



Special Points of Interest:

- ◆ A Visual Banding Method, by Michael Marcotrigiano
- ◆ Basic Bird Care, Part One of a Series by Tom Riggs & Ross Bishop
- ◆ The Black Crested Finch, by Steve Hoppin
- ◆ Part Two of the Annual Census, compiled by Daniel Almaguer

In the Next Issue:

- ◆ Part Two in the series on Basic Bird Care

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# The NFSS Bulletin

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## From the Editor

It would appear that we (I) have made a major faux pas. In putting together the ballot for the last bulletin, I did not indicate that you may only vote for the Regional Vice President in one region, that being the region in which you live. So if you haven't cast your ballot, please only vote for one Regional VP. If you have already mailed it, we will try to sort it out by post mark. Live and learn. My apologies and thank you for your patience and cooperation.

We are presenting some very good articles for you this month. Michael Marcotrigiano shows us what a little ingenuity can do, Tom Riggs and Ross Bishop start a series on general bird care, and Steve Hoppin gives us an in-depth article on his successful breeding of the Black Crested Finch. I hope you enjoy these articles as much as I did. I'm sure you'll agree, we are very fortunate to have such generous and knowledgeable contributors to this bulletin, referring to both current and past issues.

I would like to remind everyone that the 1999 National Cage Bird Show, hosted by The International Canary Society will be held November 18-20 in Buffalo, New York. Contact John Bemacki @ jbernacl@rochester.rr.com for more information. Make arrangements early.

Steve Poe  
3517 Morgan Road  
Hephzibah, GA 30815

stevepoe@mindspring.com

### Change of (Email) Address

Dale & Eileen Laird have changed their email address. The new address is DALEL2@prodigy.net. Please make note of this change.

### Address Correction:

In the last issue, Catherine Reynolds' email address was incorrectly printed in the census. The correct address is Catherine Reynolds, MI-3656, (517) 264-5432, padfan1@tc3net.com

## **A Leg Banding Method To Distinguish Over 180 Birds at a Glance**

by Michael Marcotrigiano

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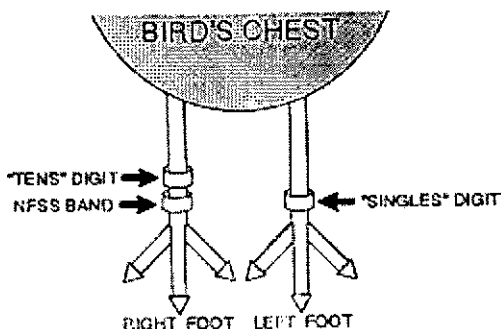
If keeping records of your bird's pedigree, age, and genetic makeup is important to you, you will need to have some way of telling your birds apart from one another, especially if they are similar or identical looking. I use NFSS closed bands, each of which has a unique I.D. number. They indicate the year the bird was born and have a number that can be traced to the breeder. They are put on the babies while they are still in the nest. However, these bands are not easy to tell apart and are not helpful when you are trying to catch and sort out birds in a large cage or aviary. Perhaps you wish to sell some specific birds, pair specific bird for breeding, or get a particular bird in a separate cage to condition it for an upcoming show. A method to quickly identify a bird is a necessary tool for a serious breeder. I have developed a simple method that utilizes just two split plastic bands to specifically identify up to 180 birds without even catching them. If you have over 180 birds of a species you may need to modify this method, but I suspect anyone with over 180 birds is not keeping detailed pedigrees unless he or she is home with their birds all day, every day.

In my system, the split bands are placed on the birds after they have fledged but before they are transferred to the cages or flights in which they will mature. The method relies on color alone. There is no need to take out the reading glasses to try to read tiny band numbers on moving birds. Colors are translated into numbers and then records with specifics can be kept in books in numerical order. Each color represents a numerical digit. A wall chart is handy to have but with time you will remember what number each color represents. The translated number that represents a specific bird can be kept on a page in a record book or on a computer spread sheet.

In order to use my system, you must find a supplier that has split plastic bands in at least nine colors. For example, if your supplier sells the following 9 band colors you could use the following color = digit system:

No band	= zero	Red	= five
Black	= one	Orange	= six
Gray	= two	Pink	= seven
Blue	= three	Yellow	= eight
Green	= four	White	= nine

Whatever color code you choose, make sure you are happy with it because making a change later will be very confusing unless you plan to remove and replace leg bands on many birds. The specific leg on which the band is placed is very important. I chose the bird's right leg for the "tens" digit (so if the bird is facing you, it is on your left side as seen in the illustration below) and the bird's left leg for the "singles" digit. Because the NFSS close band is put on the babies while they are in the nest, and I put it on the right leg, the "tens" digit band is added to the same leg, either above it or below it – whatever is easiest.



The table below gives you six examples of how the system works using the previously mentioned color = number code. This system works well for the bird numbers 0 to 99.

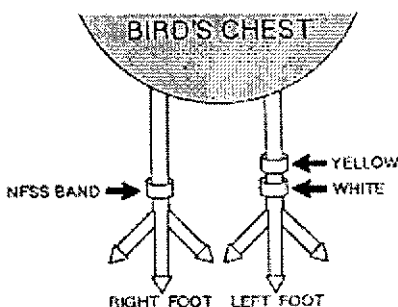
Right Leg	Left Leg	Bird Number	Right Leg	Left Leg	Bird Number
None	None	0	Red	Orange	56
None	Yellow	8	Pink	None	70
Gray	Gray	22	White	White	99

By now you must be saying "How can you get past the number 99 with only two bands"? That was my thought when my society finch population finally exceeded the 100 mark with the importation of frilled and pearled society finches from Japan. I did not want to go to a three-band system because it would be more expensive and time consuming. So, I came up with a modification of the two-band system that works for MOST but NOT all of the numbers between 99 and 200. First I will tell you about the high number modification and then about its limitations.

I put my NFSS bands on the right leg. If you use the left you may need to reverse the logic below. To get past the 100 barrier with two bands, what I chose to do is put both bands on the same leg – in my case the left leg. As soon as I see a bird with **TWO** split bands on the **LEFT** leg I add 100 to the value. The band on top is the “tens” digit, the one on the bottom is the “singles” digit. Using another table I will give six examples. Remember that **BOTH** bands are on the bird’s **LEFT** leg.

Top Band	Bottom Band	Bird Number	Top Band	Bottom Band	Bird Number
Black	Black	111	Yellow	Green	184
Gray	Blue	123	White	Blue	193
Green	Yellow	148	White	White	199

The following illustration portrays a bird with the number 189.



Now for the limitations. There are certain numbers you will need to skip for a two-band system to work on numbers over 99. They are 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 120, 130, 140, 150, 160, 170, 180, 190, 200. This is because these numbers have a zero in them and because I use “no band” to be zero, the numbers could be confused. For example, number 105 would be the same as number 5 or 150; all would have just one red band on the left leg. Number 108 would be confused with numbers 8 and 180; all would have just one yellow band on the left leg. Remembering to skip these “zero containing” numbers does not require much thought. If you know you are banding a 100+ bird you know it must have two bands on its left foot. Of course, this “zero” problem can all be avoided if you chose a tenth color to represent the digit “zero” rather than representing zero by “no band”.



At the time I devised this system my band supplier had only 9 colors and I did not envision ever exceeding the 100-bird mark (I bet we've all heard that before!). I have decided not to use a tenth color even though more colors are now available. It is cheaper to use as few bands as possible, not to mention that it saves time and that some of the colors start looking too similar (e.g. dark blue and black.) Besides, I need to challenge my aging mind by adding some complexity to the system. I am happy with the limitations because they might keep me from owning over 180 birds!

All in all, I like my system. I can quickly find a specific bird in a flight cage or look up a bird's pedigree if someone is interested in the bird's genetic background. It has saved me from catching and recatching the wrong birds and has allowed me to sort out my birds quickly and with less stress.

If you have any questions about split banding or record keeping, feel free to email me at [michael@exoticfinches.com](mailto:michael@exoticfinches.com) or visit my web site at <http://www.exoticfinches.com>

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**BASIC BIRD CARE (A Series)**

Tom Riggs &amp; Ross Bishop

Copyright July, 1999

**Part I – An Introduction**

My Name is Ross Bishop. About five years ago, I started, like many bird people, raising zebras and I have since branched out to two aviaries and a number of large cages. The zebras are long gone, but today I have Gouldians, Stars, Diamond Firetails, Cordon Bleus, Plums, Spice, Tricolor Munias, Owls, Societies, Pallied Munias, White Headed nuns, Red Headed Parrots, Pekin Robins, Splendid Grass Parakeets and a lone Red Roller Canary.

Being new, I wanted to learn. I visited pet shops, other people's aviaries and a few bird shows. I talked to everyone I could. Although I saw some great birds, I was also deeply troubled by what I sometimes saw. Birds with almost no flight space, poor feather condition, perches coated with droppings, filthy cages, fat birds from too much "love" and skinny ones from eating a diet of mostly seed. As I talked with various keepers it wasn't, I concluded, that these people didn't care about their birds, but for the most part they did not understand what birds needed. Frankly, some people were lazy, others were too busy with other things. We all have demands on our time, and most people gave their birds the essentials, and would often cut corners on high maintenance tasks like cleaning and disinfecting. In some cases people simply did not have good information about what they should be doing.

During my ramblings I had the good fortune to be introduced to T. J. Riggs, a delightful man and a bird breeder of consummate skill. I was extremely impressed by the quality of Tom's birds and his reproduction successes. In a publication entitled: *The Beginner's Guide to Cage Birds* written in 1969, Tom is described as ". . . One of the country's leading authorities on cage and aviary birds." Having had the opportunity to get to know him, and learn a great deal from him, I have to agree. Tom has been most generous in sharing his wisdom and insight with this novice breeder and I am deeply grateful for all the help he has given me the last few years.

After sharing my concerns about the unavailability of solid,

basic bird information with Kerri McCoy, who at that time was the editor of the NFSS Bulletin, I asked Tom if he would help to set out some basic information about good bird care. He generously agreed. You may not agree with everything that is printed here, everyone has their own way of doing things, especially bird people, but that's what makes raising birds fun and challenging. So, allow me to introduce T.J. Riggs, and while we are sitting here having tea I am going to ask him to give us a little background about his bird experiences:

**Tom:** Thank you for the introduction, Ross.

I don't remember not having birds. One of my earliest memories is of a canary belonging to my grandmother. When I was about 5 we bought a pair of Zebra Finches and a wonderful, large, hand-made blue cage from the local "bird lady," a Mrs. Moore.

My first parrot was a Mexican Double Yellow-Head that my grandparents got for me. I was 7. We stopped to eat in McCamy, Texas and there was this beautiful bird in a cage in the window of the restaurant! You must understand that I was with my grandparents and they would do anything for their grandchild. Well, we walked out with the parrot and the cage, having paid the princely sum of \$25 for the whole works!

Later we bought another Mexican Double Yellow-Head and they proved to be a pair. The local bird lady told me that breeding was impossible, as they mated "on the wing." Well, we have come a long way since that theory! During my pre-teens I was given a room in the house for my birds, aquariums and my squirrel monkey, named Chatters.

My grandfather built me a small outside aviary with a flight and shelter. I kept at various times, Budgies, Cockatiels, Peach Faced Lovebirds, Fire Finches, Strawberries, Java Rice Birds and to me, the most exotic bird I had ever seen at that time, Paradise Whydahs! Which, by the way, are still one of my favorite birds.

Although there wasn't a lot available, I read everything about birds that I could get my hands on. I managed to get three books: *Parakeet Breeding for Pleasure and Profit* and a book simply titled: *Finches*, both written by C. B. Glick of the then very prominent Bird Haven in Reseda, Ca. I was about 12 years old when I got these - I still have them and they are still valid for the basics! The third book was a book on canaries, which I still have. Studying the

literature is a habit that began when I was young and that I have practiced through the years. It is something that has served me well throughout my bird keeping experiences.

Back then, all of my birds came from either New York or California via Railway Express. In those days the railroad had a man in the baggage car who was responsible for watering and feeding the livestock that was shipped. It was a wonderful arrangement and I never had a shipment that did not arrive in good condition.

When I went off to University I sold my bird collection except for the two Mexican Double Yellow Heads, which I took to school with me. I later went into the Army and was stationed in Germany. All of my three day passes were used to go to Frankfurt and spend endless hours in the wonderful Frankfurt Zoo. There I could see in the flesh such exquisite birds as Cocks of the Rock, Quetzals, Hummingbirds, Birds of Paradise and many others.

After the Army I ended up in New York City, joined the ranks of poor struggling actors, and became a regular visitor to the Bronx Zoo. I loved the "Jewel Room" in which various Sunbirds and Hummingbirds were exhibited in glass fronted enclosures. I haunted pet shops and bird dealers, almost always coming away with a feeling of sadness because the birds were so poorly kept.

I began to collect every book on aviculture I could find. I read and re-read them all, fantasizing about large aviaries filled with Scarlet Minivets, Niltavas, Cocks of the Rock, etc., etc. At that time the only birds I had were a pair of Red Cheeked Cordons in a small flight cage. They gave me great joy. The fantasy birds would come later.

In the late 1960's I decided to try importing some birds. I checked all the regulations and, at that time, with the exception of Psittacines, almost anything could be imported and without quarantine. I bought a booklet that listed foreign bird sources and decided to try a German gentleman who exported birds from Ecuador. In response to my inquiry he suggested that I let him send me a dozen birds of his choosing and if I liked them, I could then pay him for them! What a concept! Anyway, the dozen were to include Hummingbirds, Tanagers and Honey Creepers. I readily agreed, found some large wooden crates and carted them home on the subway. I converted the crates into very serviceable glass fronted box cages. Shortly after that I received a call from the airport informing me that

I had birds to be picked up. I managed to get them through customs and took them home in a taxi, to the delight of the taxi driver.

In preparation, I had obtained the Bronx Zoo's Hummingbird nectar formula, stocked in a good supply of fruits and insectivorous food from a local pet shop and mealworms, of course. The shipment consisted of 2 pair of Black-Headed Green Honey Creepers, one pair of *Eqreqia Dacnis*, one pair of Purple Honeycreepers, one pair of Blue Dacnis, two Violet-Eared Hummingbirds and two Rufus Tailed *Amazila* Hummingbirds. They were breathtaking and all in very good plumage and condition. I distributed them to the three box cages and by the next morning the Green Honeycreepers felt enough at home to start attacking each other and anything else in sight. Later the hummingbirds had to be isolated from each other too.

Desperate, I dashed out to a local pet shop and bought 4 of the largest cages I could afford. The temperamental Black Headed Green Honeycreepers were isolated one to a cage, which seemed to suite them just fine. Other than that incident, the birds thrived. But, these were more birds than I wanted to keep permanently so I put a small ad in the New York Times "pet section" and the Bronx Zoo responded and took half of my stock.

Shortly afterwards I received a letter from Jan Roger Van Oosten in Seattle. Jan, who later became a regular client, wanted the *Eqreqias* and an *Amazila* and a Violet Eared Hummer. I was now faced with figuring out how to ship them. Not being handy, I cleaned and sterilized the crate the birds had been delivered in, packed it with fruit, nectar bottles and pound cake soaked in sugar water. I booked them on Northwest Airlines and prayed. Later in the day, my prayers were answered. The birds arrived in fine condition and Jan was very pleased. And, I was hooked! I had not one loss in the shipment.

I had some of these birds for several months and none for less than a month. I had no direct experience with these specialized species, but I had carefully read the avicultural literature on them and had followed it to a "T". As I became more experienced, I made many improvements to things like diet and housing, etc., but the value of knowing the basics through reading proved invaluable to me and I am sure, to the birds.

After that experience, a friend and I decided to go into the bird

business. We created Capricorn Aviaries and began to import aviculturally rare birds. We specialized in nectar feeders (Sunbirds, Hummingbirds) and softbills. We bought finches from a local importer who let us select our birds directly from the crate. We brought in Psittacines whenever we could, but in time Velma Hart, the great Parrot breeder, supplied most of the parrots we needed. Our target market was zoological gardens and advanced aviculturists.

We did nothing remarkable in the store other than make sure that sound, basic avicultural practices were followed. Most small birds were acclimated in glass front, box cages. Sanitation was scrupulous, diets were state of the art and details were not overlooked. Our finches had grit, green food, cuttlebone, mealworms and the best seed mix we could buy. Fruit eaters had grapes, apples, pears, blueberries, etc. We used an insect food we formulated from scratch, and every bird got vitamins and plenty of bathing opportunities. All Psittacines were sprayed daily. It always amazed us how quickly birds would respond to this sort of care. We kept all birds for a minimum of two weeks after importation and sometimes longer if their condition required it. One must remember that this was a time when most dealers kept their birds for as short a time as possible, in order to minimize their losses. At one importer's I actually saw Pittas, Niltavas and Shamas that had just arrived from India, pulled from their crate and put directly into another crate for transshipment to customers here in the U.S.

We had our share of hard lessons. One thing we learned was which birds not to import. We avoided species which had saturated the market and limited our importation to the space we had available and to species we could properly care for.

We built our reputation by providing birds that were in excellent plumage, and if they were not in the best of shape when we received them, we cared for them until they were. All our birds were weaned onto the best artificial diets available. We sold no bird that had not been in our care at least two weeks. We quickly learned to gauge potential buyers by experience, commitment and facilities. We would politely refuse to sell a bird to a client that we felt could or would not care for it properly. We steered beginners to hardier finches. Under our guidance, many of these people went on to become good aviculturists and built some impressive collections. All

this may seem like common sense, but it was an uncommon practice then, and sadly for the most part, it remains that way today. Our approach paid off. Our client list grew to include many of the major zoos around the country such as the San Diego Zoo, the Columbus Ohio Zoo, and others, and many of the most prominent aviculturists of the day, including Edward Marshall Boehm and Jean Delacour.

I believe that we set a standard for dealers which has been seldom equaled, something that I wish were not the case. I feel privileged and grateful to have had the opportunity to work in depth with so many of the species that used to grace our aviaries, many of which we will probably never see in aviculture again - Cocks of the Rock, Quetzals, Hummingbirds, Sunbirds, Mannikins, all of the Cotingas, most of the Tanagers and Chlorophonia's, Yuhinas, Drogus, etc.

When I moved to Santa Fe I bought a house and turned the garage into a bird room. I had sky lights installed, dry-walled the interior and re-did the wiring. The converted garage now has a 12' X 4' X 8' flight across one end, and a 9' X 3' X 8' flight against the adjoining wall. Originally, this is all there was to be. It was going to be a sitting room with a flight with a few birds and my orchids. And it was going to be very pleasant.

Fortunately or unfortunately, my birds decided to start breeding. When a pair of Shaftails produced chicks I became quite fascinated by the occurrence. I had imported and kept a great many birds, but breeding was not that familiar to me. In those days birds were so cheap, that breeding made little sense. When my Fire Finches decided to breed a parade started that has not stopped. To date I have bred, in profusion: Red-Cheeked Cordon Bleus, Cuban Melodious, Fire Finches, Gouldians, Pearl Headed Amandines, Bearded Reedlings, Black Crowned Waxbills and to a lesser extent: Strawberries, Gold Breasted Waxbills, Bichenos, Angolan Blue Breasted Waxbills, and to my frustration, a single Red Headed Parrot Finch! I also keep Fisher Whydahs, Paradise Whydahs, Resplendent Combasous, Orange Weavers, and several Psittacines. The softbills I keep in my indoor bird room include Yellow Winged Honeycreepers, Purple Honey Creepers, Bearded Reedlings and White Bellied Sunbirds.

I also have an outdoor aviary with a heated shelter and flight. It is planted with hamboo, honeysuckle, spirea and a struggling dwarf

plum tree. The aviary houses Rufus Bellied Niltavas, Silver Eared Mesias, "Pekin Robins" (Red Billed Liiothrix), a Shama Thrush, Golden Fronted Chloropsis and a pair of Rothschild Fairy Lorikeets which produced a baby last summer.

My present efforts are to establish two specific species: Senegal Fire Finches and Red Cheeked Cordon Bleus. I think it is very important for some of us to work with birds that have a history of successful breeding, especially considering all the restrictions put upon us today. Certainly work with rarer species is desirable and I hope that many people are working with species like purple grenadiers, etc. But we have to be very careful not to lose sight of what we KNOW we have a good chance to establish.

In the past I was a member of the American Avicultural Society and the British Avicultural Society and The Foreign Bird League. I have written for both the AAS on Hummingbirds in aviculture and for the old American Cage Bird Magazine on Long Tailed Blue-Backed Mannikins. I presently belong to both the NFSS and AFA.

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Stay Tuned for Part II in the next issue when Tom and Ross cover basic bird care and getting to know your birds. See you there!

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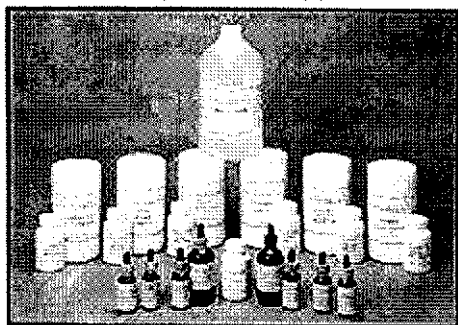
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## **The Black Crested Finch**

A Decade of Domestic Breeding

By Stephen L. Hoppin, N. Fort Meyers, Florida

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Little has been written and even less documented about the domestic breeding habits of the Black-crested finch (*Lophospingus pusillus*). In this article it is my intention to share my experiences which have contributed to successfully breeding the very beautiful Black-crested to multi-generation (4<sup>th</sup>). And, if any or all of the information contained within can offer information leading to successful captive breeding of same or other avian species, then the article was worth writing.

The Black-crested finch, incorrectly called the Pygmy Cardinal and the Crested Bunting is neither a true cardinal nor bunting. Being approximately 12.5cm (5 in.) to 14cm (5 ½ in) in length they belong to the Order Passeriformes and Family Emberizidae.

The basic color scheme sounds dull because it consists of black, white and gray; but the precise and pleasing arrangement of these colors along with a beautifully proportioned body, long tail, and prominent crest, lifts this bird into the realm of extraordinary beauty.

The lower mandible and legs are flesh colored. The upper mandible is flesh colored with a medium brownish grey cast. The cock has a long feathered black crest that is nearly always erect. The black coloring starts at the crown and continues through the nape to the back. The rest of the head is white except for a broad swath of black covering the lores, eyes and cheek areas, and a strong black throat patch. The rest of the bird is a pleasant and uniform shade of gray which is darker on the upper parts and lighter on the under parts. The center of the belly and crissum are white. Wing-coverts are broadly tipped whitish and the tail is dusky gray with large white corners (conspicuous in flight).

The hen is slightly less bold in color with gray tinged brownish (especially above). It retains the crest but lacks the black throat patch.

The Black-crested habitats semi-open, arid, sandy areas and

shrubby plains ranging from SE Bolivia to W. Paraguay to northern Argentina. They are usually found in small flocks (especially when not breeding) which feed on the ground or at roadsides, flushing when disturbed into low trees and shrubbery.

In *Finches and Softbilled Birds*, Bates and Busenbark describe the Black-crested finch as "a very desirable aviary bird", "should be included in every collection", and "not often available". Hobbyists may remember infrequent occasions as recently as 1979 when sporadically these birds could be purchased in wholesale lots of 50 or more for \$17.50 a piece. In the early '80's I recall them being occasionally available in retail pet shops of South Florida commanding \$100.00 - \$150.00 a pair. At this price they would sell quickly to discerning fanciers.

Through the late 1970's, few recorded successful breedings of the Black-crested finch occurred within the U.S., so few that a domestic population from which to acquire birds was virtually unheard of. And following the implementation of the Wild Bird Conservation Act of 1992, specimens being imported into the U.S. became a rarity.

The year was 1980 when I, a novice finch breeder, experienced my first exposure to this striking crested finch. I attended my first local bird club meeting in SW Florida where upon members were involved in the final stage preparation of their annual bird show. By the end of the social gathering and meeting, I was a new club member delegated to steward the Finch Division of the upcoming show. It was at this bird show, upon receiving and viewing a Black-crested finch entry, that I was captivated. So very captivated, that by days end I was determined that someday I would gain enough experience to attempt keeping and breeding this finch in my outdoor aviaries. Little did I know then that if and when the time approached, the availability of Black-crest's would be extremely limited.

In late 1987 I was achieving success parent rearing various Australian and Indo-Pacific species in outdoor cage and aviary when rumor began spreading among aviculturists the government was working on a bill that in the very near future (possibly in the next five years) would greatly limit avian importation or stop completely. It was then I began to review my future goals and intentions as an American aviculturist. After full review, it appeared to me the

number of breeders achieving successful domestic genetically diverse populations of Australian finches in the U.S. far, far outweighed and out-numbered that of breeders concentrating on finches of Africa, Central and South America, etc. If aviculturists did not attempt broadening specialization breeding of other challenging finch species, chances were many, many finch species would no longer exist in American aviculture. I then believed my experience as a breeder now afforded me to take risk and strongly consider attempting domestic propagation of other challenging finch species. At years end, I made the decision to liquidate most current stock and initiate a breeding program that would include smaller African waxbills (five species; Red Cheek Cordon Bleu, St. Helena Waxbill, Senegal Firefinch, Orange Cheek Waxbill, and the Gold-breasted waxbill) and (hopefully) Black-crested's. Had I gone mad?!?

Word spread I was selling out my current stock and within a month I was almost birdless. I began renovating aviaries primarily for the potential avian acquisitions, however I continued to keep and work with only a couple pair of Goulds, Red-faced Stars, and Red-headed Parrot Finches in the interim.

My short-term goal with the Black-crested was the same as the waxbills; to obtain five pair which would give me fairly good odds at setting up compatible pairs for the next few years and possibly long-term breeding. My first pair of Black-crested finches were acquired in late 1988 through a local pet shop.

Considering at the present time I could find little written or documented on the breeding of the Black-crested finch, my first year primarily consisted of study and observation, and trial and error with my one and only pair. In July of 1989, the well-acclimated pair were housed separately in a west, outdoor shaded 3'w x 6'h x 8'd aluminum aviary with a concrete floor. The pair attempted nesting, however, they did not achieve success in this aviary until the following year.

In April of 1990 the pair came into season as the cock started singing his very loud and melodious courtship song. The pair were now readily accepting varied, non-fortified finch seed, egg food (Robert Black's high protein recipe), cucumbers, peas, fresh cut corn, baked egg shells and mealworms consistently offered twice a day. Within a few weeks I witnessed the rather short, yet vigorous and aggressive courtship. The cock would continue to

dive straight at the hen, while in full song, and attempt to stimulate her to a brief chase that, if and only if the hen was ready, would end with copulation taking place on a perch or aviary wall ledge. In June, I started noticing the hen consistently perching, crouching, and attempting squatty balance on a small, short, and narrow west aviary wall ledge approximately 4 ft off the ground. I then realized she was demonstrating to the cock where she wanted the nest constructed. I soon fastened an open plastic canary nest to the wall of the ledge and within minutes the cock initiated nest building. Construction of the small, cup shaped, round nest was done by the cock and consisted primarily of coconut fiber. Several times throughout the day the hen would inspect the construction. By days end, she found the nest unacceptable and tore it apart. Fortunately for the cock, the second nest met with her approval. The interior lining was finished off by both sexes with brownish, spotted small guinea feathers from the arts & crafts store. Within two days of nest completion, two bluish eggs with brown speckles/spots were laid and twelve days of incubation succeeded by the hen. Occasionally she would come off the nest to feed, bathe, etc., however, she was always scolded by the cock for doing so. The cock took pride in bringing and feeding her various foods while she incubated the eggs. His day consisted primarily of singing, eating and making certain he met most her daily dietary needs. Two chicks hatched and were fed by both cock and hen. The act of the cock or hen landing on the nest side was enough motion to stimulate the chicks to beg straight up for food. In the first two days, egg food was the chicks primary food source. In succeeding days, copious amounts of small and medium mealworms were being fed, in addition to the other foods offered. Day nine; one chick dead on the floor. The sole survivor chick, covered with heavy pin feathers, a tiny crest, and very short tail fledged the nest at day twelve. He spent his first day on the ground, by day two was perching 1-2 ft off the ground, and by day three was observed perching the highest branches of the aviary. The cock and hen both fed, however, at week's end the cock took over full responsibility. At 26 days of age, the fledgling was independent of his parents and eating on his own. The chick, removed from the aviary at six weeks of age, acquired cock plumage by the end of ten months. He was given to a good aviculturist friend on breeding loan, hoping, in return, for a domestic parent raised chick.

In January of 1991, having already experienced the Black-crested's ravenous and expensive appetite for mealworms when feeding chicks, I started my first of several mealworm cultures. I simply filled a plastic shoe box container halfway with 90% bran and 10% crushed oats, placed a few potatoes (sliced lengthwise in half) on the bottom, and added approximately a thousand medium mealworms. Occasionally I added another potato or bran and within months I was overwhelmed with freshly molted mealworms. To this day I continue to keep five mealworms cultures going with bare minimum up-keep and less expense.

Also in preparation for the up-coming season, the now somewhat experienced pair was moved to one of five replica planted aviaries having a dirt floor and southern exposure. Each enclosure (aviary) measured 8" (w) x 14" (ht) x 6' (depth) and allowed rain and sun to penetrate the center. Black olive trees, xanadu philodendron, varigated dwarf schefflera and an occasional palm (Kentia, Alexander, and Xmas) landscaped the interior. Nests including half-open wooden nest boxes, large hooded wicker nests already hung the aviary walls and being used by the current inhabitants; Red-faced Stars, Gouldians, Red Headed Parrot finches, and Senegal Fire finches. The pair, having the opportunity to settle in well in advance of the onset of their breeding season, became very compatible with the existing species within the aviary. During their lull, I installed a second feeding station in each aviary to reduce squabbling over foods offered daily (especially live foods) between existing finch species already feeding young and the Black Crested's. In the aviaries containing the now acclimated small waxbills this helped tremendously as all aviary species were feeding live foods. As the Black-crested's breeding season approached the cock's loud courting songs could be heard and signs of the short, aggressive courtship began. Again, the hen displayed favor of a specific area which she chose to nest and I immediately accommodated her desire by affixing another open plastic canary nest to her preferred site. This nest was placed approximately six feet high. As they initiated nest building, the pair became territorial and would lead chase to any finch wandering within two square feet around their nest. The pair commenced laying eggs in June and hatched two chicks. They soon began feeding waxworms vs. mealworms, at a rate of two to one and the results were amazing. The hatchlings grew faster, were

near fully feathered by fledging (twelfth day) , and took readily to eating them upon independence.

For identification purposes and proof of domesticity I attempted banding the chicks at ten days old with recommended NFSS "E" closed bands. The bands were a bit large but this was not my major concern. After fitting the bands to the chicks, I attempted to place the chicks back in the nest and each time returned they would spring and bound from the nest landing on the aviary floor. Although their fledging was instigated (by me) a few days early, the adult pair continued to feed the young, pin-feathered chicks. Within a week, the hen began laying a subsequent clutch. I dared not pull the now free flying chicks from the first clutch, as I was afraid of disrupting the pair. Their second clutch hatched and fledged twelve days later. Two days after their fledging I entered the aviary to check their status and, if within reaching distance, attempt banding. I found the chicks to be doing well, perched two feet off the ground on a Black Olive branch. I soon found out one could easily pick up the chicks and closed band with the recommended size hand at this age. Although the chicks tolerated this well, it was no time before the adult pair began to dive bomb and threaten me. I, wasting no time, banded and released the chicks. Ah yes, slowly success was being achieved... parent raised and closed banded! Needless to say I was delighted. I left the chicks produced from the two clutches with the adults throughout the remainder of the year with no problems arising.

It was towards the end of 1992 that I encountered situations of acquiring additional unrelated Black-crested stock. The timing was perfect as I now had enough experience and yes, limited success, with this species to warrant the acquisition. The remaining stock obtained towards the end of a four year period completed a stud of five unrelated pair; one import bird was obtained through a published want ad in the NFSS Bulletin, four birds were purchased from a quarantine station in Miami, and the last three import birds were donated to the cause by Mr. Cecil Gunhy of Georgia. All birds acclimated well to their new surroundings.

As I cage-quarantined the newly acquired stock, I quickly realized cocks could not be housed together, breeding season or not. Two cocks housed together may be congenial at dawn, but mortally maimed by afternoon, should spring fever strike them.

Upon setting up the five pairs in 1993, one pair per aviary, I quickly recognized the need for appropriate distance or space between aviaries housing pairs as cock birds would spend near all day bickering and fighting with each other through cage/aviary wire, lose the desire to settle for nesting, and keep other aviary birds tense to say the least. With this in mind, I chose to set up three pair Black-crested; one pair each in three of the five adjoining aviaries. The other two pair I set-up in my outdoor cage area in cages 18" w x 30" h x 18". Although circumstances were similar (outdoors, diet, nests and nesting material offered) the aviaries proved highly successful breeding environments while pairs caged in various size cages never attempted nesting. Thus, pairs have been rotated between the outdoor, dirt floor aviaries ever since.

Today I am very glad I took the risk, opportunity, and time to work with this beautiful aviary bird. It was through careful study and observation, and trial and error that I have successfully bred this specie to fourth generation, parent raised and closed banded.

The Black-crested finch has proven to be an extremely hardy bird that has tolerated and adapted well to Florida's varying outdoor temperatures; be it the hot, humid high 90 degree summer months of August and September or the occasional 27 degree freeze experienced every few years in winter.

I find they can be housed with most finches their size or smaller providing they are allowed to be the "dominant of the aviary". The preferred aviary having a dirt floor and minimum two feeding stations (if housed with other finch species). High protein foods (including live foods) should be fed minimum three times a day when raising chicks.

Here in SW Florida, as outdoor aviary subjects, they routinely come into breeding condition in the Spring and their season lasts throughout the beginning of Fall.

Generally small clutches of two, possibly three eggs are laid each nesting. On several occasions I have witnessed three chicks fledging one nest, however, not once has a third sibling survived to independence. And no, to the many aviculturists that have asked along the way, I am not aware of a canary or finch species that readily fosters these birds.

Chicks can be closed banded within the first three days of



fledging the nest with recommended NFSS closed bands, size "E". I have found it best to remove chicks from the aviary when closed banding as the adult birds can become very disturbed and threaten other dwelling aviary species.

Juveniles from one or more clutches throughout the year can remain with the adult birds until the season's end. This has become routine here. I find domestic young displaying breeding signs are best removed from the adults and housed one bird per cage until sexed and paired for breeding. They take a short while to acclimate, however, they handle this relatively well.

If a virgin one year old pair in season has not commenced to nest building for whatever reason, a woven Black-crested nest salvaged from last season can be placed within an open canary nest will usually stimulate the virgin pair enough to initiate and progress into the breeding cycle. Second year cocks and older usually have no trouble initiating nest construction.

Adult cocks have been known to "take out" a fellow avian inhabitant on occasion. If the cock is challenged or extremely frustrated by a co-habitant, they will lead, chase and possibly attack and peck the posterior head and or neck until the bird succumbs. In my experience this has occurred 4 times. (The dominance factor previously mentioned and two aviary feeding stations tends to alleviate this problem)

In the past few years the Black-crested's have reacted well to further studies. Experience has shown true pairs can remain together year-round or be dissembled at the seasons end, rested and fed well until Spring release. The following season, pairs having been separated appear to be more aggressive to initiate the breeding cycle.

They do not bond for life. I have re-paired individual birds without problem.

And last season, as an experiment, several pair achieved successful fledging of young without live food. As prevention, egg food was provided fresh minimum three times a day. I do however, continue to believe the act of catching, pulverizing and feeding live food to their young is a strong inherited factor that should and will continue in my aviaries.

Today the Black-crested finch adorns the top of the National Finch and Softbill Society's current logo. Unfortunately, due to lack of

specialized breeding of the Black-crested finch by aviculturists, extremely limited importation, and tiny domestic gene pool available to aviculturists today, this thoroughly captivating finch may not survive another decade or two in captivity.

#### References:

Finches and Softbilled Birds, Bates and Busenbark, 1970

The Birds of South America, Ridgley & Tudor, 1989

Pet Birds, Simon & Schuster, M Friends, 1984

Steve Hoppin resides in SW Florida, is a NFSS Panel Judge, Judge's Panel Chairman, and past NFSS president. He continues to breed the Black Crested and has reached fifth generation breeding of all waxhills mentioned within this article.

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**1999 Annual Census Report- ( Part II )**  
**Compiled and Reported by Daniel R. Almaguer**  
**Finchsava Director/ Census Manager 3rd Vice President NFSS**

### **Finchsava Update**

Finchsava has many new participants and are listed in the 1999 Annual Census Report from the this issue and the July/August 1999 issue. Species Captains will be selected soon and all Finchsava Participants will be notified in the next month. I do appreciate all Finchsava Participants taking the time to fill out the Finchsava Applications, thank you.

I am honored to announce the new NFSS membership of Ian Hinze and he has graciously agreed to join the Finchsava Committee. Ian Hinze has been keeping and studying birds for more than 30 years. He has experience with a wide range of finch and softbill species and has had many successful breedings. Hinze has a regular column,

The Waxbill Scene, Birdtalk, and in the weekly Britain journal Cage & Aviary Birds for more than six years. He was also the editor of The Estrildian for five years. He resides with his family and birds in Manchester, England. Welcome Ian to NFSS and we look forward to your participation in the Finchsava Program on the Finchsava Committee!

### **1999 Annual Census Update**

This issue has four more participants for the 1999 Annual Census, and some corrections. Thanks again for a the 93 NFSS members whom completed and returned their census forms for 1999. I would like some feedback on how to make the census form easier for NFSS members to participate? Participation of the Annual Census is less than 10 percent of NFSS total membership and my goal is increase this number considerably by the 2000 Annual Census. The millennium is nearing and 73 of 93 NFSS members participating in the 1999 Annual Census have emails, that is 80% . I urge all NFSS members with emails addresses to communicate with me as often as You wish, this technology can help all of us immensely and the price is cheaper than a phone call by far. The Census Application currently on the NFSS website is not working and I apologize for any inconvenience, feel free to mail or fax. Fall is around the corner and for most of us breeding season is nearing an end and starting for

others. Best of luck and please keep in touch, I am currently talking to some of the Finchsava participants on a regular basis as we learn from each other how to care for our birds, feel free to contact me anytime!

## CALIFORNIA (Region 6)

James R. Casey, CA-4016,  
(Finchsava)  
(949) 387-0761

CASEYS@WEBWORKS.NET

Nancy Syzonenko/Gum Tree Ranch,  
CA-3746, (Finchsava)  
(760) 731-7221  
gumtree@cts.com

## FLORIDA (Region 2)

Hazel M. Abernathy, FL-2829  
(352) 343-8248  
HazelFinch@aol.com

Daniel R. Almaguer, FL-1876,  
(Finchsava)  
(407) 894-3808  
DRAFinch@aol.com

## ILLINOIS (Region 3)

Mark Phelps, IL-3221  
(630) 671-1143  
markphelps@excite.com

## NEW YORK (Region 1) I)

Nizam Ali, NY-2612, (Finchsava)  
(718) 835-8590

## PENNSYLVANIA (Region 1)

James Felix, PA-3510  
justuff@worldnet.att.net

## WASHINGTON (Region 6)

Lynda Davis, WA-4052, (Finchsava)  
(509) 299-7477  
birdgoofyx10@worldnet.att.net

**1999 NFSS Census Report &  
Finchsava Participants (FSP)**

Button Quail, Chinese Painted  
(*excalfactoria chinensis*) (China,  
India, Celebes, Philippines and  
Molucca Islands)  
WA-4052, L. Davis

Canaries,  
WA-4052, L. Davis

Diamond Sparrow, (Firetail)  
(*stagonoplura guttata*) (South  
Australia, South Queensland)  
FL-2829, H. Abernathy

Dove, Diamond, Normal  
(*geopelia cuneata*)  
(Central Australia, savannas)  
WA-4052, L. Davis

Dove, Diamond, Yellow Mutation  
(*geopelia cuneata*)  
FL-1876, D.R. Almaguer

Dove, Diamond, Red/Cinnamon Mu-  
tations (*geopelia cuneata*)  
FL-1876, D.R. Almaguer

Firefinch, Senegal (Red Billed)  
(*lagonosticta senegala*)  
(West Africa)  
FL-2829, H. Abernathy

Grassfinch, Shaftail (Heck's)  
Long-tailed Finch, Normals, Fawns  
& Whites  
PA-3510, J. Felix

Gouldians, Normal (red, black and  
yellow headed) and White breasted  
(*chloebia gouldiae*)  
PA-3510, J. Felix

Gouldian Finch, Normal  
(*chloebia gouldiae*)  
FL-2829, H. Abernathy

Green Singing Finch  
(*serinus mozambicus*)  
(Africa, South Sahara)  
CA-4026, J.R. Casey (FSP)  
FL-2829, H. Abernathy

Honcyreeper, Red Legged  
(*cyanerpes cyaneus*) (Mexico,  
Central & South America)  
FL-1869, D.R. Almaguer (FSP)

Honeyreeper, Yellow Legged  
(*cyanerpes caeruleus*) (Mexico,  
Central & South America)  
FL-1869, D.R. Almaguer (FSP)

Munia, Strawberry ( Red Avadavat  
or Red Munia)  
(*amandava amandava*) (India)  
FL-2829, H. Abernathy  
WA-4052, Lynda Davis (FSP)

Owl,(Bichenov) Finch, White  
Rumped  
(*poephila hichnovii*) (Australia)  
FL-2829, H. Abernathy

Parrot Finch, Red Headed  
(*erythura psittacea*)  
CA-3746, N.Syzonenko  
Gum Tree Ranch  
FL-2829-II. Abernathy

Red Headed Finch,  
FL-2829, H. Abernathy

Roller, Blue Bellied  
(*coracias cyanogaster*) (Western  
Africa, the Gambia, Senegal, Mali)  
IL-322, M. Phelps

Seed Eater, South American  
(pico Plat)  
(South America)  
NY-2612, Nizam Ali (FSP)

Societies Finch, (Bengalese)  
Chestnut, Chocolate, Crested,  
Fawn, & Pied  
(*lonchura striata* var. *domestica*)  
FL-2829-H. Abernathy  
PA- 3510, J. Felix

Star Finch, Red Faced  
(*neochimia ruficauda*)  
(Northern Australia)  
FL-2829, H. Abernathy

Tanager, Violet  
(*euphonia violacea*)  
FL-1876, D.R. Almaguer (FSP)

Waxbill, Cordon Bleu, Blue Capped  
(*uraeginthus cyanocephalus*)  
(Senegal to Ethiopia)  
FL-2829, H. Abernathy

Waxbill, Orange Cheek  
(*estrilda melpoda*)  
( W. & Central Africa)  
WA-4052, Lynda Davis (FSP)

Weaver, Orange Bishop (Red)  
(*euplectes orix*) (Africa)  
WA-4052, L.Davis (FSP)  
PA-3510, J.Felix (FSP)

Zebra Finch, Pied  
(*poephila guttata*) (Australia)  
WA-4052, L. Davis

Zebra Finch, Black-Breasted  
CFW, Fawn, Lightbacked, Pied,  
Penguin, Silver,  
PA-3510, J.Felix

## Novice Exhibitors Recognized!

Let's inspire new exhibitors to the field of avian exhibition. To all interested parties, let it be known that NFSS now has a "BEST NOVICE" rosette available through the Awards Manager. The NFSS Board has defined a Novice Exhibitor as "An exhibitor who has not placed three times in the top ten in the Finch and Softbill Division at a show(s) judged by an NFSS judge."

## CLASSIFIED ADS

FS: One proven pair Olive Finches, must sell. FinchSave eligible. Breeder or potential breeder preferred. Contact Dylan Burge, (530) 345-6878 or [burgefam@aol.com](mailto:burgefam@aol.com).

FS: Cordon Bleus, Owl Finches, Gold-breasted Waxbills and Cutthroats. I ship USPS. Call Candice in Ohio, (419) 447-5909 or fax (419) 447-6790.

FS: Venezuelan Black Headed Red Siskins. Interested in this species? Permits not required if in Florida. Contact [dalel@magicnet.net](mailto:dalel@magicnet.net) or call (407) 657-7989 EDT.

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## UPCOMING SHOW DATES and EVENTS

### OCTOBER

- Show: Mid America Cage Bird Society  
October 2, Des Moines, Iowa, Best Western Airport Inn  
Judge: Earl Courts  
Delegate: Rhoda Shirley (515) 243-1511
- Show: Fort Worth Bird Club  
October 2, Colleyville, Texas, Colleyville Community Center  
Judge: Paul Williams  
Delegate: Clarence Culwell (817) 220-5568  
Email: Janice Millican circlm@swbell.net
- Show: Society of Canary and Finch Breeders  
October 2 & 3, Livonia, Michigan  
Judge: Tom Rood  
Delegate: Patrick Vance (248) 443-0643
- Show/Event: Middle Tennessee Cage Bird Club  
October 2 & 3, Nashville, Tennessee, Tennessee State Fairgrounds  
Judge: Clarence Culwell  
Delegate: Darlene McDonnell (615) 355-4250  
r211mcg@aol.com
- Show: Kaytee Great American Bird Show (Also a Regional show)  
Organizacion Puertorriquena de Aves Exoticas  
October 2 & 3, Isla Verda, Puerto Rico, San Juan Grand Hotel  
Judges: (10/2) Marion Spartzak & (10/3) Daren Decoteau  
Delegate: Jacky Civitarese (787) 752-4433  
Email: Lix4mc@aol.com
- Show: Indiana Bird Fanciers  
October 9, Ft. Wayne, Indiana, Allen County Fairgrounds  
Judge: Marion Spartzak  
Delegate: Conrad Meinert (219) 269-2873  
Email: BirdmandofWarsaw@kconline.com



**UPCOMING SHOW DATES and EVENTS**

- Show: Sunshine State Cage Bird Society  
October 9, Orlando, Florida  
Judge: Armando Lee  
Delegate: Dale Laird (407) 657-7989  
Email: dalel@magicnet.net
- Show: Cleveland Cage Bird Society  
October 9, Tri-City Senior Center, Middleburg, Heights, Ohio  
Judge: Paul Williams  
Delegate: Annette Howard (330) 337-7654  
Contact: Linda Brandt (330) 364-6198  
Email: jum1006@bright.net  
Other Events: Fall Bazaar, October 10  
Contact: Laura Szahler (330) 764-3086  
Email: Ohiobird@aol.com
- Show: Bird Fanciers of Oklahoma  
October 9, Oklahoma City, OK, Ramada Bricktown Hotel  
Judge: Cecil Gunby  
Delegate: Don Lackey (405) 948-3349
- Event: Bird Fair, Society of Canary and Finch Breeders  
October 10, Livonia, Michigan  
Delegate: Patrick Vance (248) 433-0643
- Show: Essex-Kent Cage Bird Society  
October 15, Windsor, Ontario, Canada  
Fogolar Furlan Sports Complex  
Delegate: Alfred Mion (519) 949-6398
- Show: Badger Canary Fanciers (Regional Show)  
October 16, Waukesha, Wisconsin, Waukesha Expo Center  
Delegate: Sue Feldstein (414) 968-4514  
Contact: Pat Holm, bpholm@webtv.net
- Show: Massachusetts Cage Bird Association  
October 16, Bellingham, Massachusetts, Bellingham High School  
Delegate: Kathy Vieweg (617) 730-4821  
Email: kathy\_vieweg@hphc.org

**UPCOMING SHOW DATES and EVENTS**

- Event: New York Finch & Type Canary Club  
October 16, Mineola, NY, Knights of Columbus Hall  
Delegate: Stan Kulak (718) 967-6889  
barstand@erols.com
- Show: Suncoast Avian Society, Inc.  
October 16 & 17, St. Petersburg, Florida, St. Petersburg Coliseum  
Judge: Dr. Al Decoteau  
Delegate: Stuart A. Sandler FLDOCSTU@aol.com  
Contact: Joe Ventimiglia (727) 392-9391  
Email: sas-club@usa.net
- Show/Event: Greater Kansas City Avicultural Society  
October 16 - Show, October 17 - Bird Fair  
Super 8 Motel, 15201 S 71 Hwy, Grandview, Missouri  
Judge: Martha Wigmore  
Delegate: Nita Haas (816) 331-5285  
Email: TJHaas@OasisKC.net
- Show: Florida West Coast Avian Society  
October 23, Palmetto, FL, Manatee Convention & Civic Center  
Delegate: Joy Johnson (941) 966-6238  
joyfeathers@yahoo.com
- Show: Connecticut Association for Aviculture  
October 23, West Harford, CT, American School for the Deaf  
Judge: Dennis Lewis  
Delegate: Laura Jo Sherman (914) 266-5617  
inthechirps@juno.com  
Contact: akgaud@erols.com
- Show: Southeast Tennessee Avicultural Society  
October 23, Cleveland, TN Holiday Inn (I-75, exit 25)  
October 24, Fair  
Judge: non-panel, Ken Gunby  
Delegate: Janet Burrell (423) 472-1306  
Contact: squawk\_talk@webtv.net

**UPCOMING SHOW DATES and EVENTS**

Show: Canary & Finch Society  
October 30, League City, TX  
League City Civic Center, 400 W. Walker  
Judges: Armando Lee, Harold Sodomann, Bob Metheny  
Delegat: Margie McBrayer (281) 338-2814

Show: Greater Chicago Cage Bird Club  
October 30, Arlington Hts, IL, Radisson Hotel  
Judge: Paul Williams  
Delegat: Jane/John Muscato (630) 305-9043  
jamjdm923@aol.com

Event: Motor City Bird Breeders, Inc.  
October 30, Warren, MI, 28111 Imperial Drive  
Italian American Community Cultural Center  
Delegate: Ron Girling (810) 751-8265  
parrotmccb@aol.com

**NOVEMBER**

Show: Central California Cagebird Club (Regional Show)  
November 6, Modesto, California, Sportsmen of Stanislaus Club  
45th Annual Show  
Judge: Clayton Jones  
Delegate: Richard Pizzurro (408) 927-0734  
Contact: Ben Jones, Show Manager (209) 579-2530

Show: Missouri Cage Bird Club  
November 6, Eureka, Missouri, Days Inn  
Judge: Martha Wigmore  
Delegate: Rich/Rose Dickman (314) 928-3444  
Email: skdatl@inlink.com  
Contacts: Debbie Maneka (314) 831-3843  
Linda Kratky (314) 296-4355

Show: Georgia Cage Bird Society  
November 6, Marietta, GA, James Miller Park  
Judge: Armando Lec  
Delegate: Derrel Ward (770) 694-6282

**UPCOMING SHOW DATES and EVENTS**

- Show: Texas Bird Breeders & Fanciers Association  
November 6, Temple, Texas, Mayborn Convention Center  
Judge: Charlie Anchor  
Delegate: Clarence Culwell (817) 220-5568  
Email: culwell5@flash.net
- Event: Greater Pittsburgh Cage Bird Society  
November 6  
Delegate: Margie Jonnet (412) 795-1904  
mjonnet@katz.pitt.edu
- Show: Rocky Mountain Society of Aviculture  
November 6 & 7, Denver, CO, Lakeside Center  
November 6 Judge: Harold Bowles (Regional Show)  
November 7 Judge: Earl Courts  
Delegate: Glenda Pullum (303) 937-1498  
Contact: rmsa@altavista.com
- Show: Finch Society of San Diego County  
November 6 & 7, Del Mar, California, Del Mar Fairgrounds  
Judge: (11/6) Joe Krader, (11/7) Miki Spartzak  
Delegate: Sally Huntington (619) 452-9423  
Email: huntington-center@worldnet.att.net
- Show: 1999 National Cage Bird Show  
Hosted by: The International Canary Society  
November 18 - 20, Buffalo, New York  
Contact: John Bernacki jbernac1@rochester.rr.com
- Show: Santa Clara Valley Exotic Bird Club  
November 27 & 28, Santa Clara, California, Wilcox School  
Judge: Clarence Culwell  
Delegate: Richard Pizzurro (408) 927-0734  
Contact: Dorecn Waugh Doreen123@earthlink.net
- Event: National Institute of Red-Orange Canaries  
November 27 & 28, Elk Grove, IL  
Holiday Inn, 1000 Busse Rd (Route #83)  
Delegate: Stephan Hopman (815) 469-8455

## UPCOMING SHOW DATES and EVENTS

### DECEMBER

Event: Colorbred Canary Club of Miami  
 December 3 thru 5, Miami, FL, Days Inn  
 Delegate: Nora Trincado (305) 255-2661  
 Contact: Armando Lee, ajlee@aol.com

Show: Aviary Association of Kern  
 December 4, Bakersfield, California  
 Harvest Hall, Kern County Fairgrounds  
 Delegate: Leon Harris (661) 588-4511  
 Email: LHHARRIS@aol.com

Show: Organizacion Puertorriquena de Aves Exoticas  
 December 4, Guaynabo, Puerto Rico  
 Judge: Jacky Civitarese  
 Delegate: Jacky Civitarese (787) 752-4433  
 Email: Lix4me@aol.com

## THE ESTRILDIAN

The Estrildian is produced for the purpose of relating the most up to date information on all species belonging to the family Estrildidae both in the wild and in captivity. Within its 124 species are all of the *Quailfinches*, *Parrot finches*, *Munierins* and *Australian finches*. The aviculturist and the breeder have much to offer each other and the



brings together like-minded enthusiasts from around the world. The magazine is sent to 13 different countries ranging from Australia to Puerto Rico and has many leading Zoo's, Aviculturists and Researchers as both members and contributors. With well over 100 members in the U.S.A. we have now been able to reduce our overseas subscription rates.

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 'ESTRILDID FORUM'

10, Gable Terrace, Wheatley Hill, County Durham, DH6 3JT.  
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13193-B Quiet Woods Rd.

Wellington FL 33414

**1999 AFFILIATION AGREEMENT**

The basic affiliation fee is \$25.00. Make check payable to NFSS.

Mail to: Dianna Rubly, Liaison Officer  
1102 Allen Street  
New Cumberland, PA 17070  
Phone/Fax: (717) 774-3354

Club Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Club Delegate: \_\_\_\_\_

NFSS #: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\*Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ \*Email: \_\_\_\_\_

\*NFSS may use this information in the NFSS Bulletin and on the web site.

Delegate's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Club Officer: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\*Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ \*Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Club Email Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Show/Event Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Panel Judge: \_\_\_\_\_

Show Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Send NFSS Bulletin to: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please list other fairs or events hosted by your club for listing in the Bulletin. Please include dates, locations, and a contact member with phone number and/or email address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## AWARD ORDER FORM FOR SHOWS/EVENTS

Award order forms for shows and events will be sent to each affiliated club as soon as possible after the affiliation papers are processed by the Liaison Officer, Dianna Rubly. Allow a minimum of eight weeks before the actual show/event to process the order. The form and fee *must* accompany the order.

The prices remain the same, however, we have added a new rosette. Many clubs have indicated a desire to have an official Novice rosette with the NFSS logo. These have been designed and will be available for \$5.00. There are no NFSS rules regarding this award. Each club will set its own standard.

These are the 1999 awards available:

Ck Box	<b>PLAQUES</b>	Cost
	All plaques are \$25 each. They are walnut finish with the engraved NFSS logo on brass over black plate on one side and the club information on brass over black plate on the other side of the plaque. They can also be customized by each club.	
	Service/Breeder Award Plaque (7"x 9")	\$25.00
	"Best in Show" Plaque (7"x 9")	\$25.00
	"Second Best in Show" Plaque (6"x 8")	\$25.00
	"Third Best in Show" Plaque (6"x 8")	\$25.00
	"Best Softbill in Show" Plaque (6"x 8")	\$25.00
	<b>ROSETTES</b>	
	The basic set consists of ten 15" long rosettes for the ten best finches or softbills, plus one best unflighted rosette. Unflighted birds are those banded with 1999 bands.	
	Basic Rosette Package	\$35.00
	Unflighted 2nd and 3rd place rosettes	\$7.00
	Novice Rosette	\$5.00
	<b>Total amount of check payable to NFSS</b>	

For more information on awards, contact the Awards Manager:

Ginny Allen  
307 Brookwood Court  
Opelika, AL 36801  
Phone/Fax: (334) 749-7168  
Email: [gndallen@earthlink.net](mailto:gndallen@earthlink.net)

## The National Finch and Softbill Society Membership Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

New Member? \_\_\_\_\_ Renew NFSS#? \_\_\_\_\_

How did you hear about us? \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Dues:

Single: \$25  Dual: \$30  Junior (under 16) \$12.50 

\* 2nd name for Dual Membership \_\_\_\_\_

U.S. & Puerto Rico 1st Class mailing add \$5.00  
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NFSS thanks you for your support!

Mail application and check or  
money order payable to NFSS:  
Eileen Laird  
NFSS Band Secretary  
P.O. Box 2459  
Goldenrod, FL 32733-2459  
(407) 657-7989

## The National Finch and Softbill Society FinchSave Application

Interested in joining FinchSave? Please fill out the below preliminary information and send to the FinchSave Manager, Mr. Daniel Almaguer. Upon receipt of this form, you will receive a complete information package outlining all aspects of the FinchSave Program.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ NFSS# \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

What would you like to accomplish through FinchSave?

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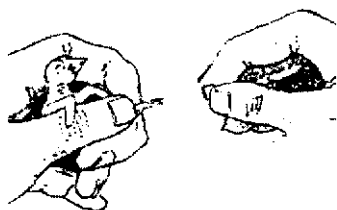
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Mail this completed form to:  
FinchSave Manager  
Daniel Almaguer  
P.O. Box 533015  
Orlando, FL 32853-3015  
Phone: (407) 894-3808  
Fax: (407) 894-6400  
Email: DRAFinch@aol.com

**Thank you for supporting aviculture's foremost  
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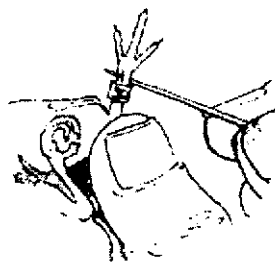
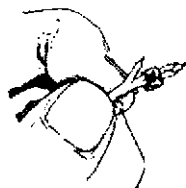
## The National Finch and Softbill Society Banding Procedures

The important thing to remember when handling chicks is to do it over a counter or table so if the chick is dropped, it doesn't fall to the floor. The age to band varies between species but is generally between 5 and 10 days. You can tell by looking at the ankle joint (the joint where the toes come together) and the size of the band. Have the bands, a toothpick (or other small blunt instrument) and some lubricant ready. Be sure you have the bands "right side up" for easier reading. The band is generally placed on the bird's right leg. Banding just before the parents go to roost in the evening will help prevent them from picking at the band. By the next morning, they will have forgotten about it.



Hold the chick firmly, but in such a way as to not cut off its' breathing, and so that you don't harm it. Remember their bodies cannot tolerate compression.

Put a little bit of lubricant on the chick's foot and slide the band over the three front toes and finally over the ankle joint.



The back toe will probably have to be gently pried out from under the band with a toothpick.

The band should now be in the proper location between the ankle and the elbow joint.



Check on the chick the next few days to be sure that the band has not slipped off and that there are no scrapes or irritations on the foot or leg.

## The National Finch and Softbill Society

### Band Order Form

Mail form and payment payable to NFSS:  
 Eileen Laird  
 NFSS Band Secretary  
 P.O. Box 2459  
 Goldenrod, FL 32733-2459  
 (407) 657-7989

NFSS offers, to members only, closed traceable aluminum bands, available only in the NFSS color of the year. The bands are engraved with the initials NFS, size code, year and number. There is no choice of numbers. All orders are recorded for permanent reference. Bands are ordered in strings of ten, all the same size. New members may order before receiving their membership number.

Write "New" for membership number on the order form. Orders processed weekly as received. Please, no mail requiring signatures. **\$1.00 handling fee effective 3/1/99**

Band Size	# of Strings	Price per string	Total Amount
A		\$2.75	
B		\$2.75	
C		\$2.75	
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J		\$2.75	
K		\$2.75	
L		\$2.75	
M		\$2.75	
R		\$2.75	
S		\$2.75	
T		\$2.75	

**Postal Insurance:** Under \$50 = \$.85  
 From \$50 - \$100 = \$1.80 Over \$100=\$2.75  
 If you choose NOT to include this sum, NFSS will NOT be responsible for replacement of bands lost in shipment.

Subtotal: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Insurance: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Handling \$1.00  
 Total: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ NFSS # \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

**The National Finch and Softbill Society  
Guide to Ordering NFSS Closed Leg Bands**

<b>Bird Species</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Bird Species</b>	<b>Size</b>
Aracaris	S	Gouldian Finch	D
Black & White Mannikin	C	Green Singing Finch	C
Black Cheeked Waxbill	B	Green/Purple Starlings	R
Black Crested Finch	E	Grey Singing Finch	C
Blue Capped Waxbill	C	Heck's Shaftail	C
Blue Head Parrot Finch	D	Hornbills (small)	T
Bronze Wing Mannikin	C	Indian Hill Mynah	S
Cherry Finch	C	Java Mynah	S
Chestnut Breast Finch	D	Java Rice Bird	K
Cordon Blue Waxbill	B	Lavender Finch	C
Cuban Melodious Finch	B	Leaf Birds	M
Diamond Dove	L	Magpie Mannikin	G
Diamond Sparrow	E	Mannikins (most smaller)	D
Dove (other small)	L	Mannikins (other larger)	G
European Goldfinch	J	Nuns	E
European Greenfinch	E	Olive Finch	B
Fire Finch	B	Orange Cheeked Waxbill	A
Gold Breasted Waxbill	A	Owl Finch	A
Golden Song Sparrow	E	Pagoda Mynah	M

NFSS welcomes comments and suggestions for this Guide.  
Contact the Home Office

Bird Species	Size	Bird Species	Size
Painted Finch	C	Silverbills	C
Parrot Finch (most other)	D	Siskins	E
Pekin Robin	J	Society Finch (Bengalese)	E
Peter's Twinspace	E	Softbills (other small)	J
Pictorella Finch	D	Softbills	L
Pileated Finch	C	Spice Finch	E
Pintailed Nonpareil	D	Star Finch	C
Plush Capped Jay	T	Strawberry Finch	A
Pytilias	C	Sunbirds (large)	M
Quail	L	Superb Starlings	R
Quail Finch	A	Tanagers (small)	G
Red Crested Cardinal	K	Toucanettes	S
Red Eared Waxbill	A	Toucans (small)	T
Red Head Parrot Finch	C	Touracos (small)	T
Ring Neck Dove	S	Twinspots (most)	D
Rufous Backed Mannikin	B	Waxbills (small)	A
Saffron Finch	K	White Tailed Jay	S
Shaftail Finch	C	Yellow Rumped Finch	D
Shama Thrush	K	Zebra Finch	D
Silver Eared Mesias	J	(intentionally left blank)	( )

**FINCHSHOP**  
**The National Finch and Softbill Society Store**  
**ORDER FORM**

NFSS Membership # \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Shipping & Handling:	Total
Orders \$10 and under add \$2.00, orders \$10.01 and over add \$3.00 \$ _____	\$ _____

Mail form and payment  
 (check or money order payable to NFSS) to:

**FINCHSHOP**  
 Attn: Ms. Julie Duimstra  
 4201 NE 125th Place #163  
 Portland, OR 97230

**NFSS SHOW CAGE PLANS**

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 #2 Cage – Finches larger than Zebras, #3 Cage – Softbills



NFSS Plastic Water Bottle						\$6	
NFSS Zebra Pin						\$6	
NFSS Gouldian Pin						\$6	
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Past bulletins, 1994 and later issues						\$4	
Past bulletins, 1993 and earlier issues						\$3	
1998 NFSS Handbook Membership Yearbook						\$4	
NFSS Judges Handbook and Official Standards						\$15	

ITEM	SIZE/STYLE	EA.	QTY	TDL
New NFSS T-Shirt - Ten Colorful Finches in Stalks of Grass, White Only, 50/50 Blend	Circle Size: M L XL XXL	\$18		
Video: "The Wonderful World of Finches & Softbills: An Introduction"	Members/Affiliates Non-Members	\$17 \$22		
NFSS Show Cage Plans	Circle Size: #1 #2 #3	\$4		
All Three Show Cage Plans	Save \$2 by ordering all three	\$10		
Eric Peake Lithograph <b>The Diamond Firetails</b> Signed by the Artist		\$35		
New Video! Finch Husbandry	Add \$3.20 S&H	\$25		

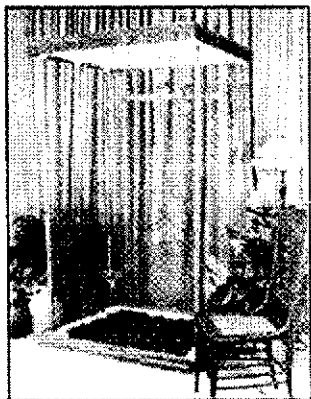
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Franklin, WI 53132

For more information, write, call or email  
Show Secretary, Evon Van Ornum  
943 Taft Avenue  
Oshkosh, WI 54901  
(920) 233-4362  
DEvanornum@aol.com

**National Finch and  
Softball Society**

*3517 Morgan Road  
Hephzibah, GA 30815*

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