

Journal of the

National Finch & Softbill Society

Vol. 26, No. 5

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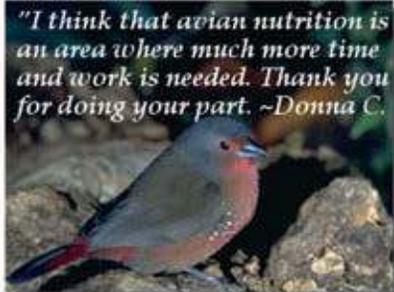




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NFSS Mission Statement

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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President's Message



Not Just a Journal

The National Finch and Softbill Society tries to be more than just a journal for its membership, even if it is one of the best journals of its type. While the journal is informative and entertaining, NFSS has other benefits available to its members such as the husbandry forum NFSS@yahoogroups.com where members discuss topics and share information of their choosing, such as breeding, housing, care, bird availability and any other bird related subject they can come up with. NFSS-P-P@yahoogroups.com is another forum dedicated to the discussion of politics and policies of NFSS.

NFSS.org is the website of The National Finch and Softbill Society and here you will find a wealth of information that can't be printed in every journal. An Education page will lead you to information regarding such things as Safe Aviary plants, clipping birds nails, how to band your birds with open or closed bands, and links to out of print book sites. A Legislative page provides alerts to bills that are potentially harmful to aviculture and other pet owners' rights. You can also find links to other websites that include bird food, other avian clubs, breeding, sexing labs, cages, finches, softbills, zoos, and much more. Also listed are the clubs that affiliate with NFSS and their upcoming events, a good place to see shows and fairs taking place in your area. View avian webcams of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and others.

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) is explained

and lists of flora and fauna covered. Embroidered shirts, bags, and other merchandise as well as the new NFSS lapel pins can be purchased at the FinchShop. Did you ever think you might want to be a NFSS judge? You'll find the judges handbook that explains how you can make that happen.

And if you just want to see some beautiful photographs of the birds we love, check out the links to some awesome photographers. Barbara Jaquez is our new Webmaster who has done some wonderful work on other sites. I am certain we will see an even better website in the not too distant future.

In this issue you will find the 2009 census. Take a little time to fill it out and share as much information as you feel comfortable with. One thing this can do for us is tell us what birds are where and who you may be able to share with.

Please don't forget to send in your General Election ballot that was printed in the Jul/Aug 2009 journal. I hope to see many of you at an upcoming NFSS event.

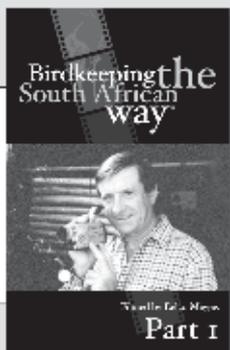
Respectfully,

**Bob Peers
President**



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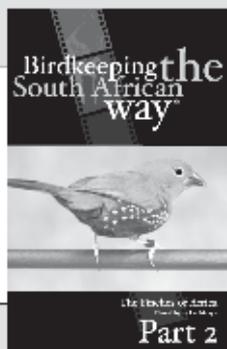
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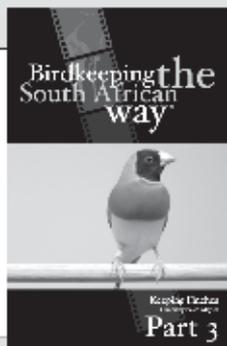
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Message from your Band Secretary

This is your NFSS Band Secretary. I just wanted to remind you that NFSS does have all 2009 bands in stock. However, A's & B's are going fast. BTW: Whatever you're doing its so terrific with these smaller birds! Keep it going!

NFSS has mailed in bands so far for 2009: "A" - 920, "B" -1,150, "C" -2,500, "D" -13,540, "E" -2,770, "G" - 820, "J" - 190, "K" - 560, "L" - 320. Compared to 2008: A, B, C and L has increased while D, E and G decreased. K and L remained the same.

New 2010 bands: I'll announce the new link off the main band page soon for 2010 bands. The 2010 color is black with white lettering. I will keep the availability updated for color and sizes as best I can. 2010 bands will be released Christmas week as usual.

Bands will carry new numbering. Due to the expansion of the aluminum when struck and some issues with bands not being consistent in size, I've spoken with Mr. Hughes. He and I feel this will help in keeping all bands consistent in size whether you receive band 1 or band 13,000 in size "D" or other sizes. This will eliminate those who have been frustrated with inconsistent sized bands. I actually think NFSS is the only bird group who asked him to do this.

Here's examples of different sized band strings with the new sequential numbering:

"A" string: 001, 002, 003, 004, 005, 006, 007, 008, 009, 010

"B" string: 0001, 0002, 0003, 0004, 0005, 0006, 0007, 0008, 0009, 0010.

"C" string: 0011, 0012, 0013, 0014, 0015, 0016, 0017, 0018, 0019, 0020.:

"D" string: 01001, 01002, 01003, 01004, 01005, 01006, 01007, 01008, 01009, 01010.

NFSS has 2 large bulk band orders in place one for December's release and a second order to arrive in January which will include more plastic bands. If your not seeing the colors you prefer you can check back.

****Don't forget to renew your membership or this will definitely delay your band order.***

****Don't forget NFSS ballot is in your Journal.***

Any questions you can e-mail me: bands@nfss.org

CHIRPS FROM THE FINCH FORUM

NFSS Yahoo!® Discussion Groups

Did you know that NFSS runs two discussion groups on Yahoo!® Groups? NFSS currently sponsors two distinct forums:

1. *The Husbandry Forum, for bird husbandry and breeding discussions*
2. *The Politics & Policy Forum (known as the P&P Forum)*

These groups are easy to join, and you can participate as much or as little as you like:

- Participating in these forums is free, but open only to NFSS members
- Receive messages as e-mail or read them on the web
- Send messages to the entire group if you have questions or need advice
- See birds-for-sale listings
- Post announcements to the group, such as birds for sale or your own successes

For the husbandry group, go to <http://pets.groups.yahoo.com/group/NFSS/>

For the P&P group, go to <http://pets.groups.yahoo.com/group/NFSS-P-P>

SOME RECENT MESSAGES FROM THE HUSBANDRY FORUM

Message #52280 **Turaco Survey - Final Call!**

Hi Turaco People,
Thank you to everyone, zoo & private, who has shared their turaco info and filled out the online survey!

I will be wrapping up the results on the 15th of this month, so, please, if you haven't taken the survey yet, check out the links below.

It is fast and easy, and can be totally anonymous if you want. The important thing is that turaco info is shared. Even if you only have one turaco, your feedback is important so we have a more accurate picture of turaco aviculture.

Please feel free to send and crosspost this to any other group or individual that you think may have turacos.

<http://tinyurl.com/turacosurvey1>

<http://tinyurl.com/turacosurvey2>

Let me know if you have any questions or problems with the survey. Thank you very much!

Kateri Davis

Davis Lund Aviaries, Specializing in Softbilled Birds

<http://tinyurl.com/davislundaviaries>

Near Eugene, OR, USA

Author of *Mousebirds In Aviculture* by Birdhouse Publications

<http://tinyurl.com/birdhousepublications>

[Note: links containing "tinyurl" will not work when typed into your browser that way. -Ed.]

Message #52238
WCZSFS 2009

The show in Sacramento was everything and more than we had hoped for. Very nice entry, good attendance, wonderful judging, the best folks, good food, fine wine and as much fun as we could handle. We had twice the space in the show room and it worked well. More sales area, room for a few vendors and just some more "elbow room". Clarence was very complimentary of the birds that were presented, answered our questions and shared some information on details of conformation and staging with those of us who are new to the show world. He, along with the rest of us had a very good time. The quality of the birds was exceptional, with Sally and Richard reaping top awards as a reward for their hard work and effort. There were some new exhibitors, some first time top bench placements and the fun of watching our junior exhibitor take the number one spot in the Society Division. As always the crew of wczsfs really pulled out the "stops", went the extra mile and put on a great show. They are all to be commended for continuing to build a great reputation.

Early planning for WCZSFS 2010 is underway.

Please watch for the official results to be posted soon!

Chryse



Message #52230

Jamie Yorck

1920 23rd Street
San Francisco, CA 94107

Contact me directly at 415.824.3594

or email jjyorck@rcn.com

Current Price List July 25, 2009

Join the Yahoo! group to get regular for-sale updates from Jamie Yorck, Singing Wings Aviary, and more!

If you have any problems joining the forums or questions about how it works, email Forum Moderator John Wilson at jwilson153@aol.com.

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West Coast Zebra and Society Finch Show 2009

by Chryse Seeman

Beginning in 1997, Nita Haas and Tom Rood organized a Zebra and Society Finch show in Kansas City. Their idea was very popular with breeders/exhibitors and the show was successful.

The Kansas City specialty show was held almost every year until 2005. They sure must have been great gatherings, as those who were lucky enough to be a part of this show are still talking about them. After a few years, Jamie Jackson stepped up to manage this event, and was joined in his efforts by Charlie Anchor, Martha Wigmore and Clarence Culwell. Jamie says, "When Charlie, Clarence and Martha joined the effort, it really legitimized the show."

The Kansas City Zebra and Society

Show was instrumental in placing the Zebra and Society finches in the spotlight and enabled them to be more appreciated and respected than had been the case before this "specialty" type show. Some of those in attendance at the 2005 Kansas City show were Bob Peers, Raspberry and Richard Renshaw. A discussion was started about the possibility of having a show of this type a little closer to "home," at least for Richard and Raspberry. Raspberry put the word out about having a show, patterned after the Kansas City event. There were conversations going on about a West Coast show for a few months, and the idea really gained steam when several members of the soon-to-be-formed West Coast group found themselves again in the

JUST FINCHES and Softbills Magazine



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same room at the Santa Clara show in December '05.

A casual group was formed online among those who shared similar interests and enthusiasm. The West Coast group started the planning phase for a summer 2006 event. As there was no treasury at this time, we all "kicked in" what we could and begged, borrowed and stole the rest from other supporters from all corners of the US. Many donations of money, fundraising items and general support have helped to maintain a solid financial base for the show to continue into the future. We have held the show each year since 2006.

The 2009 West Coast Zebra and Society Finch show was held in July of this year, and once again we were pleased to see that the attention and interest in the event continues to grow. While the group has gained a few members and lost a few, it has continued to have a core group of dedicated breeders/exhibitors, who will work hard to see that the show and weekend flourishes. Each member brings his/her talents and energy to the table, and all work together for the sole benefit of the big weekend in July.

As the group members arrive from many different directions on the day before the show, the tasks of setting up the rooms, staging the raffle and auction, and finding a space for the sales area begin and the anticipation begins to build for Saturday. John Wilson supplied the work crew with snacks and beverages to go with the non-stop bird conversations that ran late into the night before the show.

There is usually a casual dinner Friday evening and a guest speaker to start off

the event. This year Mr. Clarence Culwell was our honored judge and guest speaker. He captured the room with his stories and information and answered as many questions as we could direct to him. Richard Renshaw gave a presentation on photographing birds with a homemade cage and a point-and-shoot camera. The audience was pleasantly surprised to find that very good results are possible without a lot of technical skill or expensive equipment.

On Saturday morning, Clarence did a great job of sorting, switching and placing the birds that were presented for his opinion, all the while sharing tidbits and big bites of good information with the gallery. As has been the tradition, the judging was relaxed and anyone wanting to ask questions during the process was accommodated.

This atmosphere has prevailed at each of our shows and this seems to be one reason that those who attend once will become regular visitors to the event. Some of the new exhibitors who had visited just to watch have returned the following year with entries. Good spirits, good sportsmanship, good times, renewed friendships and great birds are to be found at this gathering.... what's not to like?!

Why breed Zebra Finches? For two days, you don't have to explain.



West Coast Zebra and Society Finch Show Results

THE FRIENDLIEST FINCH SHOW IN THE WEST!

Sacramento, California
July 25, 2009
Judge - Clarence Culwell

Official results

69 entries (57 zebra finches, 17 society finches)
10 exhibitors

Division 1 – Standard Zebra Finch Varieties

1st	Sally Huntington	Normal Gray
2nd	Sally Huntington	Normal Gray hen
3rd	Sally Huntington	CFW
4th	J. Edmonds/S. Huntington	Normal Gray
5th	Janet Edmonds	Normal Gray
6th	Chryse Seeman	Lightback
7th	Jami Arndt	CFW
8th	Sally Huntington	Normal Gray pair
9th	Jami Arndt	CFW hen
10th	Roy Beckham	Lightback Fawn

Best Unflighted – Sally Huntington – Normal Gray

Best Pair – Sally Huntington – Normal Gray

Division 2 – Rare Zebra Finch Varieties

1st	Sally Huntington	Orange Breasted Fawn
2nd	Sally Huntington	Orange Breasted CFW
3rd	Sally Huntington	Continental CFW pair
4th	Roy Beckham	Penguin hen
5th	Roy Beckham	Penguin
6th	Chryse Seeman	Black Cheek
7th	Chryse Seeman	Black Cheek
8th	Richard Renshaw	Black Breasted
9th	Janet Edmond	Black Face
10th	Richard Renshaw	Continental CFW hen

Best Unflighted – Sally Huntington – Orange Breasted Fawn

Best Pair – Sally Huntington – Continental CFW

Judges Special Award – Laura Watkins – Black Breasted

Division 3 – Standard Society Finch Varieties

1st	Deziraе Lord	Fawn Self
2nd	Sally Huntington	Fawn & White Pied
3rd	Richard Renshaw	Chocolate & White Pied
4th	Deziraе Lord	Chestnut Self
5th	Mario Talamantes	Dark-eyed White
6th	Desiree Lord	Fawn Self
7th	Mario Talamantes	Fawn Self

Best Unflighted – Deziraе Lord – Chestnut Self

Special Junior Exhibitor Award – Deziraе Lord



Judge Clarence Culwell with Junior Exhibitor Deziraе Lord

Division 4 – Rare Society Finch Varieties

1st	Richard Renshaw	Pearl Gray
2nd	Richard Renshaw	Pearl
3rd	Richard Renshaw	Pearl
4th	Richard Renshaw	Creamino
5th	Sally Huntington	Pearl
6th	Sally Huntington	Pearl
7th	Sally Huntington	Pearl Gray
8th	Lily Curd	Bonten (Crested)
9th	Sally Huntington	Chiyoda frill
10th	Lily Curd	Bonten (Crested)

Best Unflighted – Richard Renshaw - Creamino

Judges Special Award – Richard Renshaw - Pearl



7th-Black Cheek, Chryse Seeman

Some Comments from Attendees of the WCZSF Show

I was so excited to see the quality of birds at the show. I was glad to see such a great group of people working together to improve their birds. The group was very receptive to suggestions that I made that would help in their breeding programs. There is a tremendous amount of knowledge in your club. You guys can expect good things to happen if you keep on sharing birds and ideas. Roy is a great resource person who is willing to help anyone. Sally is always willing to share.

Thanks again for inviting us. We enjoyed our time in Sacramento very much. The meal at the Brewing Co. was excellent. We loved the cool weather. It was cooler here when we returned but it is really heating up again.

Thanks again and keep in touch.

Clarence Culwell, 2009 WCZSF Show Judge

We truly had fun at the show. Birds were all in condition for show. Birds for sale were in clean cages, all well lit cages, healthy, clean and well kept. Hall was air conditioned and comfortable and raffle items were outstanding. One person commented they liked to place their ticket in the items they wanted to win rather than draw for all from one container. New folks to birds were given good information how to start. Everyone was helping not having to be asked. Very relaxing show. Good judge with good information and knowledgeable about the birds he was placing. What the birds were suppose to look like and what they should be paired with. Auction was the funniest and great items to bid for.

Paula Hansen

I loved the extra space for bird sales and tables for lunch! Very much appreciated Mr Culwell's willingness to share his thoughts and constructive criticisms throughout the judging. The camaraderie from judging to the raffle and auction to ice cream social at the end is the best part for me.

Gwynne Willison



Penguin Pair

As a first time participant in the [WCZSF] event, I had a great time! My husband also attended with me for the first time ever going to any bird event and he found it to be very educational. He even pushed me to purchase a pair of Finches and if you knew my husband, adding more birds to my collection is the last thing you would ever expect him to do!!! Meeting Sally Huntington and Clarence Culwell was such a treat, they are so approachable, helpful and knowledgeable. I found the other members that I met to be wonderful and so willing to share their experiences, and tips. As a novice I left learning so much about my own birds as well as about other varieties and what were good traits for show finches. As a first time enterant I was so thrilled to place and win a couple of ribbons. And yet as amazing as that was, beyond the ribbons the biggest award was the knowledge gained, and the friendships made.

Lily Curd

All Photographs courtesy of Roy Beckham, efinch.com



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National Finch & Softbill Society REGIONAL SHOW

Schedule

Show Bird Entries.....Friday 6-9 pm
Saturday 7-9 am

Judging Begins.....Saturday 10 am

Sales Room Open.....Saturday 10 am-5 pm
Sunday 10 am-3 pm

Raffle.....Sunday 2 pm

Information: Canaries - Sandra Foote-Gregory stoote@xpressdata.net 503-792-3582

Finches & Softbills - K.J & Linda Brown JeepersPeepers55@aol.com 503-266-7606

Admission: \$2.00 Children Under 12 Free

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T H U R S D A Y

Registration, begins at 10 am

All entries MUST be registered by 9 PM thursday

AFTERNOON OF AVICULTURE (AOA) from 12-6 pm.- Granda room.

Relax, talk birds, ask questions of top breeders, and socialize. This is NFSS's educational event as well hosting the judges clinic. \$10 members, \$40 non member (includes 1 years membership).

4th Quarter Board meeting 7 pm, location tba.

F R I D A Y

All birds entered must be in show hall no later then 6 am

Judging begins promptly at 8 am

Bird Sales room open 10 am to 6 pm

Hospitality Night, 7:30 pm; Band, refreshments and the lively Bird Auction, birds are donated by last years winners

S A T U R D A Y

NFSS general Meeting 1 pm, Seville room 3:

The results of the election will be announced, awards presented & suggestions taken from the floor

Silent Auction ends (time tba) watch the NFSS list for items

Awards Banquet 7pm: Time to dress up and honor the winners, after which birds must be removed from show hall

THE END ... until next year

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Renaissance Tulsa Hotel & Convention Center

2009 NFSS ANNUAL CENSUS

The 2009 online census will be open from Nov 1 – Dec 31, 2009. I want to encourage everyone with the means to participate in the Census online to do so. The online system takes only a few moments to complete, the data is collected and tallied immediately, and you can log in at any time to change your data as long as the Census is open. You will also be able to view the overall totals as they come in. Your personal information is not disclosed unless you choose to share contact information with other fanciers.

While online participation is encouraged, mail-in Census forms will also be accepted for those without Internet access.

The Census is an important function of the NFSS. The data collected will help us assess the state of aviculture in the US and Canada, as well as analyze trends over time. Everyone's participation is encouraged no matter how many birds you keep, whether you breed or just enjoy, whether you are an NFSS member or not. The more data we get, the better we can understand our hobby.

2009 CENSUS INSTRUCTIONS

To participate in the Census online (preferred), simply visit www.nfss-fss.org/Census between November 1st and December 31st, and follow the instructions to create an account, log in, and submit your data. Returning participants may choose to log in with their previous account information or create a new account.

To participate in the Census via mail, fill out the form included in this journal and mail it to me at the address below.

Tracking mutation data is not a goal of the Census. Limited mutation data is collected only to help connect breeders. Mutation combinations are not supported, so you must choose which mutation to enter such birds under. You are free to enter all your birds as Normal (or Other) rather than enter them by mutation to keep the process simple.

Supported mutations are as follows:

Gouldians (body color only): Normal, Blue, Dilute, Powder Blue, Silver, Yellow, Other.

Red Throated Parrotfinch: Normal, Pied, Seagreen

Society Finch: (All White, Chestnut and White Pied, Chestnut Self, Chocolate and White Pied, Chocolate Self, Crested (any color), Euro Black Brown, Euro Grey, Euro Red Brown, Fawn and White Pied, Fawn Self, Pearl, Other.

Star Finch: Normal, Isabelle (Any Head Color), Pied (Any Body/Head Color), Yellow-faced.

Zebra Finch: Normal Grey, Black-breasted, Black-cheeked, Black-faced, Chestnut-flanked White, Cream, Crested, Dominant Silver, Eumo, Fawn, Fawn-cheeked, Florida Fancy, Lightback, Orange-breasted, Other, Penguin, Pied, Recessive Silver, White.

The Census is open to both NFSS members and non-members in order to get the most accurate portrait of the birds we are keeping in the fancy. Please help to contribute to the success of the program by participating and spreading the word!

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or comments about the Census.

Vonda Zwick, FSS Director

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Schaumburg, IL 60193

VondaFSS@finchaviary.com



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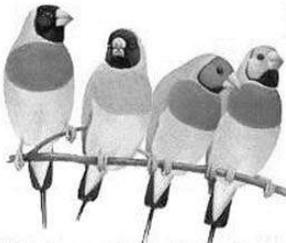
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2009 Mail-in Census Form

(To submit your census data online, go to www.nfss-fss.org/Census)

Species - Finches	Cocks	Hens	Unsexed	Breeding (Y/N)
<u>African Citril (Serinus citrinelloides)</u>				
<u>African Silverbill (Lonchura cantans)</u>				
<u>Black And White Mannikin (Lonchura bicolor)</u>				
<u>Black And White Seedeater (Sporophila luctuosa)</u>				
<u>Black Siskin (Carduelis atrata)</u>				
<u>Black-bellied Firefinch (Lagonosticta rara)</u>				
<u>Black-cheeked Waxbill (Estrilda erythronotos)</u>				
<u>Black-crowned Waxbill (Estrilda nonnula)</u>				
<u>Black-faced Firefinch (Lagonosticta larvata)</u>				
<u>Black-headed Nun (Lonchura malacca atricapilla)</u>				
<u>Black-headed Siskin (Carduelis notata)</u>				
<u>Black-rumped Waxbill (Estrilda troglodytes)</u>				
<u>Black-winged Bishop (Euplectes hordeacea)</u>				
<u>Blue-billed (African) Firefinch (Lagonosticta rubricata)</u>				
<u>Blue-breasted Cordon Bleu (Uraeginthus angolensis)</u>				
<u>Blue-capped Cordon-bleu (Uraeginthus cyanocephalus)</u>				
<u>Blue-faced Parrotfinch (Erythrura trichroa)</u>				
<u>Brimstone Canary (Serinus sulphuratus)</u>				
<u>Bronze-winged Mannikin (Lonchura cucullata)</u>				
<u>Brown Twinspot (Clytospiza montei)</u>				
<u>Canary (Serinus canaria)</u>				
<u>Chaffinch (Fringilla coelebs)</u>				
<u>Cherry Finch (Neochmia modesta)</u>				
<u>Chestnut-bellied Seedeater (Sporophila castaneiventris)</u>				
<u>Chestnut-breasted Mannikin (Lonchura castaneothorax)</u>				
<u>Chinese Grosbeak (Eophona migratoria)</u>				
<u>Combassou (Vidua chalybeata)</u>				
<u>Crimson-winged Pytilia (Pytilia phoenicoptera)</u>				
<u>Cuban Melodious Finch (Tiaras canora)</u>				
<u>Cutthroat Finch (Amadina fasciata)</u>				
<u>Diamond Firetail (Stagonopleura guttata)</u>				
<u>European Goldfinch (Carduelis carduelis)</u>				
<u>European Greenfinch (Carduelis chloris)</u>				
<u>European Serin (Serinus serinus)</u>				
<u>European Siskin (Carduelis spinus)</u>				
<u>Five-colored Munia (Lonchura quincolor)</u>				
<u>Goldbreasted Waxbill (Amandava subflava)</u>				
<u>Golden Song Sparrow (Passer luteus)</u>				
<u>Gouldian Finch (Chloebeia gouldiae) Mutation: Normal Body</u>				
<u>Gouldian Finch (Chloebeia gouldiae) Mutation: Blue Body</u>				
<u>Gouldian Finch (Chloebeia gouldiae) Mutation: Dilute Body</u>				
<u>Gouldian Finch (Chloebeia gouldiae) Mutation: Powder Blue Body</u>				
<u>Gouldian Finch (Chloebeia gouldiae) Mutation: Silver Body</u>				
<u>Gouldian Finch (Chloebeia gouldiae) Mutation: Yellow Body</u>				
<u>Gouldian Finch (Chloebeia gouldiae) Mutation: Other Body Color</u>				
<u>Grand Mannikin (Lonchura grandis)</u>				
<u>Green Singer (Serinus mozambicus)</u>				
<u>Green-backed Twinspot (Mandingoa nitidula)</u>				
<u>Green-winged Pytilia (Pytilia melba)</u>				
<u>Grey Singer (Serinus leucopygius)</u>				
<u>Grey-crowned Mannikin (Lonchura nevermanni)</u>				
<u>Grey-headed Mannikin (Lonchura caniceps)</u>				
<u>Grey-headed Silverbill (Lonchura griseicapilla)</u>				
<u>Heck's Shafftail (Poephila acuticauda hecki)</u>				
<u>Indian Silverbill (Lonchura malabarica)</u>				
<u>Jacarini Finch (Volatinia jacarini)</u>				
<u>Jameson's Firefinch (Lagonosticta rhodopareia)</u>				
<u>Japanese Grosbeak (Eophona personata)</u>				
<u>Java Rice Finch (Padda oryzivora)</u>				
<u>Lavender Finch (Estrilda caerulescens)</u>				
<u>Lemon-breasted Canary (Serinus citrinipectus)</u>				
<u>Linnet (Carduelis cannabina)</u>				
<u>Madagascar Mannikin (Lonchura nana)</u>				
<u>Magpie Mannikin (Lonchura fringilloides)</u>				
<u>Masked Grassfinch (Poephila personata)</u>				
<u>Napoleon Weaver (Euplectes afra)</u>				

Red-throated Parrotfinch (<i>Erythrura psittacea</i>) Mutation: Pied				
Red-throated Parrotfinch (<i>Erythrura psittacea</i>) Mutation: Seagreen				
Rosy Twinspot (<i>Hypargos margaritatus</i>)				
Rosy-rumped Waxbill (<i>Estrilda rhodopyga</i>)				
Saffron Finch (<i>Sicalis flaveola</i>)				
Scaly-crowned Weaver (<i>Sporopipes squamifrons</i>)				
Shafttail (<i>Poephila acuticauda</i>)				
Siberian Goldfinch (<i>Carduelis carduelis major</i>)				
Society Finch (<i>Lonchura striata domestica</i>) Mutation: All White				
Society Finch (<i>Lonchura striata domestica</i>) Mutation: Chestnut and White Pied				
Society Finch (<i>Lonchura striata domestica</i>) Mutation: Chestnut Self				
Society Finch (<i>Lonchura striata domestica</i>) Mutation: Chocolate and White Pied				
Society Finch (<i>Lonchura striata domestica</i>) Mutation: Chocolate Self				
Society Finch (<i>Lonchura striata domestica</i>) Mutation: Crested (Any Body Color)				
Society Finch (<i>Lonchura striata domestica</i>) Mutation: Euro Black Brown				
Society Finch (<i>Lonchura striata domestica</i>) Mutation: Euro Grey				
Society Finch (<i>Lonchura striata domestica</i>) Mutation: Euro Red Brown				
Society Finch (<i>Lonchura striata domestica</i>) Mutation: Fawn and White Pied				
Society Finch (<i>Lonchura striata domestica</i>) Mutation: Fawn Self				
Society Finch (<i>Lonchura striata domestica</i>) Mutation: Pearl				
Society Finch (<i>Lonchura striata domestica</i>) Mutation: Other				
Spice Finch (<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>)				
St. Helena Waxbill (<i>Estrilda astrild</i>)				
Star Finch (<i>Neochmia ruficauda</i>) Mutation: Normal (Red-faced)				
Star Finch (<i>Neochmia ruficauda</i>) Mutation: Isabelle (Any Head Color)				
Star Finch (<i>Neochmia ruficauda</i>) Mutation: Pied (Any Body/Head Color)				
Star Finch (<i>Neochmia ruficauda</i>) Mutation: Yellow-faced				
Straw-tailed Whydah (<i>Vidua fischeri</i>)				
Strawberry Finch (<i>Amandava amandava</i>)				
Swee Waxbill (<i>Estrilda melanotis</i>)				
Timor Zebra (<i>Taeniopygia guttata</i>)				
Tri-colored Nun (<i>Lonchura malacca</i>)				
Tri-colored Parrotfinch (<i>Erythrura tricolor</i>)				
Violet-eared Waxbill (<i>Uraeginthus granatina</i>)				
Western Bluebill (<i>Spermophaga haematina</i>)				
White-bellied Canary (<i>Serinus dorsostriatus</i>)				
White-headed Nun (<i>Lonchura maja</i>)				
Yellow-rumped Seed-eater (<i>Serinus atrogularis reichenowi</i>)				
Zanzibar Red Bishop (<i>Euplectes nigroventris</i>)				
Zebra Finch (<i>Taeniopygia guttata castanotis</i>) Mutation: Normal Grey				
Zebra Finch (<i>Taeniopygia guttata castanotis</i>) Mutation: Black-breasted				
Zebra Finch (<i>Taeniopygia guttata castanotis</i>) Mutation: Black-cheeked				
Zebra Finch (<i>Taeniopygia guttata castanotis</i>) Mutation: Black-faced				
Zebra Finch (<i>Taeniopygia guttata castanotis</i>) Mutation: Chestnut-flanked White				
Zebra Finch (<i>Taeniopygia guttata castanotis</i>) Mutation: Cream				
Zebra Finch (<i>Taeniopygia guttata castanotis</i>) Mutation: Crested				
Zebra Finch (<i>Taeniopygia guttata castanotis</i>) Mutation: Dominant Silver				
Zebra Finch (<i>Taeniopygia guttata castanotis</i>) Mutation: Eumo				
Zebra Finch (<i>Taeniopygia guttata castanotis</i>) Mutation: Fawn				
Zebra Finch (<i>Taeniopygia guttata castanotis</i>) Mutation: Fawn-cheeked				
Zebra Finch (<i>Taeniopygia guttata castanotis</i>) Mutation: Florida Fancy				
Zebra Finch (<i>Taeniopygia guttata castanotis</i>) Mutation: Lightback				
Zebra Finch (<i>Taeniopygia guttata castanotis</i>) Mutation: Orange-breasted				
Zebra Finch (<i>Taeniopygia guttata castanotis</i>) Mutation: Other				
Zebra Finch (<i>Taeniopygia guttata castanotis</i>) Mutation: Penguin				
Zebra Finch (<i>Taeniopygia guttata castanotis</i>) Mutation: Pied				
Zebra Finch (<i>Taeniopygia guttata castanotis</i>) Mutation: Recessive Silver				
Zebra Finch (<i>Taeniopygia guttata castanotis</i>) Mutation: White				
Other Finch (specify):				
Other Finch (specify):				
Other Finch (specify):				
Other Finch (specify):				

Species - Softbills	Cocks	Hens	Unsexed	Breeding (Y/N)
<u>African Black Crane (Porzana flavirostra)</u>				
<u>African Yellow White Eye (Zosterops senegalensis)</u>				
<u>Allen's Gallinule (Porphyrio alleni)</u>				
<u>Amethyst Starling (Cinnyricinclus leucogaster)</u>				
<u>Bali Mynah (Leucopsar rothschildi)</u>				
<u>Bananaquit (Coereba flaveola)</u>				
<u>Barbary Shrike (Laniarius barbarus)</u>				
<u>Bearded Barbet (Lybius dubius)</u>				
<u>Black-faced Dacnis (Dacnis lineata)</u>				
<u>Black-spotted Barbet (Capito niger)</u>				
<u>Black-throated Laughing Thrush (Garrulax chinensis)</u>				
<u>Blacksmith Plover (Vanellus armatus)</u>				
<u>Blue Dacnis (Dacnis cayana)</u>				
<u>Blue Tit (Parus caeruleus)</u>				
<u>Blue-gray Tanager (Thraupis episcopus)</u>				
<u>Blue-naped Mousebird (Urocolius macrourus)</u>				
<u>Blyth's Hornbill (Aceros plicatus)</u>				
<u>Burnished-buff Tanager (Tangara cayana)</u>				
<u>Chestnut-eared Aracari (Pteroglossus castanotis)</u>				
<u>Chestnut-mandibled Toucan (Ramphastos swainsonii)</u>				
<u>Cissa (Cissa chinensis)</u>				
<u>Collared Aracari (Pteroglossus torquatus)</u>				
<u>Collies Magpie Jay (Calocitta colliei)</u>				
<u>Common Mynah (Acridotheres tristis)</u>				
<u>Crimson-rumped Toucanet (Aulacorhynchus haematopygus)</u>				
<u>Double-toothed Barbet (Lybius bidentatus)</u>				
<u>Eastern Yellow-billed Hornbill (Tockus flavirostris)</u>				
<u>Emerald Starling (Coccycolius iris)</u>				
<u>European Blackbird (Turdus merula)</u>				
<u>European Roller (Coracias garrulus)</u>				
<u>European Song Thrush (Turdus philomelos)</u>				
<u>European Starling (Sturnus vulgaris)</u>				
<u>Garden/black Eye Bulbul (Pycnonotus barbatus)</u>				
<u>Golden Tanager (Tangara arthus)</u>				
<u>Green & Gold Tanager (Tangara schrankii)</u>				
<u>Green Aracari (Pteroglossus viridis)</u>				
<u>Green Honeycreeper (Chlorophanes spiza)</u>				
<u>Guianan Toucanette (Selenidera piperivora)</u>				
<u>Guinea Touraco (Tauraco persa)</u>				
<u>Hartlaub Turaco (Tauraco hartlaubi)</u>				
<u>Hwamei (Garrulax canorus)</u>				
<u>Indian Hill Mynah (Gracula religiosa)</u>				
<u>Jackson's Hornbill (Tockus deckeni jacksoni)</u>				
<u>Japanese White Eye (Zosterops japonica)</u>				
<u>Kikuyu White Eye (Zosterops polioogaster kikuyuensis)</u>				
<u>Laughing Kookabura (Dacelo novaeguineae)</u>				
<u>Livingstone's Turaco (Tauraco livingstonii)</u>				
<u>Oriental Pied Hornbill (Anthracoceros albirostris)</u>				
<u>Paradise Tanager (Tangara chilensis)</u>				
<u>Pekin Robin (Leiothrix lutea)</u>				
<u>Piping Hornbill (Bycanistes fistulator)</u>				
<u>Plush-crested Jay (Cyanocorax chrysops)</u>				
<u>Purple Glossy Starling (Lamprotornis purpureus)</u>				
<u>Purple Honeycreeper (Cyanerpes caeruleus)</u>				
<u>Purplish Back Jay (Cyanocorax beecheii)</u>				
<u>Red And Yellow Barbet (Trachyphonus erythrocephalus)</u>				
<u>Red-billed Blue Magpie (Urocissa erythrorhyncha)</u>				
<u>Red-billed Hornbill (Tockus erythrorhynchus)</u>				
<u>Red-crested Turaco (Tauraco erythrolophus)</u>				
<u>Red-faced Liocichla (Liocichla phoenicea)</u>				
<u>Red-faced Mousebird (Urocolius indicus)</u>				

Red-faced Mousebird (<i>Urocolius indicus</i>)				
Red-legged Honeycreeper (<i>Cyanerpes cyaneus</i>)				
Red-tailed Laughing Thrush (<i>Garrulax milnei</i>)				
Red-vented Bulbul (<i>Pycnonotus cafer</i>)				
Red-winged Laughing Thrush (<i>Garrulax formosus</i>)				
Ross' Turaco (<i>Musophaga rossae</i>)				
Royal Starling (<i>Cosmopsarus regius</i>)				
Silver-eared Mesia (<i>Leiothrix argenteauris</i>)				
Silvery-cheeked Hornbill (<i>Ceratogymna brevis</i>)				
Southern Ground Hornbill (<i>Bucorvus leadbeateri</i>)				
Speckled Mousebird (<i>Colius striatus</i>)				
Spotted Laughing Thrush (<i>Garrulax ocellatus</i>)				
Spur-winged Plover (<i>Vanellus spinosus</i>)				
Trumpeter Hornbill (<i>Ceratogymna bucinator</i>)				
Turquoise Tanager (<i>Tangara mexicana</i>)				
Viellot's Barbet (<i>Lybius vielloti</i>)				
Violaceous Euphonia (<i>Euphonia violacea</i>)				
Violaceous Turaco (<i>Musophaga violacea</i>)				
Von Der Decken's Hornbill (<i>Tockus deckeni</i>)				
White Head Black Bulbul (<i>Hypsipetes madagascariensis</i>)				
White-backed Mousebird (<i>Colius colius</i>)				
White-cheeked Turaco (<i>Tauraco leucotis</i>)				
White-collared Mynah (<i>Acridotheres albocinctus</i>)				
White-collared Yuhina (<i>Yuhina diademata</i>)				
White-crested Thrush (<i>Garrulax leucolophus</i>)				
White-eared Bulbul (<i>Pycnonotus leucotis</i>)				
White-headed Mousebird (<i>Colius leucocephalus</i>)				
White-rumped Shama (<i>Copsychus malabaricus</i>)				
White-throated Laughing Thrush (<i>Garrulax albogularis</i>)				
Yellow-breasted Cissa (<i>Cissa hypoleuca</i>)				
Yellow-hooded Blackbird (<i>Chrysomus icterocephalus</i>)				
Yellow-rumped Cacique (<i>Cacicus cela</i>)				
Other Softbill (specify):				
Other Softbill (specify):				
Other Softbill (specify):				

Species - Doves and Quail	Cocks	Hens	Unsexed	Breeding (Y/N)
Bare-faced Ground Dove (<i>Metriopelia ceciliae</i>)				
Barred Cuckoo Dove (<i>Macropygia unchall</i>)				
Bartlett's Bleeding Heart Dove (<i>Gallucolumba criniger</i>)				
Black-naped Fruit Dove (<i>Ptilinopus melanospila</i>)				
Button Quail (<i>Coturnix chinensis</i>) Mutation: Normal				
Button Quail (<i>Coturnix chinensis</i>) Mutation: Silver				
Button Quail (<i>Coturnix chinensis</i>) Mutation: White				
Button Quail (<i>Coturnix chinensis</i>) Mutation: Other				
Cape Dove (<i>Oena capensis</i>)				
Diamond Dove (<i>Geopelia cuneata</i>)				
Emerald Dove (<i>Chalcophaps indica</i>)				
Golden Heart Dove (<i>Gallucolumba rufigula</i>)				
Island Collared Dove (<i>Streptopelia bitorquata</i>)				
Luzon Bleeding Heart Dove (<i>Gallucolumba luzonica</i>)				
Peruvian Ground Dove (<i>Columbina cruziana</i>)				
Pink-headed Fruit Dove (<i>Ptilinopus porphyrea</i>)				
Ringneck Dove (<i>Streptopelia risoria</i>)				
Roul-roul Partridge (<i>Rollulus rouloul</i>)				
Stephan's Dove (<i>Chalcophaps stephani</i>)				
Sulawesi Quail Dove (<i>Gallucolumba tristigmata</i>)				
Tambourine Dove (<i>Turtur tympanistria</i>)				
Victoria Crowned Pigeon (<i>Goura victoria</i>)				
Yellow-breasted Fruit Dove (<i>Ptilinopus occipitalis</i>)				
Other Dove/Quail (specify):				
Other Dove/Quail (specify):				
Other Dove/Quail (specify):				
Other Dove/Quail (specify):				

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A grey silhouette of a finch is positioned on the left side of the page, partially overlapping the text. The finch is facing right and has a prominent beak and a crest on its head.

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Judge / **Garrie Landry** of Acadiana Aviaries

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http://www.ccbirdclub.com/index_files/2009ShowPage/index.htm

For more info contact / Shelley Ortman / eortman@comcast.net / 609-202-7556

FIRST IMPRESSIONS: Keeping and Breeding the Orange-Cheeked Waxbill (*Estrilda melpoda*)

by Vonda L. Zwick

Orange-cheeked waxbills have been plentiful at bird fairs for a long time. They are inexpensive because they are imported in large numbers from Puerto Rico where feral populations have become established. Despite their relatively low price, they are a complex species that is easy to maintain but that can be a challenge to breed successfully. They are a great aviary bird, mixing well in a community and possessing their own unique subtle beauty. They are very showy birds, small and tight feathered, that love to show off by fluttering back and forth and flicking and fanning their tail feathers.

Orange cheeks will do very well on your typical finch diet. Start with a good

finch seed mix. I have found that, like many other small waxbills, the orange cheeks prefer the smaller millets. When presented with a choice of seeds offered in separate dishes, the orange cheeks showed a strong preference for Siberian millet. After the Siberian millet, they also liked German millet, followed closely by Japanese millet. White proso and red millet were consumed more moderately, and rape, canary, and nyjer were taken only in small amounts. Thus, to avoid waste, try to find a seed mix high in the top three seeds, but including the others in lesser amounts for variety. I cut EM Spec Finch Mix from Herman Brothers with additional Siberian millet to reduce waste when fed to my waxbills. In addition to a good

Domestic-bred orange-cheeked waxbill.



seed mix, orange cheeks will take fresh egg food (although new imports may need to be trained to do so), fresh greens, and small mealworms. Mealworms are not required for non-breeding birds. I mix an avian vitamin (Nekton-S) in with the fresh egg food. I also offer oyster shell at all times as well as a constant supply of dry commercial egg food so there always is a good protein source available.

I have experienced very few health problems with orange cheeks – they are a very hardy bird and a good choice for beginners if breeding is not the goal. They can be prone to egg binding, so calcium sources should be offered at all times. Orange cheeks are also overzealous preeners and can potentially preen a partner until they have bald patches – even when offered excessive protein. If you remove the plucked bird immediately, the feathers will usually start to grow back in a week or two. But if the plucking persists, the follicles will be damaged and feathers will not regrow. This does not seem to affect their health or their breeding performance, but can be unsightly. In rare cases, I have noticed the plucked feathers to come back in white, giving the bird a false pied appearance around the head, neck, or shoulders. I have also noticed a fading of the intensity of the orange in the beak and in the cheeks in a few older birds – I am not sure if this is due to age or if perhaps those birds did not consume as balanced a diet as the others in the flock.

Probably the biggest concern for new orange cheek owners is finding appropriate accommodations for them. They are lively birds and will benefit from having a lot of flight space, but they are also small birds and can easily slip through the bars of a standard cage.

When I quarantined my initial stock in 36"-wide canary double breeders with ½" bar spacing, it was not unusual to find one or two birds sitting on top of the quarantine cages. In an unsafe environment, this can be a problem. Attaching greenery or a solid material to the sides and top of the cage may help confine the birds. Three-eighths inch spacing is more appropriate for this species – but it is almost impossible to find spacious cages with this bar-spacing. Chicks can even squeeze through this bar spacing if there is any give. If you build a flight yourself, ½" square hardware cloth (I like the PVC-/vinyl-coated variety) will safely confine the birds – and even the young cannot escape through ½" x ½" openings.

While orange-cheeked waxbills are one of the easier species of waxbill to keep, they are also one of the most difficult to breed. In Australia where the species cannot be imported, one pair costs more than 1000 US dollars. However, the fact that they still can be found in Australia is an indication that breeding the species is difficult, but not impossible.

Here in the US, the orange cheek is rarely bred. Breeding success is difficult and costly, frequently requiring vast amounts of live food and large enclosures, but prices remain low due to market oversaturation with imports. Thus, there is little incentive to breed the species. However, should the US pass legislation prohibiting importation of wild-caught birds, the ubiquitous orange cheek will be one of the first species to disappear. Thus, it is important to make an effort to work with this species now and share our experiences with other aviculturists.

I started my orange-cheek breeding

program with 27 birds, all imports. At the very end of the breeding season, one clutch of three parent-raised chicks somehow miraculously managed to fledge before I retired the birds for the season. I considered this seemingly dubious accomplishment to be an unmitigated success. After having spent untold money on the initial stock, on building the bird room and the breeding aviaries, on excessive amounts of live food being shipped to me every few weeks, on light fixtures and heating bills, and on fan installations and air cleaners, what did I have to show for it: three domestic orange cheeked waxbills that had a street value of maybe \$20 a piece. But those three orange cheeked waxbills were more valuable to me than all the money spent getting there. Because I had proven to myself that it could be done, and perhaps more importantly, to the birds themselves that they could raise chicks in captivity.

The first problem that needs to be overcome when beginning an orange cheek breeding program is determining how to pair them up. Orange-cheeks are monomorphic and tricky to sex. The most common physical indicator is the coloring of the vent area, and to a lesser degree, the size and intensity of the orange cheek patches on the face. Cocks are more likely to have a bright orange patch at the vent area. Hens are more likely to be more buff or less brightly colored on the vent than cocks. However, there is much variation here, leaving a large number of birds in the muddled middle and this method may not always be reliable. I have found it to be most marked in juveniles that have just gotten their adult plumage and red beaks. Thus, the best time to sex may be at this young age.



Cock (Left) and Hen (Right)



Same birds – Cock (Left) and Hen (Right)

Orange cheeks also form tight bonds with their chosen mates and may not accept the mate chosen for them – especially if a preferred mate is within earshot. Most of my pairs consist of birds that were initially quarantined together – indicating that despite being given opportunities to choose new mates when I moved much of my initial stock to a large free flight, they still chose to stick with the bird that they first bonded with. There is always the exception, of

course, and I have had one male successfully raise chicks with one hen, then switch to a newly introduced hen the next year and raise more chicks.

Because of the potential difficulties pairing the birds up, I choose to community breed. This requires an aviary environment. When I first acquired stock, I quarantined them six birds to a 36" cage, trying to place an even number of hens and cocks in each cage based on my loose estimation of vent color. When quarantine was complete, the same six birds were moved to their own 4 ft x 4 ft x ceiling height aviary. I kept the same birds together to try to preserve any bonds that started to form during quarantine.

Once the birds have paired off, it becomes possible to sex them by observing nest building behavior. Orange cheeks are very flighty and will not usually be found near a nest if you are in the bird room – so you have to be a little sneaky. I setup a camcorder aimed at new nests in progress and allow it to record the nest building while I am not in the room. In this way, I learn which birds are paired and which nest belongs to which birds (at least at first – as they will eagerly abandon nests and new pairs are more than willing to take up the old nests). I have found that cocks are more likely to gather nesting materials while hens tend to stick around the nest and arrange the materials.

In a community environment, I need to be able to identify the individual birds and keep records. I use split aluminum numbered bands on my imports and close band all young on fledge so that I can keep accurate records. To visually distinguish the birds by sight and on video, I use colored plastic bands. Orange cheeks easily lose their plastic

bands. I have found that if you put the plastic band on the same leg as the aluminum band (either split or closed) with the aluminum band closest to the foot, the aluminum band, which will not fall off, will keep the plastic band from slipping off as well.

Once the birds are banded and placed in their community environment, they will quickly start building nests with enthusiasm. In fact, orange cheeks will build one nest after another without ever laying an egg, and will deconstruct old nests to build new ones if necessary. When they do give me eggs, they are frequently abandoned without incubating and the birds move on to another nest leaving behind clear eggs. It was a huge accomplishment for me when I finally got my first tossed day-old chick. It is hard to say I celebrate a tossed chick, but when all you have gotten for months are empty nests and occasionally clear eggs, getting to hatch is a big step forward.

I allow all my birds to build their own nests and do not offer prefabricated nests. This allows them to choose the location, the direction, the height, the size, and the amount of light they need. I provide large amounts of coco fiber along with sisal, switch grass, and white feathers from a feather pillow. Nesting locations include ledge planters at various heights, silk ficus trees, and artificial Christmas trees. By choosing this method, instead of trying to make the birds adapt to our choices, we can learn from the choices the birds make. Different waxbill species make different choices.

Orange cheeks will build at any height. I have had chicks fledge from nests built on the floor, from nests at eye level, and

from nests midway between. They are more flexible than blue caps, which always build at eye level, and from rosy rumps which usually build on the floor. Their nest usually faces out into the aviary. They do not usually stick tight in the nest when you enter the bird room – they are out before you ever get a chance to see them near the nest. They share this behavior with rosy rumps, both of which differ from blue caps, which usually will sit tight in the nest even when you get close. It is my guess that they flee the nest because they frequently build on the floor. Birds that nest on the floor are more vulnerable to predators as well as to accident (being stepped on) and thus have a strong flight reflex when they sense vibrations that indicate you are coming.

Orange cheeks build a dome shaped nest with thick walls and a tiny opening that is usually funnel shaped and is sometimes quite long. At times this tunnel can become so long, the nest becomes top heavy and falls from the nesting site. They will often build a cock's nest on top or on the side that they love to decorate with feathers and

dried droppings, paper scraps, and any other material they can find. The main chamber of the nest itself is rarely lined or decorated. The cock nest usually has a wide opening, whereas the actual nesting chamber has a narrow opening. It is nearly impossible to see inside the nest, making nest checks impossible except for a quick feel with a finger through the opening. I have noticed that both orange cheeks and rosy rumps build thick dark nests (although a little different in style), whereas blue caps build looser more transparent nests that are difficult to see into, but that let in a lot of light. It is noteworthy that rosy rump and orange cheek chicks have iridescent nodes on the sides of the beaks and that blue cap chicks do not. It is my estimation that the darkness of the orange cheek nests make the reflective nodes a necessity to find the mouths of the chicks inside, whereas the openness of a blue cap nest does not require such assistance.

Once you have nests, it becomes a waiting game. It may be a very long wait as they are eager to build and lay, but incubate – not so much. This

is quite a contrast with the rosy rumps, who tend to be very good parents and if they lay, they will usually incubate and raise chicks. When orange cheeks do incubate, there is a high likelihood they will toss the chicks at first hatch. The good news is that if they don't toss after the first day or two, then they will likely raise the entire

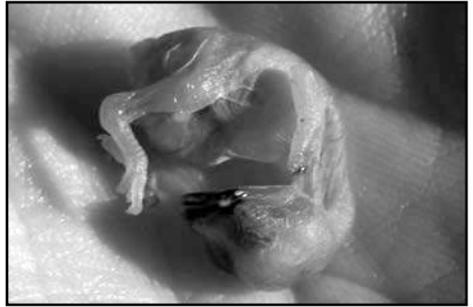


An orange cheek nest in a Christmas tree. The cock nest is on the left, the actual nest is on top and to the right. This nest has an unusually wide opening and you can barely make out a chick inside.

clutch just fine. Even if they toss a chick or two at hatch, they may go on to rear the remaining chicks. They have never accepted a tossed chick back for me – if I replace it in the nest, it will be tossed again shortly thereafter. I do not foster with societies – however, I might consider fostering with rosy rumps if they had similar aged eggs or chicks. Because of the similar nest styles and the similar mouth markings and presence of the iridescent nodes, it is possible that rosy rumps may accept an orange cheek chick. I have not tried such an experiment yet, but I keep an open mind. It is always my preference to have parent-raised chicks.

In a 4x4 breeding aviary, I will not nest check unless they happen to nest where I can reach from the feeding tray door. Entering such a small aviary creates a huge disturbance. With a species that is so quick to abandon a nest, it would be a disaster. Thus, when breeding orange cheeks in small aviaries, I do not recommend entering for any reason. Fresh food and water is best provided without entering – I slip it through a hinged swing up door on the floor. I do not clean the aviary until chicks fledge or until video surveillance indicates it is unlikely anything is going on. As long as the food area is kept clean and the water is kept fresh, I haven't had any problems caused by a messy aviary – but I had no breeding success at all when I attempted to clean periodically.

I have also bred my orange cheeks in a large free flight (12 ft x 10 ft, with an attached 4x8 aviary that is left open). In this environment, I have no choice but to enter, because my mealworm farm is kept inside, along with other supplies. However, in this larger environment, my presence is not as disturbing, and many



One-day-old orange cheek chick tossed at hatch.

of the birds flee safely into the adjoining aviary while I do my business and then return once I have left. I have even been able to finger check nests when there are eggs and chicks without deterring the birds from returning to their nest.

Even if you don't nest check at all, there are clues that will tell you that you may have chicks. Orange-cheeked waxbills will consume large amounts of mealworms – even when not breeding. However, when a pair has chicks, that pair may be extremely eager to get to the mealworm dish before the other birds can ravage it. I will frequently see the same pair come close to the feeding location when I enter and wait there for the dish of worms. They may even start consuming them eagerly while I am still sitting there – usually they are not so bold. If one or both birds have a crooked tail, you can almost be certain that you have chicks somewhere. The best news is that if you have gotten to that point, they will almost certainly raise the chicks to fledge. Even better, once they have successfully fledged chicks, they are more likely to go at it again and successfully rear more. It seems that once they have raised chicks, they gain the confidence they need, and become more prolific.

I used to believe that large amounts of

mealworms are required to breed orange cheeks. I no longer believe it is as important as I at first thought if the pair has successfully raised chicks in the past. I had one surprise clutch of orange cheeks fledge in an aviary that had only been receiving minimal mealworms. This was from a proven pair. Since then, once a pair has raised chicks for me, I will experiment with reducing the quantities of mealworms offered, with the hope that eventually, I can get them to breed on eggfood alone. But for pairs that are first-timers, I always replace mealworms several times a day so that they believe they have what they need to raise their young.

It seems to me that less live food is taken when it gets close to fledge. Sometimes this decline in live food consumption has tricked me into thinking I was mistaken about a pending clutch only to be surprised later in the week. I have read that this may happen to help encourage the chicks to fledge, but perhaps it is just that their need for live food at this stage declines.

When the chicks fledge, I am usually greeted in the bird room with a characteristic “flutter flutter flutter thump” sound as the disturbed fledgling startles and can’t manage a safe landing and bounces off of walls and onto the ground with a thump. Orange-cheek chicks are incredibly small and can squeeze through narrow bar spacing, so breeding environments should be prepared for this. They fledge with black beaks, iridescent nodes on the sides of the beaks, pale orange cheek patches, and a splash of crimson on their rump. They have short stubby tails and sometimes may be sparsely feathered on the belly – depending on how early they fledge (I usually estimate about 19-21



An orange cheek fledgling.



An OC juvenile (right) with Mom (left).



White coloration on wing of F2 fledges

days, but one clutch fledged for me at 17 days). I have been able to band all of my chicks at fledge with size A bands without incident. Others have reported

to me that they cannot get size A bands on at fledge, so keeping some size B on hand is probably a good idea. Once the chicks have fledged, I can clean the breeding aviary. I usually do so after banding, before returning the chicks to the flight. If space will be tight, I will remove other birds from that flight (unrelated pairs or the previous clutch). If space is not an issue (as in the free flight), I have left previous clutches with the parents. They have not interfered with subsequent breeding attempts so far, and may be learning good parenting skills by watching their parents raise subsequent clutches.

My second year breeding orange cheeks was more successful than the first. I was able to get three unrelated pairs breeding multiple clutches in the season, including the successful pair from the year before. One "pair" was a unique arrangement of three birds working together to raise multiple clutches. This was unusual, because while the orange cheeks are normally very peaceful, when breeding, they will aggressively defend their nesting site from other orange cheeks – including the curious and those wishing to loot nesting materials.

Of the imported birds, my largest clutch to fledge has been three chicks. A clutch of four was hatched once, but two chicks were tossed and two were raised. In all other cases, only two or three chicks hatched. This may be caused by the age of my imports.

In my third year of breeding, I attempted to pair some of the F1 young in the 4'x4' breeding aviaries. The F1 young were more willing to incubate, but were also quick to toss at hatch. At the end of the season, I finally got my

first clutch of four F2 young (five chicks hatched but one was tossed immediately). This clutch was raised solely on eggfood. The fledges seemed to fledge a little early as they were small even for orange cheek fledges and had fairly bare stomachs. They also fledged with white patches on some feathers on the wing. It is possible that because they were raised on eggfood, they may not have been fed as well as chicks raised on plentiful mealworms, thus resulting in the smaller size and perhaps the odd white feathers. I suspect that when the fledges molt into adult plumage that they will lose this white coloration.

While some of my imports have plucking issues, so far, the young have not been affected. In fact, the young really stand out in the crowd with their perfect feathering, bright orange cheek patches, and dark orange beaks.

Exhibition is an important part of my breeding program. While it is true that when working with difficult species, I cannot exercise the same level of selection that those working with free breeders can, I still must decide which of the young to keep for my own program and which to part with. The reality of the situation is that if I part with a bird and do not know the new owner, it is likely they will not be kept in the proper conditions to actually breed and perpetuate the line. Therefore, I need to make sure I keep the birds with the most desirable traits and allow those with less desirable traits to fall into the pet bird market.

When I first started working with orange cheeks I didn't think there was much variation other than condition. With time, I learned to recognize subtle conformation and coloration differences. In

captivity, the potential to perpetuate irregular features increases dramatically. Since a conservation effort focuses on perpetuating species in aviculture as they exist in the wild, it is essential that we not only breed the birds, but select birds to keep based on the wild-type standard. Exhibition will train your eye to recognize positive traits as well as potential genetic faults so that the birds in your line improve with subsequent generations and do not fall off from the wild type standard.

Orange cheeks should be small dainty little birds. But some that I have seen are a little too lanky and angular. Some get a little chesty and some have a little dip at the neck. I like a small, but well filled out bird with smooth lines and a little substance while still remaining a sleek, tiny, and active little bird. I have noticed that there is variation in richness of color of the cheek patches and sometimes the beak, as well as a variation in the size and shape of the cheek patch that cannot be accounted for by gender differences. An orange cheek's feathers should be tight and sleek – but occasionally they are not quite as polished as I would like. Behavior is also important. A waxbill should be an active bird that is quick to display. A waxbill that is calm and inactive may not be an ideal representation of its species – even if it is nearly perfect in form and color.

I will add that orange cheeks are much easier to show if you keep them in aviaries. In a cage environment, they will fly from side to side of the cage and flick their tails against the bars, fraying the tail feathers. An orange cheek's tail is critical to the overall appearance of the bird and frayed tail feathers will cause the bird not to show well. Thus, it is harder to learn about the conformation

defects when the condition faults get in the way.

Someday, I will perhaps be an expert on breeding this species. Today, I learn more each day. I thought it beneficial to share what I have learned so far, even if I haven't mastered the species, because, as far as I have yet to go, it seems I have come a long way from where I started.

Keep in mind that this is not a "How To" article. When I started, I started by doing what felt right to me and what worked for my lifestyle based on my existing knowledge of the species. I adjusted my practices based on what I thought the birds were telling me until I finally got that first clutch, then later additional lines. The birds will teach us more themselves than we can learn from an article as long as we study their behavior and try to understand why they do what they do. Because I have had some success breeding orange cheeks in a community aviary on my diet doesn't mean you won't be successful breeding them in pairs in a cage on yours. Where we can help each other is to share our successes and failures and thus create new options for each other. When my way isn't working, what can I change to get a little closer? Hopefully, I have provided some options to consider.



IN MEMORIUM: Meeting G.A. Abbate

by Ricardo M. Pereira, Portugal

When checking my recent emails, a couple days ago, I could not help having a strange feeling of loss over the news of G.A. Abbate passing away. Even if we had only once met in person and, since then, seldom kept contact by email over the years.

Meeting G.A. Abbate was an experience that I retain and will always remember with a smile. Although I've been involved with birds since I was 16, when I received an email from G.A., back in 1999, saying that he would come to Portugal and would like to meet some breeders, I was not exactly sure what to expect. That May, on a grey, rainy day I met him and his wife at the Sheraton Hotel in Lisbon, like we had agreed. I remember picking up my mother's car as mine was probably too small and too old for what I had planned.

After the usual introductions, we left his wife in Lisbon and started our tour. We met several breeders, from finches to canaries and European finches. On every stop, G.A. would take the time to share his opinions, knowledge and experiences, take photos and observe the birds closely. Not only did we visit breeders but also importers when wild bird imports were still common and legal in Europe. Again G.A. shared his thoughts about the differences between Europe and the USA.

We ended the day at my place, curiously night time had already fallen.

Still I keep a picture in my mind of G.A. looking up a ladder with a lantern in his hand to peek at a goldfinch nest over my porch. It was only then I heard of G.A.'s true age, which he proudly confirmed with his documents.

Over a dinner that lasted for several hours, one could see just how young of spirit he was, always willing to help and learn. Never did he place his much longer experience, knowledge or opinion over mine – a complete beginner. We kept in touch every now and then over the years, and he would always have a word for the friends he met that day, which is how he called everyone that he had met for just a few hours. But that is exactly how I remember him; someone who loved not only birds, but also other bird-lovers who shared his passion. A friend to all of us that has now departed but will surely be remembered by many.

[Gino Abbate passed away on July 17, 2009. He was 78 years old. – Ed.]





Photos of G.A. in his New Jersey offices courtesy of Shelley Ortman



Greater Kansas City Avicultural Society, Inc.

ANNUAL ALL BIRD SHOW
NFSS REGIONAL SHOW
DOUBLE POINTS
Saturday, October 17, 2009
9:00am

Canaries: **Jim Pickel**
Cockatiels: **Bert McAulay**
Cockatiels: **Linda Oldberg**
Love Birds: **Joe Deluca**
Budgies: **Russell Roberts**
Finches, Softbills & Hookbills:
Dr. Al Decoteau

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13000 Bennington Grandview, MO

Info: Anthony Day 816-252-1120
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IT'S SHOW SEASON!

Below is a list of upcoming shows for the fall 2009 show season. For complete details, see the affiliated clubs listing below and be sure to visit the web sites of these clubs for late-breaking news or corrections.

- Sept 5-6** Central Alabama Avicultural Society Show & Bird Fair (AL)
- Sept 26** Finch & Softbill Breeders & Exhibitors Club Annual Show (IL)
- Sept 26** Birds of a Feather Avicultural Society Fall Show (NH)
- Sept 26** New York Finch & Type Canary Annual Show (NY)
- Sept 26-27** Essex-Kent Cage Bird Society Annual Eastern Canadian Classic (ONT)
- Oct 3** Santa Clara Valley Canary & Exotic Bird Club Annual Show (CA)
- Oct 4** Fort Worth Bird Club All Bird Show (TX)
- Oct 10** Canary & Finch Society Annual Show (TX)
- Oct 17** Baltimore Bird Fanciers Fall Show (MD)
- Oct 17** Massachusetts Cage Bird Association Annual Show (MA)
- Oct 17** Michigan Society of Canary & Finch Breeders Show (MI)
- Oct 17** Greater Kansas City Avicultural Society All Bird Show (MO)
- Oct 18** Canary & Finch Club of Minnesota Show & Expo (MN)
- Oct 31** Central California Cage Bird Club (CA)
- Oct 31** Greater Chicago Cage Bird Club Show (IL)
- Oct 31** Chester County Bird Club Annual Show & Mart (PA)
- Nov 6-8** Asociacion de Criadores de Finches del Este Winter Regional Show (PR)
- Nov 7-8** Columbia Canary Club Show (OR)
- Nov 7-8** Canadian Finch & Softbill Society Annual Show (ONT)
- Nov 14** Empire Finch & Canary Club Show (NY)
- Dec 12** Santa Clara Valley Canary & Exotic Bird Club Annual Show (CA)

NFSS Affiliated Clubs/Events

Liaison Officer - Alfredo Bruguera
174 County Road I Mineola, TX 75773
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, September 26, 2009, Sheraton Wayfarer Convention Center, Bedford, NH. 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, jeeperspeepers55@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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