



The Show Budgie

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For Show Budgie Breeders and Exhibitors

Visit to the aviary of Gerald Binks by Kobus Hechter



I had the privilege to visit the aviary of Gerald Binks in Virginia Waters, Surrey a few months ago. I was picked up at the station by Gerald and spent a lovely morning with him, his wife and of course the aviary.

The aviary is situated at the back of the garden and consists of a breeding room with 64 cages made by Reinhard Molkenntin, a Show trainer, seedbins, worktops and washbasin, and a flight area with two flights.

The birds are of exceptional quality and the outstanding features are definitely the head qualities and the type of the birds. Gerald was very patient and spent a lot of time explaining the desired features of showbirds. He took examples from his aviary, pointing out to me what is expected, what to avoid and how to achieve this feature.

He also recently acquired the entire stud of the late Jim Moffat and has exceptional birds from this quality stud, predominantly light greens. As the Moffat bloodline runs in his stud he has paired some of his birds with the new Moffat birds and showed me some of the offspring with a lot of potential.

As a true beginner I asked a lot of questions and received so much information that it is indeed difficult to even try and remember all. A number of outstanding issues I have listed. I suffered from such an information overload that things actually took a while to register afterwards.

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Highlights

On the 26th August an aviary visit was arranged. The main aim was to let members visit and see other members aviaries. This was very poorly attended but those present found it very informative. Ideas were traded with the best idea of the day coming from Kobus Hechter. Kobus makes use of a feeder in his flights that is really ingenious. The feeder is made from a 2 litre bottle and 2 pop plant bottoms. If you are interested please contact Kobus. For more information see Tip of the Month on page 3.

All contributions can be forwarded to John Nel
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Budgerigar Health

~Stress Marks by Sam Vaughn ~

Under this category we will look also at the absence of barbs and barbules, poorly formed barbs or barbules, and improperly shed sheaths. Stress marks are lines on the feathers where the barbules have not formed. Sometimes there is a line of weakness in the shaft at the same level, and the feather may break off at this point. If the barb and barbules are absent from a section of the feather, or if they are poorly formed, the feather does not hold together, giving the bird a tatty appearance. Improperly shed sheaths is a condition when the feather sheath is not shed in the usual way and instead persists over a greater part of the feather than is normal.

Occasionally, fully formed feathers are totally enclosed in their sheath. In all three conditions the abnormality is most easily seen in the large wing and tail feathers.

In all these conditions, the changes seen in the feathers usually indicate something wrong in the bird's system in general. This needs to be attended to rather than concentrating on the feathers. With stress marks, the disturbance is general short-lived, a matter of a few days to a week or thereabouts. The other conditions are associated with longer periods of illness, which can be quite mild, periods of stress or poor diet. When one or two birds in a flight are affected, this does not mean that the overall diet is unsatisfactory. Some budgerigars are very picky feeders and while different foods need to be supplied, it does not mean every bird will eat all of them. Provided the underlying problem is identified and corrected, the birds will almost certainly grow a set of normal feathers at the next moult.

Visit to the aviary of Gerald Binks, continued

Observations:

All nests were filled with plenty of young and the issue of fertility was touched on. Gerald's opinion on this is that feeding, age, and fertility are the most important aspect of fertility.

His birds possess very good head qualities, type and are in general of outstanding quality. I asked him how to achieve this and he had a few views on this. Firstly patience, know your stock and the progeny they produce will indicate the quality of the breeding stock. Have a breeding plan in mind for each year and pair with this in mind and cull with this desired effect in mind. He however keeps any bird with potential for at least fifteen months.

Chick mortality after leaving the nest was discussed and he is currently experimenting with deeper nest boxes that will keep the chicks in the nest box for longer. He is of the opinion that this will provide the chicks with the extra few days in the box resulting in a stronger chick by the time they leave the box.

I really had a most enjoyable time with him and his wife and too soon the time arrived for me to leave. It was a very strange feeling walking back into my aviary at home and looking at what I call show budgies and the first thought that entered my mind was to sell all the birds to the nearest petshop and start all over again.

I came back with a lot of information and the words of Gerald still echo in my head. "There is no easy way to achieve quality other than hard work and a bit of luck."



Above: Neville Greyling's breeding room. Right: Neville talking to members.



Kobus Hechter

Left: Breeding room layout.



Left: Kobus (right) and Ian Nel in the aviary

Colour for Beginners by Jim Hutton

Varieties

It doesn't matter whether you take Greens or Blues, there are a series of different varieties.

Opalines

Opalines have the full body colour of Normals, but they differ in wing markings. Where Normals have black and yellow markings on their wings in the Greens and black and white in the Blues, the Opalines have black, but instead of either yellow or white, they have a diluted body colour. In addition, at the back of the neck they have a clear V, only the body colour is showing, no black markings at all.

Next month we will continue looking at Varieties.

Tip of the Month

~Auto Feeder by Kobus Hechter~

I use the feeder depicted in the pictures below. The basic idea is a 2 litre bottle which holds the seed. Holes which allow the seed to flow are made just below the bottles top (in the neck area). Two pot plant bottoms of different sizes are taken. (see picture). A hole is made in both pot plant bottoms slightly smaller than the 2 litres bottles thread. The two pot plant bottoms are then screwed onto the bottle followed by the bottle top. A large washer can be used as seen in the picture. A hole is made in the bottom of the bottle. This will be used to top up the seed.



A hole in the bottom of the bottle must be made and a length of wire hooked from the bottle to a point in the aviary roof. Try it.



Share your experiences
with us by contributing an
Article

Feel free to contact the editor.

Articles always
required.

John or Ian Nel
(012) 542 3533

NEL BROTHERS STUD

XN2

EST. 1996

Most colours bred

1998

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

1999

Best Novice Any Age - Berario
Yellow Face and Dark & Olive
Green CC's
JSBS Derby and Club Champions
Yellow Face Grey Champion Bird

2000

Best Opp. Sex on Show - JSBS
Millennium Show
Best Novice - JSBS Millennium
Show
Best Bird on Show - Inter-Club
Show
Best Novice Any Age on Show -
Gauteng
Violet and Dark & Olive Green CC's

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

Visitors welcome. 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
A.O.C/V CC
Best Novice Young Bird Area 5

We welcome fellow enthusiasts, to phone, or visit,
have tea, stay the night, but please come.

**Do give us a call.
(031) 4651004 or 083 358 7125**

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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or

**Contact Pieter v/d Linde for more
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Tel : (012) 335 6950

September Birthday Wishes

Martie Erasmus on 7 September