



The Show Budgie

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The Nel Brothers Stud
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For Show Budgie Breeders and Exhibitors

Special Techniques for Varieties

When breeding budgerigars for showing, there are generally no distinct advantages with breeding any particular variety. Genes that cause variety are not related to the size or other characteristics of the bird. Your main focus should be on the size and type of the bird, irrespective of variety. There are, however, some techniques that can be used for particular varieties to increase the quality of markings or colour.

In no circumstances should you actively try to breed hybrid varieties. Although some hybrids are interesting as pets, they will not be accepted in a show class. Time spent breeding non-pure-bred varieties is wasted if you want to show budgerigars.

Recessive Varieties

The simplest way to breed a line of a recessive variety is to only use birds of the variety. Unfortunately you may want to introduce a bird that does not have the recessive gene. With the result of such a mating, none of the offspring will show the recessive characteristic, but they will all be split for this variety. By breeding them back to the recessive parent or among themselves the next generation will contain birds with the variety, modified by the non-variety bird. Recessive varieties are treated further in the section on genetics.

Pieds

When breeding these birds, the markings are hereditary. When choosing your breeding birds, check the standards as to what is permissible as pied marking for show purposes.

Clearwing

This variety involves choosing the birds with the clearest wings and breeding them together. However, the larger birds usually have poorer markings and so some compromise should be arrived at between size and wing markings, depending on the show standard used in your area. Try to breed the largest birds you can get without losing clarity in the wings.

Lutino

The best method employed to have Lutinos with a deep full colour is to breed them on birds with a darker base colour. Light Green birds overlaid with Lutino will appear pale compared to dark green, and olive is better still. If you have light green Lutinos then outcross your line with an olive bird to get a deeper colour.

Albino

Sky blue birds overlaid with albino can have a pale blue suffusion showing through. To remove this, outcross with a grey bird to produce grey albinos, and the birds should have a better colour.

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Jacaranda Show Budgie Society Highlights

The Jacaranda Show Budgie Society Millennium Show is behind us. Thanks goes to all the hard working members of the club who made this event happen.

Planning for the next club show for 2001 needs to commence now. This will enable the club to improve on the show as well as offer larger prizes and hopefully in this way attract a larger number of entries.

Any ideas which will enable us to improve our next club show can be sent to the editor at
P.O Box 43594
Theresa Park x2
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Budgerigar Health

~Crop Stasis by Sam Vaughn ~

Sour crop is the common name given to the condition where the bird's crop is moving too slow or not at all. Many people tend to view crop stasis (sour crop) as a diagnosis in its own right, and this is a huge error because there are many causes of crop stasis in birds. This article is an attempt to address the most common causes of slow crop and their diagnosis.

Environmental Causes

Hand feeding formula that is too thick and not mixed in the proper ratios can cause water to drain into the crop from the bloodstream in an effort to dilute the food to a more digestible consistency. This often dehydrates the baby bird and the total gastrointestinal tract then slows, and the bird's crop slows down because his entire system cannot function. In today's market this should never happen because there are too many fabulous baby formulas on the market with excellent directions. Low environmental temperatures cause the baby to chill and all body organs to slow down. The crop then slows down and the food becomes stagnant and thick; again easily preventable with proper brooders and equipment. Dehydration can occur if the temperature is too high and again the results are the same. Foreign bodies in the crop can also cause crop stasis. I am talking about wood chips, those 'digestible beddings' on the market and anything else that a baby can get into its mouth and swallow.

Infectious Causes

Many incidents are the result of infectious organisms growing in the crop that can be introduced to the bird by the parent birds or by the person doing the hand feeding. Many times this is fed to the babies by perfectly normal appearing parents. Many breeders are stunned

and seem disbelieving when they find out that those beautiful appearing parents gave these babies this organism before they pulled the babies from the nest. Bacteria are a second infectious cause of crop stasis. The list of possible bacteria is endless, but some of the most common are *Pseudomonas*, *Klebsiella*, *Proteus*, *Enterobacter*, and *E. coli*. These too can be fed to the babies by the parents, and some of them can even be transmitted in the egg by the hen. Many times these bacteria are fed to the baby by the person hand feeding, a result of improper disinfecting and drying of the hand feeding utensils. One of the most common errors is to leave the syringes soaking in a solution between feedings, even chlorhexidine, as these bowls of syringes become little bacteria cesspools especially favoured by *Pseudomonas* bacteria.

Diagnostics

History of the baby's environment is the most important part of any diagnostic plan. Gram stains are the first step of lab diagnostics, and usually give the veterinarian an idea of bacterial vs. *Candida* as the cause. If Gram negative bacteria are found in abnormal amounts, then a culture and sensitivity of a crop swab should be performed. This will tell you the exact bacteria involved and the absolute best drug with which to treat. Unfortunately, many people know of places to get drugs, and they start the birds on medications and without a diagnosis, these babies usually get worse and die. If your baby bird is exhibiting slow crop the first move for you to make is to call a good avian veterinarian, BEFORE the baby is totally dehydrated and in organ shut down.

Tip of the Month

~Pairing by Jim Hutton~

Never be too hasty in pairing your birds, just because Joe Bloggs down the road has paired his, there is no necessity to pair yours as well. Wait until they are in tip-top breeding condition before pairing. It is always difficult to decide when they are ready. Even Champions have difficulty. The best way to decide whether they are ready is simply hang an old nest-box in the hen flight, the hens that show a lot of interest in the box you will find are the ones that are ready. Cocks are different, if the hen is fit, you will find the cocks generally follow suit.

No Showability

Lack of success at shows.

Make sure that birds have been well prepared and trained prior to showing, and that they are all in "Show Condition". Never expect a bird caught straight from the flight, thrust immediately into a show cage and taken to a show, to achieve results. Only show "complete" birds.

Missing feathers can mean missing first placing in a class. The main lack of success is having substandard breeding stock which produce mediocre show birds.

Light Greens and Skyblues by B. Byles

A large number of breeders get hooked on Light Greens from the time they take up the hobby. Many think that because the wild budgerigar is green, breeding top-quality Light Greens is easy. It is not. Many have tried to produce studs containing nothing but pure Normal Light Greens and have failed. Pairing Light Green x Light Green may seem to be the ideal mating, and it can result in excellent offspring, but it is not the ultimate answer. Have a complete stud of Light greens - to the exclusion of all other colours - and over the course of several years, breeders can lose size and head quality. Breeders are advised to use their best Light Greens with good Dark Greens, Skyblues, Cobalts, Greys and Grey greens - and not just other Light Greens. Top Skyblues - those with first-rate size and good heads - can be excellent mates for Light Greens, especially if they have good, deep, colour. The same applies to Grey Greens and Greys, both of which can be mated to Light Greens, although it is said that the Grey factor can deaden the colour of both Greens and Blues. Fanciers who have good-quality dark factor stock - particularly Dark Greens and Cobalts - can use these birds to advantage with Light Greens because they will enhance the Light Greens' colour, a feature which can spoil an otherwise good exhibit. Opalines can also be used to advantage with Light Greens, although care must be taken to avoid the opalescent markings on the side of the neck that can result when Opalines are mated to Normals. No Normals with opalescent markings should be included in a good stud of Normals. The fault can spread rapidly and give the owner little chance of winning against Normals which are free of this scourge. If there is this disadvantage to mating Opalines to Normals, there is also a lot to be said in its favour, in as much that quality Opaline hens provide chicks with good width of head and large spots - which can often be lacking when Normal hens are used. Skyblues, like Light Greens, are best not paired to mates of the same colour, except in special circumstances. All too often, such matings can result in disappointment unless there is good size in both, and excellent head qualities, which tend to be lacking in all but top Blues. Size can be lost, and colour, and as a result, can become shallow and patchy. Greys are often excellent partners for good Skyblues because they frequently have better head qualities and more size than run-of-the-mill Skyblues. However, to produce Skyblues, the Grey must be a single factor bird. Skyblue x Grey Green pairings can result in excellent Skyblues, but again, the Grey Green must be split Blue. However, the make-up of the Grey Greens used for this purpose must be taken further into account. Certainly fanciers who wish to breed Skyblues should not use double factor Grey Greens which will mean producing nothing but Grey Greens.

Tumors and Lameness

Tumors are a serious problem for which no effective cure has been found although birds that are supplemented with vitamins almost never develop such problems.

When tumors appear on the breast of the Budgerigar, they probably are caused by keeping them a long time in a cage that is too small. They have too little exercise and their wing muscles degenerate. Tumors on the head look more like cancer tumors. If tumors occur, lance them with a needle sterilised by boiling or heating them red-hot under a flame. Squeeze out any dirt inside the swelling. Then sterilise the wound with mercurochrome. The bird survives this type of operation remarkably well. But the affected Budgerigar will tend to develop another tumor in a new location. Sometimes, it may also develop a fatty degeneration. Humanely dispose of such a bird because nothing will help it. The cause is a disturbance in glandular function. Ask your veterinarian for advice! Wartlike excema on the head near the eyes and under the beak, the well-known scaly face, can be cured by applying penicillin as a salve. Isolate the affected bird till the cure is complete. Dettol disinfectant can also be used.

Swellings on the feet often are caused by mosquitoes that suck the birds blood while they sleep. These swellings are easily cured by making a few very small cuts using a properly disinfected razor blade. Treat the wounds with mercurochrome--not tincture of iodine because that stings too much. Then wrap the treated leg with a small adhesive bandage. You don't have to worry about removing the bandage later. The bird will remove it, or else it will just rub off naturally. This treatment prevents infection when the bird scratches around the cage floor with the sore leg. If you have any hesitations about doing this, it would be better to consult an experienced avian veterinarian. I recommend mercurochrome to prevent infection in all types of wounds, whether caused by accidental injury or by a fight. A bird that no longer can use its legs properly suffers from lameness. The cause is thought to be a sexual disturbance. The lameness worsens with time till finally the bird can no longer perch and starts lying on the floor, unable to do so much as move its legs. For the rest, such a bird is completely healthy and even will continue to eat normally. Since lameness is incurable, it is kindest to humanely dispose of afflicted birds.

NEL BROTHERS STUD

XN2

EST. 1996

Most colours bred

1998

Best Beginner - Berario
Best Beginner - Area 5
Best Novice -NTBS Club Show
Yellow Face CC's x 2
NTBS Club Champions

1999

Best Novice Any Age - Berario
Yellow Face CC x 1
Dark & Olive Green CC x 1
JSBS Derby winners
JSBS Club Champions
Yellow Face Grey Champion Bird

**Telephone John or Ian at
(012) 542 3533**

Visitors welcome. To avoid
disappointment please call first

Scott-Scott Aviaries SSA

~Sylvia & Ken~

1997 Best Beginner on Show Durban
1998 Best Beginner Young Bird Area 5
Albino CC
D.B.C Club Champion
B.S.S A Champion Beginner
1999 Cinnamon Green CC
Cobolt CC x 2
Double Factor Spangle CC

Grey Greens by B. Byles

Grey Greens, because they are among the best birds seen on the show bench, receive the most attention from breeders whose ambition is to win best in show awards, irrespective of colour. But, even the most ambitious breeders don't like to breed too many Grey Greens, so they are regularly paired to Greens, Blues and Greys.

Historically, this has not had an adverse effect on the colour, and others have benefited into the bargain. Grey Greens, like Light Greens, can benefit from being mated to Opalines, but many champions keep only the best Opaline hens for this purpose. Opaline cocks are rarely used unless they are outstanding. Opalescent markings affect Grey Greens as much as they do other Normals so great care needs to be taken when selecting a breeding team. The golden rule should be: if any Normals show opalescent markings, discard them.

The Jacaranda Show Budgie Society

Annual Subscriptions

Membership Fees:

Member - R 120.00
Spouse - 50% of Member
Pensioner - 70% of Member
Juniors - 40% of Member

New membership Entry : - R 100.00 (Once off)

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Birthday Wishes Go To

**Corrie van Staden
25 January**