

The National Finch and Softbill Society



MARCH

APRIL

1988



GWNOREEN

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Volume 3

Number 2

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

I would like to congratulate all of our new officials for 1988-89. It is my hope that we may work together during the next two years to make the NFS even more responsive to member needs, and a greater force in the Avicultural world.

The Board of directors also wishes to thank our outgoing officers for their immense impact on our organization. Hal Koontz who is now 3rd Vice President and Finchsave Director was a great Regional V.P. and worked diligently for the good of NFS in the Pacific Region. Karl Kline in the Southeast was a great asset to NFS and an active participant in the club. Paul Williams in the Mid-West and Bill Hodges in the Northeast are also to be thanked for their contributions to the Society. Thank you all for a job well done.

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ATTENTION ALL CLUB DELEGATES

Show name: _____
 Date _____ Panel Judge: _____
 Location: _____
 Delegate name _____ Phone () _____

TAKE THE TIME NOW, TO SEND THIS INFORMATION TO NFS P.O. BOX 18607
 EAST HARTFORD, CT 06118-0607, SO THAT YOUR SHOW INFORMATION MAY
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The National Finch and Softbill Society

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____ - _____

OFFICE USE ONLY

NFS# _____ Self# _____

Reg.# _____ Dues _____

Ann.Date _____

Check type of membership desired:

Single 15.00, Dual 20.00, Junior 7.50 (-16yrs), Canada add \$5.

Foreign add \$10. Canada and Foreign Subscriptions are first class.
Please list other name to be included in a dual membership:

Please answer a few questions for us:

How long have you been involved in finches and softbills? _____ yrs.

How many species have you kept? _____

How many species have you successfully bred? _____

Do you exhibit in bird shows? _____

Do you keep softbilled birds? _____

Please list an occupation or special talent that may be helpful to the NFS (printer, artist, lawyer, etc.) _____

Are you interested in participating in the NFS Judges Panel? _____

Please indicate below the items you are most interested in.

Nutrition _____ breeding _____ management _____ exhibition _____ bulletin _____

PLEASE MAIL YOUR APPLICATION AND DUES TO:

NFS Member Services c/o Russ Armitage Jr.
345 Boston Road, Middletown, CT 06457

AFFILIATION AGREEMENT 1988

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.

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

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SEND YOUR APP AND REMITTANCE TO: THE NATIONAL FINCH SOCIETY, AFFILIATION DIRECTOR, C/O PAM LIDDY, 245 DRAPER ST. SPRINGFIELD, MA 01108.

List your club, affiliation amount, delegate and address.



THE NATIONAL FINCH & SOFTBILL SOCIETY

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Please make your check or money order payable to NFS and send your order to:

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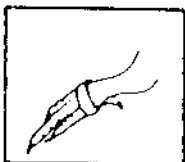
Leg banding Procedure courtesy of the NATIONAL FINCH SOCIETY



The most important thing to remember when you begin to band a finch is to do it over a counter or table in case the chick makes a sudden move, it will not fall to the floor.



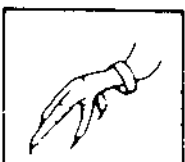
The age of the bird to be banded varies with the species. Generally it will be between five and six days old. You can tell by looking at the ankle joint (the joint where the toes come together) and the size of the band.



The band is generally placed on the right leg of the bird. Banding just before the nightly roost will help prevent picking of the band by the parents. By the next morning the birds will have forgotten about the band.



Have the band ready with a toothpick (or other blunt instrument) and a lubricant. Hold the chick firmly but in a way not to cut off the air supply 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 a toothpick. The band is now in the proper location between the ankle and elbow joints.

It is best to check on the chick after a few days to make sure the band has not slipped off. Before banding, make sure the band is right side up so that it can be easily read.

NFS AFFILIATED CLUBS

ALABAMA

The Central Alabama Avicultural Society - delgate - phone

CALIFORNIA

The Fresno Canary and Finch Soc. Helen Espindula (209) 686-4272

The Capitol City Bird Soc. Helen Caudle (916) 933-1619

The Golden Gate Avian Society - Mary Payne (415) 449-8719

Aviary Assoc. of Kern Cty. - Hal Koontz - 805-872-1063

North Cty. Aviculturists. Victor Swatsek - phone

Santa Clara Valley Canary & Exotic Bird Club - Marty Von Raesfeld
(408) 985-2712.

San Diego Bird Show Club - Wayne Schulenberg - phone

COLORADO

Colorado Cage Bird Assoc. - Martha Wigmore (303) 574-1594.

The Rocky Mtn. Society of Aviculture - Mary Buchtel (303) 422-6529

CONNECTICUT

The Conn. Assoc. for Aviculture - Jerry D'Agata - 203-688-9403

The N.England Finch Fanciers - Russell Armitage (203) 346-5875

FLORIDA

The Gold Coast Exotic Cage Bird Club - Karl Kline -

The Sunshine State Cage Bird Society - Ann Hurst - 305-843-9450

The Greater Miami Avicultural Society - Hector Ugalde

The Miami Parrot Club - Marco Arida - (305) 251-3895.

The Panhandle Avicultural Society - Chas. Richardson

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The Georgia Cage Bird Society - Cecil Gunby (404) 251-2877.

ILLINOIS

The Greater Chicago Cage Bird Club - Charles Anchor - 312-543-3757

INDIANA

The Indiana Bird Fanciers - Val Clear - 317-642-0795

IOWA

Mid America Cage Bird Society - Rhoda Shirley (515) 243-2255.

LOUISIANA

The Gulf South Bird Club Inc. - Evon Kruse (504) 469-2435.

MARYLAND

The Baltimore Bird Fanciers Inc. - Brenda Geesey (717) 854-2604.

The Maryland Cage Bird Assoc. - Catherine Gaffney

MASSACHUSETTS

The Boston Cockatiel Society - Helen Jabre (617) 641-3430.

The Boston Society for Aviculture Inc. Helen Holmes (617) 322-1562.

The Exotic Cagebird Soc. of N.E. - Roger O'Connell (617) 899-8523

The Massachusetts Cage Bird Assoc. - Shirley Eaton - 401-333-5594

The Western New England Cage Bird Society - Bob Clark - phone.

MICHIGAN

The Mid-Michigan Bird Club - Mary Rue (517) 394-1047.

The Mid-West Canary and Cage Bird Soc. - Mary Kaszyca - 313-285-5168

MINNESOTA

The Minnesota Cage Bird Society - Micheal Bronson

MISSOURI

The Greater Kansas City Avi Society - delegate - phone

The Missouri Cage Bird Club - Tom Rood - 217-774-5265

NEBRASKA

The 6tr. Omaha Cage Bird Club - Wayne Eichelberger (308) 872-2947.

NEW JERSEY

The South Jersey Bird Club - delegate - phone

NEW HAMPSHIRE

The Birds of a Feather - Larry Brandt

The New Hampshire Avicultural Society - Mike Putnam (603) 352-2826.

NEW YORK

The Astoria Bird Club - Alex Grivas

Rochester Cage Bird Club - Jeanne Murphey.

NORTH CAROLINA

The Charlotte Metrolina Cage Bird Society - Pat Gibson - 704-588-1616

OHIO

The Central Ohio Bird Fanciers - Joan Gangle (216) 666-9773.

OKLAHOMA

The Bird Fanciers of Oklahoma - Gene Miller - 405-382-7066

The Oklahoma Cage Bird Society - Laura Bewley (918) 369-2717.

PENNSYLVANIA

The Central Penna Cage Bird Society - Brenda Geesey (717) 854-2604.

Chester County Bird Breeders - William Trace, phone.

Philadelphia Avicultural Society - Rosemarie Priemon, phone.

TENNESSEE

The Middle Tennessee Cage Bird Club - Eva Duffy, phone.

TEXAS

The Texas Bird Breeders & Fanciers Assn. delegate - phone

VIRGINIA

The Penninsula Cage Bird Society - delegate - phone.

WISCONSIN

The Milwaukee Bird Society Ltd. - delegate - phone

The Wisconsin Cage Bird Club - Kathryn Konkol - phone

INTERNATIONAL AFFILIATES

The Australian Finch Society - England - Martin Mogg

The New Zealand Finch Breeders - New Zealand - Valerie Hughes

The Zebra Finch Society - England - J.A.W. Prior

Our Success in breeding the PEKIN ROBIN by Vincent Moose

The Pekin Robin or Chinese Red-billed Nightingale, Leiotrix lutea, is one of the most common of the small softbilled birds kept in aviaries. It has a very pleasant song and, when not breeding, can be kept in mixed aviaries of smaller and larger birds with very little problem.

Unfortunately this bird is often fed an incorrect diet. People have found that it can exist on hard seed, but in fact this bird is unable to digest hard seed properly in its stomach; there fore it gets very little or next to nothing from seed. It is a softbilled bird which means it needs a high protein diet that is soft; for example egg food, fruit, and live food.

We had kept Pekins for a number of years but never a true pair. In the fall of 1983 at the National Bird Show in Hamilton (Ontario, Canada), we were fortunate to be able to purchase a young pair of Pekins from Flikkema Aviaries. These birds were immature and still in their juvenile plumage. The male had a deeper, richer colour in the chest feathering but only covering a very small area, whereas the female's chest had next to no colour. At first we were not certain that we had a true pair, but when they molted into their adult plumage, we were no longer in doubt. Sexing this species at the best of times is only fifty percent accurate. The male tends to have a slightly larger head with his plumage being brighter, and the white between the eye and bill (lores) is larger. We have found, however, that this will vary in the birds due to their health, age, and feather condition. Breeding time brings about on the brightest plumage, and during non-breeding the colour varies from dull to faded. When breeding is concluded, the birds plumage appears dull and dirty.

In order to house the Pekins, we built cages inside and aviaries outside our garage. The two are connected by a porthole. The four cages measuring three feet by four feet by six feet are heated. The aviaries are larger measuring from four feet to six feet by five feet by seven feet. The inside cages are smaller because we expected the birds to be able to stay outdoors for up to eight months of the year. This is considerably longer than the three to five months which finches are able to stay out.

During the Pekin's first winter outdoors, it was very enjoyable to watch them. They seemed to enjoy playing in the snow, and they also added colour to the winter scene: very pretty birds indeed! With their song, it was hard to believe it was winter. It was no wonder that these birds wouldn't come in at night. Due to cat problems and freezing nights, we wanted them to stay inside at night. We had to catch them only four times before they learned to go in at dusk. To this day only when breeding and,

during some early spring and late fall evenings do they not come in.

We found very little information available in the books on Pekin Robins, especially on breeding. We talked to different people, some of whom had been to or talked to breeders in England. It appeared that the reason for their success was live food, dense vegetation, and running water in the aviaries. We could supply the first two, but as for running water we were limited to changing their water bowl three to five times a day. As soon as Pekins bathe, they will not bathe again until fresh water is given even if the bowl is topped up. We use a wash basin with a smaller glass dish in it. This keeps the water splash in the cage to a minimum. The aviaries were planted with elderberry shrubs, dogwood shrubs, hightbrush, cranberry shrub and white cedar trees. This supplied dense cover for the birds to feel secure and at home. If they wanted to be seen, they came out into the openings. The shrubs also supplied flowers to attract insects and also produced berries for the birds to eat.

What we had been told is the denser the aviary is, the better the birds like it. It took a full two years for the shrubs to fill in the aviary, and until then the birds didn't make any attempt to breed. Age also might have been a factor; we don't know.

In July 1986, we noticed the female would be missing on different days and nights, but we didn't pay any attention since it didn't occur to us that they would be breeding. The aviary next to theirs needed the grass trimmed, so I did; as I finished, I happened to look up into their aviary, and there was a nest about three feet above ground level, in the elderberry shrub against the nest aviary wall. Two days later I checked the nest. The nest was small and very tight, like that of a North American Robin but with no mud showing. In the nest were two eggs: green with brown spots about half the size of a Robin egg but not as deep in colour. We left the birds alone and started dreaming of young. About seven days later, both adults were sitting inside for the night. Oh well, there goes the chance of any young, we thought. I checked two days later to remove eggs or dead young, but we found one very healthy live chick. The second eggs was infertile. The book had said that incubation took thirteen days and that the you fledge at thirteen days of age. We thought this was strange since our finches take thirteen days to hatch, and the Pekins are quite a bit larger.

The chick's plumage was very bright, not at all like its parents when we first got them. At this stage we were feeding the parents 100 mealworms and 30-40 crickets a day; we were also adding to the outside aviary, ripe and left over fruit to attract insects. The parents started pushing the young one, when he was about twenty-seven days old, so I pulled him (yes a male).

The parents re-nested in mid-August, using the same nest and laying four eggs. They hatched two young, with one egg infertile and the other having

a dead embryo about one/quarter developed. In August the weather turned cold and wet. I noticed the adults were not acting normally one early evening, and when I checked the nest, the youngest chick had died, and the oldest chick was cold. The parents had stopped sitting on the chicks at approximately six to eight days after hatching, and the young don't have many feathers at this age; as a result they are unable to keep themselves warm if the weather turns cold. I pulled the live young, at that time ten days old, wared it up, and put it in the inside cage off the aviary. We hooked up a heat lamp and hoped the parents would come in and feed it; they did. A couple of times we had to retrieve the young, once from the outside, as it was very active for this age and would go out and then be unable to find it's way back inside.

The second young one, had bright plumage and turned out to be a male. Both offspring's plumage was brighter then their father's when we first go him. We don't know if diet had anything to do with this.

In July 1987 the adult pair built a nest just like the one last year, even in the same spot, but they didn't use it. Instead they built a second larger and sloppy nest about eighteen inches off the ground, below the first one. They laid four eggs of which three were infertile, and they hatched the fourth egg. This time I left the young, one with the parents, since they didn't seem to be pushing it like they did with the young the year before. Two more eggs were laid, but this time they were eaten, either by the young one or be the parents which were under stress because of the young one left in the aviary. This young also turned out to be a male.

We kept the second male offspring from 1986 and obtained a female for him in January 1987. We planted an aviary for them and hopefully it will be dense enough to encourage nesting in 1988. As for the original pair, we plant to go back to pulling the young as soon as they can be removed in the hopes of stopping any further egg eating.

Now it's just a matter of waiting for the 1988 breeding season to arrive.

We hope this article is of some interest to fellow NFS members who are endeavoring to breed the Pekin Robin.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Vincent Moase is an NFS member from Oshawa, Ontario, Canada. We thank him for this article and look forward to future ones he has said are forthcoming. Also, elsewhere in this issue is a great egg food receipt, used by the Moases'.

Many NFS members should find the breeding of birds outdoors, in Ontario, Canada of some interest, especially those in the norther tier states.

**NATIONAL FINCH & SOFTBILL SOCIETY
EXHIBITION POINTS SCHEDULE**

This points schedule will be used for shows judged by NFS Panel judges. NFS plaques are awarded only at affiliated shows. Points are awarded by the NFS Points Director. Appeals or questions are to be directed to NFS Points Chairman, Tony M. Patterson, P.O. Box 18607, East Hartford, CT 06118-0607. Please note the Total points needed for Championship and Excellence awards. Excellence awards are accumulative.

**CHAMPIONSHIP EXHIBITOR
50 POINTS IN ONE YEAR**

**EXHIBITOR EXCELLENCE
200 ACCUMULATIVE POINTS**

POINTS SCHEDULE

Birds in Division	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
60-79	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	x	x	x
80-99	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	x	x
100-119	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	x
120-139	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
140-159	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2
160-189	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3
190-219	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4
220-259	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5
260-299	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6
300 +	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7

A Voluntary Bird Census

by Bill Parlee

The voluntary bird census can be a valuable tool to the finch and softbill breeder. By filling out the census and mailing it in, you will furnish the census department with the necessary information to connect you with other interested parties.

Letters from members wishing to buy babies or odd birds to complete pairs at the NFS office, are a constant occurrence. Very often we can not help because the information is not available. Thus the purpose of the census. NFS has had a census for three years now, but the response has not been spotty, until last year, when our first major census was published.

This will be our last attempt this year in gathering this information. Please take the time to rip out the page or Xerox it, fill it out, and mail it in, even if you had done it last year (update please)

If we can gather a meaningful amount of breeder information, we will publish it in the July/August issue. This will make the information available to all for the show season.

Here's how it works. You fill out the form and mail it in. The information is computerized. When a member calls or writes (writing is better as the computer is not always immediately available) we punch in the species, and out pops a few members telephone numbers that they can call. This sells your babies and odd birds. On the other hand, when you need something, it works for you also.

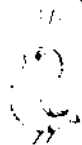
We are constantly surprised to find that a member is breeding a particular species that we did not realize anyone was breeding. We usually find out this information in a casual conversation at a show or other event. If this same information was available to other members, babies could be sold, odd birds swapped, and most importantly, breeding information shared. The info is even more important now, for the Finchsave program.

Your address will never be given out by NFS. We only use telephone numbers to connect members, so be sure when filling out the census to clearly print out your area code and number. Your cooperation with this census makes it work. Sit down right now, or as soon as you can and fill it out. Check off yes if you sometimes have babies for sale. Many finches are getting harder and harder to obtain. When giving out information we will try locate the members closest to you for convenience in shipping.

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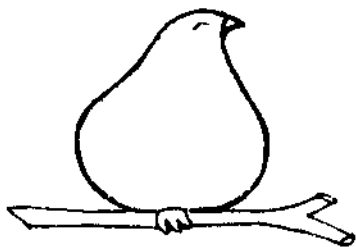
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FINCH



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ZEBRA FINCH MUTATIONS

by Garrie Landry

In response to your request for additional information on color mutations of Zebra finches as written by Cyril Rogers in your June 1987 issue (of the NFS Bulletin), I can corroborate much of what was written about Yellow-beak and Black-breasted Zebras, but I can also shed some light on differences.

In 1985 I imported Black-breasted and Orange-breasted Zebra finches from Holland. It was the first time I had had an opportunity to do so. I had wanted these mutations for many years.

The Black-breasted Zebra mutation originated in 1968 in Europe, I am unaware of the exact locality. Why it has taken so long to reach the USA is a mystery to me. It is certainly one of the most unique Zebra mutations to have arisen. Although the description of Rogers is correct, he does not emphasize the striking appearance such birds might have. The cheek patches of the cock birds are much larger than normal size. Good specimens have cheek patches which extend above the eye and meet on the back of the head, giving the bird virtually red headed appearance. Black-breasted lack a tear drop mark (both hen and cock), the chin is white and cocks may possess an exceptionally large, thickened breast bar. The flanking is more white than red with large irregularly shaped white markings. the ramp is beige and the tail covers lack the typical black/spotted with white markings, having instead beige tail covers in which the center vein of the feather and little more is black pigmented. The mutation is one termed by geneticist as incomplete dominance. A Black-breasted (any sex) crossed to a normal bird will equal offspring which show to some degree traits of the Black-breast.

Any number of features may be expressed and observed on these birds. For instance, males may show slightly larger cheek patches, and generally all show to some degree the partial lack of the tear drop. The flanking of cock birds often has extra elongated white markings, but the most distinctive feature which appears to be easily seen on all crosses is the irregular pattern of dots on the tail coverts. The normally back/spotted white tail coverts have white dots which now run together and connect with one another. This is easily observed even in just fledged young, and instantly labels the bird as a carrier for the Black-breast mutation. Paring two "visual" splits produces Black-breasted Zebras, more "Visual" splits, and normal birds. Presumably in a 25% - 50% - 25% ratio.

In breeding this unusual mutation, I discovered one interesting feature about Black-breasted birds. No two Full-blooded Black-breasted necessarily resemble one another. (The female Black-breast all appear

identical) Full Black-breasted males are often as variable as the visual splits. It appears that the various mutagenic features which combine to make a Black-breasted bird may not manifest themselves at equal levels. For instance, in comparing obvious Black-breasted males, all show extensive cheek patches, but some much more than others, all show a distinctly different black breast bar, but some show considerably broader more heavily pigmented bars, and oddly enough, some show nearly normal flanking, others, typical Black-breasted flanking. One feature which appears to be stable and consistent on all full Black-breasted Zebras is the rump and tail covert coloration, and the absence of any tear drop mark. This varied display of color certainly makes breeding this mutation a challenge. While I feel all Black-breasted Zebras cocks are attractive, some are certainly more so than others. Therefore breeding this mutation presents a challenge to produce the perfect Black-breasted cock which exhibits all of the traits of the mutation to their fullest degree. Believe me, it is a real challenge!

One error in Rogers article is that of equating the Australian Black-faced or Black-fronted Zebra with the European Black-breasted mutation. The two mutations are completely different in appearance as well as inheritance. I acquired Black-fronted Zebras from Australian origin and have bred them as well. The Black-fronted cock is similar to a normal Zebra with the following exceptions. The normally white area between the beak and the tear drop mark is black, not white! The striations on the chin and throat area are more heavily pigmented with black, and the black breast bar is extensive, often the birds have black pigmentation extending down the breast into the abdomen and vent area. A well marked Black-fronted cock is virtually completely black below the breast bar and may only have a very small amount of white in the area just between the legs. Also, often the flanking contains fewer white markings and may be mostly red, though this is variable. To date though we have bred many Black-fronted cocks, and we have produced not a single visual Black-fronted hen. I am slowly coming to the conclusion that visual hens do not occur. I have not been able to obtain any information about its genetics other than through my own breeding. The Black-fronted mutation appears to be recessive. Normal birds are capable of producing Black-fronted cocks. Since the hens are not distinguishable from normal hens, one must always work with visual males in order to produce Black-fronted cocks.

From the Black-fronted Zebras I obtained, I also produced the Yellow-beaked mutation. Yellow-beaks are quite distinctive. the beak colorations of both cocks and hens has no hint of orange color, only yellow, and this coloration also occurs in the legs. Although certainly a subtle color difference, when compared side by side with normal colored Zebras, the Yellow-beak mutation, though subtle is very attractive.

It is a simple recessive trait. Both parents must be carrying the gene for Yellow-beak in order for Yellow-beaked offspring to be produced. The

beak color becomes obvious when birds are only a few weeks old, and when the typical orange coloration fail to appear as the bird assumes sub-adult plumage. I have also produced Yellow-beaked Chestnut-flanked Whites from my Black-fronted stock.

I hope the preceding information will be of some value to those of you interested in rare color varieties of the Zebra Finches.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Many NFS members toured Garrie's aviaries during the 1986 New Orleans AFA summer convention. Garrie has done much work with Zebra Finches for many years now and has been an NFS member. If you have questions for Garrie regarding different Zebra Mutations and wish to have them included in a question and answer format in future issues please send your questions to him: Garrie P. Landry, Rt. 1, Box 199, Franklin, LA 70538. If you wish to offer differing opinions or additional information on Zebra Mutations, please do so. Send your comments or articles to NFS, P.O. Box 18607, E. Hartford, CT 06118-0607.

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RESULTS OF THE 1988 ELECTION. . .

By Pamela E. S. Liddy

First let me say that it was very encouraging to see the large return of ballots for this election. Many of the regional Vice Presidential spots were very close. All of these ballots were recounted to validate the count. Here is the outcome of the election.

These officers in accordance to the by laws will hold office for the next two years.

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BREEDER OF FINCHES

CAPTIVE MANAGEMENT OF TOURACOS AT THE HOUSTON ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS.

By Robert Berry

The touracos (Family: Musophagidae) are an interesting group of African birds, which are extremely popular as zoological exhibits, due to the relative ease of their maintenance in captivity, the brilliant coloration exhibited by many species, and their interesting and active behavior. In surveying the literature, it appears that over the years a number of species have been bred in captivity, but reports of sustained breeding successes are relatively few.

Prior to the now infamous bird embargo of 1972, most zoos in the United States tended to treat commonly imported species such as touracos as second-class "citizens". If a specimen died, it could be easily replaced, and little importance was attached to the need for in-depth captive breeding efforts. The primary value of a bird was represented by its exhibit potential and, perhaps, from the standpoint of economics, its longevity. With the exception of a few of the more progressive zoos, the majority of reported breeding, especially of softbills, were the result of chance occurrence rather than applied efforts. The Houston zoo was no exception.

When I joined the zoo staff in July of 1972, one month before the embargo went into effect, our inventory listed seventeen touracos, representing five species. Unbelievably, all were housed with a variety of other species of softbills in one planted, walk-through aviary measuring 50 feet wide, 80 feet long and twenty feet high. Needless to say, breeding success was virtually nil! From the standpoint of public exhibit, the touracos were spectacular in this environment, constantly zooming about in the dense vegetation. There was never a moment of reduced activity. Even with high crowd densities in the building, they remained a constant show of hyped activity. Actually, fleeing for their lives is probably a more apt description of this behavior as the alpha pair of specimens, a male and female white-cheek, tried relentlessly to drive all competitors from their territory, which apparently included the entire aviary.

Armed with the very real potential of being able to acquire only white leghorn chickens, domestic pigeons, and canaries to fill our exhibits as a result of the Newcastle furor, I was given permission and full support of the zoo director to redirect the department toward some degree of self-sufficiency by establishing captive breeding programs for many of our birds. Not having a magic wand, this project could not be accomplished overnight! One immediate action could, however, be taken, and this was to reduce the number of species housed in our exhibits. Within six weeks, all of the touracos except the alpha pair of white-cheeks and one pair of Schalow's were trapped and removed from the Rainforest aviary. Almost immediately the white-cheeks constructed a flimsy nest of twigs in the fork of a Ficus tree over-hanging the public walk and subsequently

produced a clutch of two eggs. Like pigeons and doves, touracos seem unwilling to devote much effort to detail in nest construction. After determining the eggs were fertile, the nest was reinforced with a wire-frame, hanging basket lined with one quarter inch hardware cloth to reduce the chance of the eggs or chicks falling from the nest. The adult birds, totally unperturbed by our intrusion, immediately accepted the refurbished nesting site and continued their parental duties, successfully hatching and rearing the two chicks to independence.

The Schalow's also made several attempts to nest, but were unsuccessful due to the continued harassment by the adult pair of white-cheeks. The Schalow's were subsequently removed from the exhibit.

Having absolutely no off-exhibit breeding areas at the time, we were forced to try mixing the remaining touracos with other species housed in a series of outdoor flights devoted primarily to our cracid collection. Each unit measures 7 and one half feet wide, 15 feet deep, 7 foot high with a ten foot height in the shelter area. Electrical outlets were installed in the shelters to accommodate heat lamps during inclement weather.

After trying the touracos with various species housed in this area, we found they could be accommodated most successfully with the curassows which are too large to use smaller perches placed in the upper portions of the exhibits. This significantly reduced the interaction between the two species. Since both species are offered similar foods, feeding presented no problems. Small feeding platforms were placed high in the shelters for the touracos so there was no direct competition for food between the two species. The curassows, of course, quickly clean up any bits of fruit dropped from the elevated trays.

Our initial success with the white-cheeks demonstrated that breeding could be accomplished with relative ease in large, heavily planted aviaries. However, we were concerned over their reproductive potential in small enclosures on public exhibit, with minimal cover and constant disturbance from daily cleaning activities. All went well, and this past year we raised a total of twenty-one chicks from four pairs of touracos: five white-cheeked, seven red-crested, seven Schalow's and two white-crested. A pair of purple-crested also nested but produced infertile eggs. Considering that the pair is known to be at least twelve years old and the female blind in one eye, this failure was of no great surprise.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This article by Bob Berry will be continued in the next issue. The conclusion of the article will consist of the husbandry used to accomplish the reported breedings. Since this article was written (1980) many other species have been raised at Houston along with many other zoos that learned from Bob's insight.

NFS new members

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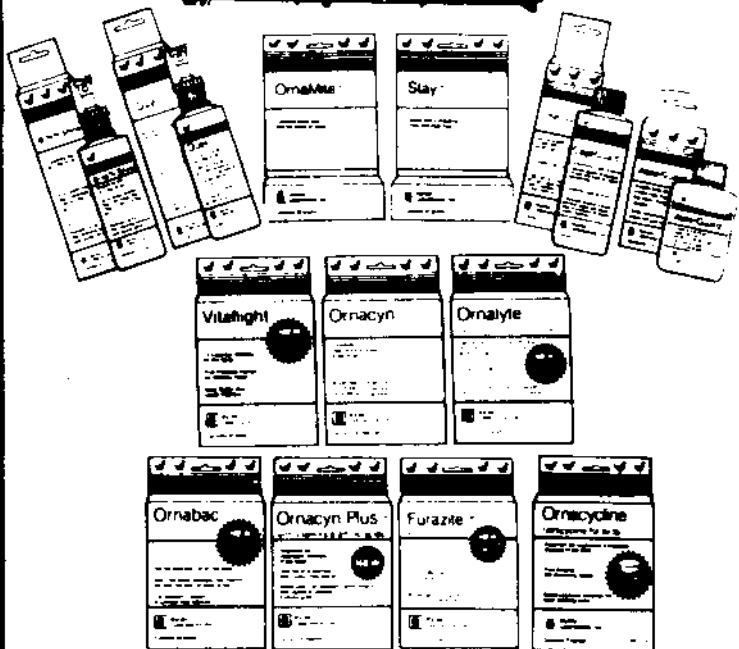
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NATIONAL FINCH SOCIETY EXHIBITION POINTS SCHEDULE

This points schedule will be used for shows judged by NFS Panel judges. NFS plaques are awarded only at affiliated shows. Points are awarded by the NFS Points Director. Appeals or questions are to be directed to NFS Points Chairman, Tony M. Patterson, PO Box 18607, East Hartford, CT 06118-0607. Please note the Total points needed for Championship and Excellence awards. Excellence awards are accumulative.

CHAMPIONSHIP EXHIBITOR
50 POINTS IN ONE YEAR

EXHIBITOR EXCELLENCE
200 ACCUMULATIVE POINTS

POINTS SCHEDULE

Birds in
Division

Best 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th 7th 8th 9th 10th

20-29	3	2	1	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
30-59	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
60-79	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	x	x	x
80-99	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	x	x
100-119	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	x
120-139	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
140-159	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2
160-189	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3
190-219	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4
220-259	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5
260-299	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6
300 +	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7

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"D" SIZE BANDS

"D" SIZE LEG BANDS ARE NOW ALLOWED FOR THE BANDING OF ZEBRA AND GOULDIAN CHICKS EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY. "C" SIZE BANDS ARE STILL ACCEPTABLE, HOWEVER DUE TO NUMEROUS REQUESTS FROM NFS BREEDERS DURING THE PAST THREE YEARS, THE NFS BOARD OF DIRECTORS HAS PASSED THIS ITEM. THE VOTE HAD FAILED ON TWO PAST TRIES.

The Central Alabama Aviculture Society Presents

The 7th Annual
ALL FEATHER BIRD FAIR
&
CAGE BIRD JUDGING SHOW

Sept. 3rd & 4th 1988

SHOW PLACE:

The Civic Center
300 Bibb Street
Montgomery, AL

HOST HOTEL:

The Madison Hotel
120 Madison Ave.
Montgomery, AL

AFFILIATED JUDGES TO BE:

NFS: DAREN DECOTEAU
NCS: DR. A.E. DECOTEAU
BUDGIES: E.J. TARBUR
CANARY & HOOKBILLS: WAYNE THOMANN

Judging Saturday only, Contests On Sunday

For Information Contact:

Chuck Clift, Fair Chairman
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INFORMATION, WRITE TO HAL M. KOONTZ, 2604
AUBURN COURT, BAKERSFIELD, CALIFORNIA 93306.**

NFS QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING - MARCH 13, 1988.

The NFS quarterly Board meeting was held at the home of Nancy Reed, in Windsor, CT on March 13, 1988. The meeting came to order at 2:48 p.m.

Present at the meeting were: Dr. Al Decoteau, Roger O'Connell, Pam Liddy, William Parlee, Russ Armitage, Nancy Reed, and Chris Voronovitch, and last but not least my hand-fed CFM English Zebra "Fortune".

The secretary's report was accepted as published and the Treasurer's report was accepted as read.

Standards Committee: Dr. Decoteau reported that the Chairman of the Diamond Sparrow committee had to resign for personal reasons. Micheal Bronson of Michigan will now Chair that committee. It is presently at a stand-still, as additional committee members are needed. No report was yet available on the Lavender Finch from Brenda Geesey, Chairperson. Charles Anchor has written to Dr. Decoteau to pass on some information to the Diamond Sparrow committee. The information is that "squatting on the perch", seems to be a trait of the bird, and he would not like to see them "faulted" for that in the Standard.

The Java Rice Bird Standard by Cecil Gunby was circulated among the Board for their consideration.

Judge's Panel Report: Dr. Decoteau sent two separate letters to remind panel members to pay their judges fees. To date four judges have still not paid the fee. There was also a suggestion made that Membership Services note on the renewal letters of panel members to make their fees due when their membership renewals are due. Al also submitted four new candidates for approval. (see votes).

Elections Committee: Pam Liddy stated that returns are still coming in and tabulations are under way. The results of the election should be published in the March/April issue of the Bulletin, as it will be out after the votes are counted.

"FINCHSAVE" REPORT: Effective January 1, 1988 the program officially went into effect. The program is getting off to a slower start than we had hoped for. There have been 38 official inquiries. Five participants have qualified and sent the correct paperwork to Hal Koontz, to qualify for the program. Species chosen by these participants were: Green Singer, St. Helena Waxbill and three with the Blue-capped Cordon Bleu. It was reported that a few Captains have not sent in some necessary paperwork.

1988 CENSUS: Bill Parlee reported that the 1988 Finch and Softbill Census is now underway, and should be published in the July/Aug issue of the Bulletin. It was suggested that all members responding be contacted by

letter regarding participation in the Finchsave program. It was also noted that Hal Koontz would be writing an article for the AFA Watchbird.

Leg Band Report: Roger O'Connell reported that 10,400 leg bands were sold by NFS during 1987. To correct some confusion in band sizes, remember that you can always use a size smaller, but never a size larger than published, unless it is approved by the Board (for purposes of exhibition).

The Band order for 1989 will be revised to reflect some new sizes. When ordering, please try to anticipate your needs for the whole year. Don't wait until your birds to hatch and expect to have the bands in time for banding. We do have members who order every few weeks, this causes undue work for the Band Secretary, and slows things down for everyone.

Leg Band cost for 1989 was also discussed as we are losing money on the bands with the dollar devaluation.

Affiliation report: Pam Liddy stated that last year we had a total of 51 affiliated clubs, 47 American and 4 International clubs. Clubs that have not yet re-affiliated for 1988 will be send a second reminder as of March 31, 1988.

Membership Report: Russ Armitage indicated that as of this date we have 617 paid members.

VOTES:

1. Java Rice Bird Standard approved
2. Motion passed to make judges fee due upon membership renewal.
3. Martha Wigmore, Clayton Jones, Harold Bowles, and Larry Brandt, all completing their requirements were accepted to the Judge's Panel.
4. Motion to relax the 25 cap on the Panel was passed.
5. Motion to increase the cap to 40 passed.
6. Vote to increase leg band fee to \$1.75 a string of 10, and to eliminate the shipping charges was accepted.
7. The Board voted to privately censure a Judge for not sending in a show report on time.
8. Motion to require all judges to participate in one specie being worked on by the Standards Committee during a three year period was passed.
9. Motion carried to allow for First Class delivery of Bulletin at additional \$5 cost due upon renewal.
10. Passed was a motion to remove from the panel any Judge that does not pay his/her fee after a 30 day written notice.
11. Diamond Sparrow to be 1988 NFS Tee-shirt.
12. Passed to remind members that in 1991 colors for show boxes will be enforced. Exterior; black, interior; white or Pdw.Blue

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m. with the next meeting scheduled for June 12, 1988 in York, PA. Respectfully submitted, Christine Voronovitch.

NFS PANEL JUDGES 1988

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