



Journal of the

National Finch & Softbill Society

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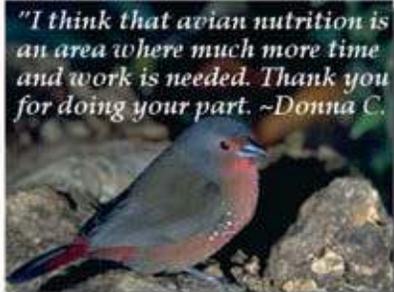
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NFSS Mission Statement

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

Journal of the National Finch & Softbill Society

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Photo by Mike Fidler



President's Message



Start Preparing Now

I hope all have had a successful breeding season this spring. Those of you that attend shows have probably already started to look at the birds that you plan to exhibit this fall and for those who are thinking of showing, now is the time to begin preparing. Not all species can be prepared the same way. Waxbills are naturally active birds that are expected to move about extensively in their show cage. Just catching them to put in a show cage can result in lost tail feathers so what can one do to prepare? All birds' plumage benefits from bathing, so provide them with daily bath water. When you do have to handle your birds make sure your hands are clean and not oily or sweaty this will help minimize the chance of losing feathers. Birds tend to show better when they are fit so exercise and a healthy diet is a positive.

Other species, like Societies or Gouldians, are expected to be more docile in a show cage and therefore exposure to a show cage well beforehand can help their chances. A Zebra that cowers in the bottom of it's cage or panics and beats his wings against the bars will not make a good presentation. Place them in a show cage weeks or even months before showing and put the cage in an area of the house where there will be pedestrian traffic. Get them used to people moving about so when they are in a show hall they don't panic. Some birds in a show cage tend to sit low on their perch but you can improve their stance by putting the show cage in a paper bag that has been cut just low enough for them to see over the top when they sit upright. Have a spray bottle with clean fresh water nearby to give your

birds a light misting a few times a day. And if you have room to keep individuals separated from each other they won't over preen or pluck each other.

Our NFSS judges have a wealth of knowledge and they like to share that with exhibitors at the shows they are judging. Showing your birds will afford you the opportunity to hear from experts the pros and cons of your stock and how you can work to improve the birds you keep through selective breeding. A simple thing like having trimmed toenails may not seem like big matter but as I've heard judges point out it can be a safety issue with the birds as well. Excessively long nails can get caught in a cage or flight causing severe harm and because nails in captivity don't wear like they do in the wild we need to be attentive to grooming. If you have the opportunity, watch a judge you have not seen before, get as many perspectives as you can.

Most show organizers welcome additional specially sponsored awards. If you would like to see recognition for a special category such as Top Carduelan, consider donating an award. It does not have to be expensive and our Awards Manager Alfredo Brugueras can assist. His and all the board of directors' contact information is available on our website www.NFSS.org or in the back of your NFSS journals. Just a reminder that regional shows are now worth double points and show information is also available on the website.

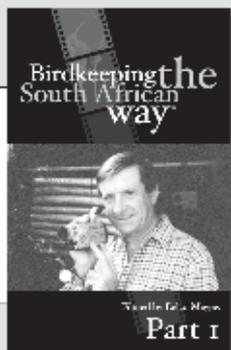
I hope to see many of you this fall.

Respectfully,

Bob Peers
President

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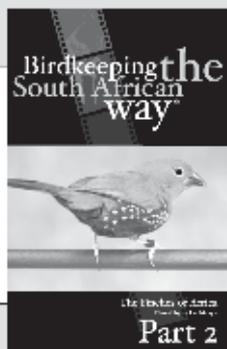
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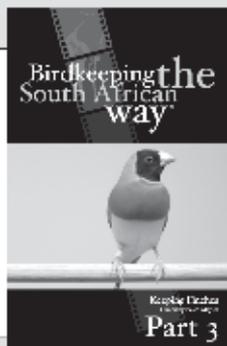
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Plumage Color Influences Choice of Mates and Sex of Chicks in Gouldian Finches (*Erythrura gouldiae*)

Devorah Benu, Ph.D.

[This article reprinted from Avicultural Bulletin, American Avicultural Society, May/June 2009.]

Gouldian finches, *Erythrura gouldiae*, are small cavity-nesting passerines that are endemic to open savannahs adjacent to mangrove swamps in northern Australia. These finches eat a variety of native grass seeds, but to meet the increased energetic and nutritional demands of rearing chicks, they primarily eat insects when breeding. Gouldian finches are social birds that typically occur in large flocks in the wild. However, invasive species, disease and habitat destruction have dramatically reduced their population so there currently are fewer than 2500 individuals remaining in the wild. Fortunately, these beautiful birds are popular avicultural subjects so there is an active conservation and captive breeding program in place to preserve them.

Gouldian finches are known by a variety of common names; the Lady Gouldian Finch, Gould's Finch, or as the Rainbow Finch. Both sexes of this "weaver-finch" (family: Estrildidae) are strikingly colored with an olive green back and wings, a sharply pointed black tail, lemon yellow belly, purple breast, and a pale blue outline around their brightly colored heads. These birds were once thought to be three separate species because of their distinct color polymorphisms, or "morphs" that occur naturally in the wild population.

"These colorful native birds have three

possible head colors – red, yellow and black,"* observed Dr. Sarah Pryke, a behavioral ecologist at Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia.

The plumage colors of these birds' heads is a sex-linked genetic trait, with red being dominant to yellow, which is dominant to black. Thus, a red-headed bird can produce offspring with either red, yellow or black head plumages; a yellow bird produces offspring with either yellow or black heads, while black morphs produce only black-headed chicks.

Interestingly, these three color morphs have distinct behavioral and hormonal profiles that affect their life histories. Both male and female red morph birds are very aggressive and thus end up with the best nesting cavities. Because red-headed birds have very high plasma testosterone concentrations, the male spends most of his time fighting instead of helping his mate raise their chicks. These elevated testosterone levels and high-stress lives compromise the birds' immune systems, making both males and females shorter-lived than individuals of the other color morphs.

Black-headed birds, which comprise approximately 70 percent of the wild population, are less aggressive than the red-heads, and have correspondingly lower testosterone levels. Black morphs

usually lose the best nesting cavities to red morph birds, but the black morph males share chick rearing duties with their mates, and both sexes live longer.

The yellow-headed birds, which are very rare in the wild – consisting of less than one individual per thousand – are the pacifists in the flock. These birds avoid all aggressive interactions with both the red and black morphs and tend to experience great difficulty in retaining possession of suitable nesting hollows.

Based on these life history differences, it should not be surprising to learn that these color morphs are very important to mate choice: female Gouldian finches choose their mates based on the plumage color of the male's head. Further, it has long been suspected that they also choose the sex of their chicks based on the color of their father's head.

The idea that females can bias the sex of their offspring based on external factors is not new. But researchers have found very little evidence to support this hypothesis that can't be explained by random fluctuations, according to Dr. Pryke. To test this possibility, Dr. Pryke and her colleague, Dr. Simon Griffith, designed an elegant series of experiments.

"Gouldian finches wear their genes on their head," remarked Dr. Pryke. "So it was relatively easy to construct an experiment to [test] the influence of head color on sex."

A female Gouldian finch chooses to breed with a male whose head plumage coloring matches hers because this is a visual indication that these males are a better genetic match. It is known that genetically incompatible pairs experience a 40.2% greater mortality of

sons and an 83.8% greater mortality of daughters than in broods produced from genetically compatible matched pairs.

"Daughters produced from mixed matings – where parents differ in head color – suffer from genetic incompatibilities between their parents that cause about 84 per cent to die young," Dr. Pryke explained.

Unlike in mammals where the sperm determines the sex of each offspring, the sex of a bird's offspring is determined by the egg even before it is fertilized. Thus, when a female Gouldian finch is stuck with a mismatched male, she preferentially produces more male chicks because they are more likely to survive. Further, females in mixed pairs also reduce their energetic investment by producing fewer and smaller eggs.

"Females really don't want to mate with a male with a different head color," stated Dr. Pryke. "But there simply aren't enough compatible males, so later in the mating season they seem to use this control to make the best of a bad situation."

Since female Gouldian finches visually assess the phenotype of potential mates and because mixed-morph pairings are known to result in fitness costs, the researchers predicted that female Gouldian finches that are unable to pair preferentially with genetically compatible males should adjust their relative breeding investment accordingly.

To test this hypothesis, the scientists studied 200 female finches (100 black and 100 red) in a captive breeding colony established by the Save the Gouldian Fund at Martinsville in New South Wales' Hunter Valley. They mated each

bird twice, once with each color morph and documented the sex of all the resulting chicks.

The researchers found that female Gouldian finches paired with mismatched males produced a tremendous preponderance of male chicks (82.1 percent), whereas females in matched pairs produced nearly equal numbers of both sexes (45.9 percent males).

The researchers then tested whether the females in mixed pairs were deliberately over-producing sons or if the high number of male chicks was the result of increased mortality among female chicks. To do this, they deceived female red and black morph birds into thinking they were mating with a black morph male. They did this by temporarily blackening the head feathers of red-headed males with a non-toxic dye and then pairing these disguised males with unsuspecting red and black morph females.

"It's actually quite hard to tell the experimentally blackened birds apart from natural black males," stated Dr. Pryke.

The results of this experiment show that the female birds were fooled, too. Black morph females paired to the blackened red-headed males produced roughly

equal numbers of male and female chicks. In contrast, red morph females paired with blackened red-headed males over-produced sons at a similar ratio to that found in the previous mixed pairing experiments.

The results of this experiment indicate that the female finches were fooled, too. Black morph females paired to the blackened red-headed males produced roughly equal numbers of male and female chicks. In contrast, red morph females paired with blackened red-headed males over-produced sons at a similar ratio to that found in the previous mixed pairing experiments.

This elegant series of studies reveals that female birds actually do choose the sex of their offspring, and further, they also show that it's not genetics that influences this gender bias, it's what the females actually see that counts.

"This is the clearest and perhaps most extreme example of sex biasing that has been found," said Dr. Pryke. "It's really black and white – or in this case, black and red."

But these studies raise yet more intriguing questions: how do the female finches recognize the sex of each egg cell before it is fertilized? How does her





Wild Gouldians with other grass finches. Photo by Bill Van Patten.

body preferentially select male egg follicles to be fertilized? How do the female finches know what color their own heads are? And further, how did this peculiar breeding system become established in the first place?

These research findings also have important conservation implications. As the endangered Gouldian Finch population further decreases, the number of mixed

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pairings may increase, potentially leading to a dramatically unbalanced sex ratio in the breeding population. As a result, "we may lose one or other morph and the species as we know it," warned Dr. Pryke.

"So this makes us aware that small populations are a problem. Unless we increase the connections between populations, Gouldian finches are likely to go extinct a lot quicker."

Sources:

Pryke, S., & Griffith, S. (2009). Genetic Incompatibility Drives Sex Allocation and Maternal Investment in a Polymorphic Finch. *Science*, 323 (5921), 1605-1607 DOI: 10.1126/science.1168928.

About the author:

Devorah Bennu is a researcher and ornithologist who writes the blog "Living the Scientific Life (Scientist, Interrupted)" at <http://scienceblogs.com/grrlscientist/>

*According to the author, all quotes are from the cited source or from published interviews with Dr. Pryke. (Ed.)

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Contact Orlando Rivera 787-485-1810 riverao1@wyeth.com

NFSS 2009 General Election Biographies

I am William Parlee, President Emeritus of NFSS and Election Chairman for the 2009 general election for the 2010-11 term. It has been my pleasure to serve in this position and I hope we have found some well qualified nominees to run for the offices that administer the business that makes NFSS one of the premier bird organizations in America.

Below you will find biographies of many of the members who have volunteered to run for office. Please read them over and submit your ballot that is at the end of this article. Please remember, when voting for the Regional Vice President, that you vote only for the nominee from the region in which you reside. Also, your vote will not be counted unless you put your membership number in the space provided. If you do not recall your number, it's on your membership card and on the mailing label of your Journal.

Below are the biographies that have been submitted for each office. The ballot is included in the center of this issue of the Journal. You may pull it out for mailing or mail in a photocopy of the ballot.

President

John Wilson: I have been a partner in a small Garage Door company for a little over 20 years and have managed the business side of the company from the beginning. I have a B.A. from U.C., Riverside (Sociology) and long term interests in both birds and behavior. I have 3 children; the youngest is a junior at U.C. Davis. In June my middle child will join the oldest as a UC graduate. I have kept and bred a wide range of birds from about the time I was twelve. Like many fanciers, my first birds were pigeons. I have flown racing pigeons, bred pheasants, Budgies and a number of finch species. I was among the first group of experienced finch breeders to join a finch focused conversation on the Finch Lovers LISTSERV.

Just about ten years ago I agreed to moderate an NFSS sponsored LISTSERV, (now the Finch/Softbill Forum) setting the requirement that I would accept if a core group

of experienced breeders would agree to remain active participants. I continue as moderator. I was elected First Vice President of the NFSS in the last general election. I have good working relationships with most serving and a number of past BOD members. I believe my extended exposure on the BOD to challenges and issues we have faced, well prepares me for continuing and future challenges.

We face a declining interest in bird shows and a growing legislative assault by those who would eliminate the private ownership of animals. To credibly counter these threats the NFSS needs to reach a larger percentage of the remaining finch breeders and join with other animal keeping communities in defeating restrictive legislation. By promoting our community with a strong presentation on the Internet, publishing a first rate Journal and supporting and promoting Finch Save, I hope to move us closer to these goals.

1st Vice President

(Regional Vice Presidents, Education)

Bob Peers: In the past four years I have served on the NFSS Board of Directors as Awards Manager, 1st VP and most recently as President. During the past term, I have helped to guide the BOD to many accomplishments, a few of which are a Treasury balance increase of more than 250%, a shift in journal production procedures that have resulted in a superior journal to our members, a new and improved web site, new product availability through FinchShop with little inventory held by NFSS. and a completely new bylaws revision.

The position of President of NFSS requires daily attention and because of some changes in my life, and for this reason alone, I have chosen not to run again for President. I would however like to continue to serve NFSS as a member of the board of directors and ask for your vote as 1st VP.

2nd Vice President *(Publications)*

Tom Keegan: I live in Boston, MA and have been keeping finches for over 25 years. I am a research psychologist, and I work in health care research, including publishing academic journal articles on health, health care, and health policy. I have been a member of NFSS for over 8 years. I have been Region 1 Vice President for the past few years and have been serving as 2nd VP since August 2008. Locally, I am Secretary of the Massachusetts Cage Bird Association and 2nd Vice President of the Northeast Bird Group.

I first saw a finch aviary as a teenager when I bought my first zebra finches in my home town of Woonsocket, Rhode Island, and I have been a devoted finch & softbill breeder and enthusiast ever since! I currently keep a variety of mainly African waxbills and a few softbills. I am mainly interested in husbandry aspects of the hobby and working with species that are not well-domesticated, but I also dabble in showing a bit.

I have been a big fan of the NFSS Journal since joining the Society. I hope that members are pleased with what I've been doing recently as acting Editor to bring them a high quality journal with original content and a lower page-volume of advertising. With your support, I hope to continue my efforts as 2nd VP toward making the Journal one of the best reasons to be an NFSS member. I also hope to work with our Web Master and Advertising Manager during the current term to seek new sources of revenue from our well-run web site.

3rd Vice President

(Finch & Softbill Save, Census)

Vonda Zwick: I have been keeping finches since 2000. I currently work with Orange-Cheeked Waxbills, Rosy Rumped Waxbills, and Blue-Capped Waxbills and have successfully parent-raised all three species. I am also active in NFSS exhibition in order to learn more about ensuring the birds we produce meet the wild-type standard. Conservation is my primary focus. With the future of imports being bleak, it is important that our breeding programs become established before we lose our access to wild bloodlines.

I have a background in software engineering which has been useful in the development of the Finch and Softbill Save program. I have been spending my current term developing this software and currently have code completed for setting up FSS user accounts and privacy settings, adding/editing birds and clutches into the database, entering species profile information for each species being worked with, browsing other breeders shared information and species profiles, creating and browsing bird sale lists, creating and browsing birds wanted lists, and messaging other users. By the time this is published, we will likely be even further along – with viewing the information (studbooks and pedigrees) being next on my list, followed by the breeding analysis routines.

I would like to continue in my position to see this project through and to help

ensure as smooth a transition as possible when the software goes live to the general membership.

4th Vice President

(Judges Panel/Standards/Research)

Laura Bewley: A member of National Finch and Softbill Society since the mid 80's and a NFSS judge since the late 80's, I am currently serving as Midwest Region 4 V.P. for the NFSS. I love finches! They are fun to watch, exciting to raise and interesting to show. I grew up having finches and started raising and showing finches after college. My local bird club is Oklahoma Cage Bird Society. Our club is supporting the NCBS in Tulsa this year, come and show with us! I am running for the office of NFSS Fourth VP - Judges Panel Director. I have had the privilege of being on the judges panel for several years and in that time we have had some super panel directors. I hope to follow in their footsteps, taking in the best from several I served under. I hope to continue Cecil Gunby's passion for educating exhibitors and his Southern hospitality. I hope to continue Martha Wigmore's dedication for publishing procedures, keeping panel judges informed about policy and adding to our list of written standards. I want to use Stephen Hoppin's focus on making sure our judges are the best they can be through clinics and discussions. And last but not least I want to follow Dr. Al Decoteau's example of looking to add excellent people to our panel, encourage exhibitors to show and enjoy showing.

My personal goals are to provide easy access to the judges handbook and standards, continue adding to our standards, provide educational opportunities for judges on trends & colors, support our judges by keeping materials updated & available, create new procedures for reporting show information, report the ways our judges are helping, supporting & lobbying for NFSS. Simply put this is a job to support our judges, encourage exhibitors and react in a timely manner to the needs of our show clubs. I look forward to seeing many of you at the local shows this year. I encourage

finch enthusiasts to gather at local shows to discuss the hobby, local issues and any NFSS concerns hobbyist have.

I have had the privilege of judging many shows across the U.S., the Canadian National and the National Cage Bird Show. Everywhere I go I find interesting people with great birds, super ideas and fascinating stories. I can't wait to meet you and your "tails" also. If I should be elected to the office of 4th VP, I hope you will feel free to contact me with your concerns, questions and advice. I promise to respond timely and work productively.

Executive Secretary

Rebecca Mikel: My name is Rebecca Mikel and I am running for the position of Executive Secretary for the NFSS Board of Directors. My husband, Andrew, and I reside in SW Michigan & own/operate Lakeside Aviaries where we keep, exhibit, and enjoy several species of finches, softbills, and hookbills. I am a member of Great Lakes Zebra and Society Club (Secretary), Michigan Society of Finch and Canary Breeders, Michiana Bird Society, and Finch and Softbill Breeders and Exhibitors Club. I have Bachelor's Degrees in Business Administration and Human Resources and have worked as Operations Manager for a company in Elkhart, Indiana for the past 6 years.

I began serving as Exec. Secretary on this BOD in December of 2006 and since that time I've served as Chair of the Nominating Committee and also sat on committees for Department Back Up, Champion of Section, Membership Directory, By Law Revision, & Policies and Procedures, My work on the BOD has allowed me to work with other committed individuals to bring increased accountability, efficiency, communications, and reporting procedures - all benefits for the entire organization. Thank you for your vote which will allow me to continue to serve in this capacity for the next 2 years.

Treasurer

Lisa Murphy: As your Treasurer for the past

three years (elected 11/06), I have worked with the Board of Directors to improve the organizations record keeping and overall financial well being. I would like to ask for your continued support and your vote in the upcoming election, so that I may continue to serve and help NFSS to move forward to a sound financial future.

I am originally from Texas but moved to east Tennessee in 1993. We now call Etowah our home. I have been married for 37 years and live with my husband and 17 year old grandson. I currently have about 125 birds, most of which are finches. I have been raising/breeding/showing birds since 2001. I have been a member of NFSS for 8 years and been active in several local/state bird clubs.

My past professional experience includes Document Control at several Nuclear Plants as well as keeping our household books for 37 years.

Membership Director

Diane Munroe: I live in North Kingstown, RI. I have been working on the road for a lab for 29 years going to people's homes who cannot get out to have their blood-work done. This line of work gives me a lot of freedom and flexibility in my schedule. I have a 22 year old daughter that lives in NC and a 19 year old son who is joining the Coast Guard soon.

I bred parrots for many years and worked with a local rehab center caring for and releasing young and injured birds. Two years ago I started my own flock of finches which includes Owls, Stars, Red Headed Parrots, Goldbreasts, Lady Gouldians, Pearl Societies, and Fire Finches. Now that my children are grown it has given me more time to enjoy my birds and become active in bird groups. I like to be involved with and learn from and help other bird people. Hopefully together we can increase the membership of the group and keep everyone up to date and connected.

Band Secretary

Paula Hansen: I am a native New Yorker, residing in Oregon for 25 years and have given 20 years of service in the Dept. of Human Services. Work Experience includes: Medical Records, Telecommunications, Purchasing, Warehouse Inventory, Forms Design, Printing, and Archiving. My history in the hobby started in 1991. In my spare time, I am tending to my birds, filling Band orders and attending Board Meetings. Since 1996 I have been involved with American Federation of Aviculture's Conservation group under the Red Siskin Project and serve as Chair of that project. My experience with the NFSS Board and Band Secretary duties since June of 2002. My history and acquired skills have proven to have expanded NFSS's closed and plastic band sales and availability to members.

Liason Officer (Club Relations/Affiliations)

Alfredo Bruguera: I have been a member of the National Finch & Softbill Society since 1990. I am also a member of The Canary and Finch Society (Houston), Lone Star Canary Club (Dallas), Canadian Finch & Softbill Society (Toronto), Fort Worth Bird Club, Texas Bird Breeders and Fanciers Association and the Puerto Rico Canary Club. I became involved with canaries in 1961. I started breeding canaries in 1980 along with my father.

In 1990 I started breeding several species of finches and in 1992 and 1994 I won the Puerto Rico National Show with a Normal Gouldian and a Parson Finch, respectively. For several years I was also the runner-up at this show. I became a certified NFSS Judge in 2007. As of this year I have been involved in finch breeding and exhibiting for 18 years. I was born in Puerto Rico but now live in Mineola, Texas.

FinchShop Director

Sharon Dvorak: When I started my life in California, we were not permitted to have pets. So, when I left home to join the military and I met my husband, I wanted a pet.

We got a dog, a cat, some finches, and fish. That was 40 years ago and oh how our pet family has grown! With hookbills, finches/canaries, cats, dogs, rabbits and fish, we did not suffer empty nest syndrome when our three children moved out to start their own families. I have been a finch/canary breeder for 5 years now, and started showing finches within the last year.

Previously, as a District Manager for a family owned business, I had to oversee the general management of the restaurants, ordering of product, personnel issues and financial obligations. I had to research vendors for the best product at the cheapest price, tracking expenses, and finding ways to operate more cost efficiently. When the family business was sold, I went back to the federal government with the Internal Revenue Service. Fortunately with my college education in accounting, I worked my way up to a Tax Compliance Officer.

I have been a member of the Raleigh NC Bird Club for 14 years during which I was secretary for the club for 4 years, and then elected to treasurer. I am currently the South East Regional Director for American Federation of Aviculture (AFA.) In my current position as the Finch Shop Director for NFSS, I have had the opportunity to work with many great sources of information to get the NFSS Finch Shop up on line again. We have changed some procedures to insure every member can purchase quality NFSS merchandise at reasonable prices with no up start expenses to NFSS.

I was raised to take my responsibilities seriously, be honest, work hard, and to do my best even if things don't come out perfect every time.

V.P. Region 1

Shelley Ortman: We bird folk are passionate about our hobby, our views and our methods of keeping birds, and I believe it is paramount that we promote a climate that fosters the acceptance of bird keeping as a valid, valuable avocation. I have kept and bred birds since I was a teenager, which

is more than 30 years now. Through the years, my flock has expanded to include several species of softbills and many species of exotic finches.

I show birds every fall, and take special pride in preparing and manning the NFSS table at shows and marts. It has been my particular mission to solicit members. To that end I have written a number of articles for the NFSS Journal, and given educational presentations at bird clubs and schools. My vision for the future of NFSS is to promote our passion and our hobby to a new generation of bird-keepers. Please consider voting for me for Region 1 NFSS Vice President.

V.P. Region 2

Michael Gravely: I currently reside just outside of Atlanta, GA with my wife Laura and 3 children. I have a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration and am currently working on a Master's Degree in Early Childhood Education. I am currently self-employed and have been most of my life. This has enabled me to develop many skills that have been useful in this position as I've served over the past 2 years. I am a self starter and am strongly motivated to complete tasks set before me in as complete a fashion as possible. If I do something, I do it right or not at all. I am relatively new to the world of Aviculture but have kept some interesting birds and have had fairly good success breeding some of the more difficult species such as Yellow Legged Honeycreepers.

My main interest lies in preserving species in Aviculture through captive breeding programs and in educating more people about the hobby. As a Regional VP, I hope to bring more cohesion among the regional membership, thus bringing about better communication and exchange of ideas and husbandry techniques, closer friendships, and the possibility of more cooperative breeding programs. I also hope to encourage more clubs in the region to not only affiliate with NFSS, but to begin hosting more shows - the best way to better educate the

general public about our hobby and our organization. Therefore, I ask that you vote for me as the VP for Region 2 - you won't be disappointed!

V.P. Region 3

Jason Crean: I reside in Woodridge, IL and I am asking for your support as Region 3 VP. I am employed as a Biology Teacher at Lyons Township High School, teach Environmental Science in Moraine Valley College, aid in research/service work in the Genetics Lab at Brookfield Zoo where I also teach graduate courses in the Education Dept., and am an Avian Consultant to zoos and other institutions in the care, breeding, and propagation of avian species.

I graduated Cum Laude from Saint Xavier University with a certificate in Zoology & Aquarium Science, completed the AFA Fundamentals of Aviculture Course (Level 1), and completed a second Master's Degree in Biology from Western Illinois Univ. I am the President of The Avicultural Society of Chicagoland, Regional Director of American Federation of Aviculture, and a breeder of softbills - specializing in Aracaris and Mousebirds. I have published several works including "The Lineolated Parakeet, *Bolborhynchus lineola*," "Avian Education: The need for Softbill Exposure," "Activities in Environmental Science," "The Aviarium: Constructing a Year-Around Avian Habitat," and "Zoo Genetics: Key Aspects of Conservation Biology." I have also made presentations, including "Zoo Genetics," "Genetics Curricular Activities for the High School Classroom" and held lectures on "Responsible Aviculture: Softbills," "Avian Genetics," "Experiences in Aviculture," "Species Survival Plans" and "Biodiversity Hotspots."

V.P. Region 4

Cheryl Burns: I have been a pet bird owner and hobby breeder for 19 years. I have been active in bird clubs and organizations for most of that time. I have been a speaker for many bird clubs and have published articles in BirdTalk, Watchbird as well as

society journals. I show birds in the Parrot and Finch divisions. My birds have placed best in division and on top bench several times over the years. I won best in show with a dusky-headed conure at the Texas Bird Breeders and Fanciers Association Show in 2007.

I keep conures, pionus, caiques, show-quality Society Finches, Cuban Melodious Finches, Honeycreepers, Saffron Finches and domestic ducks. I am a training and communications professional with a B.A. in Public Relations from Abilene Christian University. I build and maintain web sites for five bird clubs as well as my own personal web sites.

When not working away at one of the many web sites or cleaning the aviary, I enjoy photography and driving in auto-cross events.

V.P. Region 5

Paul Rodenhauer: The over-arching nature of my career as a physician precluded the possibility of pursuing many other interests, including one based on my emotional attachment to chickens as a child. I was still serving as professor of psychiatry and assistant dean at Tulane University School of Medicine, however, when Poulet, a peach-faced lovebird, rekindled that attachment by adopting me as a companion. Now thirteen going on twenty, Poulet has outlived her mate, witnessed the acquisition of other feathered friends, and retired with me to the high desert. Although I stepped down from my full-time position at Tulane in June 2003, my teaching career continued part-time—that is, until the deluge of New Orleans following hurricane Katrina.

Having had the decision about when I would evolve into full retirement wrenched from my control seemed exceedingly unfair, and the circumstances more than inconvenient; however, the outcome is enormously rewarding. Many career-suppressed interests—oil painting, pottery, photography, creative writing, master gardening, and aviculture—emerged as full-time activities.

Sally and Vince Huntington's 1993 BirdTalk article, "Meet the Companion Finch," instigated my fascination with finches. Among my avian companions are five hand-raised finches, two societies raised by Sally and three Gouldians, and a pair of green singers. Some of my artwork and a tale of the joys of everyday life with my society finches appeared in the November/December 2008 issue of the NFSS Journal.

As mentioned in my published essay on society finches as companion birds, if I were to have the luxury of starting over my ownership of cage birds would be limited to finches. Unfortunately we grow too soon old and too late smart. That's one of many compelling reasons for disseminating the knowledge and upholding the values exemplified by the NFSS and shared by its members, a mission I firmly support.

Anna Sinclair: I am Anna Sinclair and I live in Colorado Springs, Colorado. My membership number is #519. I have been raising finches now for 29 years. I enter and do quite well at showing my birds at local shows now for many years.

I served as regional Vice President of the National Finch and Softbill Society from 2000 to 2005 and again would live to serve our members as their regional Vice President. During my past terms in this post I have always represented NFSS at local shows and events by handing out membership applications, I have also shown photos of finches and given out information on care and breeding. Also in my 25 years of membership in NFSS I have written several articles for the NFSS Journal.

I would appreciate your support and will look forward to serving during the 2009-2010 term as the regional Vice President and serving all the members of NFSS in the mountain area of Region 5. Thank you, Anna Sinclair.

V.P. Region 6

Doug White: I am married with 3

daughters, the oldest two (9 and 7) help me with the care of the birds and I hope will show increased interest in showing over the next several years. I am a US Navy Chief Petty Officer currently stationed in Seattle where I review application of potential US Navy Officers.

I have owned and bred birds off and on for nearly 30 years. I currently have Zebras, Societies, Stars, Javas, Diamond Doves, canaries, and cockatiels. I have shown many types of birds in the past but have not shown much recently.

I enjoy the opportunity to meet people at the shows I visit and try to make it a family event for the shows I travel to. I hope this exposure to the show environment helps spur my daughters interest in showing and I think this type of exposure is what will cultivate our future bird hobbyist for years to come. It is during the interaction with fellow members that we get to discuss the direction of NFSS and they have brought up some good ideas.

In my job I have had to deal with up to several hundred people at any one time, I have been able to solve differences and consolidate ideas. In addition I have the opportunity to travel throughout the west coast with my new job.

V.P. Region 7

Orlando Rivera: I am Orlando Rivera and reside in Caguas, Puerto Rico. I am a licensed Chemist graduated in 1985 and work as a manager at a pharmaceutical company. I was married in 1987 and have a 16-year-old daughter.

I became involved in finches during high school and began to breed Society finches. I took some time off from the hobby to attend university in 1980. In 1995 I again had the opportunity to begin breeding finches again, breeding Zebras, Societies, and Gouldians although Gouldians held my interest the most, and only breed Gouldians now. During 2001 I became a member of the Asociacion de Criadores de Finches. From 2001 to 2008, I have won

many awards at shows held by the club. I have been very active in our club and have noticed gaps in communication between our region and NFSS.

This is the first time that I am running for this position; but as a manager of a Pharmaceutical Company, I have administrative managerial skills to work closely with NFSS as it pertains to our region. If I am elected I will improve the communication links between our region and NFSS. I will follow and promote the mission and vision of NFSS. I will be promoting the benefits of membership to all those in our region. I would be very proud if you would give me your vote. Thank you.

V.P. Region 8

Vince Moose: I have kept birds since boyhood, first keeping chickens, pigeons, birds of prey, and also trying my hand at hand-raising baby crows. After time spent at Algonquin College in the Forestry Program, I got a job working at Kortwright Waterfowl Research Station. Working at Kortwright only fueled an already established love and existing hobby, raising waterfowl. It was through a contact with waterfowl that I went on to a career in zoo keeping, specializing in work with birds at the Toronto Zoo. Along the way there have also been periods of quail, partridge, budgies, grass parakeets, cockatiels, Ring-necks, Plumheads, Princess of Wales Parakeets and even a Goffins Cockatoo which came to us from the skies and a Hornbill that had to be captured and rescued in Whitby in November.

Currently my wife Kendra and I keep 8 species of finches, Pekin Robins and White-Rumped Shama Thrushes. I have been judging birds since 1986 at various shows throughout Canada and the U.S., including four Canadian Nationals.

On the domestic front, I met my wife Kendra when both were working at the Toronto Zoo. I started working at the zoo in 1973, and Kendra was hired a year later. We were married in August 1980, and have

two sons, Andrew and Benjamin. Currently I am show manager for the Canadian Finch and Softbill Society. I continue to judge finches and softbills at various clubs, including the Canadian National in 2009. I will be apprenticing as a NFSS judge this fall.



NFSS WEB MASTER NEEDED

Do you have good web programming skills?

Have a few hours/week to donate to NFSS?

If you are interested in filling this NFSS officer position, please contact 2nd Vice President **Tom Keegan** at **nfss.pubs@gmail.com**

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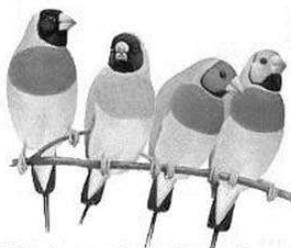
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TEAR OUT BALLOT

MAIL BALLOTS TO:

NFSS Elections
c/o Gail Benson
144 N. Clyde Ave.
Palatine, IL 60067

Postmark Deadline: November 1, 2009

TEAR OUT BALLOT

THE NATIONAL FINCH

General Election Ballot FOR OFFICERS SERVING IN 2010 AND 2011

*** _____ NFSS Membership Number
This must be completed or the ballot will not be counted

Dual Membership households are entitled to two (2) votes and should submit two (2) separate ballots (ballot may be photocopied)

Ballots must be postmarked by November 1, 2009

MAIL BALLOTS TO:
NFSS Elections
c/o Gail Benson
144 N. Clyde Ave.
Palatine, IL 60067

Vote for one candidate in each category by making an X in the box or writing in the name of a candidate

PRESIDENT

- John Wilson
- Write-in Candidate _____

1st VICE-PRESIDENT (*Education*)

- Bob Peers
- Write-in Candidate _____

2nd VICE-PRESIDENT (*Publications*)

- Tom Keegan
- Write-in Candidate _____

3rd VICE-PRESIDENT (*FSS-Finch/Softbill Save*)

- Vonda Zwick
- Write in Candidate _____

4th V.P. (*Judges Panel/Standards/Research*)

- Laura Bewley
- Write-in Candidate _____

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

- Rebecca Mikel
- Write-in Candidate _____

TREASURER

- Lisa Murphy
- Write-in Candidate _____

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR

- Diane Munroe
- Write-in Candidate _____

AND SOFTBILL SOCIETY

LIAISON OFFICER *(Affiliations)*

- Alfredo Bruguera
- Write-in Candidate _____

BAND SECRETARY

- Paula Hansen
- Write in Candidate _____

FINCH SHOP MANAGER

- Sharon Dvorak
- Write-in Candidate _____

REGION 1 VICE-PRESIDENT *(Northeast)*

Only members residing in the states of CT, DE, ME, MA, MD, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VA, VT, and WV may vote for this candidate.

- STATE IN WHICH YOU RESIDE: _____
- Shelly Ortman
 - Write-in Candidate _____

REGION 2 VICE-PRESIDENT *(Southeast)*

Only members residing in the states of AL, FL, GA, MS, NC, SC, and TN may vote for this candidate.

- STATE IN WHICH YOU RESIDE: _____
- Michael Gravely
 - Write-in Candidate _____

REGION 3 VICE-PRESIDENT *(Mid-Central)*

Only members residing in the states of AR, IL, IN, KY, IA, MI, MO, OH, WI, or in Australia, Bermuda, or England may vote for this candidate.

- CNTRY/STATE IN WHICH YOU RESIDE: _____
- Jason Crean
 - Write-in Candidate _____

REGION 4 VICE-PRESIDENT *(Midwest)*

Only members residing in the states of IA, KS, MN, NE, ND, SD, OK, and TX may vote for this candidate.

- STATE IN WHICH YOU RESIDE: _____
- Cheryl Burns
 - Write-in Candidate _____

REGION 5 VICE-PRESIDENT *(Mountain)*

Only members residing in the states of AZ, CO, ID, MT, NV, NM, UT, and WY may vote for this candidate.

- STATE IN WHICH YOU RESIDE: _____
- Paul Rodenhauer
 - Anna Sinclair
 - Write-in Candidate _____

REGION 6 VICE-PRESIDENT *(Pacific Coast)*

Only members residing in the states of AK, CA, HI, OR, and WA may vote for this candidate.

- STATE IN WHICH YOU RESIDE: _____
- Doug White
 - Write-in Candidate _____

REGION 7 VICE-PRESIDENT *(Caribbean)*

Only members residing in Puerto Rico/Caribbean Basin may vote for this candidate.

- TERRITORY/CNTRY IN WHICH YOU RESIDE: _____
- Orlando Rivera
 - Write-in Candidate _____

REGION 8 VICE-PRESIDENT *(Canada)*

Only members residing in Canada may vote for this candidate.

- PROVINCE IN WHICH YOU RESIDE: _____
- Vince Moase
 - Write-in Candidate _____

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ATTENTION: LEG BAND ORDER PROBLEM

Dear NFSS Members:

This is your NFSS Band Secretary. My extra order of bands placed on Feb 17th 2009 was lost! After passing the due delivery date it finally was confirmed, personally by Mr. Stephen Hughes with a sincere apology!

NFSS has enjoyed the impeccable quality of this company's bands with never an error, shortage, etc. since 2003 during my 6 yr run in this position.

I will be contacting each member who has been backordered. These will be the choices given:

- a refund,
- late delivery or
- credit towards 2010 bands.

IF you would like to make my life easier (and please do) and you have experienced a back order this year from me, please send me an email direct and tell me what your choice will be.

May thanks for your support and understanding! I will be updating the band page sometime this week in regard to backorders for 2009 bands.

Regards,

Paula Hansen

NFSS Band Secretary

Email: bands@nfss.org

BREEDING THE GOULDIAN FINCH: What Wild Gouldians Can Tell Us

by Bill Van Patten

with contributions by Mike Fidler

In September of 2008, I had the opportunity to travel to Australia and visit Mike Fidler, co-author of the book "The Gouldian Finch" and co-founder of the Save the Gouldian Fund, a registered charity in Australia dedicated to research and conservation of the endangered wild Gouldian finch.

My trip included spending two weeks in the "bush" of the Northern Territory and the Kimberley District of northwest Australia, studying the Gouldian in the wild with Mike. We then returned to Cooranbong, NSW, Australia, about two hours north of Sydney, where I studied captive Gouldians under Mike's tutelage for two weeks at the Save the Gouldian Fund research facility.

My time was spent focused on two distinct activities. The first was to better understand the many different conservation efforts being conducted by the Save the Gouldian Fund. The second was to study the correlation between the Gouldian life cycle in the wild and keeping captive Gouldians using techniques to simulate the environmental conditions that occur in nature.

Mike Fidler is regarded by many as the foremost breeder of Gouldian finches in the world, and much of his success has come from his study of them in nature for over 30 years and then simulating their natural conditions as closely as possible in captivity, and in particular, simulating their annual

dietary cycle. I thought I might share with you his current practices including expanded and new information not included in his book.

Contrary to popular opinion, the Gouldian finch is not a colony breeder. In the wild, they have been recorded nesting as far as 10 miles from the next nearest Gouldian nest site. To maximize your breeding opportunities, Gouldians should be bred in single pairs to allow them to focus more on breeding and less on defending territory and competing for nutritional resources. If you are unable to provide an individual cage or flight for each pair, then I would suggest you refer to Dr. Sarah Pryke's article in the Sept/Oct 2008 NFSS Journal for tips on minimizing stress and aggression for Gouldians bred in a colony environment.

Gouldians have a temperature tolerance of about 50F to 105F. They can tolerate temperatures outside this range for short periods of time, but not without added stress. In the Gouldian's native habitat the nighttime temperatures can occasionally fall below freezing for short periods during the winter, but this is infrequent, with daytime temperatures typically rebounding to 50F. The best temperature range for breeding indoors is 64F to 77F with a humidity of 35% to 50%. Most importantly, Gouldians must be allowed to acclimate to temperature changes, and don't do well under sudden temperature fluctuations and drafts.



mike fidler

Photo by Mike Fidler



Examining a potential nest site. Photo by Mike Fidler.

The Resting Season

(approximately 3 months)

When not breeding, Gouldians should be kept in same sex flights to keep the males from driving the hens into breeding condition when they are attempting to rest their bodies. The presence of the opposite sex during the resting period elevates hormone levels, tending to suppress the immune system while at the same time stimulating the reproductive system, which can create long term health problems. Under ideal circumstances, you should segregate your flights into same head color groups. For more information on this, please see Dr. Pryke's article cited above.

The resting period, which should last approximately three months, is a time to exercise and thin down from the rich diet of the breeding and molting seasons. Provide as large a space as possible to allow your birds to fly and regain their body condition. During the

resting period, the diet should include a dry seed mix of millets and grass seeds. A high quality softfood or eggfood with a full complement of vitamins and minerals should be offered twice a week in conjunction with a sprouted seed mix of millets and high-fat oil seeds such as niger to provide the essential amino acids and lipids which cannot be synthesized by the body. Feed the softfood or eggfood and sprouted seed mix sparingly, at one half teaspoon per bird when offered. Also, provide a calcium grit such as oyster and egg shells continuously, in addition to fresh water. Mike includes charcoal at a ratio of about 5% in his calcium grit mix and offers inert grit such as river sand to give his birds the opportunity to eat a non-calcium grit when they feel the need for grit without ingesting calcium.

The goal during the resting period is to slim down and regain body strength, while at the same time receiving

balanced nutrition. This resting diet simulates as closely as possible the waning nutritional period of mid to late winter in the wild, where the Gouldian will stop breeding due to a lack of nutritional resources, typically by mid July.

The Austere Diet (*4 weeks*)

Following the resting season, it is now time to prepare the Gouldian's body for the upcoming breeding season, which is done through a simulation of the scarce nutritional resources in the wild that occurs typically in September and October, just prior to the Wet Season. During this austere period, hormone flow ceases, allowing the gonads and ovaries to shrink to a vestige of their normal size and rest. Another desirable effect of the austerity period is the burning of excess body fat, as fat Gouldians typically have low fertility or simply won't come into breeding condition at all. Gouldian body fat can be identified by blowing back the belly feathers and inspecting the abdomen. If there is a yellow band of fat on the belly, the Gouldian is carrying too much body fat to be considered in peak condition for breeding. Using this austere period just prior to the breeding season also helps to ensure your males and females will come into breeding condition synchronously when placed on the breeding diet. Gouldians not placed on the austerity diet can become difficult to breed, with males and females coming into breeding condition at different times resulting in a lower percentage of pairs forming and lower fertility rates.

The austerity period should last 4 weeks in captivity, with a diet consisting of a blend of White and Yellow millet (or a similar low fat mix such as Rye Grass and Japanese Millet) and fresh water.

No other foods should be made available during this period. No softfood, sprouted seed, calcium grit, vitamins, fruits, vegetables, or greens.

Beginning the Breeding Diet (*4 weeks*)
Following four weeks of the austerity diet, your Gouldians should be placed on a rich breeding diet including a dry seed mix of millets, grass seeds, and oil seeds such as niger. Additionally, softfood or eggfood should be supplied fresh daily, along with sprouted seed, a calcium grit, and fresh water. This sudden burst of nutrition simulates the results of the Wet Season, with an abundance of seeding grasses that the Gouldian eats fresh from the stem. The Wet Season typically begins in Nov-Dec, with rich nutritional resources developing through to the end of the "wet" in March or April. This increase in available nutrition following the austerity period triggers the Gouldian's body to begin hormone flow in preparation for breeding. Your birds should remain in same sex flights for four weeks after starting the breeding diet to allow them to come into breeding condition.

Pairing Your Birds (*4 weeks*)

After four weeks on the breeding diet, while maintained in same sex flights, it is time to pair your birds. It is best to keep your hens and cocks in flights where they cannot see each other when not breeding. This can be achieved by simply using an opaque barrier between the male and female flights or cages. If they are in sight of each other, they may have already selected their mates without you knowing whom they have chosen, and your pairings may be less successful.

It is also best to pair birds of the same head color, as current research at the

Save the Gouldian Fund has found that there is higher infertility and hatchling mortality with pairs of different head morphs. This is still currently being studied to better describe the genetic mechanism at play, so more to come in the future on this topic.

Prepare each nest box with a small amount of nesting material and then offer additional nesting material to allow your birds to complete the nest themselves, which is an important ritual in pair bonding.

The Breeding Season *(approximately 4 months)*

Within two to four weeks, you should see pairs forming and eggs in the nest boxes! A Gouldian hen will typically lay between four and seven eggs. Fertile eggs will not start to develop until the hen begins sitting at night. This is also an indication that she has completed laying her eggs for this clutch, although you may also see an additional egg laid in her first few days of sitting at night. By starting the incubation period at the same time for all of her eggs, the hen is instinctively trying to ensure that her eggs will hatch at the same time, usually within 24-48 hours of each other, to give her nestlings equal opportunity in their size and strength when competing for food and nest space.

If you do not see a pair show interest in nesting after 4 weeks, it is possible that they have not formed as a breeding pair. If so, you should consider forming a new pair using other birds that have also not paired successfully. Another technique is to add a spare male to the cage of an unformed pair, which will often cause the hen to accept the first male introduced in the presence of this

new stranger. Keep a close eye on this group, for as soon as the hen has paired with either male, the rejected male will become the target of aggression and should be removed from the cage.

On the 14th day of the hen sitting at night, begin increasing the amount of softfood or eggfood and sprouted seed provided each day, and when nestlings appear, continue to increase the amount of softfood or eggfood and sprouted seed so there is always a little left the following morning. Fertile eggs will hatch in 14 to 16 days of the hen first sitting, and once hatchlings appear, offer as much softfood or eggfood and sprouted seed as can be eaten in 24 hours, which will increase in volume as the nestlings grow! It is also important to ensure there is a continuous source of calcium grit at this time. The hen will need to replenish her own body with calcium lost through the eggs she has laid, as well as feed the calcium grit to her nestlings to ensure the healthy development of their bones and other body organs.

The nestlings will fledge in approximately 21 days, and should be independent in 40 to 45 days after hatching. As soon as the nestlings fledge, clean out the dirty nest box and add more nesting material. This time, make up the majority (but not all) of the nest, as the adults need to concentrate on feeding fledglings not nest building. The male will continue feeding the fledglings while the female should soon go back to egg laying. She will take a small part in feeding fledglings, but the male will assume the primary role of feeding the fledglings.

Remove the juveniles from the breeding environment after 45 days and place



A flock of Gouldians drinks from a puddle. Photo by Bill Van Patten.

them in a weaning cage to allow them to adjust to life on their own. Place food and water dishes in many locations around the weaning cage until you are certain the juveniles have found their permanent food and water receptacles. Using the same food and water receptacles provided for their parent birds will help ensure a fast conversion, as they will be familiar with their appearance. Once you are happy that the juveniles have found their permanent sources of food and water, remove the extra dishes slowly over a period of a few days, keeping your eye out for a sudden sign of weakness in a bird who may have not yet found the permanent receptacles. After four weeks the juveniles should be ready to be placed in holding flights.

The Molting Season

(approximately 8 weeks)

Over the course of the four month breeding season, your Gouldians will typically produce three clutches. After approximately four months, it is time to end the breeding season and move your birds into the molting season. Remove the nest boxes and segregate the parent birds into same sex flights or cages, again out of sight of opposite sex birds. These cages or flights should be as large as possible to allow for exercise, with perches at opposite ends to encourage flying.

Cages or aviaries overcrowded with perches will not encourage flying, but rather, just hopping about, so the goal here is exercise. Use stress perches if possible, as mentioned in Dr. Pryke's article cited above. In the wild, the Gouldian operates in loosely organized flocks, and they like a bit of space and



Gouldians share their habitat with budgerigars. Photo by Bill Van Patten.

privacy, which the stress perches help to provide in captivity.

At the same time the parent birds are moved into their same sex flights, place them on the austerity diet for 2 weeks. The combination of the move, loss of the nest boxes, and the radical change in diet should induce the molt. Once the molt has been triggered, place your molting birds back on the breeding diet until the molt has been completed, which should take approximately 6 weeks. In cooler temperatures, the molt may take longer.

After the parent birds have completed their molt, they should be returned to the resting diet described above to re-start the annual dietary cycle.

About the Juvenile Molt

The juvenile birds produced during the

current year's breeding season should be handled differently than the parent birds. Do not use the austerity diet to try to induce a molt in juvenile birds. Rather, continue feeding the breeding diet until they have completed their first molt into adult plumage.

In the wild, current thought is that temperature plays a significant role in the molt. The molt typically begins in Sept, at the end of the Dry Season and Australian winter, when daytime temperatures rise back into the 90's. Mike has experimented with this concept in captivity and has found that the trigger is approximately 85F minimum daytime temperatures.

Interestingly, this is the time when nutritional resources are most scarce for the wild Gouldian. However, in captivity, we can help unmolting juveniles along with a rich diet. The rich diet also helps to offset the fact that most

captive Gouldians are not enjoying the high temperatures of the wild during the molt.

Mike also uses a fast molt as one of his indicators of good breeding stock. In the wild, this selection process occurs naturally, as while some survive, it is now thought that many juveniles who have not completed their molt by the arrival of the Wet Season do not survive.

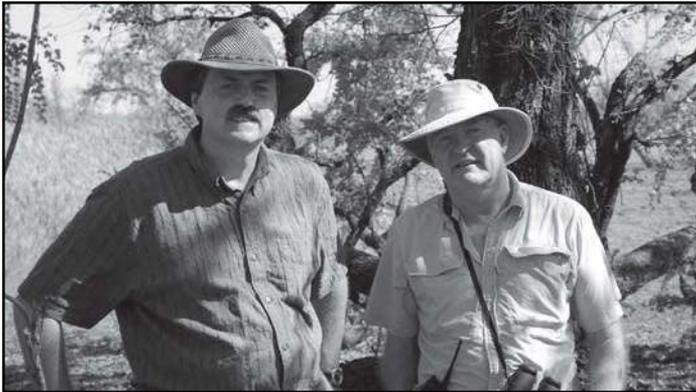
Selecting Breeding Stock

The Molting and Resting seasons are a good time to begin choosing next year's breeding stock. Keep only the very best breeders for another breeding season. Remove any birds with a history of illness or balding from your breeding program. Any juveniles who can be sexed should be placed into single sex flights, at which time you begin to evaluate them for potential

replacements of the adult birds not kept from the prior breeding season. Look for a fast molt by age, confirmation, body size, and vigor.

In Summary

You'll notice I didn't assign months to Mike's annual schedule, as the Gouldian's life cycle is primarily driven by diet. You can assign the months as you wish, as long as you stick to the sequence of the schedule over a 12 month period. In the wild, Gouldians breed well into the shortest days of winter, where daylight swings between 11 and 13 hours from the shortest to the longest days of the year. So 12 hours of light each day is adequate for breeding. If you establish the schedule where the molting season coincides with the warmest period for your aviary or bird room, you will have established the best conditions for a fast molt.



Bill Van Patten (left) & Mike Fidler (right).

About the Author

Bill Van Patten operates a commercial aviary specializing in the breeding of Gouldian finches, and serves as the U.S. Communications Officer for the Save the Gouldian Fund. He can be reached at Bill@FabulousFinch.com.

THE NFSS BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2nd Quarter 2009

- Bank Balance 1/1/09: \$24,040; 3/31/09: \$26,178; 5/1/09: \$25,473
- 1st Quarter Income: \$11,219 1st Quarter Expenses: \$9,082
- Michael Gravely & Bill Parlee will conduct audit of 2008 NFSS Financial Records
- IRS Form 990 was filed with IRS on 3/27/09
- FinchShop Budget increased by \$200 to purchase indexing software
- FSS Census published in Mar/April Journal; software updates continue, we need persons willing to assist with “tests” of the software – contact Vonda Zwick, 3rd VP, if interested
- 31 Affiliated Clubs, 585 Members
- Nominees are available for all positions on the ballot for the General Election, Bios and Ballots sent to 2nd VP for inclusion in Journal
- Work continues on 2 potential new exhibition awards
- Regional Show Assignments announced to Affiliated Clubs
- Committee developed to review realignment of current NFSS Regions – contact Bob Peers, NFSS President, if interested in serving on this committee
- Advertisements developed and submitted for A.F.A. and N.C.B.S.
- Cecil Gunby, 4th V.P./Judge’s Chair resigned on 4/1/09. Laura Bewley appointed to fill the position Pro-Tem
- Special Election Results: Tom Keegan-2nd VP; Alfredo Bruguerras – Affiliations/Awards; Cecile Aguilera-Membership
- BOD accepts 2 certified letters and votes to remove Region 7 VP for non-participation
- Gail Benson, Advertising Manager and husband, and witnesses will accept and tabulate ballots for the 2009 General Election

MOTIONS (All Passed):

- 2009-5: Full page ad placed in AFA brochure, to highlight NFSS membership
- 2009-6: FinchShop budget increased by \$200 to purchase indexing software
- 2009-7: Committee developed to investigate region realignment
- 2009-8: Laura Bewley appointed 4th VP Pro-Tem
- 2009-9: Michael Gravely & Bill Parlee to conduct audit of 2008 NFSS Financial Records
- 2009-10: Full page ad placed in NCBS Catalog
- 2009-11: Gail Benson, Advertising Manager and husband, and witnesses

to receive and count the ballots for the General Election in November 2009

2009-12: Published mailing addresses for NFSS Officers will not include the Officer's name to facilitate forwarding. Exceptions will be at the discretion of the President.

2009-13: Remove Region 7 VP from the NFSS BOD at request of Region 7 members

2009-14: Orlando Rivera appointed Region 7 VP Pro-Tem

2009-15: Accept minutes and adjourn meeting

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NFSS Affiliated Clubs/Events

Liaison Officer - Alfredo Bruguera
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affiliations@nfss.org

Note: Events may be held in states other than the home state of the club. Regional affiliates are those with no steady location, but should be checked for events near you.

Alabama

Central Alabama Aviculture Society, Montgomery, tedsexton@bellsouth.net, www.caasociety.com, 256-892-3072. Events: Show & Bird Fair, September 5-6, 2009, Quality Inn & Suites, 2705 East South Blvd, Montgomery. Judge: Paul Williams. Other Divisions: Two day NCS Cockatiel Show, Two day SPBE Show. Event Contact: Ted Sexton, tedsexton@bellsouth.net, 256-892-3072.

California

Central California Cage Bird Club, Modesto, chryse95320@yahoo.com, www.mycbc.org, 209-838-2466. Events: 56th Annual Finch & Canary Show, October 31, 2009, S.O.S. Club, Modesto. Judge: Sally Huntington. Event Contact: Chryse Seeman, chryse95320@yahoo.com.

Finch Society of San Diego, sbodde@ucsd.edu, www.finchsocietysandiego.org, 858-452-9423.

Santa Clara Valley Canary & Exotic Bird Club, Santa Clara, santaclarabirdclub@gmail.com, www.santaclarabirdclub.org, 408-716-7776. Events: 48th Annual Cage Bird Show, December 12, 2009, Temple Emanu-El, 1010 University Ave., San Jose. Judge: TBA. Other Divisions: Type, Colorbred, & American Singer Canaries, ABS, NCS. Event Contact: Barry Cohen, cohenbarry@aol.com.

Florida

Tri State Avian Society, Tallahassee, BarryL7523@comcast.net, www.tristateaviansociety.org, 850-364-4666. Events: Spring Exotic Bird Fair, May 30-31, 2009, North Florida Fairgrounds, 441 Paul Russell Rd., Tallahassee. Event Contact: Barry Laster, BarryL7523@comcast.net, 850-364-4666.

Treasure Coast Exotic Bird Club, Stuart, FL, tm50et@yahoo.com, 772-380-9882 www.tcexoticbirdclub.com. Events: TBA.

Illinois

Finch & Softbill Breeders & Exhibitors Club, Palatine, gailsgouldians@comcast.net, www.fsbec.finchfiles.com, 847-963-1926. Events: Annual Finch & Softbill Show, September 26, 2009. Location: Crowne Plaza Hotel, Mundelein, IL. Judge: Laura Tinker. Event Contact: Gail Benson, gailsgouldians@comcast.net, 847-963-1926.

Greater Chicago Cage Bird Club. Club website: www.gccbc.org. Meeting Schedule: 3rd Friday of the month. Location: 215 S. Riverside, Lombard, IL. Show: October 31, 2009. Location: DuPage Expo Center, St. Charles, IL. Judge: Cecil Gunby. Info contact: president@gccbc.org.

Iowa

Mid America Cage Bird Society, Des Moines, thielking@iowalink.com, www.MACBS.org, 239-851-8132, Events: Bird Fair, March 22, 2009, Des Moines Botanical Center. Event Contact: John Thielking, thielking@iowalink.com, 239-851-8132. Bird Fair, May 17, 2009, Des Moines Botanical Center. Bird Fair, August 23, 2009, Des Moines Botanical Center. MACBS Show, October 3, 2009, Best Western Airport Hotel, 1810 Army Post Rd, Des Moines, Martha Wigmore, Hookbills, Budgerigars, Type & Colorbred Canaries, Lovebirds, John Thielking, Thielking@iowalink.com, 239-851-8132.

Maryland

Baltimore Bird Fanciers, Baltimore, robertmehl@aol.com, www.baltimorebirdfanciers.org,

443-834-3224. Events: Spring Mart, May 16, 2009, Tall Cedars Hall, Parkville, MD.

Event Contact: Robert Mehl, RobertMehl@aol.com, 443-834-3224. Annual Fall Bird Show, October 17, 2009, Tall Cedars Hall, Parkville. Judge: TBA. Other divisions: Lovebirds, Cockateils, Hookbills.

Event contact: Robert Mehl, robertmehl@aol.com, 443-834-3224.

Massachusetts

Massachusetts Cage Bird Association, So. Foxboro, AUDREYO2@msn.com, www.masscagebird.org,

781-335-3927. Events: Annual Show, October 17, 2009, Weymouth Elks Club,

Event Contact: Tom Keegan, thomkeegan@aol.com, 781-335-3927.

Michigan

Michigan Society of Canary & Finch Breeders, Detroit Area, tielnmore@aol.com, 313-247-5900.

Events: Bird Fair, September 19, 2009, Quality Inn, Plymouth Rd, Livonia. Bird Show, October 17, 2009,

Quality Inn, Plymouth Rd., Livonia. Judge: TBA. Events Contact: Jim Heffernan, tielnmore@aol.com, 313-247-5900.

Minnesota

Canary & Finch Club of Minnesota. Events: Bird Show Expo, October 18, 2009, River Heights Motel, 1020 US Hwy 10 Prescott, WI (Tel: 1-715-262-3266). Event contact: Darlene Witt, 507-645-8984.

Missouri

Greater Kansas City Avicultural Society, Grandview, dayforthebirds@aol.com, www.gkcas.org,

816-252-1120. Events: The GKCAS Fundraiser, April 19, 2009; GKCAS Spring Bird Fair & Bazaar, April 25, 2009; The GKCAS Summer Bird Fair & Bazaar, June 27, 2009; The GKCAS Spaghetti & Casino Fundraiser, August 9, 2009; The GKCAS All Bird Show (All Birds), October 17, 2009. Judge: Dr. Al Decoteau.

Events Contact: Anthony or Shiela, dayforthebirds@aol.com, 816-252-4120 (for April Fundraiser, contact Maria 816-763-5935 or 816-803-1874, mcmbirdsetcmichel@kc.rr.com).

All events at Coronation of Our Lady Church, 13000 Bennington, Grandview.

New Hampshire

Birds of a Feather Avicultural Society, Manchester, President@BOAF.com, www.boaf.com, 603-362-6106.

Events: Spring Bird Mart, April 19, 2009, Nashua National Guard Armory; 22nd Annual Fall Bird Show & Mart, October 24, 2009, Nashua National Guard Amory, Nashua. Judge: TBA.

Events Contact: Ray Schwartz, prismsdad@aol.com, 603-362-6106.

New York

Empire Finch & Canary Club, West Hempstead, irmanperez@aol.com, 516-593-2841, Events: Empire Finch & Canary Club Show, November 14, 2009, St. Mark's Church, 200 Hempstead Ave, Rockville Center. Judge: Manuel Popa. Other Divisions: Color-bred, Type, Gloster, Fife Fancy.

Event Contact: John Lund, irmanperez@aol.com.

New York Finch & Type Canary Club, NYC, barstand@aaahawk.com, 718-967-6899. Events: Feather Show, June 28, 2009, Averill Blvd Park Meeting Hall, Elmont (Long Island),

Event Contact: Stan Kulak, barstand@aaahawk.com, Annual Show, Sept. 26, 2009, St. Jude Church (Coyne Hall), 1677 Canarsie Rd, Brooklyn.

Oregon

Columbia Canary Club. Events: Show, November 7 & 8, 2009, Tigard National Guard Armory, 6700 SW Oak Street, Tigard, OR 97223. Judge: Ken Gunby. Other Divisions: Type & Colorbred Canaries Club/Event Contact: Linda Brown, jeeeperspeepers55@aol.com, 503-266-7606.

Pennsylvania

Chester County Bird Club, Frazer, PA. info@ccbirdclub.com, www.CCBirdClub.com, 610-647-4632, Events: 21st Annual Show & Mart, October 31, 2009, Church Farm School, Exton. Event Contact: Doris Rickards, rickards@quixnet.net. Cockatiel, Lovebirds, Parrots & Finches. Zebra & society finches again under separate judge, Double Points shows for cockatiels, lovebirds & parrots.

Puerto Rico

Asociacion de Criadores de Finches del Este, Caguas, Puerto Rico, acfeinc@onelinkpr.net, 787-633-1215. Events: Summer National Show, June 5-7, 2009, Centro Comunal, Alturas de Villas del Rey, Caguas. Judge: Ken Gunby Event Contact: Orlando Rivera, riverao1@wyeth.com, 787-485-1810; 2009 Winter Regional Show, Nov 6-8, 2009, Centro Comunal, Alturas de Villas del Rey, Caguas, Judge Cecil Gunby, Contact: Orlando Rivera 787-485-1810 riverao1@wyeth.com

Tennessee

Southeast Tennessee Aviculture Society, Niota, TN, www.stasbirdclub.com

Texas

Canary & Finch Society, Houston, TX. lisashepholmes@verizon.net, <http://canaryfinchsociety.tripod.com>, 281-576-0574. Events: 14th Annual Show, October 10, 2009, The Baymont Inn, Bush Intercontinental Airport, 500 N Sam Houston Parkway, Houston, TX 77060. Judge: Cecil Gunby. Contact: Lisa Holmes, lisashepholmes@verizon.net, 281-576-0574.

Fort Worth Bird Club, Fort Worth, TX, www.fwbc.org, coculwell@wccs.net, 817-220-5568. Events: All Bird Show, October 4, 2013, Azle Community Center. Contact: Clarence Culwell, coculwell@wccs.net, 817-220-5568.

Foreign

Canadian Finch & Softbill Society, Ontario, Canada. Events: 3rd Annual Canadian Finch and Softbill Society Show, November 7 & 8, 2009, Brampton Fairgrounds, 12942 Heart Lake Rd, Brampton Ontario. Judge: Rick Crook (England). Contact: Vince Moase, vmoose@rogers.com, 905-723-1978.

Essex-Kent Cage Bird Society, Windsor, Ontario, Canada, julianne@mnsi.net, www.essexkentcbs.com, 519-948-6398. Events: Young Feather Show, May 31, 2009, Colasanti's Tropical Gardens, Ruthven, Ontario, Event Contact: Julianne Mion, julianne@mnsi.net; 34th Annual Eastern Canadian Classic, Sept. 26-27, 2009, Foglar Furlan Club, 1800 E. C. Row, North Service Rd, Windsor, Ontario. Judge: Ken Gunby. Other divisions: Type Canaries, Colorbred, Hookbills, Budgerigars. Contact: Dave Sylvester, 519-727-3766, d.sylvestr@gmail.com.

Regional/National

American Dove Association, dennyjoyce@aol.com, www.doveline.com, 812-923-3483. Events: Nat'l Young Bird Show (pigeons & doves), October 31, 2009, KY State Fairgrounds, Louisville. Event Contact: Denny Stapp, secretary@doveline.com.

West Coast Zebra & Society Finch Show, chryse95320@yahoo.com, www.efinch.com/show, 209-838-2466. Events: WCZSF Show, July 24 (mart & speaker) & 25 (show, mart, awards), 2009, La Quinta Downtown, Sacramento. Judge: Clarence Culwell, Event Contact: Chryse Seeman, chryse95320@yahoo.com. For reservations, call the motel directly 916-448-8100 (specify "bird show" for special rate).

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1 - Year	\$30.00 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$35.00 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$42.00 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$10.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
3 - Years	\$85.00 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$99.00 <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5 - Years	\$140.00 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$165.00 <input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Lifetime	\$1500.00 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$1740.00 <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Please print this application out and mail with check or money order [U.S. Funds]
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Mike Fidler has no financial interest in Birds R Us. Donations are made to the Save the Gouldian Fund as a thank you for Mike's assistance in the design & formulation of these products.

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The EuroCage™ is based on a design used by many European bird breeders. The cages can be used singly or in stacks of three high, covering an entire wall or room. The cages are light, sturdy, have powder-coated fronts and durable white plastic sides. These opaque sides are an important part of successful breeding; they separate the pairs so they can hear each other without seeing each other. Each unit can be equipped with a fluorescent light to show the birds to their best advantage. Nestboxes can be placed on a platform inside the cages which assures that banks of cages can be neatly fitted together. The design of the cage allows for maximum hygiene with minimum effort, and the high quality aluminum tubing is designed for a lifetime investment. Any questions...

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