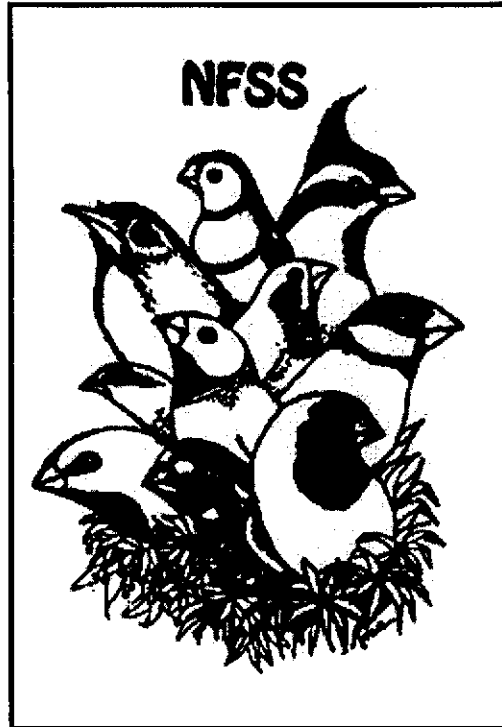


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2000  
Volume 17,  
No. 6

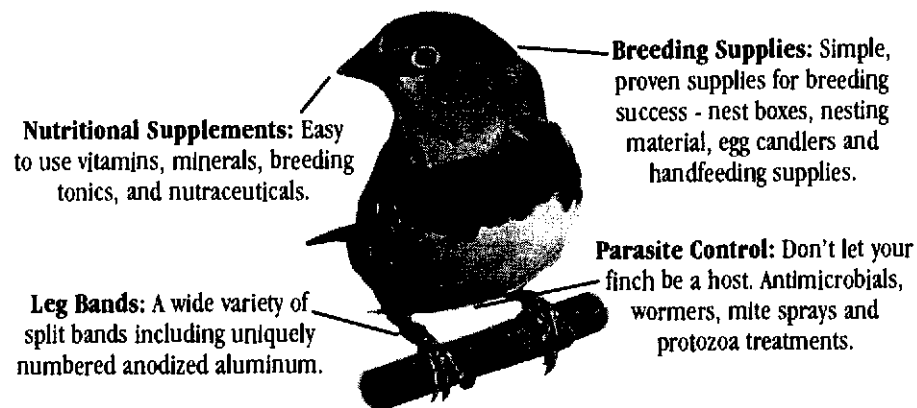
National Finch and Softbill Society



**Articles Include:**

- ◆ Diets for Finches and Softbills (*Robert G. Black*)
- ◆ Insect Food for Finches (*Randy Taylor*)
- ◆ Silver-eared Mesias (*Grant Rishman*)
- ◆ The Fourth Factor to Breeding Success (*Ian Hinze*)
- ◆ Too Many Birds? (*Michael Marcotrigiano*)
- ◆ Why Do People Raise Birds? (*Vince Huntington*)
- ◆ Talking Finches (*Julie Duimstra*)

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## The NFSS Bulletin

Home Office  
4310 Ascot Road, Hephzibah, GA 30815  
<http://NFSS.net>

Publisher: The National Finch and Softbill Society  
Editor: Steve Poe

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The NFSS Bulletin is published bi-monthly by the National Finch and Softbill Society. The following deadlines normally apply to all aspects of the Bulletin:

Issue	Deadline for Submissions	Mailed (Target Date)
Volume 1, January/February	January 1st	February 1st
Volume 2, March/April	March 1st	April 1st
Volume 3, May/June	May 1st	June 1st
Volume 4, July/August	July 1st	August 1st
Volume 5, September/October	September 1st	October 1st
Volume 6, November/December	November 1st	December 1st

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## President's Message

I cannot believe it is the end of the year already. What a great year we have had. I will not bore you with everything we have accomplished, but do have several items I want to go over. Have you looked at the Finchshop section of the web site yet? ([www.NFSS.org](http://www.NFSS.org)) It looks fabulous. Pictures of the items and an order form you can print to place your order. At this writing we are implementing a credit card purchase program for Finchshop. Look for many new items to be added over the next few months. Are you a vendor who wants to offer your products through Finchshop? Drop Shipment work for you? Give Annette Howard, the Finchshop director, a call and see if our arrangement will work for you. When I wrote this, one of our members was in negotiations for adding a show cage and hand drawn notepaper to Finchshop. I would really like to see a good jewelry and garment distributor agree to drop ship orders through Finchshop. I know we have many members with products for sale that will fit very nicely into what Finchshop is offering both on the Internet and through the Bulletin.

We have three positions requiring a vote by the membership. **Please see the election ballot on page 17** of this issue and vote for the person nominated to fill the position or provide a write-in vote. In the 3rd Quarter Board meeting a motion was passed to establish an E-mail list limited to NFSS members. I have been on it several times just before writing this and have already been discussing how to sex Chinese White Headed Bulbuls. If you want quick messages you can receive them individually or if you are like me and want to get them all at once, receive a digest once a day. This works well for me since I normally check my e-mail in the evenings. Go to the NFSS web site to sign up or see the directions in this issue. A special thanks goes to John Wilson for stepping forward and volunteering to run this program for NFSS.

Look for another raffle to be conducted by Kerri McCoy the 1st Vice President in 2001. She already has three pair of birds and is busy putting together other donations for the fundraiser. We are also looking into a membership drive. More details to follow. 2001 is shaping up to be a very exciting year and I hope you find it as productive as I expect it to be for the National Finch and Softbill Society.

Dale Laird  
President NFSS

## DIETS FOR FINCHES AND SOFTBILLS SIMPLE OR COMPLICATED?

by Robert G. Black

When we discuss feeding and diets, for many breeders there is first a very sharp dividing line between the diets used for maintenance and daily feeding, and the diets that must be used for feeding a breeding pair of birds. I have never subscribed to this belief, and every bird I have kept for several decades has received the same diet every day of the year, whether breeding or simply on a maintenance schedule. The birds will eat very little of the most nutritious foods and a greater quantity of seed when they are not breeding.

If you must feed different diets, make sure that the maintenance diet for any finches or softbills have all of the nutrients that a pair of birds needs, but in the limited quantities that they need. Particularly with respect to its content of complete protein, the maintenance diet will be completely inadequate for a pair of breeding birds, especially when they are feeding a nest of growing youngsters.

The breeding diet for most finches and softbills must be over 20% complete protein, and it must contain an abundance of the other required nutrients to be adequate for feeding a clutch of growing nestlings. Though some few species will manage quite well on a diet with a protein content less than 20%, as examples: the Society Finch; Zebra Finch; and budgies, most species require a content of over 20%, and from 25% to 30% complete protein is best for successful rearing of their offspring. The waxbills all need this higher protein content, as do most of the softbills.

Of course, protein is only one of the requirements for the hatching and growth of a nestful of babies to maturity. Every vitamin, mineral and fatty acid must also be included in the diet, or at some point before hatching, or during growth, the babies will die. Often in these cases, it is virtually impossible to determine which nutrient was lacking and thus caused the death before hatching or during the rapid growth of the nestlings.

Breeders who are having problems frequently send me lists of the items fed to their birds which seem unhealthy or are failing to breed, and almost invariably, these diets are extremely time-consuming and complicated, as well as expensive. A simple, complete diet is often far more effective in supplying the birds everything they need for breeding. And, of course, there are as many different successful diets for finches and softbills as there are breeders of birds!

Nutrients are widespread in foods, and any mix of both plant and animal products can provide a complete diet for your birds. By plant products, I mean anything from a plant source, such as seeds, seed meals, greens, and vegetables. By animal products, I mean anything that comes from the animal kingdom, including, meat, fish, eggs, milk, insects and worms. Animal sources are nearly all good sources of complete protein – the only exception I have found is gelatin, which is an animal product, but because of its processing is not complete protein.

If your diet contains fifty different items and mixes, all of them from the plant kingdom, it will still be inadequate for life. This is because there are several vital nutrients that are found only in animal products. Primary among these are vitamin B<sub>12</sub> (cobalamin), vitamin A, and vitamin D<sub>3</sub>.

Vitamin B<sub>12</sub> can be detected in some plant products, notably comfrey, but it is there as a contaminant, not needed by the plant, but absorbed in trace amounts through the roots that are exposed to either *Streptomyces* bacteria in the soil or to a class of soil microorganisms called actinomycetes. **These microscopic life forms are the only living things on this earth that can make vitamin B<sub>12</sub>.** All other animal life depends on these microorganisms for their lives and their continued existence, including us. Laboratories produce great quantities of vitamin B<sub>12</sub> as a byproduct of the culture of *Streptomyces* bacteria that are bred to create the antibiotic, streptomycin.

Though the yellow and orange pigments in plant matter are carotene pigments, which a healthy body can transform into vitamin A, **no plant product contains preformed vitamin A.** Birds need a source of the preformed vitamin A in their diets in order to have an

adequate supply in their diet. Diets that contain no animal products contain too little vitamin A to maintain birds in good health and certainly far too little for successful breeding.

With respect to vitamin D, the form of vitamin D found in plants is D<sub>2</sub>. Though most animals and humans can use D<sub>2</sub> quite effectively, birds cannot use vitamin D<sub>2</sub> to fulfill their need for this vitamin. They must have vitamin D<sub>3</sub>, which occurs only in foods from animal sources. Alternately, birds can form vitamin D<sub>3</sub> on their skin when the skin is exposed to the ultraviolet rays of sunlight. Birds maintained indoors do not have this advantage. The technical name for vitamin D<sub>3</sub> is cholecalciferol.

A complicated diet is not necessarily a good diet. Many years ago while I was keeping 2000 breeding birds, their care required a lot of time and effort. Consequently, the simplest complete diet requiring the least preparation was the best for my use. Cost was also a major factor, as 2000 birds, even finches, eat a heck of a lot in a day's time. When you consider their consumption of food over a year's time, it is breathtaking. These tiny bundles of energy even on a simple maintenance diet usually eat about half of their body weight in food every day.

As an example, say a finch weighs one ounce, so this bird eats one-half ounce of food every day. 2000 finches will then consume 1000 ounces of food each day on a maintenance diet. That translates to 62.5 pounds each day. Multiply that out, and these birds are eating over 22,812 pounds of food per year. Yikes! That's over 11 TONS of food per year, just for a maintenance diet! Finches that are feeding a nest of young will probably consume twice their own body weight in food each day, so they'll be eating four times that much. Feeding birds can become VERY expensive!

If you are feeding lots of vegetables and greens, you are multiplying the cost of your feeding program many times over. Why? Because most of these vegetable items are over 90% water. Greens that you can grow yourself are a cheap food, but if you have to buy them at a commercial outlet, you'll pay at least three or four dollars per pound for them. At three dollars per pound, you are paying for a lot of water. This raises the actual cost for the food value



of the item to over \$25.00 per pound! For that price, you can get a 25 pound bag of shelled, chopped sunflower seed at any large feed store, and it will be 95% food value. Sunflower seeds have a very low water content, usually 5% or less.

Over a number of years, especially after a thorough study of nutrition, I was able to settle on just a few items that make up a complete, and relatively inexpensive diet for the birds. I have also been very gratified to find over the last few months that this limited diet, minus the hard seeds, is also complete for softbills. One of those items is chopped, shelled, sunflower seed.

The first thing many breeders would say is "I tried shelled sunflower seed for the finches, and they wouldn't eat it." Well, birds become as set in their ways as people do, but if they get hungry enough, they will try anything that is in their cage. By simply cleaning the cage and sprinkling sunflower chips over the floor of the cage, I have been able to get every finch to eat these sunflower pieces. Once they recognize that this is a good food, they will eat it daily and regularly.

When young birds fledge and leave the nest, every food item that you intend to feed them should be scattered around on the floor of the cage. As the fledglings grow and begin pecking around, they will sample everything in the cage to see if it is edible. If you have all of your normal diet items scattered on the floor of the cage, they will try all of these items, discover that it's all food, and they will begin eating everything as they mature and become independent. When they become independent, they will be eating every item you feed on a regular basis. If your diet is complete, you will then have birds raised under your own conditions that are eating a complete diet that they will in turn feed to their own young when they begin breeding.

Birds don't need feeding dishes. It's people that need dishes. The birds are perfectly happy to eat their food off of the floor of the cage. The only purpose a feeding dish serves is to prevent the birds from scattering too much of the food around. As anyone who keeps finches will confirm, however, it doesn't work, and they will still scatter seed and other food items everywhere.

Though many breeders are scared to death of egg spoiling, or feel that it is too "rich" to feed on a regular basis, I have used mashed, hard-boiled egg as my primary nestling food and as the primary source of basic nutrients for daily maintenance of non-breeding birds ever since I discovered that the main problem with egg foods was that people were adding so much trash food to the mix that it was less than 25% egg when they got it mixed. My own egg mix, after adding powdered vitamin-mineral supplement to it, is still over 90% egg. Every bird I have ever had loves this egg mix, and this includes all finches, doves, parakeets, cockatiels, and birds as demanding in their eating habits as lories, lorikeets, and waxwings.

When you feed an item such as egg, or one of the commercial pelleted foods, feed it free choice. By free choice, I mean that you should always give the birds all that they will consume during the day, and let their instincts tell them how much they need each day. Believe me, the bird's instincts are a far better judge of what the bird needs nutritionally than any knowledge you or I could possibly have. Too many feel that they are so well informed that they can set out the exact portion of each food that the birds need each day, and have it perfect for every bird. That is a total impossibility. Nutrition is not that simple, and the nutrient requirements for every bird within a species will be different – this is one of nature's safety nets to prevent the natural extinction of a species when food items become very limited, which actually happens with every drought, hurricane, flood and unexpected freeze.

By feeding each item free choice, you can let the bird's instincts take over. Their instincts will be a far better guide for the bird's health and breeding than any decision you can possibly make concerning their needs. Birds that have an item available constantly will never overeat of that item, while birds deprived of a nutritious food for a long time are quite likely to overeat. In the case of such items as salt and grit, overeating can cause death.

Last, use your common sense when you are working with your finches and softbills. As an example, one prominent book on the Gouldian Finch states emphatically that you must expect to lose

50% of your offspring during their first molt. That comment is an insult to a hardy, beautiful finch that I have kept at temperatures below freezing in perfect health, and shows the abysmal ignorance of nutrition that that author possesses. A 50% mortality rate indicates malnutrition on a grand scale. I have never experienced any loss of Gouldians in their first molt greater than the normal attrition experienced in the older birds.

Old wives tales such as this are a prominent part of the written history of aviculture. Don't believe everything you read or hear just because someone was a writer, had a publisher, or was a good speaker. Everyone makes mistakes, either from lack of experience or from simply stupid blunders. I once neglected to give a newly set up cage of birds water, and didn't discover the error for two full days. Very fortunately for me, the temperature was in the 50's on the Fahrenheit thermometer during that period, and birds need far less water at lower temperatures, so no harm was done. On a hot summer day, I would have had a cage of dead birds.

As you handle either finches, softbills, or any other bird in captivity, you spend the time to learn all that you can about their native habitats, their breeding habits, mating rituals and nesting habits. All of this is important to your eventual success in keeping and breeding the species. If you would double or triple your chances of success, learn enough about the nutritional requirements of your birds so that you understand just how little you really know.

End

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Robert G. Black is an aviculturist living in Lafayette, California. His books include "Nutrition of Finches and Other Cage Birds", "Problems with Finches", "Establishing a Breeding Strain in Aviculture", "Society Finches as Foster Parents", "Cockatiels: Their Care and Breeding", and "Avian Nutrition", in addition to numerous articles and fact sheets that have been written over the last 30 years.

**Insect Food for Finches**  
**Flightless Fruit Flies, Freeze-Dried Ants and Bevo**  
by Randy Taylor

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In my attempts to breed some of the African Waxbill Finches (*Estrilda*, *Lagonosticta* and *Uraeginthus*), I found that mealworms alone did not always fulfill the birds needs when they had young in the nest. The more variety in this type of food, the greater the chances of success. The thought of white worms 'swimming' around in wet compost was not particularly appealing to me.

I sort of 'stumbled' upon the idea of using fruit flies indoors when the birds were observed catching small flying insects in the outdoor aviaries. I thought that if I could provide them with a steady supply of these tiny insects that there would be a much greater chance of having breeding success and I was right. The birds seemed to enjoy catching the flying bugs. This form of insects has been supplied for many years by aviculturalists for their birds in outdoor aviaries.

I had heard somewhere that there are fruit flies that can't fly. I did not want to have the flying species loose in my house, so I searched the internet for a source of the 'flightless' species. It took me awhile but a supplier was finally located. The flightless fruit fly cultures were purchased from "Timberline Fisheries" in Marion, Illinois. They have a web-site at: [ww.timberlinefisheries.com](http://ww.timberlinefisheries.com), but their order page did not work when I ordered my flies.

*Editor's Note: I placed an order with Timberline Fisheries shortly after receiving this article, and the order page was fully functional.*

Anyone that is having problems with their breeders throwing out their young might consider this form of live food for their birds. Though they are very small insects, the fruit flies will make a difference in giving the adults a new choice in feeding their young. Birds in the wild have to 'work' for what they feed their young and catching these flies gives them that sense of doing their 'job'. If you are interested you can check out their web-site before you order, or you

can place an order by phone. They have a toll free number: 800-423-2248. They will accept credit card orders and re-ordering is a breeze. They also have a catalog that they will send to you which lists some of their other insects and how to care for them.

There are two varieties of the flightless fruit flies: *Drosophila melanogaster* and *Hydei sturdivant*. The *Drosophila* are smaller than the *Hydei* but they have a faster rate of production and shorter life cycle than the *Hydei*. *Drosophila*'s life cycle is between 12-15 days while *Hydei*'s is about 25 days. The *Hydei* species is about 1/8 inch long as adults and the *Drosophila* are quite a bit smaller. I purchased their "fruit fly culture kit" which includes 2 cultures of either fly species, 6 culture jars and medium for growing them for \$25.00 (I purchased the *Drosophila* species).

Once the cultures were going, they were switched to pint canning jars with a fine mesh over the top (the same as I use for sprouting my seed) until ready to place into the cages or flights. I had to order more medium for this as I place a jar into each cage (sometimes two jars, the more jars the more flies) and lay the jar on it's side so that not all of the flies will 'escape'. They tend to congregate at the top of the culture and if left just standing up-right, all of the adults would be eaten before they lay more eggs into the medium to keep it going. Only use about an inch of the dry culture medium in the bottom of the jar then add a little more than the same amount of water.

I have found that to start a culture, you can place 12-15 flies into the jar and within 2 or 3 days there will be larvae crawling around in the medium. Once the larvae have 'ate' their fill, they will leave the moist culture and attach themselves to either the sides of the jar or to the plastic tube mesh that is included in the kit. At this stage, the larvae will soon turn into pupae in preparation for becoming adults. It sits at room temperature for a couple of more days until the first pupae start to 'hatch' into adults (these will be a 'pale' version of the older adults) and then cut out a small hole in the mesh large enough for the flies to get through and place it in the cage with the jar laying on its side. Don't make the hole too large or all the flies will get out and soon it would stop producing flies. As long as there are some adults and moist culture medium in the jar, it will continue to produce. There will be more flies hatching every day.

If you make the mesh large enough, you can just move it to position the 'hole' so that the flies can escape without having to 'ruin' the mesh and you can re-use it over and over for the same jar. The medium will sort of settle down when it is placed on its side, but it will not harm the culture. I keep an eye on the culture to make sure it is still producing every day (adults in the jar will signify this). New cultures are started about every week or so to keep the birds in supply. The birds were afraid of the jars at first, but soon learned that there was 'live' food there and are eager to eat them. This system will work very well indoors.

For outdoors, just a can or jar with some over-ripe fruit (bananas for instance) will do the trick for the flying species of flies or you can use the 'flightless' species but it will soon become contaminated by the flying species as this is dominant over the flightless characteristics. The flies will just 'show up' in the rotten fruit. Wire mesh ( $\frac{1}{2}$  or  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch) should be placed over the top of the fruit culture to prevent the birds from getting into it. Since the flying species can escape from the birds, there should always be some adults that survive to keep the culture going. You will just need to keep adding more fruit on a regular basis. Either flying or flightless flies will give the birds some exercise as they catch them. I also give my birds the mini size mealworms only when they have young in the nest. The flies can be a stimulus to breeding when a pair is set-up in the breeding enclosure.

About getting birds to eating some of the dried insect and egg foods, it is much easier if you can place a bird in with them that will take these foods such as a Society or any other bird that will eat them. I was lucky in that I purchased some birds that had been cage bred and were already used to the commercial foods and the wild caught ones just checked it out since they had observed others eating it. I feed Bevo and Turbo dry in small containers and only refill as they get empty. They will not take a large amount of this unless they are feeding chicks. They will prefer the live insects over this no matter if they eat the Bevo or dried ants prior to having young or not.

As far as the freeze dried ants, I was extremely disappointed when I first received them as they were very expensive and looked like something that I thought the birds would not eat. I was fooled how-

ever, as the birds scatter them around and do eat them. The ants themselves are a green color and are very large, most with wings. They are about one half inch long. There are supposed to be 'eggs' included, and although I can't find any in the product, but the seller assures me that they are there. They are very expensive and you can get a gallon jar (will last a long time) which is the minimum size for \$60.00 plus shipping. You can find them at: Cuttlebone Plus, PO Box 305, Fallbrook, CA 92088. 800-747-9878. The owners e-mail address is: dws911@earthlink.net His name is Dick Schroeder.

I hope that this information has been helpful to at least one breeder. I have no problem in sharing information and will help in anyway that I can. If anyone has questions, or wants to learn more, feel free to contact me at the address below.

End

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## Shows and Events 2000

For corrections or additions, please contact me @ [stevepoe@mindspring.com](mailto:stevepoe@mindspring.com) or the address/phone on page 5 of this bulletin.

### DECEMBER

1-3	Colorbred Canary Club of Miami	No location or judge listed
16-17	Sociedad de Avicultores Puertorriquenos	Bayamon PR
	Judge TBA	

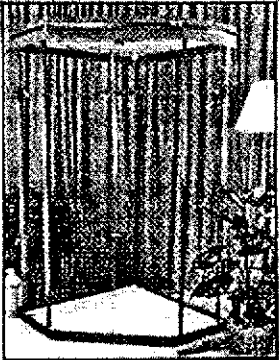
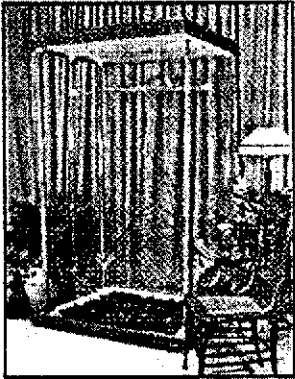
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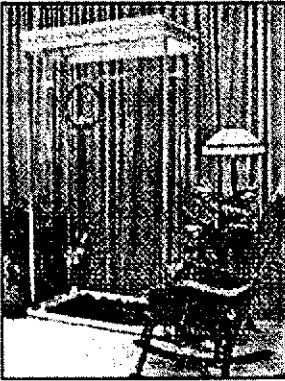
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## ELECTION BALLOT

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

**Liaison.**

Ginny Allen \_\_\_\_\_ Write In \_\_\_\_\_

**All members Please vote.**

**Region 3 Vice President**

Darla Dandre \_\_\_\_\_ Write in \_\_\_\_\_

**Region 3 members ONLY please vote**

**Region 5 Vice President**

Anna Sinclair \_\_\_\_\_ Write in \_\_\_\_\_

**Region 5 members ONLY please vote**

Please mail all ballots to: Dale Laird, PO Box 2459  
Goldenrod, FL 32733  
Email DALEL2@prodigy.net

**Region 3 includes** Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio and Wisconsin

**Region 5 includes** Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming

## CLASSIFIED ADS

**Advertising (display ads), Inside cover \$300/yr or \$70/issue. Full Page \$200/yr or \$50/issue. 1/2 page \$120/yr or \$30/issue. 1/4 page \$80/yr or \$20/issue. Web site advertising \$100/yr, \$50/yr for Inside cover advertisers. Classified ads are \$.25 per word for NFSS members and \$.30 per word for non-NFSS members. Classifieds are also posted to the web site at no additional charge.**

Wanted: New Bloodlines-( Forbes) Blue Breasted Parrot Finches, Fairy Bluebirds, Red Crested Cardinals, Luzon Bleeding Heart Doves, Cape Doves, and Yellow/Red Diamond Doves. Daniel Almaguer, 407-894-3808 or DRAfinch@aol.com

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**Silver-eared Mesias**  
by Grant Rishman

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We had been searching for Silver-eared Mesias and were unable to find any so we imported a small group from Holland. When they arrived in quarantine we were very disappointed to see that half the birds had no feathers on their head and neck and the other half had no feathers at all! By the end of the quarantine period all the birds, with one exception, looked quite good. They were all sold except for one hen and the "bald guy". We housed these birds individually and it was a couple of months before the feathers started to appear. The wait was well worth it, the bird eventually moulted all his feathers and was transformed from an 'ugly duckling' into a beautiful proud male Mesia. With the plumage came the song, 7-8 notes of pure energy. The song is more tuneful than the Pekin Robin and considerably louder. We are very fortunate to have some understanding neighbours as the male can be heard over 1/2 mile away!

The following May the pair was put into an outside aviary which they shared with Pekin Robins and Fairy Bluebirds. After only two weeks the Mesias were seen flying around with coconut fibre, after a further week a deep cup-shaped nest had been constructed in the fork of a maple tree, about four feet from the ground. A few days later the dominant pair of Pekins had commandeered the nest. They made no attempt to lay eggs, appearing to be quite content to merely stop anybody else from laying. The Mesias made no further attempt to nest.

Coming from the Himalayas these birds are very hardy and remain totally unconcerned when the winter temperature drops to approximately 25 degrees F. They remain outside all winter, although their aviary is surrounded by polythene to provide some protection from cold winds.

In March they were moved to a small flight 7' X 3' X 7' high. The back four feet was planted with bamboo, cotoneaster and forsythia, a small fir tree was cut down and wedged in front. The birds were very grateful for the growing plants and, starting at one side of the aviary, they removed each leaf until the branch was bare. When this chore was complete they happily moved onto the next branch. Within a week the only cover left in the aviary was the fir tree. More fir and cedar branches were hung in the aviary to provide some cover.

The birds had chosen a wicker plant pot as a nesting site. We had run out of coconut fibre so we supplied fine hay, moss, sisal etc. None of this was taken and the birds chose to lay their eggs on the bare floor of the plant pot. They laid a total of 13 eggs (in 4 nests) and all of them were dead-in-shell. We felt the nighttime temperatures were dropping so low it was killing the embryos. In September we received some coconut fibre, (ordered in March!), so we were all set for the following year.

The following spring saw the Mesias eager to breed. They used the same nest site and built a small cup-shaped nest. A second pair, obtained over the winter, was housed in a separate aviary and chose to nest in a covered finch nest. Both pairs hatched three eggs and the parents were given a continual supply of livefood consisting of crickets, mealworms and any livefood caught in the garden. Two days later all 6 chicks were dead on the aviary floors. There was still livefood in the pots and we could not understand what went wrong, ...until we went outside at 10PM and chased a cat off the aviary roof.

The two pairs laid a total of 17 more eggs and hatched 15 chicks in 5 nests. 14 chicks were thrown out before they were 3 days old. We even tried liberating one pair so they could find their own livefood. This worked very well – for about four hours, until the parents decided it was much more fun to play in the garden. What a magnificent sight they made tumbling through the trees – but what about the chicks? At 6PM both parents returned to their aviary but were ignoring the chicks. The babies were checked and they were quite cold so we made the decision to remove them for hand-raising. We had hand-raised hookbills before so softbills should not be that much

different - should they?

Well, the first lesson came when we discovered that Mesias do not have a crop and the food goes straight down into the stomach. The second lesson came when we discovered that feeding once an hour was not going to be enough. The third lesson came the following morning when both chicks were dead.

The original pair had gone back to nest and laid three eggs. It was getting late in the year for them to be breeding (they usually nest from March to June and it was now late August). Only one egg hatched and the parents were very attentive. After three days the chick was still in the nest!! And the parents were feeding well. The chick fledged after 12 days. It could not fly and spent the first few days climbing through the bushes and up the wire. The parents did not sleep with the chick at night but resumed feeding it in the morning. Four days later it was dead! Died of pneumonia.

This was getting very frustrating!

Another year wasted. Mid-May saw the original pair incubating. In contrast to previous years the cock did most of the incubating this time. On May 27<sup>th</sup> two split eggshells were found on the floor. The pair had been almost totally insectivorous for a week. The following day a third eggshell was found. The parents were feeding mealworms, feeder guppies, and previously frozen crickets. Some nectar was also being taken. For the first four days all the food was swallowed by the parents and then regurgitated to the chicks. By day 5 the chicks could be heard begging for food and whole insects were being taken back to the nest. One chick was found dead the following morning, from the size it looked like it had been squashed in the nest by its older siblings. Both parents were off the nest and a quick inspection revealed 3 chicks. One was about twice the size of the other two so we did not expect the smaller two to survive. The following day the largest chick was found dead on the aviary floor.

The other two chicks progressed very well and after only 12 days both had fledged. Because our Canadian show rules state all current year birds must be closed rung, we banded both young with budgie rings. The parents were very upset that we handled their offspring

but were totally unconcerned by the leg bands.

The weather deteriorated with high winds and heavy rainfall and, remembering last year's chick, we decided to move all four birds to a cage in the birdroom. After another five days both chicks were flying well and were becoming inquisitive. At this time the family were returned to their aviary. Over the last 3 weeks the parents had taken over 200 feeder guppies, 2500 crickets, and 8000 mealworms. When the chicks were three weeks old the parents began to wean them onto a regular diet of Universal food and diced fruit.

The only reference we could find regarding breeding Mesias stated that the young are dependant on their parents for "quite some time". As the male can be very aggressive we kept a close eye on them and the young remained dependant until they were almost 6 weeks old. At that time they were moved to their own aviary.

In subsequent years both pairs have raised young with far fewer failures. Once the correct stimuli are discovered and the birds have a safe environment they can usually be counted on to raise their chicks successfully.

End

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## The Fourth Factor to Breeding Success

by Ian Hinze

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In America, once-common species such as green (*Serinus mozambicus*) and gray (*S. leucopygius*) singing finches, goldbreasts (*Amandava subflava*), Pekin robins (*Leiothrix lutea*) and white-rumped shamas (*Copsychus malabaricus*) are now in as much danger of being lost to aviculture as any rare parrot.

Breeding the birds in our care, therefore, is more urgent than at any other time in aviculture's history, but this is easier said than done. Even the most experienced and accomplished birdkeepers, despite providing their stock with the finest housing conditions, quality foods and supplements, are often as frequently frustrated as any beginner at the end of the breeding season. Spacious cages or aviaries, warmth and a good varied diet, as the American keeper has found to his/her cost, obviously aren't enough. So exactly what is it that's missing?

We have to realize that everything we do for our birds is done from a human standpoint. We house and feed our birds a certain way because *WE* feel it's in their best interests. Some of the time we might even be successful with our methods, but overall this is usually only to a limited degree. What we need to be doing is viewing things from our birds' perspective. Quite literally, how do *THEY* see things?!

I have written many times of the importance of providing tropical birds, especially, with a minimum of 12 hours of daylight every day. This, of course, is impossible and so to compensate it is necessary to supply artificial lighting, usually by way of a dimmer unit. Unfortunately, the lighting we generally provide our birds emanates from household tungsten bulbs or fluorescents - which is totally inadequate

Birds have more sensory cells in their eyes than any other living creature. Unlike humans, they are able to see four, not three, primary

colors (in light these are red, green and blue - not red, yellow and blue as in paint pigments). The additional color is ultra violet (UV) which, in some breeds, enables them to differentiate one another's sex! More than this, however, UV light affects every aspect of a bird's life.

Many of us prefer to keep our birds in an indoor birdroom, but even though this room may possess large windows the essential UV light found in natural sunlight will be virtually useless as glass filters most of it out. A lack of UV light leads to vitamin D3 deficiency, which in turn prevents calcium (needed for strong bones, egg production, blood coagulation and a correctly tuned nervous system) from being metabolized. Sexual and reproductive behavior, as well as healthy feather formation (vital for a problem-free molt), are all seriously affected. In essence, the birdkeeper may be completely unaware that the cause of all his problems is directly related to insufficient lighting!

Over the years I have searched around for a lighting system that is as near to the full spectrum of natural light as possible, i.e. a correctly balanced light output which included the UV segment. Herpetologists (keepers of reptiles and amphibians) and aquarists have long known the importance of correct lighting, thus full spectrum lighting equipment catering for their needs has been available for quite some time. With this in mind I contemplated using similar lighting for my birds. Unfortunately, many of the published "facts" about avian lighting stem directly from research conducted on reptiles, but birds have completely different illumination and dietary requirements. A number of the recommendations, therefore, are completely erroneous and positively health damaging to birds.

What is needed is a system of lighting developed specifically to meet all of a bird's light requirements. Such a system would need to be easy to install and thereafter simple to use. Moreover, the birds subjected to such lighting would have to display signs that it was definitely beneficial. Happily, a British company, 'Arcadia', has achieved all of this and I have availed myself of its products with immense satisfaction.

I am presently using both 4 feet and 2 feet long full spectrum fluorescents. From the moment I positioned the lighting above the cages

of two pairs of Dybowski's twinspots (*Euschistospiza dybowskii*) the results were staggering. My own-designed wooden box-cages differ from the norm in that they have all-wire roofs instead of the usual all plywood type. The cages were designed this way so that the fluorescents can be hung or placed directly above and, with specially manufactured reflectors, all the emitted light is directed downwards onto the occupants, instead of becoming inefficient through having too wide a dispersal.

The Dybowski's twinspots were selected because 1) I have enough pairs to do controlled experiments, some under the light and others without it and 2) male and female are difficult to distinguish normally unless they are viewed from below, whereupon the male can be differentiated from the female by his black lower breast and belly as opposed to hers of entirely gray.

After some initial nervousness due to an unfamiliar fitment being placed directly above them, the birds under the light settled down very quickly. I was instantly amazed at how dark the cages had been compared to their now being entirely basked in "sunshine". But the birds, oh the birds! Previously, the red areas of plumage, notably the mantle and back, had appeared murky red, but they were now a lustrous velvet looking crimson. Also, the flanks, instead of being the usual dull black with white spots, now appeared more reminiscent of a jet-black sky full of twinkling stars. The difference in coloration really is that remarkable, making profile sexing determinable at a glance.

Twenty minutes after the lighting had been positioned one of the males, who had of late been somewhat subdued, burst into song and started to perform the breeding display. Her hitherto comparatively drab looking partner now in resplendent garb, the female was most suitably impressed and went to nest. The pair successfully reared young!

Clearly, an immense lesson has been learnt and not before time. Breeding success (or the lack of it!) has always been linked with the firmly entrenched tenets of housing, heating and feeding, whereas all along there has been a fourth equally important but generally less understood factor to consider - full spectrum lighting.

End

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## Too Many Birds for Too Long? by Michael Marcotrigiano

Someone once asked me "How many birds can a person with a full time job handle?" "How do I know when it has gotten out of control?" Since then, I have asked myself the same question as I spend countless hours "working the birds". So, I've come up with a quick list that will allow you to assess your involvement with your birds. If you can relate to more than ten of these situations, you may be in over your head. Read and enjoy.

### You know you have too many birds for too long when:

- 1) Your idea of a quiet evening at home changes from a bottle of fine wine and candlelight to a bottle of pedialyte and a Vita-lite.
- 2) You rush out to buy your vanity license plate because you're convinced that INDIGO-BUNTING might already be taken.
- 3) You become so friendly with your veterinarian that you go bowling together on Friday nights.
- 4) You undress at night and collect enough seed hulls from inside your "undies" to mulch your vegetable garden.
- 5) Your favorite food switches from a medium-rare filet mignon to a well-done hard boiled egg.
- 6) Your family eats 99 cent pesticide-laden lettuce, but your birds get the "Certified Organic".
- 7) An eye surgeon spends an hour removing a half cup of seed hulls from beneath your eyelids.
- 8) You have two copies of your daily newspaper delivered because one is not enough to line your cage trays.
- 9) You feel less 'comfy' on a therapeutic mattress than you do on a circular bale of hay.
- 10) You try to auction your dirty bird papers as "fine examples of conceptual art".
- 11) One house fly in the pantry "grosses you out", but it's perfectly OK to have live mealworms in your refrigerator.
- 12) Your spouse wakes up only to see you sleeping with your head tucked under your armpit.
- 13) You are well known in the art community for your cuttlebone crims-haw.
- 14) You can reliably close band a strawberry finch baby while mud wrestling.
- 15) You start pre-chewing breakfast for your children.

- 16) There is nothing left to do in the bird room but you go back in just to make sure they are still there.
- 17) Without your spouse being aware, you change your family's surname to "Finch".
- 18) You describe the shape of a Border Canary as "kinda scxy".
- 19) You start sweeping the bird room by grasping the broom handle with both feet.
- 20) You actually believe that newly hatched finches look beautiful.
- 21) You need to replace the bird's HEPA filter each night before bedtime.
- 22) Your UPS delivery man, now with a hernia, refers to you as "that jerk that keeps getting bird seed delivered".
- 23) You bathe with your finches.
- 24) You have joined so many bird listservers that your 2 gigabyte hard drive fills each day with e-mails.
- 25) You hire a cleaning service to clean your house because you hate it so much, but you don't mind scraping poop off perches for two hours.
- 26) Your spouse greets you at the door dressing in nothing but Saran Wrap, and you say "Not tonight, dear, I need to add egg food to the babies' cages."
- 27) You send your children off to school with egg food and veggie sandwiches.
- 28) You find it pleasurable to breathe in feathers.
- 29) You have enough "white dust" in your house to use as fake snow on your Christmas tree.
- 30) Your angry spouse tells you that they would rather that you have an extramarital affair than add one more birdcage to the living room.
- 31) You ask your ABBA sales rep "How much for a cubic yard of grit?"
- 32) You enter your bird room as a brunette and exit with gray hair.
- 33) You accidentally diaper your infant in newspaper.
- 34) Your children prefer collecting feathers to Pokemon.
- 35) You are fairly sure you can convince your HMO to pay for ivermectin.
- 36) You put both of your children in one bedroom because you "need the space to expand the bird room".
- 37) You try to seduce your spouse by combing your hair forward, fluffing up your pajamas, and jumping up and down on the bed.
- 38) You are so afraid to leave the birds with someone else that your annual vacation consists of one weekend.
- 39) That weekend vacation is spent in someone else's bird room.
- 40) The most common phrase uttered by your family is "he's in the bird room".

P.S. I think I may have too many birds!

## Why Do People Raise Birds?

By Vince Huntington

If you are ever around a group of bird people at a convention, a monthly club meeting, or national bird show, you soon see the greatest pastime is "talking birds." As a captive bird person (married to Sally Huntington, Bird breeder, avian artist, NFSS judge, NFSS 6<sup>th</sup> Regional Rep, and past president of the [230 member] Finch Society of San Diego County) and as a professional psychologist, I've tried to figure out - what do people get from bird clubs?

Armed with my handy questionnaire, I've spent the last couple of years making my list, and checking it more than twice. Most of my data was gathered during club meetings, reading newsletters magazines and at regional and local bird shows. So, I thought it only fair to cap off my data by getting input from the bird-talkers at the 2000 AFA convention, Los Angeles, August 3-5.

From going meeting to meeting, listening to conversations in the halls, at lunches, at dinners, in smokeless bars and smoke-filled patios - at vendor stalls, and more, I offer the following list as to why people belong to bird clubs. (Not necessarily in the order of importance for everyone, but it is in the "most mentioned" order)

1. To **"talk birds"** with others. For a sense of what many agree is "social connection" including the need to "take care" of people. To either "provide a service of information" or to "become a leader in a project." To participate in fund raising for clubs, and to take part in the "action of the auctions."

2. For the **"politics"** (not the local club cliques and "political struggles") of the national and international play of the on-going issues of import-exports, the CITES list, the arguments with those who would prefer no one has a pet *anything*, etc. This includes gathering, originating, sharing and mailing letters of support to congress, the post office, and the senate. This includes keeping involved in environmental futures of avian species, government cross-communication and the like. This includes being

involved in travel safety for birds by monitoring airlines, postal regulations, lobbying for better services, etc.

3. Serious involvement in matters of **avian nutrition** and health. Reading/ writing, trying new foods, keeping tract, weighing, recording results, sharing results, etc.

4. To be involved in the design of aviaries, **cages**, flights, travel cages and devices including watering and feeding attachments, including always looking for a better way.

5. **Teaching**, which includes writing and publishing articles, including running a club's newsletter. Writing and distributing research results, which includes, passing on any education feature, article, and information source. . . overall.

6. **Bird show** participation including the social aspects of travel to new places, seeing friends again, etc. Getting birds ready for show, pampering, hoping. The experience of seeing what is considered this years "best." Watching trends change. Participating in developing and setting "standards" for specific breeds.

7. **Genetic** record keeping and **bird demographics**. Participation in such as NFSS *Finch Save*, or other programs designed for genetic fact finding, the difference between nature/nurture, passing of traits, recording impact on species of dominant and recessive genes, the effectiveness of banding, branding and tattooing to insure honesty and integrity in breeding programs.

8. Belonging to and organizing national and international **organizational events** such as National Cage Bird Show, Great American Bird Show, American Federation of Aviculture conventions, regional and local bird *marts* and sales, with or without shows.

9. To **earn a living** with birds and bird products, by selling and trading birds, locating birds as a broker, buying and selling bird related products as a *primary profession*.

10. Developing new and improved, safe and clean **water use systems**.

11. **Mentoring** new members one-on-one. Finding and motivating young members to become aviculturists.

12. In **support of a spouse** or other family member. Drive the car, build the aviary, feed the birds during the bird person's vacation, help watch the birds, and overall, help them be fulfilled in their pastime as an aviculturist.

Why are YOU involved in birds?

## Talking Finches

By Julie Dumstra

Talking finches are not that uncommon! I have heard the little Red Headed Finch that was featured in the article utter the word "Turkey" very clearly over the telephone! His talent is limited however.....he did not dial my telephone number. :-)

Years ago at a bird show in Medford, OR, I witnessed my first talking finch, a hand fed Java Rice Bird that said the word, "Hello" in a very clear little voice. More recently I have heard a hand fed chocolate and white pied Bengalese (Society) finch say, "Flick my bird" - an abbreviated version of what his owner Clara Gontero always said to Flick when she would uncover his cage in the morning, i.e., ..... "How is Flick my bird...?"

I have hand raised several finches over the past five years. Bengalese, Zebra and the Diamond Firetail Finch are the species that I have worked with. I know many others who have enjoyed the rich rewards of this labor intensive endeavor. The hand tamed finches are endearing little souls and offer a whole new dimension to what we think of as pet birds.

There is a window of time during which birds learn their songs. The late Dr. Luis Baptista at the California Academy of Sciences devoted much of his life's work to the study of song in birds - its development and the variations or dialects that exist from region to region. Not unlike our own patterns of human speech and how they differ with geographical regions.

Luis was fascinated with how birds learn their song. When I visited with him last year in his laboratory at the California Academy of Sciences, he played sonograms or recordings of bird songs and encouraged myself and others to record the vocalizations of the birds that we keep.

I began to think about the birds that I had raised over the years and the "songs" that each one subsequently developed. I reflected on one little Society Finch (not hand raised incidentally) that incorporated portions of three distinctly different songs from 3 different cocks into his own little song. I was totally amazed by this!

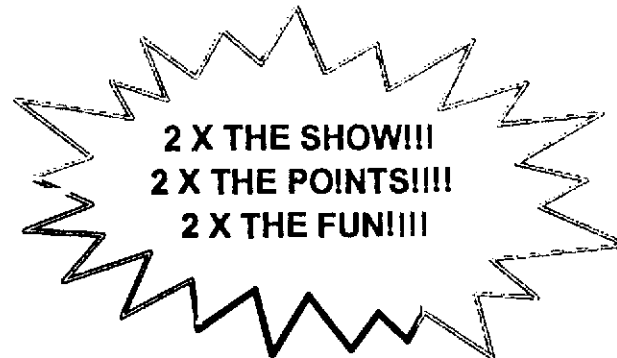
I have also heard the trilling song of a canary pour forth from a brilliant, multi-colored Gouldian Finch cock! The Gouldian was housed in the same room with a singing canary at that critical time when the pieces of its song was forming and the result was that it incorporated the canary's entire song as its own!

Having said all of this in this uncharted area of "talking finches" all I can offer are my observations. I must say, I have found this whole concept very fascinating and just to test it further, I keep repeating simple, one syllable words to the little Bengalese finch that I have just hand raised through fledging. To date I have nothing to report in terms of the bird's speech.....however, the sex of this bird has yet to be determined!

Hand fed finches as pets! What a novel concept.

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## Affiliated Clubs 2000

STATE	CLUB NAME	DELEGATE	CONTACT#
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AL	Central Alabama Avicultural Society	Margie Lanier randyl@mindspring.com	334-567-4073
AL	Southeast Bird Fanciers	Ginny Allen gndallen@earthlink.net	334-749-7168
CA	Capitol City Bird Society	Mariana Mejia lorogal@aol.com	916-452-2037
CA	Central California Cage Bird Club	Richard Pizzurro njones7110@aol.com	408-927-0734
CA	Finch Society of San Diego County	Sally Huntington huntington-center@worldnet.att.net	858-452-9423
CA	Santa Clara Valley Canary and Exotic Bird Club	Richard Pizzurro doreen123@earthlink.net	408-927-0734
CO	Rocky Mtn. Soc. of Avi.	Glenda Pullum	303-937-1498
FL	Aviary and Cage Bird Society of South Florida	Carric Efstathion carice3@aol.com	954-432-3349
FL	Colorbred Canary Club of Miami	Nora Trincado	305-255-2661
FL	Florida State Fair Exotic Bird Show 2001	Dale Laird dalel2@prodigy.net	407-657-7989
FL	Greater Brandon Avian Society	John Floyd johmanda@mindspring.com	813-677-7679
FL	Suncoast Avian Soc. Inc.	Joe Ventimiglia	727-392-9391
GA	Georgia Caged Bird Society	Pat Miller jandpmiller@mindspring.com	none listed
GA	Southeast Bird Fanciers	Ginny Allen gndallen@earthlink.net	(none listed)
HI	Honolulu Canary and Finch Club	Elaine Shimokawa ala1884@aol.com	808-521-5544
IA	Mid America Cagebird Soc	Rhoda Shirley	515-243-1511



IL	Grtr Chicago Cagebird Club	Jane Muscato	jamjdm923@aol.com
IL	Illini Bird Fanciers	Tom Rood 217-774-5265 tjrood@bmnhnet.com	
IL	National Institute of Red Orange Canaries, Inc.	Steve Hopman birdhop@aol.com	815-469-8455
LA	Acadiana Bird Club	Lynn Evans	337-457-4620
LA	Cajun Canary Club	Meade H. Phelps neworleansmeade@aol.com	504-887-0724
MA	Massachusetts Cagebird Association	Kathleen Vieweg kvieweg@zoonewengland.com	617-989-2089
MD	Baltimore Bird Fanciers Dorothy Haynes	Dorothy Haynes drhaynes@ubmail.ubalt.edu	410-256-9326
MI	Great Lakes Avicultural Society	Diana Hugo hugo@iserv.net	616-842-0163
MI	Motor City Bird Breeders	Pat Piekarz p3495@aol.com	810-296-2957
MI	Society of Canary and Finch Breeders	Patrick Vance	248-443-0643
MO	Greater Kansas City Avicultural Society	Nita Haas tjhaas@oasiske.net	816-331-5285
MO	Heart of America Hookbill Society	Earl Courts	816-554-3922
MO	Midwest Zebra and Society Finch Club	Nita Haas tjhaas@oasiske.net	816-331-5285
MO	Missouri Cage Bird Club	Rich Dickman skdatl@accessus.net	636-928-3444
NH	Birds of a Feather Avicultural Society	Ray Schwarz prismsdad@aol.com	603-362-6106
NM	New Mexico Bird Club, Inc.	Gail Ranshaw ransaw@swcp.com	505-822-1483
NY	Greater Rochester Avian Society	Patrick Goonan patrick_goonan@hotmail.com	716-288-5653
NY	International Canary Society	Maria Gleason sacca@gte.net	716-282-2944
NY	New York Finch and Type Canary Club	Stan Kulak barstand@erols.com	718-967-6899

## Affiliated Clubs 2000 –continued

OH	Toledo Bird Association	Rick Yunker ryunker@uoft02.toledo.edu	419-691-9432
OK	Bird Fanciers of OK	Tom Ressel	580-332-6254
OR	Finch Connection Bird Club	Paula Hansen	503-581-8208
PA	Greater Pittsburgh Cage Bird Society	Margie Jonnet pparrots@gateway.net	412-795-1904
PR	Organizacion Puertorriquena De Aves Exoticas	Rafael Suarez Lix4me@aol.com	787-752-4433
PR	Sociedad de Avicultores Puertorriquenos	Julio C. Mateo	787-797-7491
TN	Middle TN Cage Bird Society	Darlene McDonnell	615-355-4250
TN	SE TN Avicultural Society	Janet Burrell	423-472-1306
TX	Canary and Finch Society	Margie McBrayer	281-338-2814
TX	Fort Worth Bird Club	Clarence Culwell culwell5@flash.net	817-220-5568
TX	Texas Bird Breeders and Fanciers Association	Clarence Culwell culwell5@flash.net	817-220-5568
VA	Peninsula Caged Bird Soc.	Marian Rogers dickivy@two-rivers.com	757-484-6001
VA	Virginia Society of Exotic Finches	Peggy Duval peggyc@macs.net	757-623-4786
WA	Cascade Canary Breeders Association	Kenneth R. Foster kfostermiller@uswest.net	206-938-6072
WI	Radger Canary Fanciers	Sue Feldstein	262-965-5362
WI	W.I.N.G.S. Bird Society	Carol Belisle bjnest@ticon.net	608-427-6674
Canada	Essex-Kent Cage Bird Soc.	Alfred Mjon	519-948-6398

END

### NFSS FinchSave Application

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

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

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ NFSS# \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_  
 State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### The National Finch and Softbill Society Membership Application

Mail application and check or money order payable to NFSS: Eileen Laird,  
 Membership Secretary, P.O. Box 2459, Goldenrod, FL 32733-2459

Annual dues are \$25 for single memberships, \$30 for dual, and \$12.50 for junior (under 16). U.S. & Puerto Rico 1st Class mailing add \$5.00, Canadian add \$5.00, Foreign add \$10.00 (Please send US funds). Canadian and foreign subscriptions mailed 1st Class.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ NFSS# \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_  
 State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
 New Member? \_\_\_\_\_ Renew NFSS# \_\_\_\_\_  
 Second name if dual membership \_\_\_\_\_

# NFSS Board of Directors 2000-2001

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 Phone/Fax: (407) 657-7989 Email: dalel@magicnet.net

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 Email: kerrimccoy@mindspring.com

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 Phone: (905) 576-1901  
 Fax: (905) 436-9872  
 Email: marc@nfss.net

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**Manager**  
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 Phone: (407) 894-3808  
 Fax: (407) 894 6400  
 Email: DRAFinch@aol.com

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 3836 Hidden Acres Circle  
 N. Ft. Myers, FL 33903  
 Phone: (941) 997-2237  
 Fax: (941) 997-NFSS  
 Email: n2finchs@peganet.com

**Membership Director**  
**Eileen Laird**  
 P.O. Box 2459  
 Goldenrod, FL 32733-2459  
 Phone/Fax: (407) 657-7989

**Executive Secretary**  
**Annette Howard**  
 1271 Conser Drive  
 Salem, OH 44460  
 Phone/fax: 330-337-7654  
 Email: sale\_ah@access-k12.org

**Treasurer ProTem**  
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 909 S. 9th Street  
 Leesburg, FL 34748-6939  
 Phone: (352) 787-8654  
 Fax: (352) 787-2097  
 Email: fkeenan@digital.net

**Liaison Officer**  
**Dianna Rubly Shipman**  
 525 Pottsville Street  
 P.O. Box 52  
 Wiconisco, PA  
 17097-0052  
 Phone: 717-453-9095  
 Email: bearden@epix.net

**Band Secretary**  
**Carol Heesen**  
 P.O. Box 752  
 Riverbank, CA 95367  
 Phone: (209) 869-2603  
 Fax: (209) 869-5987  
 Email: carol@birds2grow.com

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 631 Talcottville Rd, Apt. 4N  
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 Email: BillHTFDCT@aol.com

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 Phone: 860-649-8220

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**Region 2 - Southeast**  
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 Phone (305) 270-1000  
 Email: ajlee@bellsouth.net

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 250 Horseshoe Drive  
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 Phone: (817) 220-5568  
 Email: culwell5@flash.net

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Phone/Fax: (858) 452-9423  
Email: huntingtoncenter  
@worldnet.att.net

**Regional Vice President  
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Calle 6F-10  
Rexville  
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**Appointed Officers**

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**Annette Howard**  
1271 Conser Drive  
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Ph/Fax: 330-337-7654  
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Sale\_ah@access-k12.org

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**Advertising and  
Promotions Manager**  
**Daniel Almaguer**  
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Orlando, FL 32853-3015  
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Fax: (407) 894 6400  
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DRAFinch@aol.com

**Awards Manager  
ProTem)**  
**Kerri Ann McCoy**  
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Phone: (905) 319-0680  
Fax: (905) 319-1865  
Email:  
kerri.mccoy@sympatico.ca

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## NFSS Panel of Judges 2000-2001

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Fax: (941) 997-NFSS

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**Patrick Vance**  
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Lathrup Village, MI 48076  
Phone: 248-443-0643

**Paul S. Williams**  
703 Donegal Drive  
Papillion, NE 68046  
Phone: 402-592-5488  
Email:  
RolTide@ix.netcom.com

### Changing your address?

Allow NFSS to be the first to greet you at your new home!

Be sure to notify:

Club Delegates also notify:

NFSS Membership Director  
Eileen Laird  
P.O. Box 2459  
Goldenrod, FL 32733-2459

NFSS Liaison Officer  
Dianna Rubly  
525 Pottsville Street, PO Box 52  
Wiconisco, PA 17097-0052.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
New Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ St: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Membership # \_\_\_\_\_

**2000 AFFILIATION AGREEMENT**

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

Mail to: Dianna Rubly Shipman, Liaison Officer  
525 Pottsville Street, PO Box 52  
Wiconisco, PA 17097-0052.  
Phone/Fax: 717-453-9095

Club Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Club Delegate: \_\_\_\_\_  
NFSS #: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## AWARD ORDER FORM FOR SHOWS/EVENTS

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

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

These are the 1999 awards available:

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

For more information on awards, contact the Awards Manager:

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

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

Size A: Gold-breasted Waxbill, Orange-cheeked Waxbill, Owl Finch (Bicheno), Quail Finch, Red-eared Waxbill, Strawberry Finch, and other small waxbills.

Size B: Black-cheeked Waxbill, Cordon Bleu, Cuban Melodious Finch, Fire Finch, Olive Finch, Rufous-backed Mannikin.

Size C: B&W Mannikin, Blue-capped Waxbill, Bronze-winged Mannikin, Cherry Finch, Green Singing Finch, Grey Singing Finch, Heck's Shaftail, Lavender Finch, Painted Finch, Pileated Finch, Pytilias, Red-headed Parrot Finch, Shaftail Finch, Silverbills, Star Finch.

Size D: Blue-faced Parrot Finch, Chestnut-breasted Finch, Lady Gouldian Finch, most smaller mannikins, most other parrot finches, Pictorella Finch, Pintailed Nonpareil, most twinspots, Yellow-rumped Finch, Zebra Finch.

Size E: Black-crested Finch, Diamond Sparrow, European Greenfinch, Golden Song Sparrow, Nuns, Peter's Twinspot, Siskins, Society Finch (Bengalese), Spice Finch.

Size G: Magpie Mannikin, most larger mannikins, small tanagers.

Size J: European Goldfinch, Pekin Robin, Silver-eared Mesias, most small softbills.

Size K: Java Rice Birds, Red-crested Cardinal, Saffron Finch, Shama Thrush.

Size L: Diamond Dove, other small doves, Quail, softbills.

Size M: Leaf Birds, Pagoda Mynah, large sunbirds.

Size R: Green/Purple Starlings, Superb Starlings.

Size S: Indian Hill Mynah, Java Mynah, Ring-necked Dove, Toucanettes, White-tailed Jay.

Size T: small hornbills, Plush-capped Jay, small toucans, small touracos.

*Banding instructions included with each order*

**The National Finch and Softbill Society  
Band Order Form**

Mail form and payment payable to NFSS:  
Carol Heesen  
NFSS Band Secretary  
P.O. Box 752  
Riverbank, CA 95367

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

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

Band Size	# of Strings	Price per string	Total Amount
A		\$3.25	
B		\$3.25	
C		\$3.25	
D		\$3.25	
E		\$3.25	
G		\$3.25	
J		\$3.25	
K		\$3.25	
L		\$3.25	
M		\$3.25	
R		\$3.25	
S		\$3.25	
T		\$3.25	

<p><b>Postal Insurance:</b> Under \$50 = \$.85 From \$50 - \$100 = \$1.80 Over \$100=\$2.75 If you choose NOT to include this sum, NFSS will NOT be responsible for replacement of bands lost in shipment.</p>	<p>Subtotal: _____ Insurance: _____ Handling \$1.00 Total: _____</p>
--	--

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ NFSS # \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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

NFSS Plastic Water Bottle		\$6		
NFSS Zebra Pin		\$6		
NFSS Gouldian Pin		\$6		
NFSS Name Badge (Members Only) Comes with one line of engraving. <b>Print name clearly.</b>	Second line of engraving add \$1. For magnetic back, add \$1.50	\$7.50		
Past bulletins, 1994 and later issues		\$4		
Past bulletins, 1993 and earlier issues		\$3		
1998 NFSS Handbook Membership Yearbook		\$4		
NFSS Judges Handbook and Official Standards	<b>NEW AND AT A LOWER PRICE!!!</b>	\$10		

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

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

**FINCHSHOP**  
Attn: Annette Howard  
P.O. Box 404  
Salem, OH 44460

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[NFSS-subscribe@egroups.com](mailto:NFSS-subscribe@egroups.com)

We look forward to talking to you on line!