINTS SCHEDULE

THE FOLLOWING IS THE POINTS SCHEDULE TO BE USED BY AFFILIATED SHOWS IN THE AWARDING OF POINTS. ALL POINTS ARE ACUALLY AWARDED BY THE POINTS CHAIRMAN AND THAT OFFICES DECISION SHALL BE FINAL. APPEALS OR OUES-TIONS MAY BE DIRECTED TO THE POINTS CHAIRMAN, TONY M. PATTERSON AT THE HOME OFFICE. PLEASE NOTE THE TOTAL POINTS NEEDED FOR CHAMPIONSHIP AND EXCELLENCE A-WARDS. POINTS FOR EXCELLENCE AWARD ARE ACCUMU-LATIVE.

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## POINTS SCHEOULE

Number of finches In a show	Best	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th
20-29	3	2	1	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
30-39	4	3	2	1	x	x	x	x	x	x
40-49	5	4	3	2	1	x	x	x	x	x
50-59	6	5	4	3	2	1	x	x	x	x
60-69	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	x	x	x
70-79	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	x	x
80-89	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	x
90-99	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
100-119	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2
120-139	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3
140-159	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4
Over 160	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5

The number of points to be ewarded for a win, 1st through 10th are listed under the place. Follow the entry size line for the number of finches shown at the particuler show over to the place which you have won. The points shown under that place are the points you have recieved for that win. Remember, regerdless of the size of the entry, if the show is not being judged by e NFS Panel Judge, there will be no points ewarded. The club involved does not necessarily have to be an affiliate of NFS, but the judge must be a panel judge for points to count. Plaques and Rosettes from the National Finch Society are only awarded at NFS affiliated shows.



## NFS REGIONAL SHOWS

REGION 1 - Greater New England Cage Bird Show, Oct. 25, 1986. All bird show. NFS Panel Judge: Conrad Meinert. The show will be held at the Veteran's Memorial Bldg., E. Hartford, CT. Special 10th Anniversary Show. For information write: Russ Armitage Jr., 345 Boston Rd., Middletown, CT 06457.

REGION 2 - Gold Coast Exotic Bird Club, October 25, 1986. All bird show. NFS Panel Judge: William G. Parlee. The show will be held at the Anacapri Inn, Fort Lauderdale, Florida. For information write: Karl Kline, 9574 Saddlebrook Drive, Boca Raton, FL 33434.

REGION 3 - The Great American Bird Show. Oct. 2-4, 1986. This show offers cash prizes for Division winners. Sponsored by The Greater Chicago Bird Club and Kaytee Products. NFS Panel Judge will be Dr. A.E. Decoteau. This is an all bird show. The show will be held at the Ramada Inn, O'Hare at Chicago's O'Hare Airport. For further information contact: Harvey Smith of Kaytee Products, P.O. Box 230 in Chilton, WI 53014.

REGION 4 - There has been no request for a regional show in this region.

REGION 5 - The Rocky Mountain Society for Aviculture Show. October 25, 1986. NFS Panel Judge: Paul Williams. The show is an all bird show and will be held at the Continental Inn in Denver, Colorado. For more info see the paid ad elsewhere in this issue.

REGION 6 - The Fresno Canary and Finch Club Show. The show will be held at the Madera County Fairgrounds in Fresno, California. The show will take place on October 31 - November 2, 1986. NFS Panel Judge will be Joseph Krader. For more info write: Graham Southerland, 2029 North Katy Lane, Fresno, CA 93711.

REGIONAL SHOWS are generally larger shows and wins at these shows will carry a higher point count. NFS Regional Rosettes are awarded in addition to other awards normally offered. Regional NFS membership meetings are also held at these shows.



## The National Finch Society

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Individual \$15 / / Dual \$20 / / Junior 7.50 / /

Dual Membership is two individuals residing at the same address (one bulletin). Juniors are under 16.

Club affiliations \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you been involved in finches \_\_\_\_\_.

How many species have you bred? \_\_\_\_\_.

Briefly describe your interest in joining the National Finch Society and what you hope to get out of your membership.

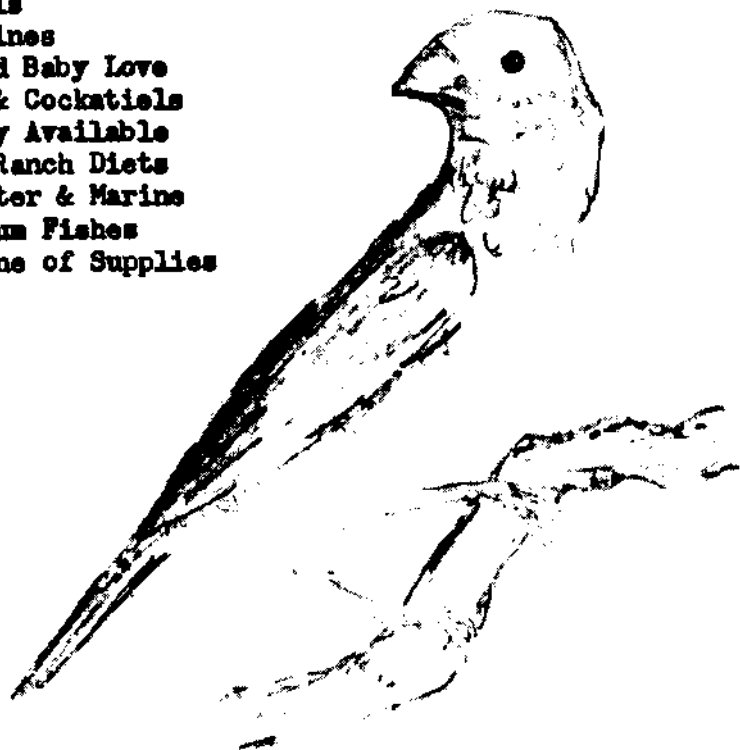
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# **GOULDIAN MUTATION UPDATE**

**By Terry Dunham**

In an earlier issue of the NFS bulletin we reported on exciting new yellow-bodied, dilute (light-green) bodied and blue-bodied Gouldian mutations. This report updates our breeding results and describes what we hope is another significant mutation we have obtained. (See earlier articles: July '84 - "Gouldian Mutations", and July/Aug. '85 - "Breeding the Yellow Gouldian", for other details).

There are still many unanswered questions. But as the article will make clear, tests are underway that should answer many of the remaining questions, and we are translating articles from foreign avicultural journals for further insights. With luck, the next time NFS addresses the issue it will be to clearly define the genetic possibilities of all these exciting new birds.

## **Dilute-bodied Goulds**

Dilute-bodied Goulds are a beautiful light green. The chest and head colors remain as in the normal, but the blue around the head and on the rump is diluted to a light blue; the black ring around the head color is diluted to a light gray-blue.

Our suspicion is that the dilute is a separate mutation bred into the yellow-bodied birds, either accidentally or intentionally, before we obtained them from Europe. That is speculative, however, since so far all dilute males we have bred have produced both dilute and yellow-bodied offspring, as well as green birds. As our pool of offspring increases we will be able to chart the results and speculate more intelligently on the genetic characteristics. Perhaps we will learn how to isolate the two mutations by selective pairings.

The dilute-bodied mutation is at least partially dominant to green, since the above results are obtained when dilute males are paired to normal green hens. (Yellow-bodied cocks or hens paired to normal green mates also produce green and yellow-bodied babies of both sexes, and dilute-bodied males.)

So far all dilutes have been males and all have been purple breasted birds, even though some of the yellow-bodied and green offspring have been white-breasted. We are now testing several dilute cocks to visual white-breasted hens to see if we can produce white-breasted dilute-bodied birds.

We have not yet produced black-headed dilutes, but have set up several pairs to produce them. We want to determine, first, if it can be done: We can anticipate no reason that should not be possible. We also want to see what those birds look like. Depending on how the black is diluted on the crown of black-headed males, they may be dramatically different and handsome, or relatively unassuming and undesirable other than as a curiosity.

## **Yellow-bodied Goulds**

Yellow-bodied birds are a rich, creamy yellow with normal red or yellow head color and purple or white breasts. Males, in particular, are stunning.

So far, results from about ten breedings remain consistent: Dilute cocks or yellow hens paired to "normal" green mates produce about 35% mutant offspring, consisting of dilute cocks and yellow cocks and hens. The balance are green birds. We have tested only a few of those green birds, and only briefly, but have not as yet confirmed the presence of visually green "carriers" or splits.

Preliminary results suggest yellow cocks mated to green hens may produce a slightly larger number of dilute and yellow young, but it is too early to be sure.

It also seems that dilute cocks mated to yellow hens produce even greater numbers of the mutations: Of the first ten we produced from such a pairing, eight were dilute or yellow-bodied birds and only two were green — about twice the percentage of the other pairings. We're testing additional pairs.

The first seven or eight yellow-bodied cocks we raised were white-breasted, suggesting there might be some linkage between the white-breasted and yellow two mutations. We have only recently produced our first purple-breasted yellow-bodied male and will test it this fall to see if production from it differs. We are also crossing some yellow birds of both sexes to white-breasted green mates to see if that affects the numbers of mutations among the young.

When we crossed yellow to yellow, our first several clutches of young died in the nest, raising the possibility, at least, that there is a lethal factor in that pairing. Or it might have been mere coincidence: We are now testing a second pair to gather further evidence.

We have produced one black-headed yellow-bodied hen, and its cream-colored head is unimpressive. Since red-headed and yellow-headed yellow-bodied birds retain all the brilliance of head color of normal greens, we will try to limit future yellow-bodied production to those head colors.

## **Blue-bodied Goulds**

The blue-bodied mutation is producing as a simple recessive and appears to have been strengthened by the outcrossing we did after importing the original birds. Our contact in Holland reports breeders there, on the other hand, are having a hard time raising more blues, and there is evidence the price abroad may have increased since our purchase, presumably due to the difficulties they are experiencing.

We crossed a few blues to white-breasted birds and are now mating those double-splits; about one-sixteenth of the young should be white-breasted blue-bodied birds, the first we will have seen.

## **Dilute and yellow crosses to blue**

One of the experiments we are most excited about involves crossing yellows and dilutes to blues. to see if we can produce dilute-blues and yellow-blues, which we theorize would be white-bodied with normal chest and head coloration.

We now have about ten yellows and dilutes we believe are also split to blue. though that cannot be known with certainty until our present tests are concluded. We have paired those birds to blue mates. If they are also split to blue, half of the dilute offspring will be dilute-blues, and half of the yellow offspring will be yellow-blues. The first babies hatched two days before this article was written, so by the time of the NFS Show in November we should have the answer to that exciting question.

## **A new mutation?**

I was lucky enough to be able to buy four melanistic Gouldian finch males earlier this month. The best of the birds has a velvet-black breast and black extending from the edges of its red head to halfway down its shoulders. The green on the back is green-black, and there is charcoal gray obscuring part of the yellow abdomen. The red head color is unaltered.

A black-headed specimen has black extending down onto the upper parts of its body, so that it might better be described as a black-headed black-shouldered Gould.

Melanistic Goulds have been reported before in a German journal, but we have not determined whether they reproduced.

It might sound as though this mutation would lose the natural beauty of the Gouldian finch, but they are actually striking. It is our hope that with careful selective breeding we can produce true-breeding black-breasted or black-topped birds. On the other hand, of course, they may prove to be nothing more than sports or birds which underwent plumage alterations due to environmental deficiencies.

I invite anyone working with other Gouldian mutations to contact me at PO Box 7870, St. Pete, FL 33734. With open communication and diligent work, we can fulfill the promise of the eighties as the most exciting decade ever in Gouldian finch breeding.

**Editor's note:** Terry called just before press time, stating that he has produced a dilute-blue. This proves both mutations (dilute and blue) can be produced on the same bird, breeding a light-blue bodied Gouldian.

---

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**MORE NEW NFS MEMBERS NEXT ISSUE.**

**EDITOR'S NOTE:**

MANY NFS MEMBERS WRITE AND ASK WHY WE DON'T PUBLISH ADDRESSES IN FULL WHEN LISTING NEW MEMBERS. THE ANSWER IS THAT MANY BIRD BREEDERS DO NOT WANT THE LOCATION OF THEIR AVIARIES KNOWN TO THE PUBLIC. EACH MEMBER HAS HIS OR HER OWN REASON FOR THIS ATTEMPT AT ANONYMITY. WE AT THE NATIONAL FINCH SOCIETY MUST RESPECT THIS RIGHT. FILL OUT THE BIRD CENSUS LOCATED ELSEWHERE IN THIS ISSUE. IT IS YOUR BEST BET IN OBTAINING TELEPHONE NUMBERS OF OTHER BREEDERS WHO WISH TO SHARE INFO.

# **BREEDING THE DIAMOND SPARROW**

**By Hal M. Koontz**

The Diamond sparrow, *Emblema guttata*, is more properly called the Diamond Firetail since it is not a sparrow at all. Instead it is one of the true grassfinches of Australia. It is closely related to the other three members of the Firetail family: the beautiful Firetail, the Red-eared Firetail, and the Painted Finch.

As you can guess from its name, the most striking feature of the Diamond sparrow is its red tail. Actually the tail itself is black, but the rump and upper tail coverts are a bright crimson. The back and wing color is brown, the head is ash grey, the throat and abdomen are white with a wide black band across the chest, the sides are black with white scalloped spots on them, the bill color varies from pink to dark purple, the iris and eyelids are red, and the feet and legs are dark grey. The eyelids are unusual in that they appear segmented instead of smooth. I have seen several Diamond sparrows with a few red feathers on the chest.

The Diamond sparrow is generally in good feather condition and consequently does well in bird shows. The Diamond sparrow is one of the largest of the Australian finches. It is stocky and can hold its own among larger finches. I have heard stories of aggression among Diamond sparrows but I have never seen it in my own birds. Perhaps this is because I have only one pair of Diamond sparrows in an aviary. I have found Diamond sparrows to be hardy and able to take our slightly below freezing temperatures.

Sexing Diamond sparrows is fairly difficult. I generally do it by comparing the beak color. The beak of a hen is generally a rose color while the beak of a male is generally a deep purple color. There are many in-between examples which are very difficult to sex. I have heard that one can sex this species by comparing the color of the eyelid. I have not found this to be a reliable way to sex Diamond sparrows.

The Diamond Sparrow is my least successful species for breeding results among the available species. I invite readers to write articles about their success with this species so I can learn what to do. I know of several persons who raise Diamond sparrows easily so I know it can be done. My experience was spotty breeding. A few good pairs over the years would breed, but I could not get the babies to breed. In order to establish species, we need to be able to breed them generation after generation. I have only been able to raise a handful once every two or three years.

I have had Diamond sparrows nest in standard tinch boxes, bushes and tumbleweeds. In tumbleweeds, they pretar to build their nest in the vary center of the tumbleweed whera it ia vary ditticult (and paintul) for you to gat to or look at. They ganarally build a larga clumsy nest, not well built at all, with a long entrance tunnel of up to four inchea. My birda ganarally lay tour eggs. Fertillity is pretty high but a number of my pairs refuse to raise their babias. My main problem is that I have had a difficult tima gatting tham to lay eggs. I think that aviaries are bettar suited for Diamond sparrows than cages. Aviaries can help prevant the birds trom getting tat, provide more privacy and provide more nasting altes. My Diamond sparrows ganerally will roost in a roosting nast rather than sleep out on a perch.

The Diamond sparrow has some distinctive calls. The male otten sings a long saries of very low raspy sounda. He can do this over and over again for up to halt a minute. He uaes this song during the courtship dance alao. Another call is tha loud high pitchad identity call which has two ayllablas.

The Diamond sparrow has an alaborata courtship dance. The male will gat the longeat pieca of grass he can tind and sit on the perch near or opposite the hen. He will sing, bob up and down by bending and then stretching his legs without his taet leaving the perch, he will put his beak on his chest and flutt out his teathers.

Most of tha individuals I have met who have had success with Diamond sparrows bred their Diamonds in colonies. This may allow them to aelact their own mates which some people teel is important in Diamond sparrows. I encouraga you to try this beautiful bird and to share your aperiences.

This column is designed in part to answer your questions on Australian tinches. Thus far, I have had only one letter. If you have any questions, please send them to me at 2604 Auburn Court, Bakerstield, CA 93306.

A Diamond Sparrow owned by Hal Koontz.

## **ZEBRA FINCHES, Part Three**

**By Bill Parlee**

Because of tha size of this bulletin, Zebra Finches, Part Three, will appear in the Novembar/Decembar issue of the NFS Bulletin.

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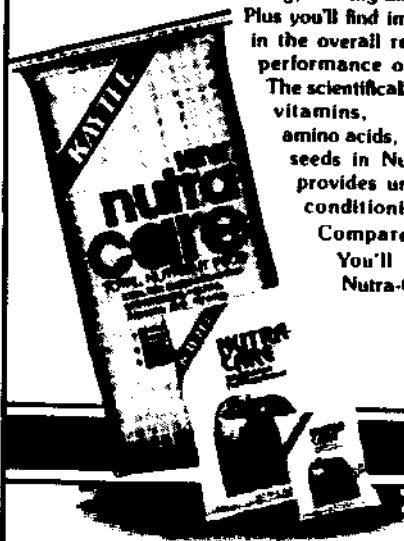
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## NFS MEMBER VIEWPOINT

### NFS Breeding Encouragement Program

by Norm Kopecky, South Dakota.

The concept of the National Finch Society actively encouraging the breeding of finches really excites me. Hal Koontz in the Jan/Feb 86 issue of the NFS Bulletin talks about the need to specialize with a particular species. Let us add to this thought process.

In the fall/winter, we have a very involved program of showing birds. In the spring/summer, why not develop a similar program dedicated to recognition of the breeding of finches.

Call the program 25-25 (I like the sound of that name). It stands for 25 people raising 25 babies to establish a species in American Aviculture. For raising 25 birds, the person would receive a very nice plaque designating this person a FOUNDATION BREEDER for that year. The person raising 10-25 birds would receive a pretty certificate suitable for framing naming them a SUPPORTING BREEDER. When a species reached 25-25 for 5 years, the species would be declared established with a big celebration etc. The plaque and certificate could be displayed at bird shows. This would advertise and promote the program even more.

There would be two classes of birds: 1. Birds not raised because they're imported so cheaply, or not raised because they are so similar to other commonly raised species (ie. Parrots) and; 2. Rare, endangered or very difficult to breed species (ie. Myiads). This program would apply to the first group. A second specialized program would need to be established for the second group.

Right now, if you raise a dozen Red-eared Waxbills, who cares? All you need to raise is one bird to say you've bred the species. There is no incentive at all to raise more. Think of the effort it would take to raise 25 babies that wholesale for less than \$5.

To qualify for an award, a person would have to have his/her breeding results verified by two NFS members. This verification would be done on a form listing the species, breeding results, type of breeding set-up, if fostering was used, etc. From these forms, quite a bit of information could be gathered.

Each species (or group of similar species) would have a species Captain just as we have show stewards. The forms would be sent to the species Captain to be compiled for publication. The report published in the NFS Bulletin would include a status report by the Captain, a list of articles published that year on the species, summaries of ideas and successful techniques used by members and then the list of FOUNDATION BREEDERS and SUPPORTING BREEDERS. When a species was declared established, a small book, would be printed using this format. This book would be a collectors item documenting the work done through the years to establish the species.

Of course, there would be a lot of holes in the program at first. But if the organizational framework were set up, I think people would fill in the gaps. It could matter that someone raised a dozen Red-eared Nuthatches and they would be encouraged to reach for 25 babies the next season. This would also tell us where we stand with each species and where we need to concentrate our efforts.

#### EDITOR'S NOTE:

The Research and Standards Committee thanks More for his interesting ideas on this subject. The NFS has asked its membership for input on this idea of a Breeding Encouragement Program. If you have comment on this "Members Viewpoint", or the project as a whole, you may address your comments to the NFS Editor, 529 Burnside Avenue, E. Hartford, CT 06108-3592. Copies of your letters will be forwarded to the Committee for their review as well.

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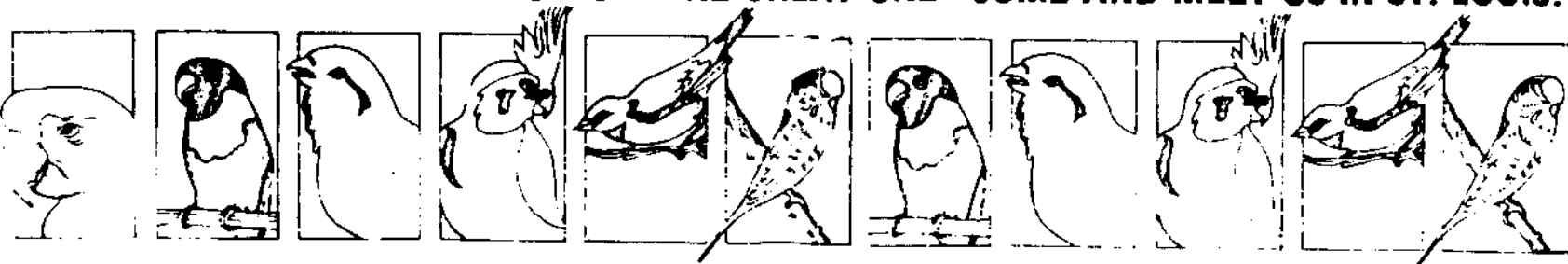
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## BOARD MINUTES, SEPT. 7, 1986

The September 7, 1986 meeting of the National Finch Society Board of Directors was held at the home of Dr. Al Decoteau in Dunstable, Massachusetts. The meeting came to order at 4:06 p.m. Present were: Russ Armitage Jr., Chris Voronovitch, Kelly Dahill, Jerry D'Agate, Roger O'Connell and Millian Parlee.

The Secretary's and Treasurer's reports were accepted as read.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

**SHOW REPORT** - Charles Anchor judged the San Antonio Show in which there were 58 entries. The format of the show (non-affiliated) allowed for two divisions; a single's and a pair's division. The show report listed two Best in Shows. Three places for singles, and three places for pairs. The National Finch Society does not recognize pairs as a division. A motion was made to accept the single's division as the winners. The motion carried. Points will be awarded for singles only.

**PUBLISHING COMMITTEE REPORT** - The Board discussed the Yearbook at great length. The Board voted, after discussing the matter with the publishing committee to postpone our first Yearbook until next year. The publishing committee sighted the present workload and the deadline for publishing the Yearbook in time for the shows, as its reason for the requested postponement. The Board is highly in favor of the Yearbook idea, but feels that the suggestion was made too late in the year. The Publishing Committee will now have the winter to work on the book for issue next spring.

**RESEARCH AND STANDARDS** - The Rare and Endangered Species Propagation Program was again discussed. Many subjects were considered, such as the question of Zoo involvement. The Board requests input from interested members so that we may further this project.

The Board again reviewed the next species to be considered for a Standard of Perfection by The National Finch Society. The Java Rice Bird, Diamond Sparrow, and Shaftail Finch were discussed. The Board voted to tackle the Java Rice Bird next, and asked the Committee to contact Dan Gutz as an authority on the species to head the Committee. The Board asks other interested parties to contact Dr. Decoteau with their thoughts on this species. The Board also considered for the first time the adoption of Standards for Softbilled birds. The present feeling of the Board is that this is indeed a necessity, but also sighted that other commonly shown finches should probably be addressed first.

**PROMOTION AND PRODUCTS** - The National Finch Society T-shirts are now available through the home office and at many local shows. Russ Armitage commented on the popularity of the four-color shirts at the AFA Convention in New Orleans. The shirts will be available at the Great American Bird Show in Chicago and the National Finch Society National Show at the Adams Mark Hotel in St. Louis, on November 13-16, 1986 at the site of the National Cage Bird Show. Many Regional Vice-Presidents have requested stocks of the shirts, and may make them available at shows they attend.

After a meeting between President Parlee and avian artist Eric Peake it was announced that artist Peake had agreed to draw Species Standards for the National Finch Society. The Zebra Finch will be the first subject. The original artwork will be auctioned off as a fund raiser at next year's National. Signed prints will also be made available to interested members when available.

**JUDGES PANEL COMMITTEE** - The apprenticeships are closed for this year. All but a few have been confirmed and approved. Dr. Decoteau has the new Judges Show Reports for 1986. The 4 part reports are carbonless and easy to use. He will have them distributed to all judges for their assignments this fall. The Committee also reiterated a few points that judges should be aware of for this coming show season: All show reports must be sent in immediately following each show judged; Any apprenticeship reports by judges must also be sent to both the home office and to the Panel Judges Director as soon after the evaluation as possible.

The Board also suggested giving the Panel Director more authority in collection of fees and reports from Panel members. It was suggested under new business that the Board make a motion to automatically and permanently suspend any judge who, after being given a 30 day notice to comply, does not pay his membership dues, Judge's fee, or does not submit required forms to the Director as requested.

The Board upon Al's suggestion, further stated that all apprentices presently in the "system" must complete all three apprenticeships and pass the Judge's Test before their names may be presented to the Board for final vote.

**MEMBERSHIP REPORT** - At the time of this meeting the membership stands at 409 and affiliates total 33 clubs.

**LEG BAND REPORT** - Of the 6,300 bands purchased for 1986 all but 1,500 have been sold. The most popular size is the "C" size for Zebræ and Goulds. Leg band Chairman, Russ Armitage feels that most of these will be sold in the next month or so. 1987 bands will be available to members for shipment on December 26, 1986. If you wish to have your 1987 bands during the first days of January, it is suggested that you get your order in by Thanksgiving so that the new Leg Band Chairman,

Roger O'Connell, will have time to assemble the large amount of orders on project by the December 26 date.

**ELECTIONS COMMITTEE** - No report.

**BY-LAWS COMMITTEE** - No report.

**NEW AFFILIATES** - President Parlee announced that the Panhandle Avicultural Society and the Oklahoma Cage Bird Society had affiliated with the National Finch Society, and we welcome them aboard.

**A.F.A REPORT** - The National Finch Society attended the AFA convention in New Orleans last month. Representing the Society at the NFS Booth were William Parlee, Nancy Reed, Dr. Al Decoteau, Russ Armitage, Roger O'Connell and Brenda Geesey. The Board wishes to thank all of these devoted members for their part in running the booth during the three days of the convention.

The National Finch Society received good exposure at the convention along with taking on new members. Leg bands, T-shirts, show cage plans, and back issues of the Bulletin were sold at the booth.

**OLD BUSINESS** -

The matter of additional Softbill show cages for this show season was tabled for further consideration and input.

Bill stated that he was happy with the results of the new Regional Vice Presidents opinion poll. He stated that he had sent an agenda of this meeting to all RVP's asking for their votes on known subjects to be discussed at the meeting. All those votes would be taken into account in tallying the votes at this meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS -**

A motion was made and passed that the National Finch Society would continue its support of the Great American Bird Show when it is held in Atlanta in 1987.

A motion was made to have the President conduct the annual meeting at St. Louis. Motion carried.

Votes were taken on the Service Awards for 1986. The outcome will be announced at the National meeting where these awards will be given out along with the Championship Exhibitor Award for 1985.

The Board voted on the motion for a 30 day rule for compliance of judges as discussed in the Panel report. Motion carried. The Board directed the President and Chairman of the Board to draft a letter to all judges informing them of this new rule.

These minutes were transcribed from notes and recorded tape.

Respectfully submitted, Christine Varonovitch, Secretary.

The Board also wishes to thank Al for his hospitality, the fine dinner and tour of his aviaries.

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

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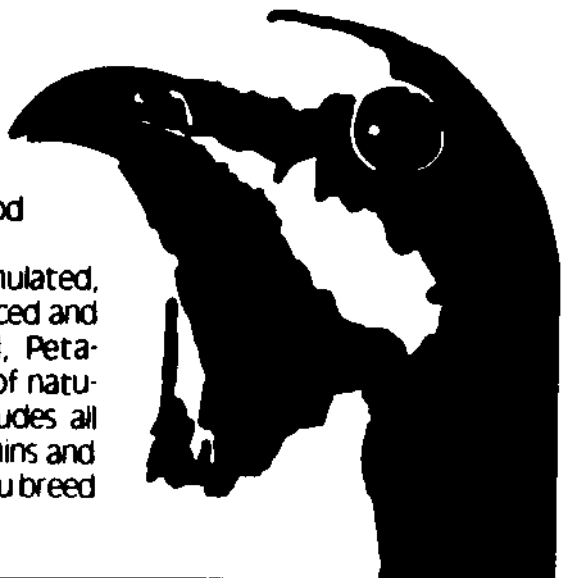
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## HANDY HINTS

These helpful and handy hints have been gleaned from the "Finches Magazine", the registered magazine of the New Zealand Finch Society. If you have some helpful hints to share with our sister society as well as other NFS members, send them along to the editor: NFS, 529 Burnside Avenue E. Hartford, CT 06108-3592.

BANDING BIRDS Do it late in the day just before roosting. After sleeping all night the birds will forget to fool or otherwise pick at their new bands.

SHELL NO PEST STRIP Kills red mite, all feather lice and air sac - mite in aviaries and bird rooms. A Pigeon fancier who reads "Finches" tells me he has had great success with the Pest Strip in his loft. He now keeps his birds free of lice.

SEED HOPPERS AND SEED Never store seed in plastic or air-tight containers, as it causes the seed to sweat and go sour. Also bay leaves in the hoppers will keep seed free of Codlin moths and stop the webbing problem.

URAENIA A sudden climatic drop in temperature can cause this complaint. Symptoms: bird appears in great difficulty, legs paralyzed, and feet and wings weak. The cold drop causes the bird's body temperature to drop and affects the kidneys - the white paste like urinee crystalizes and blocks the kidney tubes causing the whole body to be poisoned. Treatment: Heat, particularly needed in the colder regions. This causes the urine to be reabsorbed from crystals blocking the kidneys. Give Terramycin to combat any secondary illness. Add Glucose to water solution - administered frequently to the beak until the bird passes liquid. Use caution not to drown the bird!

CHARCOAL Granules are important in the aviary and act as a digestive aid.

CARROT An important color food - ideal for Gouldians, Fires, etc. In order to get your birds to take it, grate it into the soft food, or serve it with crushed arrowroot biscuit or sprouted seed.

BLUE POPPY SEED Has a constipating effect and sometimes can quickly correct diarrhea problems.



FRUITFLY CULTURE Here's a simple method. Put a small piece of cheese or half a tomato in a half-pint milk bottle. Set on the window sill for 4-5 days and this will produce enough eggs per bottle. Now fasten a piece of cheesecloth on top with a rubber band to form a lid. Store in a warm place and within a few days the bottle will be bursting with fruitflies. Feed by placing the bottle on the aviary floor and removing the lid. The birds quickly learn what is about to happen when a bottle is brought into the aviary and they will swoop down on the fruitflies with great relish!

ANOTHER FRUITFLY TRAP Put your fruit scraps and any over ripe fruit into a large flowerpot and cover the pot's top with a wire grill. The fruitflies will lay their eggs and breed in the fruit. The birds will land on the grill causing the flies to take flight. The birds then eat them. The grill stops the birds from eating any of the spoiled fruit.

YET ANOTHER GENTLES TRAP We have discussed many ways of breeding gentles (eggheads). Here is another. Place a jar of boiled potatoes and soured milk outside, and after several days put the lid on. Several more days and you will have all the gentles you need. Tip the lot in an old sieve and rinse under fast running tap water. Putting the gentles under the fast tap water causes them to release the contents of their intestines. Always be fussy with your gentles to ensure against botulism.

SPROUTING SEED Keep the legs of old stockings or pantyhose. Fill them with seed, soak, then hang and allow the seed to sprout.

THE BODY TEMPERATURE OF A BIRD Birds have an extremely high body temperature, 43 to 43.5 C, and a very rapid metabolism. If for some reason the bird slows its intake of feed, the effect is almost immediate. The bird will seem to deteriorate before your very eyes. Their behavior changes and they become nervous, more restless and move about the aviary constantly pecking at the other birds. At a somewhat later stage they ruffle their feathers, tuck their heads under their wings and go to sleep in a corner of the aviary. Birds therefore must be kept interested in their food. Try to keep the food similar to what the bird would find in the wild. Birds will not resume eating on their own, so tempt them back to food with the honey in the drinking water trick! The bird will pick up quickly as the honey activates the digestive system.

**CALCIFIED LEGS AND FEET** This is normally caused by mite infestation. Bathe legs in Beklag Soda and gently rub legs with Petroleum jelly. Scrub and disinfect housing. If case is bad, treat with Bayer's Oxylen 0.15%, solution of Negevon, or 4% solution of Lysol. Vitamin A aids in a quick recovery.

**UPSET STOMACH** Milk of Magnesia - 2 drops in a tablespoon of lukewarm water will usually help.

**FOSTERING UNDER BANGLAISE** Wait until your Bangalese (Societies) have the same number of eggs as you want to foster and change over eggs later in the day just before roosting. After spending the night on the eggs the Bangalese will accept them.

**ANOTHER EGG TEST** On thick-shelled eggs (e.g. Queil), place in a bowl of blood warm water. The following will happen: a. If alive they seem to rock back and forth; b. If chick is about to emerge, the egg will float point down; c. Eggs that sink are not fresh.

**KELP** Dried and mixed with cuttlebone, wheat germ and brewer's yeast helps stretch the live food supply.

Please send in your helpful hints. Just like them, the one liners are often the life savers.

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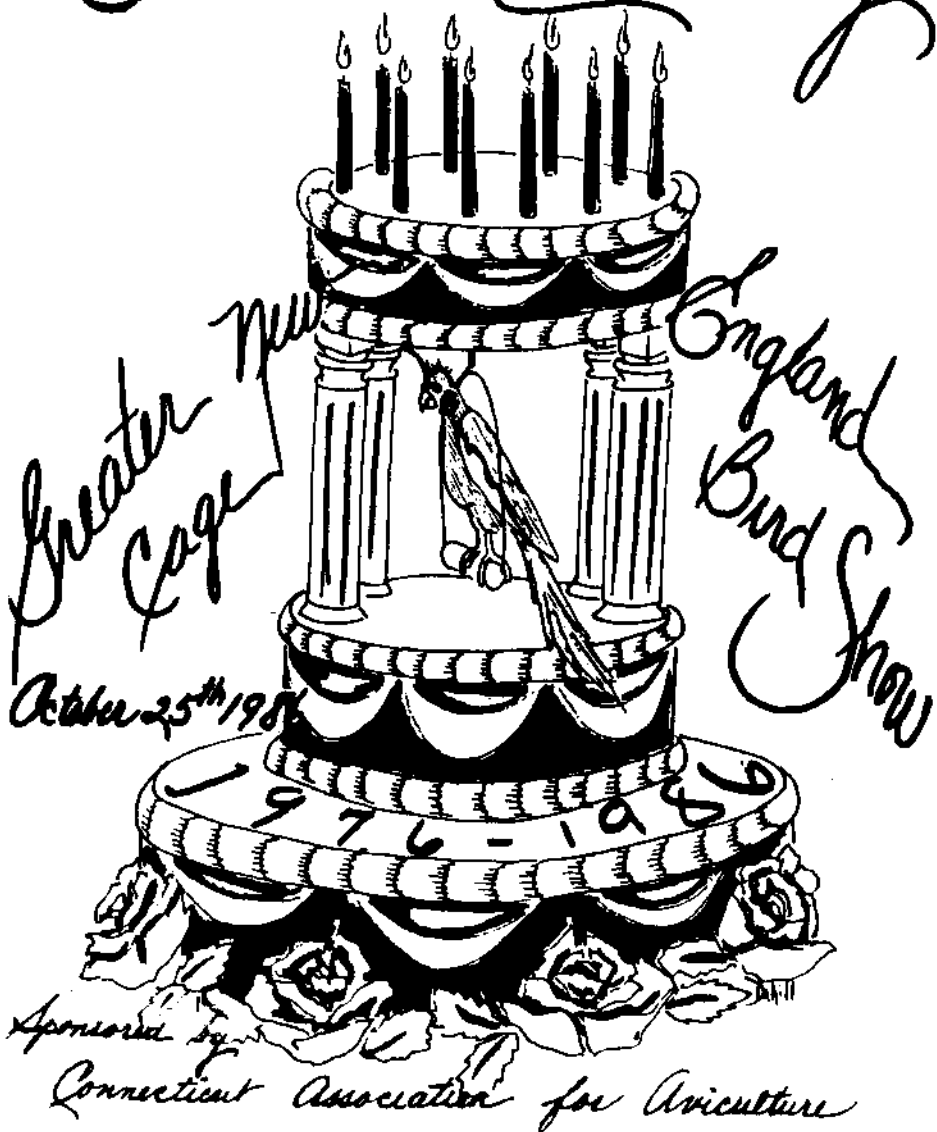
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## BEST IN SHOW JUDGINGS: The Possibilities

by Bill Parlee

Let me introduce myself for those of you who don't know me. My name is Bill Parlee and I'm President of the National Finch Society. In past years I have been President of the local Connecticut Association for Aviculture and a State Coordinator for the American Federation of Aviculture. I am a breeder of Finches, Cockatiels, Budgies, and some of the Australian Parakeets. Most recently I have been trying my hand at breeding a pair of Lilac-Crowned Amazons. On the exhibition circuit I have won many Best in Division awards and have won Best in Show ("Supreme Best") with Finches, a Cockatiel, and a Softbill at shows here in the Northeast.

I have been attending bird shows for over 12 years and have been judging shows for the past eight years. I have been a judge of Finches, Cockatiels, Lovebirds and Parrots. I am a Panel Judge for the National Finch Society and the Society of Parrot Breeders and Exhibitors. In the past eight years I have participated in many panels that were judging the Best in Show of local bird shows, and I also have judged Best in Show as a single judge on many occasions.

This year I have been selected to judge Finches at the National Cage Bird Show in St. Louis, along with other assignments judging Finches, Parrots, and Canaries in other parts of the United States. I consider it an honor to be selected for a judging assignment, especially in an area outside of New England. So therefore I consider it a special honor and responsibility to have been asked to chair a panel of 3 judges that will judge the Best in Show at the Great American Bird Show in Chicago (October 2-4, 1986). The show is being sponsored by the Kaytee Products Co. of Wisconsin and the Greater Chicago Cage Bird Club. They both are to be commended for the fantastic effort that goes into putting on a show and educational event of this magnitude.

The Judges for the Best in Show event are Dr. David S. Guinn, Mr. Raymond Johnson, and myself. David Guinn is a well-known judge of Color Bred Canaries, and Old World Varieties. He has also judged Finches, Softbills, and Hookbills on numerous occasions. Ray Johnson has over the years judged just about everything there is to judge at a bird show. Ray for many years was President of the National Cage Bird Show, Inc. Overall this is a well rounded panel, and should provide the viewer of the Best in Show Judging with quite a treat.

I was prompted to write this article because of a long held belief that the Best in Show judging was a confusing ordeal both for the exhibitor as well as the judges involved. For instance, what should this judging be called? I happen to like the word "Supreme" attached to the Best in Show phrase. It is my thought that this Supreme title truly defines this judging from the commonly called "Best in Shows" for the individual Divisions. Again for instance, someone wins Best Cockatiel at a local show. That person may say that he/she has won Best in Show and not say Best in Division, which that is actually is. The Supreme Best in Show leaves little to be confused.

Another question is how will the judging be completed? A single judge? A panel? How will a panel arrive at a decision? These are just a few of the questions that need attention.

I can recall many times being asked to judge Best in Show with a panel of other judges. In some cases we would be left to our own devices to determine Best. In other cases some hurried point scale was adopted by a show chairman, which would sometimes end up in a tie. Maybe air wrestling would be the answer. I'm kidding of course, but you can see that a Standard for Supreme Judgings in this country should be established so that there is some consistency and credibility to the procedure.

In my readings over the years, I have never seen anything in print regarding the Supreme Judgings. But when attending shows, it always seems to be a sore spot, with few in agreement with how it was done or the final decision that was made. I thought that we should bring this out into the fresh air, and out of the hispering stage. In order to bring this matter to the forefront of discussion, I thought it necessary to contact other judges around the country and query them as to their views on the subject.

Obviously I could not contact every judge in the country. I did, however, endeavor to question a good cross section of the specialty judges that are well-known and well liked in their fields. Here are the judges involved in the questionnaire on Supreme Judgings: Charlie Anchor of Illinois, Harold Bowles of Georgia, Dr. Val Clear of Indiana, Erna Fern Collins of Iowa, Roland Dubuc of California, Dr. Al Decoteau of Massachusetts, Arthur Freud of New York, Dr. David Guinn of Indiana, Lee Horton of California, Jerry Jennings of California, Conrad Meinert of Indiana, Donald Perez of Illinois, Nancy Reed of Connecticut, Harold Sodemann of Kansas, Tou Squyres of Texas, and George Warren of England. All of these judges have given me permission to reprint their views in this article.

Here are the questions I asked, and the judges' responses:

1. Are you a panel judge of any Society? If so, what Society(ies)?  
Anchor - N.F.S., N.C.S., S.P.B.E.; Bowles - N.C.S.; Clear - N.F.S., S.P.B.E.; Collins - A.B.S.; Decoteau - N.C.S., N.F.S., A.L.S., S.P.B.E.; Dubuc - A.L.S.; Freud - none; Guinn - N.C.D.A., O.V.C.A.; Horton - A.L.S.; Jennings - none; Meinert - N.C.S., N.F.S., S.P.B.E.; Perez - N.C.C.; Reed - A.C.S.; Sodamann - A.C.B., N.B.F.C.C., I.B.F.C.C., N.C.B., I.G.B.A., P.S.; Squyres - A.C.S.; Warren - N.F.S.; and Parlee - N.F.S., S.P.B.E.. I have not included foreign Societies.
2. Do you think Supreme Judgings are worthwhile?  
Yes (11) - Clear, Dubuc, Decoteau, Freud, Guinn, Horton, Meinert, Perez, Sodamann, Warren, and Parlee.  
No (6) - Anchor, Bowles, Collins, Jennings, Reed, and Squyres.  
Best pro comment: Sodamann - "The Best in Show Judging is a tradition". Best con comment: Anchor - "I wish Best in Show awards were dropped, nobody is ever satisfied."
3. Do you think a panel of judges can successfully judge Best?  
Yes (10) - Anchor, Clear, Collins, Dubuc, Freud, Guinn, Horton, Perez, Sodamann, and Warren.  
No (7) - Bowles, Decoteau, Jennings, Meinert, Reed, Squyres, Parlee.  
Best Pro comment: Perez - "I think a panel is best, providing that the judges are unbiased and objective in their selection of Best".  
Best Con comment: Reed - "As a judge I have participated in 'Best' judgings locally and nationally. No credibility in my mind. I know zip on Standards for Canaries, Budgies, etc., so if another judge could convince me that his bird was the best species/type that ever existed, could I argue?"
4. When a panel judges, do you think politics enter the judging?  
Yes (5) - Decoteau, Jennings, Meinert, Reed, and Parlee.  
No (6) - Anchor, Bowles, Collins, Freud, Sodamann, and Warren.  
Possibly (6) - Clear, Dubuc, Guinn, Horton, Perez, and Squyres.  
Best Yes comment: Reed - "I have known of politics/jealousies among judges where an obviously good bird purposely will be downgraded, putting a non-political bird (say a Cockatiel or Parrot, whatever) first. Therefore some bird may win by default." Best No comment: Anchor - "No with me, but I can't speak for everyone." Maybe comment: Perez - "I believe politics enter only if the judges are indeed unqualified and unlearned and without ethics."

5. Do you think any one judge can fairly evaluate Best?  
Yes (6) - Anchor, Decoteau, Guinn, Meinert, Sodaann and Parlee.  
No (8) - Bowles, Collins, Dubuc, Freud, Perez, Reed, Squyres, and Warren.

Maybe (3) - Clear, Horton, and Jennings.

Best Yes comment: Guinn - "Yes, but the person would need to be experienced in all areas, not just one or two." Best No comment:

Reed - "I don't think there is a judge alive that has adequate experience and knowledge of all species and every Show Standard to be capable of judging every bird to possibly show up on the show bench." On the saybes: Clear - "We all have preferences and there is no Best in Show Standard to go by."

6. Do you think the exhibitors would respond best to a panel or a single well qualified judge?

Panel (8) - Anchor, Bowles, Clear, Collins, Dubuc, Freud, Sodaann and Squyres.

Single (7) - Decoteau, Jennings, Meinert, Perez, Reed, Warren, and Parlee. Either (2) - Guinn and Horton.

Best Panel comment: Squyres - "People would respond best to a panel as they would believe no one judge could judge Best in Show."

Best Single comment: Warren - "Exhibitors would be more likely to approach a single judge."

7. Do you think exhibitors understand how different birds can be judged in comparison to each other?

Yes (6) - Clear, Collins, Freud, Guinn, Perez, and Warren.

No (7) - Anchor, Bowles, Dubuc, Horton, Jennings, Reed, and Parlee.

Some might (2) - Guinn and Sodaann. No answer: Squyres.

Best Yes comment: Warren - "Yes, by listening to the judges at the shows. Best No comment: Parlee - "No, because I for one, while attending shows, have never heard a panel explain to the gallery how the judging was accomplished. In fact, in many instances, the judging was done behind closed doors."

- B. What term do you like best for such a judging? Best in show?

Supreme Best? Overall Best?

Best in show (9) - Anchor, Clear, Collins, Dubuc, Guinn, Norton, Meinert, Perez, and Sodaann.

Supreme Best (3) - Decoteau, Parlee and Warren.

Overall Best (3) - Bowles, Freud, and Jennings.

No comment (2) - Reed and Squyres.

Best comment: Horton - "Best in Show is known worldwide."

Supreme comment: Warren - "I prefer Supreme which the bird richly deserves upon reaching that position in the show."

9. Do you think Supreme judgments should be open or closed to exhibitors?

Open (13) - Anchor, Bowles, Clear, Collins, Decoteau, Dubuc, Freud, Guinn, Horton, Meinert, Parlee, Squyres, and Warren.

Sodemann - "Closed on the national level."

Reed - "Open if single judge, closed if panel (there is no communication to gallery).

Jeenings - "It doesn't matter."

Perez - "Open, but only to exhibitors involved who have bred the bird in captivity."

I hope you have found the answers to these questions as interesting as I have. These responses should show us that there is definitely much controversy involved in the judging of the Best Bird in total show.

I wish to publicly thank all the judges who responded to their questionnaires. Many good comments were made that space will not allow in this article. There are, however, a few very interesting ones that we must make space for. Here they are: Clear - "One approach - let each judge on the panel rank all the varieties he has not judged, but not those that he has. This 'democratizes' the selection and neutralizes some of the prejudice every judge has."

Squyres - "I don't understand how different birds can be compared to each other, how can an exhibitor? The only way you can judge and compare is to have a knowledge of the breed you judge. Granted many may think they do. That is the prime reason specialty clubs such as A.C.S., A.B.S., and others were formed. You pay a \$1.00 entry fee, you deserve an honest, intelligent opinion. What judge can do that? None that I know can judge finches to macaws."

Sodemann - "Bill, you must know today's political climate in the show business is not good. There is much ill will showing among former friends in the fancy. It is a good time to keep pride and ego out of it all. When the rabble-rousers have had their day, all will return to normal."

Dubuc - "I feel very strongly that your questions were biased and left little room for comment. You obviously want a change in terminology



from Best in Show to Supreme. Your questions are geared in such a way that most will vote in a fashion chosen by you. The system for Best in Show by the National could easily be improved upon by having such judging done in an open forum. Perhaps each judge stating why he placed a bird in first place, followed by an open vote with reasons for such votes. More discussion could take place and a second and final vote could be tallied. All of which could take place in front of a gallery if so desired. This would avoid some of the hush hush secrets and also the intrigue of the final ballot."

Jennings - "In the shows I've judged, where Best in Show is selected by a group, i.e., the Canary judge, Budgie judge, and Foreign judge; all favor their own group. I think it is meaningless politics to engage in. It would be better to have Best in each grouping and leave it at that. How do you compare a Budgie bred to a Standard with a Parrot someone bought from a pet dealer? I think the best criteria is for example 'condition on arrival'."

Perez - "Bill, the most important issue here is not whether there should be Best in Show judgments in any manner, shape or form, but rather that there should be qualified people to perform that task. In other words the subject of qualified judges residing in America should be a topic covered in American Cage Bird Magazine. What America needs is a qualified judges panel to certify and select people who will be fair, knowledgeable, and qualified to judge fanciers' exhibits."

Well, as you can see by this article, most judges feel very strongly about their answers to my questions, even to the point of suggesting that the questions were rigged to produce the desired answers. Nancy Reed even stated at the end of her comments that "such a person (that would singly) accept such a responsibility (in judging supreme) is crazy, on an ego trip, or masochistic."

With the present divergency in opinion, even over what to call the judging, I personally think that it will be many years before a consensus of opinion will be reached.

I present the following steps that I feel will set us on the track to a standardization in Best in Show Judgings.

1. A central clearing house for species Standards should be established. Judges could, for a nominal fee, obtain copies of present up to date Standards for all birds.

2. A well respected Committee should be set up to certify Judges for Supreme Best in Show Judgings. A study format should be developed and testing procedures for certification adopted.

3. All Supreme Judgings should be done only by a single certified judge. One judge is truly accountable for his/her decisions and can fully explain those decisions to a gallery of exhibitors.

4. There should be written input from the Division judges on their selection going up for Supreme Best.

5. As George Werren stated, "The supreme judging is the climax of the interest shown by the exhibitors in entering their birds, they richly deserve to obtain that position of Supreme."

6. An avicultural body in this country needs to grab a hold on this discussion, work with it, and constructively set Standards, remove the options, end the haphazard way in which we conduct these Best Judgings, and pave the way for better understanding and satisfaction in the process. For those who believe the Best Judgings are meaningless, let them turn their heads. The outcome of this discussion should not matter to them.

It is my hope that this article has enlightened many exhibitors and has brought this controversy to the forefront of discussion. Anyone with ideas that he or she wishes to express, may write to me at 529 Burnside Avenue, East Hartford, CT 06108-3592. I wish all a happy and successful show season.

#### **EDITOR'S NOTE:**

This article first appeared in the September 1986 issue of American Cage Bird Magazine.



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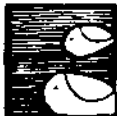
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Have the band ready with a toothpick (or some other slender but blunt instrument) and a lubricant. Hold the chick firm but in a way not to cut off its airway or to hurt the bird.

Put a little bit of lubricant on the bird's foot and slide the band over the front three toes and finally over the ankle joint. The back toe will probably have to be pried out from under the band with the toothpick. The band is now in the proper location between the ankle and elbow joints.

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