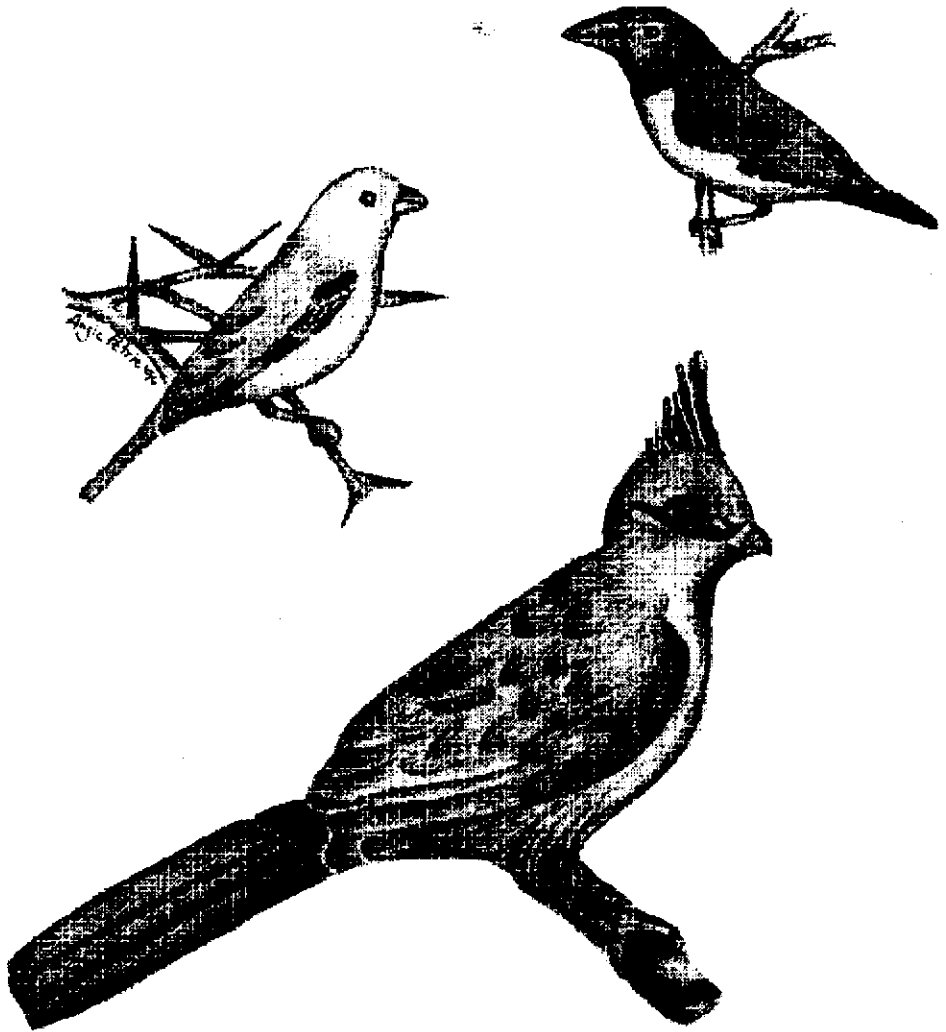


# The NFSS Bulletin

Vol. 13, No.2



**The National Finch & Softbill Society**

March—April 1996

# The NFSS Bulletin

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*Thank you to you all!*

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## In this issue:

I will first make an apology to the NFSS membership. The making of the last issue was a struggle for me. There was a lot to learn in a short period of time. It takes a lot of hours to produce the quality *Bulletin* that our previous editor put out. I know there were errors in that issue and for that I apologize. I hope everyone will find this and future issues to be of the quality that the membership deserves.

In this issue is the continuation of the 1995 show season. An excellent article on Star Finches that should definitely effect the Star Standard. A wonderful tip on millet spray. An in-depth look at Golden Sparrows and more.

Many members have responded to me, their feelings about the Jan/Feb issue. I thank them for their comments, both good and bad. Your responses let me know what is liked and what is not. This allows me, and therefore the *Bulletin*, to improve with each issue. Life is a growing process and we learn from our mistakes. I have learned a lot from the last issue! So, please always feel free to send me your comments.

*Thank you to everyone that has contributed to the Bulletin.* I have greatly enjoyed corresponding with so many members. It is truly amazing the helpful and caring membership that makes up our society. A society that I am honored to be a part of.

*Thanks Robert*

Deadline for the next issue is  
May 1st.

# The NFSS Bulletin

Vol. 13, No. 2  
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# The President's Message

*By Frank Hudson*

The birds in our aviary have gotten off to a slow breeding season.

Here in central Texas, the pairs I set up in early October are usually breeding strong by November. This year it wasn't until late February that nestlings began to appear with any frequency. This is my, and Sandy's, favorite time of the year to sit in the birdroom and watch the new babies feeding on the cage bottom and generally enjoying the first few warm days of spring. At this time of the year, cleaning show cages and training show birds is the farthest thing from our minds. But as I begin to look at the show calendar, I notice a lot of things going on out there.

We want to congratulate our friends in the Southeast, Region #2, on a successful two day show at the Florida State Fair. These shows have really been growing over the years and are attracting exhibitors from all over the country. If you think it's that warm Florida sunshine that promotes the enthusiasm for great bird shows like this, look what is happening on the other side of the country. In Washington, on April 18, 19 & 20, the Washington Cockateil Fanciers Association will be sponsoring a four day show. It will be a three day finch show with three different NFSS Panel Judges. Think of the opportunities to show your birds and to meet new friends. We wish them great success with this endeavor.

One of the best things about the show season is meeting with old friends and sharing their love and interest for the birds we breed. One way to insure that this is always available is to introduce new people to finches and the NFSS. Dale Laird, Vice President of Region #2, has challenged our Society to a membership drive. Dale thinks the Southeast Region can gain more new members than any other region. I think he's wrong. I think the Midwest Region will be able to generate more members.

I will have some money donated to this cause, so I feel we can accept Dale's challenge. The top prizes will go to the people who sign up the most new members, between now and August 15, 1996. Winners will be announced at the General Meeting at the National Cage Bird Show. Our membership application will have a spot added to list the sponsoring NFSS member, along with their membership number. The top prizes will include gift certificates for FinchShop; 1st prize \$50, 2nd prize \$35, and 3rd prize \$25. Top winners from each region will receive a one year free membership. The Regional V.P from the winning region will receive a pair of tickets for the banquet at the NCBS.

Not only should this be fun, it should be a way of reminding us to always seek to introduce new members to the Society and the hobby we all love so much.

## NFSS News & Notes

*Compiled from NFSS Directors*

### 1995 Annual Census

Census chairman, Stephen Hoppin reports that the census forms are coming in strong. Steve is requesting that members please put color/variety along with the species name in the species column. And if you haven't sent in your census please do. The information collected in the annual census will help all aviculturists.

### Region #2 News

The Big news this month is the two day show we had at the Florida State Fair. 161 Finches & Soft-hill the first day and 150 the second day. Armando Lee completed his apprenticeship that weekend to apply to become an NFSS Judge. Dale & Eileen Laird's Touraco won the first day and Julio Mateo's Shafttail won the second. We had 20 exhibitors, including Sally & Vince Huntington from San Diego, CA. (second place on the 18th with a White Zebra). All in all a fantastic weekend.

### News from Region #5

The Colorado legislation is reviewing a list of exotic species of birds that might pose a threat to the regions agriculture if lose in the wild. Obviously, finches and soft-bills would probably not survive Colorado's winter and therefore



*National Finch And  
Softbill Society's*

# FINCHSAVE

**FOR INFORMATION  
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NFSS FINCHSAVE Director  
16506 SE 29th St #J-86  
Vancouver, WA 98683  
(360) 253-4572**

would be unable to establish themselves. Most legislatures do not know this, though. Region #5 V.P. Julie Kern is urging Colorado aviculturist to write a letter to the State's Fish and Wildlife Dept. Please contact Julie on what it should say and where to send the letter.

### From FINCHSHOP

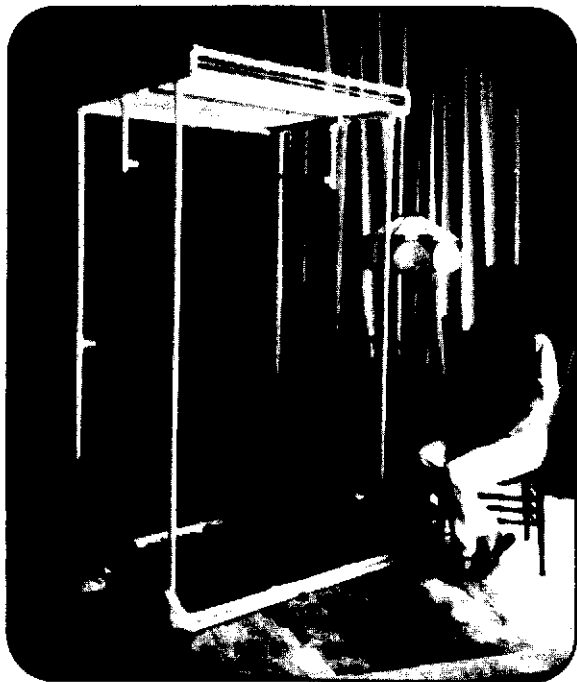
If you have not received your FINCHSHOP order please: submit a copy of your order form and/or a copy of your canceled check to the FINCHSHOP Director, along with a written explanation. Or if you have ordered an NFSS Name Badge (prior to 1/96) and have not received it, please also submit that in writing to the Director. Thanks.

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## From the Editor's Desk...



The high for the day, -5 degrees F. As I gaze out my window at my neighbor's chimney, watching the exhaust escape into the cold, I noticed something appear to fall from the top of the chimney. The fallen object turned out to be a European Starling! It took a couple of rolls on the roof and then stood back up on its feet. It seemed okay and returned to the chimney, joining the rest of its group. There were at least six of them standing there, in the steam and exhaust.

That was the first time I had witnessed that behavior. Since then I have observed other groups of European Starlings "warm themselves" on chimneys. I'm not sure if this behavior is wide spread or not. I suspect it is, Starlings are very intelligent and adaptable birds.

Breathing those fumes isn't a very healthy thing to do, but it is one way to make it through those bitterly cold days.

This led me to think of Black-capped Chickadees. These little birds are the most common winter time birds in the North. The solo call of the Chickadee is probably the

official sound of winter in the Midwest. How these little birds survive the winters still amaze me.

I don't think my birds would have fared well outside on that frozen day. It all has to do with adaptability. What environment a species is adapted to survive in, is very important to the way we house that species.

I'm reminded of a fellow aviculturist telling me about his outside aviary here in the Midwest. He stated that the Cuban Melodious were much more affect by cold & hot weather than the Estrildid finches. Makes sense, the temperatures of tropical rainforests don't vary much, 85-65 degrees. Grassland temperatures, on the other hand; vary much more. Even in Africa, the open plains can get quite cold at night and very hot during the day. Most Estrildid finches are from grasslands and savannas.

Deserts vary the most. Extremely hot in the day to literally freezing at night. Desert species of birds are more adapted to temperature changes than tropical rainforest species. However; desert species do not fair as well in areas of high humidity as the tropical rainforest species do.

So when creating the environment for your birds, remember it is important to keep in mind the habitat they are originally from.

## Flocking Together...



*We have a response from a member. The response is to the member who was "Hooked on Zebra Finches"*



*Dear Judy,*

I've just received my NFSS Bulletin and read your question about information on Zebra Finch genetics. The best book that I have found on Zebra Finch genetics is the Handbook of Zebra Finches by Dr. Mathew M. Vriends. It is published by T.F.H. Publications Inc., 211 W. Sylvania Ave, P.O. Box 427, Neptune, NJ 07753. It was published in 1980, so you may have to order it from the publisher. The copy I have is the only one I have seen. It has great color photos and covers most mutations. As for the question about how to raise more peds? Breed them. I have found the pied mutation to be dominate mutation, so all you need is one pied finch, male or female, that is either a visual or a split. Hope this information helps.

Your feathered friend  
Candy Wright  
V.P. of GA Cage Bird Society

*Our inquiry this issue comes from Janice Inman*

❖ I have a problem I hope someone can help me with. Last year I bought a Gouldian Finch. Several days after bringing her home, I noticed that her head was tilted at an odd angle and her sense of balance was very poor. I placed her in a small cage with a beating pad under it, no perches and the food dishes on the bottom of the cage. She slowly improved and after 6 months she seemed to make a full recovery. I recently set her up to breed. Everything seemed to be going

---



## *Flocking Together Con't...*

well until just before the eggs were due to hatch, when she again lost her balance and started twisting her head. The eggs did hatch but she was unable to feed them and the dad was not interested in helping. Needless to say she is no longer in a breeding situation. Now what is really driving me crazy is that recently I purchased another Gouldian from (from a different breeder, in a different state and a different mutation) who several days after being brought home is exhibiting the same problem. These birds were never near each other and though I have other Gouldians and about sixty other birds (mostly finches). In five years I have never had this problem before. If anyone has a clue to what is happening, please let me know.

Thank You  
 Janice Inman  
 R.R. 1 Box 2409  
 Sanford, ME 04073  
 (207) 324-1676

**W**ant to correspond with fellow NFSS members who share your interest in a particular species or who may have met a challenge in their bird room similar to the one you are facing? Use the NFSS **FLOCKING TOGETHER** column to send out to the membership. Mail your request to the Editor, *The NFSS Bulletin*.

Readers who can help an inquirer, can write directly to the individual if their address is provided, or to the Editor for forwarding. If you wish, send a copy of your letter to the Editor for publication in the *Bulletin* where your ideas will reach many others with the same or similar needs.

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# The Two Races of the Star Finch

by Luis Garcia  
Colorado Springs, CO

How many times have you shown some of your Star Finches in a bird show, to only have them place no higher than their own class. In the last ten years, both as a spectator and an exhibitor, I have seen this happen a lot. Some of the reasons for this are; the red on the face is too dull and does not go behind the eyes, the green of the back is grayish-green instead of olive-green, the dots on the chest are too small.

For five years now NFSS has been trying to come up with a show standard for the Star Finch. To date an agreement on a standard has not been reached. The problem has nothing to do with the NFSS judges or the committee working on the standard. Even though the Star Finch is very common in captivity, not a lot has ever been written about it. I believe I have found the main reason for the standard's controversy.

In November 1987, we got our first three pairs of Stars Finches, from a woman who originally received them from an importer. Two of the pairs were very red on the face with big white dots and a bright olive-green color to their bodies. The last pair had very little red to the face with small white dots and a grayish-green color to their bodies.

The latter were also a little smaller than the first two.

Even though the last pair produced well for us, all of their young looked just like them. These young, when paired to the young of the other two pairs, produced young with more color and larger size but nothing like the first two pairs. This made me wonder if the smaller was a different subspecies or just poorer quality.

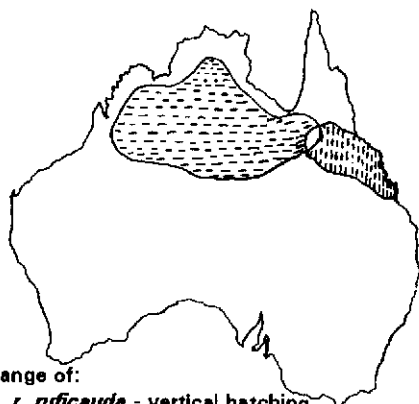
I spent almost three years looking for information on the Star Finch. In the summer of 1990, at a local flea market, I came across a book titled; *Finches*. The book was written by a German author, named Curt Af Enehjelm. It was written in German in 1975 and was translated and reprinted by T.F.H. in 1983. Enehjelm's writings on the Star Finch is only some eight paragraphs, however; one and a half of them talks about two races of the Star Finch, *Bathilda ruficauda ruficauda* and *Bathilda ruficauda clarescens*. I believe these were the original names given to these birds by John Gould.

Enehjelms writes that *B. r. ruficauda* is found from central Queensland southward to Rockhampton. He describes it as having less extensive red coloration around the head and being greyish-green above with a pale yellow under surface. *B.r. clarescens* as being found from northern and northwestern Australia and northern Queensland. He describes it as having very extensive

red coloration around the head and being greenish above with a more yellowish abdomen. He also makes note of a number of "bybrids", which occur in the wild, as well as in captivity. Some males having so little red on the forehead that they are sometimes mistaken for females.

Later in 1990, I found another book that seemed to confirm Enehjelm's writings. This book was written by Ian Harman and Dr. Matthew M. Vriends, in 1978 and was published by T.F.H.. In their book they write about the difference in richness of coloring in the birds from different localities. The Queensland race (*B.r. ruficauda*) being paler both in body and head color. The Western race (*B. r. clarescens*) being rich in green above, a rich vermilion facial blaze, rich yellow under parts and distinct clear white spots. They also make note that Australian aviary bred birds are generally of a mixed race.

Taking what was written in both books, I studied up on the Australian geographical regions. *B. r. ruficauda* is said to be found from central Queensland, southward to Rockhampton. This area falls mostly on the Great Dividing Range, a mountain range which is primarily woodland and shrubs. It ends at Rockhampton at the edge of a tropical rainforest. The average rainfall is 20-40 inches for the woodland and shrubland and 40-60 for the rainforest. For this area the January average



Range of:  
*B. r. ruficauda* - vertical hatching  
*B. r. clarescens* - horizontal hatching

daily temperature is 68-86 degrees F. and 50-68 degrees F. in July.

On the other hand; *B. r. clarescens* is found from northern and northwestern Australia and northern Queensland, an area which is mostly grassland/shrub savannas, wooded savannas and desert. The average annual rainfall is 10-20 inches for the savannas and less than 10 in the deserts. The average daily temperature is over 86 degrees F. for January and 50-68 degrees F. for July.

The following is what I believe to be the true descriptions of the two races based on the birds which I bought back in 1987. I have to date raised 9 generations from those original birds.

### Descriptions

*B. r. ruficauda* - The red of the beak and head are dull, giving the bird a more of a pinkish coloration. The red on top of the head stops just before the eyes and goes around the

sides of the face, under the chin and ending at the end of the eyes. The back and wings are a grayish-green. The upper tail coverts are a dull brownish-red, with small dull white dots. The tail is dull red-brown. The dots on this race are small and dull, appearing from white to yellow. The dots start from the throat, none above the eyes, down the chest and around the body to its flanks, where they appear irregular. The underside is a dull yellowish-white. This appears as white mixing into parts of the body color. The overall size of this race is 4 to 4 1/4 inches.

*B. r. clarescens* - The red of the beak and face of this race is a crimson red. It goes beyond the eyes, under the throat and around the top of the head. The back and wings are an olive-green. The upper tail coverts are a wine red, with white dots. The tail is burgundy-red, with a shade of gray. The dots start above the eyes, forming what looks like a point. The dots proceed down both sides of the cheeks and chest to the flanks, just below the wings. The dots of the flanks are large and formed two almost continuous lines that come from the chest to the end of the tail. The underside is a lemon-yellow that does not "bleed" into the body color. The overall size of this race is 4 1/2 to 5 inches. The chest also appears wider. The full color of this race is not achieved until second molt.

The descriptions above are for males. The hens have less red on

their face and the rest of their coloration is the same but duller. Many crosses of the two races are kept in captivity. However; I have gotten some, of what appear to be, pure races from importers and parts of the southwest US. I believe that some pure races can be found in Africa, Asia, and Europe, since these were the countries from which many importers got their birds, before the 1992 import restrictions. One of the first Star Finches that I bought in 1987, was banded with #CZ86148"87". I believe the breeder of this bird may have more of the pure races, so if you can help me; please contact: Luis Garcia (719)630-3785 or 1345 Edith Lane, Colorado Springs, CO 80909.

#### References:

- Enehjelm, C. A. 1975. *Finches*. T. F. H. Publications. Neptune, NJ.
- Harman, I., Vriends, Dr. M. M. 1978. *All about Finches and Related Seed-eating Birds*. T. F. H. Publications. Neptune, NJ.

#### Editors Note:

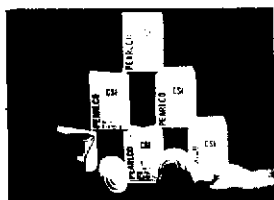
*I have seen pictures of Luis's two different races and confirm that they are definitely distinct. We would like to have printed those, but the difference wasn't apparent after black & white printing. Field guides on Australian birds confirm Luis's findings. My own Stars appear to be mixes. Try comparing your birds to the above descriptions.*

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# Your Bird's Health

## Protein Requirements

*by Robert Petrie  
Kansas City, MO*

**L**ive food, egg food, soaked seeds, etc.. we aviculturists continually are striving to offer the protein to our finches that they need. It seems I've counted an endless number of teeny-tiny mealworms to give to my birds. Non-bird people often stare in amazement that I pay for insects. Who knows how many different egg food recipes I have concocted. I still modify my recipe every now-and-then.

What is it all for? What exactly is protein? If you think of an animal's body as a house, then most of the materials to build the house, siding, wall coverings, roof, doors and windows, etc.. are protein molecules. Also the things that run the house, furnace, hot water heater, water pipes, and so on, are made of proteins. The tools to build the house, saws, hammers, cement truck and others, and the workers building the house are all proteins.

This is why a new growing body needs a higher amount of protein than a mature body. But even a mature body needs an occasional repair or remodeling. Protein can also

be used for energy. Typically a body relies upon carbohydrates, the sugars and starches, for the energy to run on, just like the electricity surging through your house. If supplied with an excess, an animal's body can use protein as an energy source.

Proteins are made of what is called "Amino Acids". There are 20 different amino acids known (Eckerts et. al 1973). These amino acids form together, in seemingly endless chains, to form the protein. These chains can be put together in an almost infinite number of different orders allowing different types of proteins.

Some of these amino acids an animal's body knows how to make. Others need to be in an animal's diet for it to survive. Humans need to have 9 different amino acids in our food (Alberts, et. al. 1983). These needed amino acids are called "Essential Amino Acids".

Most of us know of some foods that are high in protein. Protein content doesn't say enough though. There is complete and incomplete protein. There is also crude and usable protein.

The protein content is determined in a laboratory. I'm not even going to pretend to know how it is



determined. I do know that the measure they give is for crude protein. That is all the protein in the sampled material. But not all the protein is available to the animal eating the substance. For example, if you eat a piece of wood, the cell walls are made of protein but your body cannot use it, so it is of no value. We haven't found a way to determine usable protein, so we must go by the crude protein content amount.

Meat and beans are good sources of protein. But meat is considered complete and beans, incomplete. All that means, is that meat contains all the Essential Amino Acids. Beans lack at least one of the essentials. But if you eat beans and corn, both good sources of protein, you will have all your essential amino acids.

Well, why should you really concern yourself with this biology lesson? People constantly ask for my recipe for egg food. I constantly ask people their recipe for egg food. No one knows everything and it helps to continuously compare recipes. It helps when considering someone's egg food recipe to understand something about protein, so you can make good judgments on what to do.

We know that in the wild our finches eat seeds and insects. The protein content of seeds can vary anywhere from 12 to 20%. The protein content of mealworms is around 20%. When seeds begin to germinate, the point when the plant is just

emerging from the seed coat and not when it looks like a little plant, they increase their amount of protein.

So all those insects, egg food and soaked seeds are to make sure our little ones get the protein they need. During the nonbreeding, nonmoulting periods, a finch's diet would probably be somewhere in the neighborhood of 12-18% protein. These are only my guesses. During the breeding season the protein requirement probably increases to a little over 20%.

I have had the extreme good fortune to have all my finches raise their own babies, indoors on mealworms, soaked seeds and my egg food recipe. The list of species include Melbas, Lavenders, and Violet-eared Waxbills, all reported to need lots of live food. I am only telling you this because I feel I have struck on a good thing and I would like to share it with as many people as possible. So here is my egg food recipe and an evaluation of its ingredients.

### Main Ingredients

3 hard boiled eggs with the egg shell  
2 Tbsp of grated carrot  
Sprinkle of dried spirulina  
2 Tbsp of Nutritional Yeast  
1/4 cup of dry mix

### Dry Mix Ingredients

1/2 oat bran (not meal)  
1/4 wheat bran  
1/4 corn meal

The egg of course is added for the protein, probably little over 20%. The eggshell is for the calcium. Carrot is for the beta carotene.

The dry mix is used to coat the egg crumbles and make it dry out when left in the dishes. Making the egg dry out prevents any spoilage. The three dry mix ingredients are semi good sources of protein (Oat bran 17%, wheat bran 16%, and corn meal 9% [Nutrition Monitoring Division 1989]), but they lower the overall protein content of the egg food. By mixing all three dry ingredients, I have gotten all the essential amino acids. The carrot and eggshell also lower protein percentage. Spirulina and nutritional yeast help boost the protein amount. Nutritional yeast is about 40% protein and dried spirulina is 57% (Nutrition Monitoring Division 1984).

My recipe is hopefully over 20% protein. I also feed out chopped greens and cooked rice with the egg food, but this is for the non breeding birds.

A caution here on using the spirulina. Do not over use. Too much of anything is not good. I'm sorry I can't remember the source, but a study once done on protein needs of ducklings found that too

much and their limbs were misproportioned. I used too much spirulina once and lost a clutch of Lavender chicks with tiny bodies and large beads.

Final note, with this egg food I must restrict some of my birds. These birds have a tendency to become obese. The species most frequently over weight are Orange-cheeks, Red-ears, Violet-ears, and Red Heads.

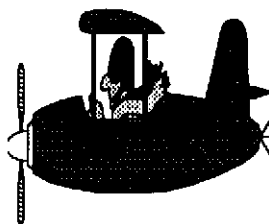
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# The Enchanting Golden Song Sparrow

by *Brendan Wilay*  
Kansas City, MO

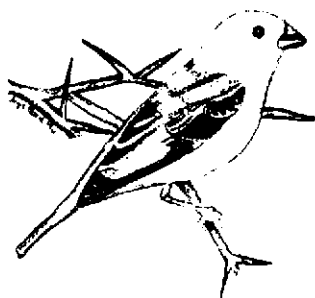
Aviculturists strive to find the right species to place in their aviaries. If flashy color, intriguing behaviors, and easy management have been the considerations in determining such a species, then the Golden Song Sparrow (*Passer luteus luteus*) would make the perfect addition.

This species, which should be housed in flights as opposed to cages, is unique in the way it displays so many natural behaviors in captive situations. It is important to realize that due to the reduction of birds being imported into the country this species will not be available for much longer. The time to establish a captive founder population is now.

Because the Golden Song Sparrow is so unique, there have been many different opinions regarding its classification. In the early 1800's it was placed in the Fringillidae Family, due to similarities it was believed to share with other finches (Clement, et. al. 1993). In 1851 Bonaparte classified the species as a member of the Ploceidae Family, along with the weavers, whydahs, indigo birds, and Old World sparrows. He classified them there mainly because of the feeding

behavior and complex nest structures (Clement, et. al. 1993). The status of their Family has been universally accepted. There is still, however, a great deal of debate regarding which Genus they belong to. The Golden Song Sparrows do display many Sparrow-like characteristics, but they are so distinctly different from the other members of the Genus *Passer* and there is still uncertainty as to whether they should remain in that Genus or not (Summer-Smith 1988). For the purpose of this paper, they will be treated as a member of the Genus *Passer*.

The male Golden Song Sparrow is about the size of a Cut-throat Finch, but is more streamlined. While his head, chest and nape

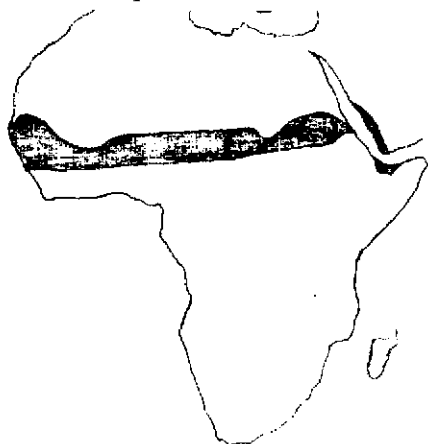


are a striking golden yellow, the birds mantle, tertials, and back are all chestnut brown (Kingston 1994). The beak is slate gray except during the breeding season, when it turns jet black. The female

and juvenile look similar to each other. They are basically a soft gray with light shades of brown streaking through the head and wings. The gray feather of the under parts and back appear to be edged with a light shade of yellow, giving a subtle hint to the relationship with the much more striking male. The juvenile Golden Song Sparrow does not achieve its adult plumage until its second year (Summer-Smith 1988).

However, the juvenile male's beak may darken in its first year during the breeding season and maybe an early sex indicator (Kingston 1994). In all the Genus *Passer*, the yellow plumage is found only in *Passer luteus* and may be an adaptation to colonial life in the open savanna (Summers-Smith 1988).

The only other bird that the Golden Song Sparrow, *Passer luteus luteus*, might be confused with is the isolated Arabian Golden Sparrow, *Passer luteus euchlorus*. However, the male *P. l. euchlorus* is more intensely yellow and lacks any brown or chestnut. The female is much grayer and also unstreaked on her under parts (Clements, et. al. 1993). While *P. l. luteus* is described to inhabit a band across the continent of Africa, from approximately 14 degrees to 20 degrees N. Latitude. *P. l. euchlorus* inhabits a much smaller range on the Southwest corner of the Peninsula of Arabia (Summer-Smith 1988). As for their relatedness, again; there have been numerous opinions. On the basis of



similar behaviors and many other characteristics, I concur with Summers-Smith (1988) and choose to treat *P. l. luteus* and *P.l. euchlorus* as different races of the same species.

Although *P. l. luteus* has been available for a number of years, it's not as popular as one might think. This maybe due to a misplaced, aggressive reputation the species has received at some point in time (Kingston 1994). However, I have participated in the housing and breeding of this species in mixed-species flights and have never encountered a problem with *P. l. luteus*. The Golden Song Sparrow is territorial only as far as the nest site and its immediate surroundings are concerned (Summers-Smith 1988). Even at that, their behavior is more defensive than aggressive.

In fact, *P. l. luteus* is a highly social and gregarious species (Kingston 1994). They are very mobile and extremely nomadic. These birds are opportunistic breeders. In the wild they remain in an area to breed only when conditions are favorable (Clement, et.al. 1993). Like all sparrows they enjoy bathing in sand, dust or water, but unlike other sparrows in the wild, they are rarely associated with man (Summers-Smith 1988).

In their natural habitat, *P. l. luteus* is common to abundant and mostly found in areas of dry arid scrub, sparse savanna and also in

areas where cereal cultivation is being developed (Clement et. al. 1993). However, they never stray far from water (Summers-Smith 1988). Because of this they are constantly on the move. When conditions are right and food is abundant, they gather into large flocks, some of which have been reported in the several hundred thousands (Summers-Smith 1988).

When environmental conditions are suitable (in the wild this is generally after the start of the seasonal rains), the colony switches into nesting mode as the males begin looking for nesting sites. These conditions can be simulated in the aviary by; adding chopped greens to the diet, the widest assortment of live insects that is available and fresh eggfood twice a day. Once the conditions are right for breeding, the bills of the males will change from a slate gray to jet black (Kingston 1994). Mature males will then adopt nesting sites and begin their building. The male alone begins construction of the outer nest shell, which is constructed mainly of twigs with an average length of five inches. The diameter of the twigs varies up to approximately 1/4 inch. If plenty of material is abundant, this stage generally takes the male about fifty hours of work, spread out over a ten day period and a complete nest can be composed of up to one thousand twigs (Summers-Smith 1988). It is thought that the stick and twig shell allows ventilation (so the eggs don't over heat), defense against predators, and

the ability to withstand downpours (Summers-Smith 1988).

Once the outer shell is complete, the male attempts to attract a female and continually shows her the nest opening, located on the upper side, with a tunnel leading into the nest cup. After the male attracts a female, she becomes the dominate member of the pair and aids in nest defense. She also aids in the construction of the nest cup, which may be composed of dried grass, hair, wool, feathers, and other such materials (Summers-Smith 1988). After completion of the inner nest chamber, the male then attempts to copulate with the female.

Kingston (1994) states that breeding success is dependent upon the abundance of appropriate nesting material. This appears not to be the case with my experience and from data collected from studies in the wild by Summers-Smith (1988). As stated before, *P. l. luteus* is an extremely opportunistic species. This species has bred for me in wicker baskets, half open nest boxes, and on a small clump of grass hanging from the side of the flight. The truth is that when given the opportunity, these birds prefer to build the very large complicated nest structures, but as Summers-Smith (1988) points out, even in their natural habitat, when material is limited their nest are a much reduced structure.

I have had the privilege to observe a male Golden Song

Sparrow construct a nest at the Kansas City Zoological Gardens, where I work as a Birds Keeper. The male began building in a five year old thornless Cockspur Hawthorn (*Crataegus crusgalli varainermis*) sapling. He was highly secretive when building and would not go near the nest if he detected my presence. When complete the male presented a female with a complex structure. There were two obvious parts to the nest, the smaller, lower part containing the nest cup and the larger, upper part containing the nest opening and the tunnel leading to the nest cup. The total height of the nest measured seventeen inches. The lower part of the nest was seven inches tall and seven inches in diameter. The upper part measured ten inches tall and twelve inches in diameter. The nest entrance was located about two inches down from the top, on the backside. All in all, quite an accomplishment for a bird of its size (5 inches)! Although it does take a small amount of effort on the part of the aviculturist, if provided with a suitable amount of material, *P. l. luteus* will construct a similar nest, even in an inside a flight. The experience of seeing this take place is extremely rewarding.

After the female begins laying eggs, usually no more than two or three, both the female and male tend the nest (Summers-Smith 1988). My experience has been that the female alone incubates the nest. The male sits above the nest in a defensive position. The females of this

species are extremely light sitters but quickly return to the nest after a disruption has passed. The incubation period is ten to twelve days (Summers-Smith 1988). However, periods of up to fourteen days have been reported (Kingston 1994).

Once the chicks hatch they grow quite rapidly. The nestlings are fed mainly insects (Clement, et. al. 1993). It is important to stress that a variety of live food be offered to avoid the parents discarding one or more chicks from the nest. While Summers-Smith (1988), states that the chicks fledge at thirteen to fourteen days, this data agrees with my experience. On the other hand; Kingston (1994) reports that the chicks may stay in the nest for up to twenty days. Summers-Smith (1988) attributes the rapid growth of the chicks and the relatively short fledging period to an adaptation to survival in a habitat with rapid environmental changes which allows the colony to move to an area with more favorable conditions. The prolonged period that Kingston reports maybe related to an inferior diet that was provided for the rearing chicks.

Although, *P. l. luteus* will sometimes re clutch if conditions remain favorable for a long period of time. The colony will generally move to a new location after the chicks fledge and the mature birds will begin to molt (Summers-Smith 1988). The amount of insects the birds eat decreases throughout the rest of the year and the Golden Song

Sparrows then feed primarily on seeds (Clement, et. al. 1993). In the captive setting, after the chicks have weaned and the adults have gone through their molt, these birds can be managed very similar to seed-eating finches and more importantly should be enjoyed as an active nonaggressive member of the aviary community.

Because of their alleged bad reputation, the Golden Song Sparrow has never become a common bird among private aviculturists. This has been a grave injustice to an extraordinary species. However, there is still a fair number being imported into the country. Those bird enthusiasts who have the space for a new species in their aviaries, should seriously consider the addition of the Golden Song Sparrow to their collection and help establish a strong

founder population. As legislation tightens and fewer and fewer birds enter the country, establishing them is the only way to insure that the beauty and captivating behaviors of the Golden Song Sparrow will not be lost forever among aviculturists in this country.

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# Growing and Sprouting Spray Millet

by *Rose Gianferrara*  
Bonita Springs, FL

My Finches just love spray millet! Especially fresh from our garden or sprouted on the stem. I do restrict them somewhat, as they will neglect their balanced seed diet for the millet. Like children only wanting candy and not their broccoli.

Here in Florida, we have a garden going from late September until early June. The rest of the year it is too hot to grow anything!

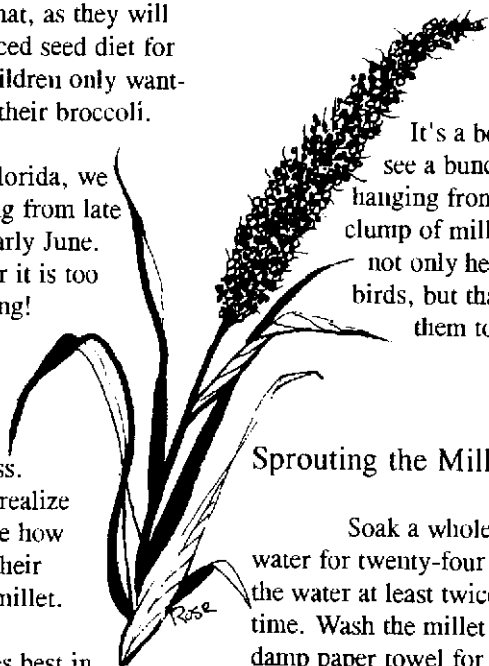
In many instances spray millet is essential for breeding success.

Most breeders do realize this, but few realize how easy it is to raise their own home-grown millet.

Millet does best in well-drained soil with organic matter. Fertilize with 6-6-6 fertilizer. Water in the mornings and from the bottom if possible. Too much water on the seeding heads and they will tend to rot. To plant, I take a nice plump spray millet and push the seeds out as I'm walking down the rows. I don't worry about proper spacing. I make about four rows as I find that the plants help support one

another. I also use stakes where needed as some will get real tall!

Millet can be ready at about eight weeks, depending on the heat and watering. I start picking when the seed heads start turning a golden brown. I taste some seeds to check and see if they are filled. If they are picked too soon, they will dry up to nothing, leaving only empty hulls.



It's a beautiful site to see a bunch of finches hanging from a big fresh clump of millet. I feel it's not only healthy for the birds, but that it can induce them to breed.

## Sprouting the Millet:

Soak a whole millet spray in water for twenty-four hours. Change the water at least twice during that time. Wash the millet and put it in a damp paper towel for another day. By day three you should see green tops and white roots showing all over. Rinse and hang in your cages and aviaries. Your finches will love it and you for taking the extra time for them. If you don't have a lot of finches, only do a small piece, as you do not want it to sour.

# Magpie Mannikin

by Neville Brickell  
Natal, Africa



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The Magpie Mannikin (*Lonchura fringilloides*) is also known by many alternative names, such as Giant Mannikin, King Zanzie, Pied Weaver Finch and Pied Mannikin, and measures 12 cm. It is a shy, stockily-built bird with a heavy, broad bill, being very similar to the Java Sparrow.

## Description

Head, neck, throat, lower rump and tail black with bluish gloss; mantle brown, barred with black; wings dusky; breast and rest of underparts white, with faint buff wash on lower belly and under tail coverts. I have been studying this mannikin in the field as well as captivity for over 30 years with most references consulted describing the sexes as being indistinguishable. From close observation made in aviaries of

sixty birds, it is clear that the female is slightly smaller and the black and buff mottling on the flanks is also slightly smaller. Juvenile uniform dusky brown above, buff below; upper tail coverts and tail black.

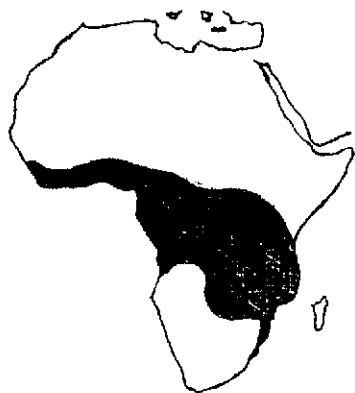
## Distribution

Coastal Natal, including Zululand and eastern Transvaal provinces of South Africa, Swaziland, eastern Zimbabwe northwards to East and West Africa; local movements dictated by food supply.

## Natural History

A typical mannikin in all respects, being found in evergreen bush along streams, in woodland clearing, bamboo, reed beds and around rural villages, cultivation and gardens.

Occurring usually in pairs or small family parties. When disturbed flies in close order like a swarm of bees, into thick cover. Feeds mainly on grass seeds, especially those of the Bindura bamboo, *Oxytenanthera abyssinica*, in Zimbabwe. Rice also recorded from West Africa. Magpie Mannikins also take termite alates on the ground. Usually the wings are



Range of the Magpie Mannikin (*Lonchura fringilloides*), from Clements, et. al. 1983. Princeton University Press.

removed before the termite is eaten, but occasionally it is swallowed wings and all.

A loud 'pee-oo-pee-oo' is uttered in flight and a 'click-chick-chicka' alarm call. In the courtship display the male raises his head feathers and stands very erect as he emits his soft 'chi, chii, chii, chi' song that lasts for about four seconds and is repeated after a pause of about a minute.

They breed at any time during the year, but most of the records for southern Africa are during the summer months (October - June).

Nests may be solitary or colonial, comprising of three or four built together as one large structure, which are built for roosting as well as for breeding. When a bird enters or leaves a nest it pulls feathers over the entrance hole. The female builds the nest but remains at the site while other members of the group bring materials to her. Nest sites are

usually 3-5m above the ground in a bush, tree or in bamboo. The 4-6 eggs are incubated by both sexes for 14-16 days and the nestlings fledge at 21-26 days. The juveniles attain adult plumage in 49-55 days.

## Aviculture

The following notes are compiled from the late Bruce Huntley and Ron Vorster. In BH's aviary one nest was built in a chicken wire nesting frame 30 x 15 x 15cm at a height of 3m from the ground. The Euphorbia trees were found to be favorite nesting sites, with six nests built at over 3m from the ground. RV reports that all ten nests constructed in his aviary were at an average height of 2m in dried Curry bushes, *Hypericum revolutum*. The nests in the Euphorbia trees were solitary whereas those in the Curry bushes were in colonies comprising three or four built together as one large structure.

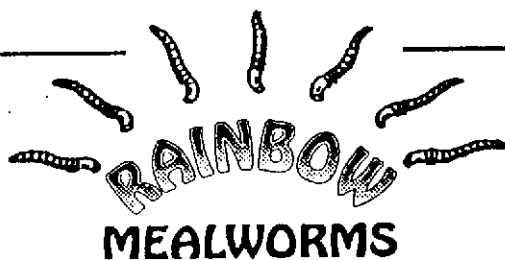
BH supplied soft thatch grass and large quantities of coir as nesting materials. RV supplied small quantities of coir but ample pieces of Lawn grass, *Cynodon dactylon*. To analyze the materials used I pulled six nests apart that yielded 350, 335, 362, 358, 370 and 354 pieces of grass respectively. RV supplied soft fowl feathers with six nests. I examined these nests which contained 71, 52, 68, 77, 83 and 58 feathers respectively.

BH and RV both found most pairs produced 3-4 broods a year and clutches of 4-6 eggs.

The incubation period was 14-16 days from 12 pairs of birds. In the aviary that housed the mannikins there was a variety of small finches, weavers and doves. No cases of aggression towards other birds were noted by BH, which is thought to be due to the fact that pairs were able to stakeout territories in the tennis court sized aviary. In the aviary of RV pairs with fledglings became aggressive, especially towards Red-billed Queleas, and defended their nests fiercely. BH and RV found that their birds bathed on an average of three times a day. If running water was introduced they immediately entered the water to bathe.

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## MEET AN NFSS DIRECTOR

Our newly appointed NFSS FINCHSHOP Director is Julie Duimstra. The FINCHSHOP has relocated to Corvallis, Oregon, in the heart of beautiful Willamette Valley. Fortunately FINCHSHOP, and Julie, were unaffected by the recent flooding and mudslides, which plagued much of Western Oregon.

Julie's degrees are in Zoology and she has worked as an Electron Microscopist in Veterinary Medicine for the past 15 years. She has used electron microscopy to characterize many of the bacterial and viral pathogens which affect birds and other animals. "Yes", she writes, "I do know what New Castle's, Pox, and Avian Polyoma viruses look like!" She has written several articles on avian diseases and aviary management techniques, which have appeared in bird club newsletters. She has served as Newsletter Editor for The Exotic Bird Club of Oregon. Julie is also a member of AFA (American Federation of Aviculture), SPBE (Society of Parrot Breeders and Exhibitors) and several other local bird clubs.

Julie's adventure with birds began eight years ago with a pair of Shafttails. Today the flock has grown to include over 100 birds, including 18 species of finches and Gloster and Lizard Canaries. Her favorite species

are the mannikins. She enjoys exhibiting birds at NFSS shows and has served as the NFSS Delegate for affiliated clubs in Oregon and Washington.

### Attention!

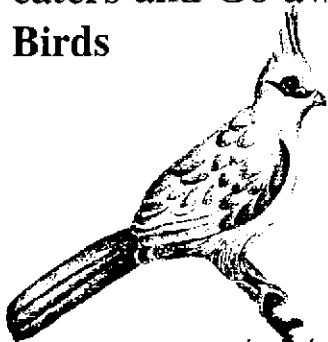
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## Turacos, Plantain-eaters and Go-away Birds



*by Robert Petrie  
Kansas City, MO*

All those names refer to a group of birds called Turacos. A truly unique group of 20 different species of softbills that are growing in popularity among aviculturists. Some Turacos are often called plantain-eaters and others called Go-away birds. A plantain is a relative of the banana that grows wild in Africa. Turacos eat more than just plantains, yet some species still get it attached to their name. All are frugivorous birds from Africa.

Midwesterners pronounce the name "Tore - Rock - O's". Texans, more specifically Bird Keepers from Texan Zoos, say "Tur - uh - cos". Turaco's red colored feathers are made of a water-soluble pigment. This pigment supposedly can be washed out, for example in a rain shower. I have gathered red feathers from two different Turaco species and have attempted to wash the red out. It never washed out.

These are large birds, about the size of Cockatoos, and are highly active. Turacos tails are long and square at the end. Most species have crests on their heads, that vary from small colorful mohawks to long lacy-looking ornaments.

A truly unique feature among the Turacos is the outer toe of each foot. Birds toe arrangement is either 2 in front, 2 in back or 3 in front, 1 in back. Turacos outer toe has the ability to swivel front and back. The result is an amazing ability to run along branches. Turacos are not powerful fliers. They tend to jump and flap a couple of times, then glide between trees. Once in the trees; Turacos move with the agility of small monkeys. Catching a Turaco from out of a tree is quite a feat.

Turacos can be divided into four groups, the Great Blue, the purple, the green, and the gray. The Great Blue Turaco is in a group by itself. I'm not aware of any in captivity. In the wild it resides in the rainforests.

The "purple group" contains 4 species of predominately purple coloration. The Violet and Lady Ross's Turacos (or plantain-eaters) are the two species from the purple group found in captivity. The purple Turacos inhabit the rainforest and woodlands of Africa.

There are 20 twenty different species of Turacos in the "green group." The prevalent coloration is

green, but that varies from lime green to shiny, dark emerald green. The green Turacos are found from the rainforest to the open forest of Africa. The crest on the head reaches its greatest variety in this group.

"Gray Turacos" are Savannah, thorn scrub and open woodland species. Three of the species are called Go-away birds because their alarm call sounds similar to someone saying "Go Away Go Away." The five species of gray Turacos are the least colorful, being various mixes of blacks, grays, and whites.

The diet of the Turacos that I worked with was a variety of chopped fruit mixed with softbill pellets and sprinkled with vitamins and calcium. The birds were in great health and reproduced readily on this diet. Live food and meat mix were offered to the birds but they never ate any. Green leafy foods were offered as treats and were eagerly accepted.

The nests were simple structures of short twigs placed on a platform of some sort. Two eggs were the normal clutch. Turacos make wonderful parents. The gray Turacos tend to be slightly more delicate than the others.

Untame Turacos tire and stress easily. When catching these birds, they quickly begin to pant and show signs of stress. Because of this and their highly active nature, Turacos are not suitable for cages. They

require lots of space to move around.

Turacos are best kept as individual pairs. Even males of different species will fight and so cannot be housed together. Turacos can be kept with other species of birds, though. We had them housed with tiny finches to large Hornbills and never encountered a problem.

Anyone with the space, and the time to chop fruit, will definitely find them a delight. The Houston Zoo in Texas is the place to see Turacos. They house and have bred more species than any other US zoo.

#### References:

Brown, Leslie. 1988. *Birds of Africa Vol 3*. Academic Press. New York. p 26-57

Laird, Dale. 1994. The Persa Touraco, *NFSS Bulletin*, vol 11, no. 6, p18.

#### Other recommended readings:

Berry, Robert. 1988. Captive Management of Touracos at the Houston Zoological Gardens: part I, *NFSS Bulletin*, vol. 5, no. 2.

Berry, Robert. 1988. Captive Management of Touracos at the Houston Zoological Gardens: part II, *NFSS Bulletin*, vol. 5, no. 3.

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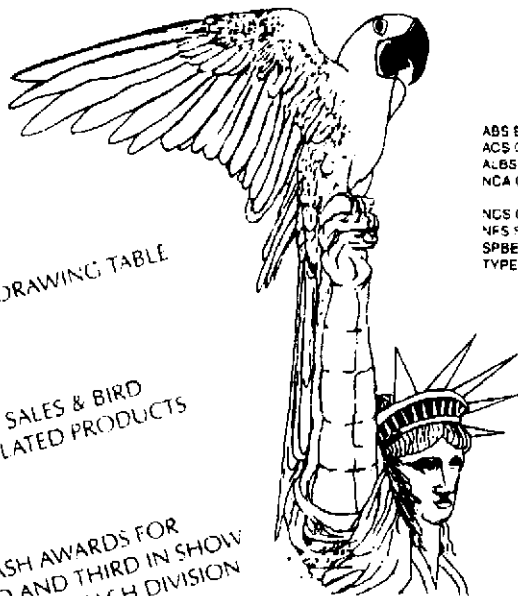
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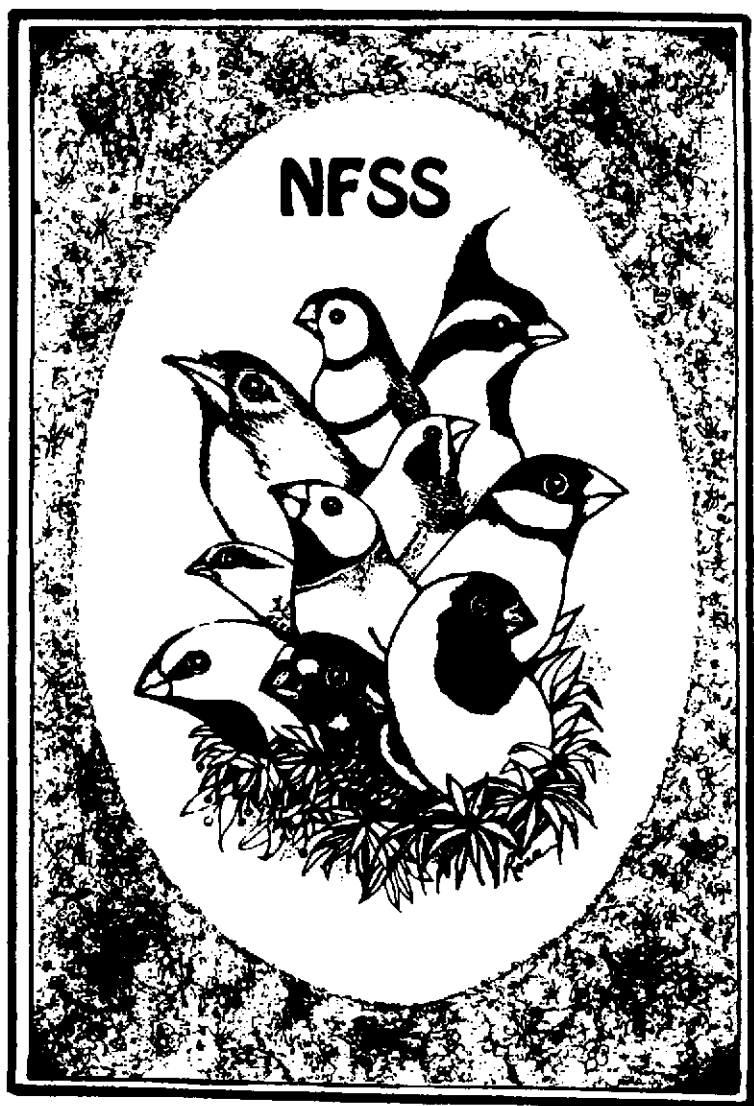
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# 1995 Show Report

## Continued



The National Finch and Softbill Society

## Awarding Points at NFSS Shows

Exhibiting NFSS members and the birds they have exhibited automatically receive points at a show where an NFSS judge is judging. These points are determined by the number of birds shown in the division. All points are awarded in accordance with the schedule below and are not official until the official show report is received and the points are recorded by the NFSS Points Director.

<b>National Finch and Softbill Society POINTS SCHEDULE</b>										
<i>Entries</i>	<i>1st</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>	<i>5th</i>	<i>6th</i>	<i>7th</i>	<i>8th</i>	<i>9th</i>	<i>10th</i>
<i>20-29</i>	3	2	1							
<i>30-39</i>	4	3	2	1						
<i>40-49</i>	5	4	3	2	1					
<i>50-59</i>	6	5	4	3	2	1				
<i>60-79</i>	7	6	5	4	3	2	1			
<i>80-99</i>	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
<i>100-119</i>	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
<i>120-139</i>	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
<i>140-159</i>	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2
<i>160-189</i>	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3
<i>190-219</i>	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4
<i>220-259</i>	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5
<i>260-299</i>	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6
<i>300 &gt;</i>	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7

**Note:** In order for a softbill, finch, or dove to attain points, it must have been judged against all the birds in the Finch and Softbill Division. Points will not be allowed in a specialty show where finches are not judged against softbills or other birds within the division.

## Top Ten Shows in 1995

*All points summarized by Dr. Al Decoteau  
NFSS Points Chairman*

- 1 - National Cage Bird Show, New Orleans, LA - 205 entries  
Judge Roddy Gabel
- 2 - New York Finch and Canary Show, Long Island, NY - 174 entries  
Judge Joseph Krader
- 3 - Durham Avicultural Society of Canada, Pickering, Ont. - 163 entries  
Judge Tom Rood
- 4 - Aviary and Cage Bird Show, Margate, FL - 156 entries  
Judge Stephen Hoppin
- 5 - Capital City Bird Society, Roseville, CA - 140 entries  
Judge Tom Rood
- 6 - Illini Bird Fanciers, Shelbyville, IL - 129 entries  
Judge Martha Wigmore
- 7 - Florida State Fair, Tampa, FL - 120 entries  
Judge Conrad Meinert
- 8 - Great American Bird Show, Concord, CA - 109 entries  
Judge Miki Spartzak
- 8 - Fort Worth Bird Club, Arlington, TX - 109 entries  
Judge Tom Rood
- 10 - Florida State Fair, Tampa, FL - 108 entries  
Judge Clarence Culwell

## 1995 Exhibitor Awards

The Exhibitors of Excellence in 1995 are:

Frank and Sandy Hudson	- 222 points
Dale and Eileen Laird	- 214
Rick Szlachta	- 212
Chris Voronovitch	- 200

Champion Exhibitors of 1995 are:

Dale and Eileen Laird	- 108 points
June and Gene Miller	- 86
Frank and Sandy Hudson	- 78
Dennis Burhans	- 58
Sally Huniogton	- 56
Alvin and Dixie Lea	- 52
Patrick Vance	- 50

The Champion Birds for finches in 1995 are:

Yellow-rumped Diamond Sparrow - June and Gene Miller  
(Band - NFSS E112 "94")

Shafttail Fiach (Band C1552 "93") - Ellen Buchanan

## 1995 Individual Bird Point Records

These are the point standings for Finches and Softbills as of Dec. 1, 1995. The list is only for birds having 20 or more points. Contact Dr. Al Decoteau if you have any questions or comments with the results.

48 - Cinnamon Java Rice Bird (NFSS K58 "93")	- Patrick Vance
47 - Startling (SPBE BRA15 "93")	- Jacky Civitarese
41 - Fawn Parsons Finch (C215 "93")	- Pat and Mary Krichten
39 - Cherry Finch (D4948 "92")	- Dennis Burhans
38 - Green Singer (C511 "91")	- Virginia Patrick
38 - CFW Zebra (C3126 "91")	- Tom Rood

# 1995 Individual Bird Points Con't

37 - Normal Java Rice Bird (K463 "90")	- Jerri Wiesenfeld
37 - Normal Java Rice Bird (K493 "94")	- Dale and Eileen Laird
33 - Bronze-winged Mannikin (D7216 "89")	- Kris Kroner
33 - Fire Finch (B14 "94")	- Gene and June Miller
32 - Pintail Nonpareil (D3649 "91")	- Stephen Hoppin
31 - Black-crested Finch (E2331 "91")	- Stephen Hoppin
29 - Cordon-bleu (B268 "89")	- Pat and Mary Krichten
29 - Persa Turaco (SPBE DJL37 "93")	- Dale and Eileen Laird
28 - Parsons Finch (C197 "93")	- Pat and Mary Krichten
27 - Self Society (D1936 "91")	- Rick Szlachta
26 - Dilute Society (E446 "93")	- Dennis Burhans
23 - Red-headed Lady Gouldian (D2312 "90")	- Pat and Mary Krichten
23 - Fire Finch (B123 "92")	- Gene and June Miller
23 - Yellow-faced Star Finch (C192 "89")	- Gene and June Miller
22 - Shafttail (C2951 "92")	- Jan Thomas
22 - CFW Zebra (C3159 "91")	- Tom Rood
21 - Fire Finch (B2 "92")	- Gene and June Miller
21 - Crimson-winged Pytilia (C463 "91")	- Pat and Mary Krichten
20 - Shafttail (C35 "92")	- Patrick Vance
20 - Shafttail (C474 "94")	- Chuck Galusha

Toledo Bird Assn. & Zebra Finch Club of America

Toledo, OH, September 23, 1995

Judge: Paul Williams — 7 Exhibitors, 51 Entries

Points	Exhibitor	Species	Band # (Yr)
6	Patrick Vance	Grey Java	
5	Patrick Vance	Fawu Shafttail	
4	Patrick Vance	African Silverbill	C1021
3	Patrick Vance	Pair pied Stars	C3350&C1019
2	Patrick Vance	Crested Cinn/White Society	E4571
1	Donald Strause	Normal Gray Zebra male	D1576

**Motor City Bird Breeders, Inc.**  
**Detroit, MI, October 28, 1995**  
**Judge: Paul Williams — 3 Exhibitors, 16 Entries**

Points	Exhibitor	Species	Band # (Yr)
	Mary Terwilliger	Normal Shafttail	391 (92)
	"	" Startling	
	"	" Gray Java	

**Greater Chicago Cage Bird Club**  
**Rolling Meadows, IL, November 4, 1995**  
**Judge: Laura Bewley — 15 Exhibitors, 70 Entries**

Points	Exhibitor	Species	Band # (Yr)
7	Liana Lada	Normal Zebra male	
6	Liana Lada	Bronze-wiog Mannikin	GC59 (95)
5	Moss Av.	Mynah	
4	Patrick Vance	Normal Java	
3	Steve Hopman	Black-cheek Waxbill	
2	Mary Terwilliger	Startling	
1	Mary Terwilliger	Society	E1346 (95)

**New England Finch Fanciers**  
**East Hartford, CT, November 25, 1995**  
**Judge: Laura Bewley — 15 Exhibitors, 69 Entries**

Points	Exhibitor	Species	Band # (Yr)
7	Val Marques	European Goldfinch	
6	Laura MacDonald	Cut-throat Finch	
5	Sally Underhill	Indian Hill Mynah	
4	Nizaus Ali	Sbafetail	
3	Donald Strause	Zebra Finch	D1588 (95)
2	Alfredo Robles	Buoting	
1	Sally Underhill	Startling Pair	

# Proposed Cut-throat Finch Standard

(Ribbon Finch)

*Amadina fasciata*

Proposed by Armando J. Lee, for the *National Finch and Softbill Society*

Any comments should be sent to:

**Dr. Al Decoteau**

**P. O. Box 369**

**Groton, MA 01450**

CONFORMATION . . . . .	50 POINTS
Head and Body . . . . .	25 points
Wings . . . . .	15 points
Tail . . . . .	10 points
CONDITION . . . . .	20 POINTS
COLOR AND MARKINGS . . . . .	20 POINTS
DEPORTMENT AND PRESENTATION . . . . .	10 POINTS

## **CONFORMATION (50 POINTS)**

**(Distributed as follows)**

**HEAD AND BODY: 25 POINTS** From the beak to the tip of the tail should be 4-1/2 inches long. The head should look round and broad, blending with the neck and back. The beak should look strong, being short and conical. The Cut-throat should look thick-set, compact and muscular, a bird of substance. The chest is round and very noticeable. A lumpy chest will enhance a concave underside and should be considered a fault. The eyes should be round and in the center of the head and should be bright and alert. The legs should be parallel and at approximately 45% from the perch.

**WINGS: 15 POINTS** The wings should be pointed, held close against the body and meet evenly at the tail. Crossed wings are a fault.

**TAIL: 10 POINTS** The tail should be slightly round at the end. A tail hanging down or sticking up is at fault. A spread tail is also at fault.



## CONDITION (20 points)

Cut-throats love to bathe and should not be difficult to maintain. They should look clean with all feathers present. Soiled, frayed or missing feathers are a fault. Pin feathers, missing toes or toenails are also faults. Legs and feet should be clean and without any scales. Cut-throats are full body birds, but overweight birds are faulted.

## COLOR AND MARKINGS (20 points)

**COCKS:** Forehead, crown and nape are pale sandy brown with a pinkish tinge and two black bars across each feather. Mantle and back similar but with a more pronounced pink tinge and the black bars form an inverted "V", one bar is almost reduced to a black dot. On the lower rump and upper tail coverts the black bars are broad. The end of the feathers are a pale buff to creamy white. Wing coverts are darker and more grayish brown and the black bars are in the inverted "V" shape and have broad pinkish fawn tips. Central tail feathers brownish black. Outer tail feathers tipped with white. Upper throat and face are creamy white. A dark red band runs across the lower throat, extending to above the ear. This band is bordered at the low side by black feathers. Upper breast is creamy white shading to pinkish fawn. Lower breast and abdominal area are a dull chestnut. Flanks are pinkish fawn with black fringes, looking barred. Belly and vent are pale fawn to white. Bill is horn-gray to gray. Legs and feet are flesh color.

**HENS** Female Cut-throats lack the red band are slightly paler in color than the males.

## DEPORTMENT (5 POINTS)

The Cut-throat should look alert and steady. Should look at the judge without crouching or hunching. Wild behavior is a fault.

## PRESENTATION (5 POINTS)

Show in an NFSS size #2 cage, perches should allow the bird to have a full grip, 2 perches position in a way that lets the bird jump from perch to perch comfortably.



# National Finch and Softbill Society

## 1996 Affiliation Agreement

- \* Select a current NFSS member to represent your club
- \*\* Send the appropriate fee and all the enclosed form to **Jerry McCawley**, Affiliation Director, by **April 30, 1996**. Make checks payable to NFSS.
- \*\*\* The minimum affiliation fee is \$35.00.

\_\_\_\_\_ Base Affiliation Fee - \$10.00... Add to award fees.

This includes an Eric Peake lithograph "Diamond Sparrow".

\_\_\_\_\_ Service/Breeder Award Plaque - \$ 25.00

This is primarily for clubs that do not have shows. You will be entitled to a 7" X 9" plaque, to be used at your discretion. In addition, you will receive all NFSS publications.

\_\_\_\_\_ "Best in Show" Plaque - \$25.00 ( 7" X 9" )

\_\_\_\_\_ "Second Best in Show" Plaque - \$ 25.00 ( 6" X 8" )

\_\_\_\_\_ "Third Best in Show" Plaque - \$25.00 ( 6" X 8" )

\_\_\_\_\_ "Best Softbill in Show" Plaque - \$25.00 ( 6" X 8" )

\_\_\_\_\_ Rosettes - \$25.00

Ten long-streamer rosettes for the ten best finches or softbills, plus 3 rosettes for the three best unflighted finches or softbills. Unflighted birds are those close-banded with 1996 bands.

Please check the award (s) your club wants. Total the amounts plus the \$10.00 base affiliation fee and send check and forms to:

**Jerry McCawley, NFSS . . . 506 Candlewyck Rd . . . Lancaster, PA 17601**

\_\_\_\_\_ Total amount of check, payable to NFSS

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

Show Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Phone# \_\_\_\_\_

# NFSS Affiliates, Delegates & Shows

(Listing as of March 1, 1996)

## ALABAMA

**Central Alabama Avicultural Society**  
Ginny Allen (334) 749-7168

**Rocket City Cage Bird Club**  
Ron Clifton (205) 852-7155

## CALIFORNIA

**Aviary Assn. of Kern County**  
Willis & Velva Baker (805) 765-6110

**Capital City Bird Society**  
Dare B. Cagle (916) 944-2437

**Finch Society of San Diego County**  
Sharon Russell (619) 273-2005

**Fresno Canary and Finch Society**  
Dixie Lea (209) 584-3764

**Golden Gate Avian Society**  
Claudia Salo (510) 455-9909

**Santa Clara Valley Canary & Exotic  
Bird Club**  
Neil Crowley (408) 258-4601  
*Show November 30, 1996*  
Panel Judge Marty Von Raesfeld  
Santa Clara, CA

## COLORADO

**Rocky Mountain Society of Aviculture**  
Julie Kern (303) 753-6145

## CONNECTICUT

**Connecticut Association for Aviculture**  
Chris Voronovitch (203) 649-8220

**New England Finch Fanciers**  
Russell Armitage, Jr. (203) 756-1753

## FLORIDA

**Aviary & Cage Bird Society of South  
Florida**  
Phil Barth (305) 426-5340

**Central Florida Bird Breeders**  
Eugene F. Goss, Jr. (407) 957-1274

**Colorbred Canary Club of Miami**  
Armando J. Lee (305) 270-1000

**Exotic Bird Club of Florida**  
Jonathan Jones (407) 724-9498

**Florida West Coast Avian Society**

**Florida State Fair Exotic Bird Show**  
Dale Laird (407) 657-7989

### *Double Show*

February 17, 1996 *Saturday*  
Panel Judge: Daren Decoteau

February 18, 1996 *Sunday*  
Panel Judge: Harold Bowles  
Tampa, FL

**Greater Brandon Avian Society, Inc.**  
John Floyd (813) 677-7679

**Sun Coast Avian Society**  
Joe Ventimiglia (813) 392-9391

**Sunshine State Cage Bird Society**  
Dale Laird (407) 657-7989

*Show October 12, 1996*  
Panel Judge: Clarence Culwell  
Chuluota, FL

\* not NFSS affiliate, but points  
earnable under NFSS Panel Judge.

**GEORGIA**

Georgia Cage Bird Society  
Candy Wright (404) 633-4364

**HAWAII**

Honolulu Canary and Finch Club  
Kathy Perreira (808) 839-2269

**ILLINOIS**

Greater Chicago Cage Bird Club  
Jane Muscato (708) 305-9043

**Illini Bird Fanciers**

Jan Marcott (217) 347-9690

Show June 1, 1996

Panel Judge Clarence Culwell  
Effingham, IL

National Institute of Red-Orange  
Canaries (NIROC)

Stephan V. Hopman (815) 469-8455

Springfield Pet Bird Club

**INDIANA**

Indiana Bird Fanciers  
Conrad Meinert (219) 269-2873

**IOWA**

Mid-America Cage Bird Society

**KANSAS**

Kansas Avicultural Society  
Jim Cowan (316) 263-8835

**KENTUCKY**

Central Kentucky Cage Bird Society  
Patricia Wilkins (606) 271-0273

**LOUISIANA**

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Tim Schexnaydre (504) 562-3579

Gulf South Bird Club, Inc.

Jeanne Murphy (504) 833-4241

**MARYLAND**

Baltimore Bird Fanciers

Maryland Cage Bird Society  
Theresa Brown (301) 735-7662

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Mary Lou Tewilliger (517) 463-5695

Mid-West Cage-Bird Club, Inc.  
Patrick Vance (810) 443-0643

Motor City Bird Breeders, Inc.  
Robert Zalewski (313) 356-5942  
Show October 26, 1996

Panel Judge Harold Bowles  
Warren, MI

Society of Canary and Finch Breeders  
Patrick Vance (810) 443-0643

**MISSOURI**

Greater Kansas City Avic. Society  
Nita Haas (816) 331-5285

Heart of America Hookbill & Finch  
Society

Moses Linn (816) 523-4661

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AFFILIATES**

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**Budgerigar & Foreign Bird Society  
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Jim Marks (416) 292-3852

**Cage Bird Society of Hamilton**

**Durham Avicultural Society of  
Ontario**

Vincent Moase (905) 723-1978

**Essex-Kent Cage Bird Society**

Alfred Mion (519) 948-6398

**NFSS  
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**AUSTRALIA**

**Queensland Finch Society**  
Gavin Dietz, P.O. Box 1600,  
Coorparoo DC 4151  
Queensland, Australia

**GREAT BRITAIN**

**The Estrildian**

Ian Hinze, Coetref, Tyn Lon,  
Holyhead, Gwynedd LL65 3LJ,  
Wales, United Kingdom

**The Waxbill Finch Society**

Mr. Buzz Hope-Inglis,  
10 Litchfield Close, Plympton,  
Plymouth PL7 3UU, England

**Zebra Finch Society, England**

Margaret Binns, 97 Bent Lanes,  
Davyhulme, Nr. Urmston, Manchester,  
M31 8WZ England

**NEW ZEALAND**

**New Zealand Finch Breeders Assn.**  
293 Albany Highway  
Albany, New Zealand

**Missouri Cage Bird Association**

Richard & Rose Dickman  
(314) 928-3444

**NEW HAMPSHIRE**

**Birds of a Feather Avicultural Society**

**NEW MEXICO**

**New Mexico Bird Club, Inc.**  
Gail Ranshaw (505) 822-1483

**NEW YORK**

**Finger Lakes Cage Bird Association**

Rena Rouse (315) 252-7673

**New York Finch & Type Canary Club**

Marie Grein (718) 468-0881

**Rochester Cage Bird Club**

Patrick Goonan (716) 288-5653

**NORTH CAROLINA**

**Raleigh-Durham Caged Bird Society**

April Blazich (919) 851-8079

**Smokey Mtn. Cage Bird Society**

Jim Cody (704) 686-5157

OHIO

**Fort Defiance Bird Club**  
Larry Endsley (419) 263-2795

**Toledo Bird Assn. & Zebra Finch Club  
of America**

Robert Ayling (419) 536-8736

OKLAHOMA

**Bird Fanciers of Oklaboma**  
Gene and June Miller (405) 382-7066

**Oklahoma Cage Bird Society**  
Doug Paris (918) 446-2447

OREGON

**The Finch Connection**  
Julie Duimstra (503) 757-3117

**Rose City Exotic Bird Club**

PENNSYLVANIA

**Central Pennsylvania Cage Bird  
Society**

Donald Strause (610) 926-5210  
*Show* September 28, 1996  
Panel Judge Hal Koontz  
Grantville, PA

**Chester County Bird Breeders**  
Roe Prieman (unlisted)

**Delaware Valley Bird Club**  
Kris Kroner (215) 628-4143

**Greater Pittsburgh Cage Bird Society**  
Dr. Lindsay Clack (412) 363-6438

**Northeastern Penn. Cage Bird Club**  
Gary Fino (717) 829-3891

PUERTO RICO

**Organización Puertorriqueña de Aves**

**Exoticas, Inc.**  
Rafael Echevarria (809) 795-5718

SOUTH CAROLINA

**Palmetto Cage Bird Club**  
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TENNESSEE

**Middle Tennessee Cage Bird Club**  
Eva Duffey (615) 361-5939

TEXAS

**Bay Area Cage Bird Club**  
Linda Beeman (713) 485-0291

**Capital City Cage Bird Club**  
Fenton R. Mereness (512) 310-1802

**Fort Worth Bird Club**  
Clarence Culwell (817) 220-5568

**Texas Bird Breeders and Fanciers  
Association**  
Clarence Culwell (817) 220-5568

**Texas Canary Club**  
Chris Davis (713) 361-3364

VIRGINIA

**Peninsula Cage Bird Society**  
Linda Oja (804) 874-8581

WISCONSIN

**Badger Canary Fanciers Ltd.**  
Patrice (Ripple) Brusk (414) 785-8988

# FINCHSHOP

the National Finch and Softbill Society store

ITEM	QTY	SIZE/ STYLE	PRICE EACH	TOTAL AMT
NEW T-Shirt for 1995! 10 Colorful Finches in Stalks of Grass w/NFSS		M/L/XL/XXL (circle size) All 50/50 White	\$18.00	
Video "The Wonderful World of Finches and Soft- bills: An Introduction"		Members & Affiliates: Non-Members:	\$17.00 \$22.00	
Show Cage Plans (see sizes below)			\$4.00	
All 3 Show Cage Plans			\$10.00	
NFSS Plastic Water Bottle			\$6.00	
NFSS Zebra Pin			\$5.00	
NFSS Gouldian Pin			\$6.00	
Eric Peake Lithograph The Diamond Firetails Signed by the artist			\$35.00	
Name Badge (members only)		Print name at bottom of form.	\$5.00	
Past <i>Bulletin</i> Issues-1994 and later issues			\$4.00	
-1993 and earlier issues			\$3.00	
1995 NFSS Handbook (Membership Yearbook)		Includes Census, Index & <u>much more</u> (Jul/Aug '95 issue)	\$4.00	
NFSS Judges Handbook and Official Standards '95		In handsome small 3-ring binder. Updated in 1995!	\$10.00	

## NFSS SHOW CAGE PLANS

- # 1 Cage Finches up to and including Zebras
- # 2 Cage Finches larger than Zebras
- # 3 Cage Softbills

Member

Name \_\_\_\_\_ # \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

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

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mail form and payment  
(payable to NFSS) to

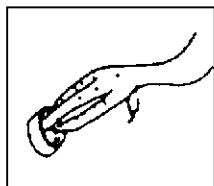
## FINCHSHOP

c/o Julie Duimstra  
4400 NW Walnut Blvd. #68  
Corvallis, OR 97330

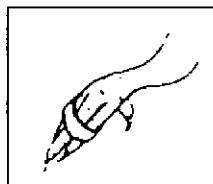
For more information call  
(541) 757-3117

# LEG BANDING PROCEDURE

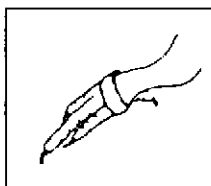
courtesy of  
**The National Finch and Softbill Society**



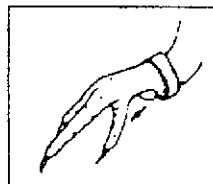
The most important thing to remember when banding chicks is to do it over a counter or table so if the chick is dropped it doesn't fall to the floor. The age to band varies between species but is generally between 5 and 10 days. You can tell by looking at the ankle joint (the joint where the toes come together) and the size of the band.



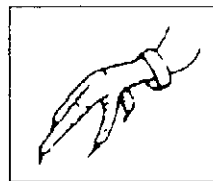
Have the bands, a toothpick (or other small blunt instrument) and some lubricant ready. Be sure you have the bands "right side up" for easier reading.



The band is generally placed on the bird's right leg. Banding just before the parents go to roost in the evening will 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 now should be in the proper location between the ankle and the elbow joints.



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

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 *NFSS*, size code, year and number. No choice of numbers.

**NO RUSH ORDERS!**  
Allow 30 days from receipt of your order for delivery.  
*Cashier's Check or Money Order* will expedite your order.  
Anticipate your needs to avoid frequent re-orders.

All orders are recorded for permanent reference. Bands are ordered in strings of ten, all the same size. New members may order before receiving membership number. Write "New" for membership # on order form.

BAND SIZE	# OF STRINGS	PRICE/ STRING	TOTAL AMT
A		\$2.75	
B		\$2.75	
C		\$2.75	
D		\$2.75	
E		\$2.75	
G		\$2.75	
J		\$2.75	
K		\$2.75	
L		\$2.75	

**POSTAL INSURANCE:**

Under \$50 - \$.75

From \$50 to \$100 - \$1.60

Over \$100 - \$2.50

If you choose not to include this sum NFSS will not be responsible for replacement of bands lost in shipment.

SUBTOTAL \_\_\_\_\_

INSURANCE \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Membership # \_\_\_\_\_

Mail form and payment payable to **NFSS** to:

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

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

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Ms. Eileen Laird  
NFSS Band Secretary  
1166 Village Forest Pl.  
Winter Park, FL 32792  
(407) 657-7989

# THE NATIONAL FINCH AND SOFTBILL SOCIETY

## MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

The National Finch and Softbill Society is dedicated to the preservation of all finch and softbill species.

- NFSS Bulletin*** Our bi-monthly *Bulletin* connects you with other finch and softbill keepers around the country. It includes articles on diet, breeding, management and the experiences of other aviculturists. NFSS keeps you abreast of the news on legislation.
- FINCHSAVE*** The goal of *FINCHSAVE* is to establish and maintain all finch and softbill species in American aviculture. All members are encouraged to enhance the propagation of finches and softbills.
- Census*** The annual NFSS Census can connect you with other breeders for the purpose of exchanging information or breeding stock.
- Leg Bands*** NFSS offers, to members, closed traceable leg bands, in 9 sizes.
- Affiliations*** Your club can affiliate and receive plaques and rosettes as show awards. Non-show clubs, too, can affiliate and receive service awards for members. Speakers are available, with slide programs that feature finches and softbills.
- National Show*** All members are encouraged to attend and participate in NFSS' National show. An International Patronage Exchange brings awards from foreign countries.
- Judges Panel*** Composed of individuals who have completed the apprenticeship program, all NFSS Panel Judges judge by the NFSS Standard of Judging, are approved by the Board of Directors, and are available to local clubs.
- Standards*** At mid-year 1995 NFSS had exhibition standards for twelve species, including the first standard for softbill species, and several more in the works.
- Champions*** NFSS sponsors a "Champion Exhibitor" and "Champion Bird" awards program. Both reward high achievements on the show bench.
- FINCHSHOP*** The sales division of NFSS offers various items for sale to members. The profits are used to support the Society's other programs.

*Join with us...Send in your application...Today!*

## NFSS Classified Ads

Classified ads (except *FINCHSAVE* ads) are \$.15 per word, per issue.

### FOR SALE

**Gouldians- Normals, White-breasted, Dilute/Yellow, Shafttails-Normal, Fawn & Cream, Stars- Normal, Yellow-faced & Pied, Owls, Plumheads (Cherries)-Normal & Fawn, Strawberries.** Most NFSS Banded. Societies. Send SASE to: Ken's Exotic Finches  
P.O.Box 23241(NFSS)  
Cincinnati, OH 45223  
or (513) 541-6411 early evenings

ja96

**Cuban Black Bull Finches** and Cuban Melodious, cage bred, available in pairs. Gerry Cherta (FL) (305) 635-4800, 8 to 5pm.

ja96

**Show Quality Zebra Finches.** Many varieties, cage-bred, NFSS banded. Also Yellow Stars, Fires, Java Rice (fawn, pied), Parrot Finches, Owls, Shafttails. Reasonable & NFSS banded. The Gilded Cage, Sally Underhill (NY) (914) 473-0301, (914) 473-9182 eve.

ma96

**Gouldians, Owls, Fires, Parrot Finches, Pekin Robins, Silver Button Quail, Diamond Doves** and more... Send stamped envelope for list. Feather Call, 120 Scotts Chute. El Sobrante, CA 94803 or call phone(510) 758-8884 fax.(510) 223-0928

**European Goldfinch** \$85 each. Pierre Ata, 13119 Sundale Rd., Houston, TX 77038. (713) 448-1188.

ma96

**Blue Gouldians.** Look no further! My prices and quality of birds can't be beat. Many proven show birds. Kyle Bolton, 535 W. Broadway, Red Lion, PA 17356 (717) 246-0936.

mj96

**Gold-breast, Owls, & Blue-caps,** 1995-96 NFSS Banded. Contact Rose at (941) 992-6331

ma96

### WANTED

**Wanted: Scaly Crowned Weavers.** Singles or pairs. Call Marie (NY) (718) 468-0881.

ja96

**FINCHSAVE classifieds run FREE** of charge to **FINCHSAVE** participants. All readers are welcome to respond to **FINCHSAVE** ads.

### NFSS Bulletin Advertising Rates

#### Display (camera ready) Ads:

Full page \$50/issue; \$200/year  
Half page \$30/issue; \$120/year  
Qtr. page \$20/issue; \$80/year  
Inside cover \$70/issue; \$300/year

#### Classified Advertisements

FINCHSAVE: free to participants  
Others: \$.15 per word, per issue

#### Deadlines

12/1, 2/1, 4/1, 6/1, 8/1, 10/1  
for next bi-monthly issue.

#### Send ad and payment (payable to NFSS) to

Robert Petris  
NFSS Bulletin Editor  
4325 NE 53rd St.  
Kansas City, MO 64119  
(816) 459-9800