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The Quarterly Bulletin

The Budgerigar Society of South Africa

Issue 13

July 2003





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Founded 1936

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Unless specifically stated, any views or opinions expressed herein, do not necessarily represent the views or opinions of the Society.

Message from the Chairman

They say that you really only know what something is worth when you do not have it anymore. I feel that way about the Quarterly Budgerigar Bulletin, which has missed a few issues, and I believe that many of our Society members have missed it as much as I have. We are very fortunate that we have someone in the Society like John Nel who has been able to take over the reins from Fred Sherman as editor. It is a time consuming and daunting task and we all wish John well in his endeavours.

Please help him as much as possible by sending him society/club news, results, items to stimulate discussion, etc. The better the inputs from you, the better the Bulletin will be!

Thank you too to Fred for your service over the last number of years and we wish you a speedy recovery after your operations.

There is so much happening in the Society currently that it really is exciting to be involved at management level. I really believe that what we are trying to change will deliver the results we expect. However, should we see that we are not getting the desired results we always have the option of further development. We, in the Society, are after all the masters of our own destiny.

The Management Committee will not make any changes without the support of the majority of our members and further undertakes to seek to improve the society as a whole and not benefit any group or faction.

So all I can ask you for is your support. If you do not agree with the majority decision please accept it in a democratic manner and continue to give your support. It is only by giving each solution a proper go that we can gauge if we are going in the right direction.

Cover

Best Bird on Show at the Gauteng Championship Show – Molkentin Stud

Eastern Cape Championship Show Report

14 – 15 June 2003

A very successful Eastern Cape championship show was held on 14 and 15 June 2003 in East London. A total of 770 birds were entered with 683 being benched on the day. There were 16 Champion, 6 Intermediate, 9 Novice, and 10 Beginner exhibitors on the day. The major awards on the day were:

The major awards on the day were:

- Best Bird on Show – PALM Aviary
- Best Opposite Sex – Hino Artus
- Best Any Age – PALM Aviary
- Best Young Bird – Ian Bleasdale
- Best Champion – PALM Aviary
- Best Intermediate – Dave Auld
- Best Novice on Show – Gail Smith
- Best Beginner on Show – JJ Fouche ♦



Left: Chris Smit preparing his entries for the Western Cape Championship Show held on the 24th May 2003.

Western Cape Championship Show Report

24 May 2003 - By Fred Wright

The 2003 Western Cape Area Championship Show was held in the northern suburbs of Cape Town on the 24th May 2003. Best bird on show was an Opaline Grey cock shown by Pat and Gerald De Beer. This bird was bred during last year, by these top exhibition fanciers, from Plumstead, Cape Town. The same husband and wife partnership took the top adult bird award with another bird of exactly the same colour.

The top Intermediate bird was a Grey Green cock benched by Hussein Sydow. The Novice leading bird was a Double-factor Yellow Spangle bred by the Carstens Partnership and another Double-factor White Spangle headed the Beginner classes for Riaan Dreyer.

Pat De Beer told me that both their two specials winners came through their top pedigree family of Greys, and that the two birds were closely related. These two fanciers have been breeding Budgerigars for more than 30 years and Pat is the secretary of one of the four Cape Town clubs. These fanciers are keen exhibitors and breeders of the main colours but have little interest in the specialist colours.

Two highly experienced judges placed the awards at this show. Ian Bleasdale came down from Johannesburg and Pierre Swart from Craddock.

The major awards on the day were:

- Best Bird on Show – de Beer P/ship
- Best Opposite Sex – Thistle Aviaries
- Best Any Age - de Beer P/ship
- Best Young Bird - de Beer P/ship
- Best Champion - de Beer P/ship
- Best Intermediate – Hussein Sydow
- Best Novice on Show – Carstens P/Ship
- Best Beginner on Show – PR Dreyer

A total of 600 birds were entered with 525 being benched on the day. ♦



Top: Pat and Gerald de Beer with Best Bird and Best Any Age and Young Bird.

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National Championship Show

8 - 10 August 2003

Contact Arthur Wadge

(011) 896 4279 (h) or (011) 746 9200 (w)

Gauteng Championship Show Report

1 March 2003 By John Nel

The Jacaranda Show Budgie Society held a very successful championship show in March 2003. A total of 823 birds were entered. These were made up of 197 Champion, 55 Intermediate, 375 Novice, and 196 Beginner birds. On the day 788 were benched. This equates to a 4,25% not benched. There were 10 Champion, 5 Intermediate, 14 Novice, and 13 Beginner exhibitors on the day. The judges on the day were Hino Artus, Bob Hirst, Albert Olivier, Chris Smit, and Pierre Swart. The major awards on the day were:

- Best Bird on Show - MolKentin Stud
- Best Opposite Sex - MolKentin Stud
- Best Any Age - MolKentin Stud
- Best Young Bird - MolKentin Stud
- Best Champion - MolKentin Stud
- Best Champion Any Age – MolKentin Stud
- Best Champion Young Bird – MolKentin Stud
- Best Intermediate - RDM Aviaries
- Best Inter Any Age – Pieter vd Linde
- Best Inter Young Bird – RDM Aviaries

- Best Novice on Show – Karyma Telers
- Best Novice Any Age – Karyma Telers
- Best Novice Young Bird – Karyma Telers
- Best Beginner on Show – TP Dreyer
- Best Beginner Any Age – TP Dreyer
- Best Beginner Young Bird – Kobus Hechter♦

Honorary Life Member

Premier Budgerigar Club nominated Chris Oberholzer for Honorary Life membership of the BSSA. His nomination was duly accepted and he was congratulated on his sterling contribution to the Society. Congratulations from all of us Chris.

Adverts

To advertise in the Quarterly Bulletin please contact the editor. See advert prices on page 16.

KwaZulu Natal Championship Show Report

3 – 4 May 2003

The KwaZulu-Natal Championship Show was held on 3 and 4 May and attracted an entry of 553 with 482 birds being benched on the day. The results were as follows:

The major awards on the day were:

- Best Bird on Show – Hino Artus
- Best Opposite Sex – KC Aviaries
- Best Any Age – KC Aviaries
- Best Young Bird – Hino Artus
- Best Champion – Hino Artus
- Best Intermediate – Brad Kirkbride
- Best Novice on Show – Brian Spinger
- Best Beginner on Show – L&D Aviaries♦

Nest Problems

By Bill and Christine Heale

Unfortunate breeding results vary due to hens becoming ill resulting in eggs chilling or newly hatched chicks dying through not being fed.

It is important to pair up at least four pairs of birds at the same time, so if anything unforeseen happens fertile eggs or newly hatched chicks can be moved to another nest box. If the identification of a chick is lost, this is the least of your worries as each chick saved could be a Best in Show. ♦

Stress Part 1, continued from page 11

By Dr Colin Walker BSc, BVSc, MRCVS, Victoria, Australia

60cm x 60cm x 1 meter are not uncommon. (This is analogous to keeping a Budgerigar in a cage 15cm square.) A cage of this size for a cockatoo should only be viewed as temporary housing or as a transport cage. If it is the only cage that is available, then the bird needs to spend a significant amount of time out of the cage to ensure its long-term health.

In Part 2 we will look at types of stress.

Acknowledgement

This article by Dr. Colin Walker is supplied by the *World Budgerigar Organisation* (www.worldbudgerigar.org), as part of their encouraged exchange of research information, and reprinted with kind permission from *Australian Birdkeeper Magazine*.

The End of Aviculture in Natal ???, continued from 7

any alien populations of flora or fauna from establishing themselves in the wild. The environment impact studies have been in force for reptiles from June 2002. How should you feel? "So what, I will pay my R250 for an environmental impact study on the birds I wish to acquire and take delivery of them within a reasonable period of time....." **You are mistaken!** I submitted an application for the importation of eight species/subspecies of reptiles in June 2002. So far I have received seven environmental impact studies. The eighth E.I.A is still pending, despite frequent enquiries on my part – 9 months later and still no decision.

Fellow aviculturists, this is a very serious matter. Those of us interested in animal husbandry are not just going to have our "wings severely clipped", we are going to be "euthanased"!!

Natallers, no more visiting birds farms in Gauteng, picking out some nice parrots and bringing them home. Oh no, first you have to apply for a permit for each species, pay R250 for the E.I.A, wait till it has been done and approved, then hopefully get your permit. What makes you think those birds you wanted to buy in the first place will still be there for you by the time you have your permit? And what makes you who live in the other provinces think this won't happen to you too? How is it going to impact on the thousands of people who rely on the income from their birds and on the many who are employed by them? Are we just going to take this lying down? ♦

Gauteng Championship Show Picture Report

By John Nel



Top: Best Opposite Sex on Show –
Molkentin Stud.
Bottom: Best Intermediate Any Age –
Pieter vd Linde.



Top: Best Intermediate on Show –
RDM Aviaries
Bottom: Best Beginner on Show –
TP Dreyer.



Gauteng Championship Show Picture Report

By John Nel



Top: Reinhard (Molkentin Stud) receives the Best Bird and Best Opposite Sex awards from Japie Smit.

Top: Ralph Morgan Receives the award for Best Intermediate on Show.



Left: The stewards in action. From left to right are Johan Jooste, Jan O'Kelly, David Jooste and Willem van Tonder.



Above: The decanters, which were up for grabs at the show.

Stress Part 1, continued from page 10

By Dr Colin Walker BSc, BVSc, MRCVS, Victoria, Australia

not like these. Often removing these and covering the floor with washed dry river sand to a depth of 1–2 cm (available from garden supply outlets) provides a surface that birds enjoy walking and lying on as well as exploring. Changed regularly, this provides a hygienic floor. The sand absorbs the moisture from the droppings and when the cage is cleaned the sand and dropping mixture make a good garden dressing.

Birds, when introduced to a new home, cannot sense intuitively that you mean them no harm. Sudden movements, bright colours and loud noises are all intimidating. Speaking in a steady voice in a lower tone also helps.

Cage placement is also important. Initially the cage should not be placed in a major thoroughfare of the house. Remember that everything is new and potentially frightening. Unfamiliar activity interferes with normal rest and feeding and does little to promote a feeling of security. Adjustment to other pets in the household, such as dogs, will take time. It is doubtful whether birds ever become accustomed to a cat. It is often a good idea to place the cage in a quieter part of the house for the first few days until the bird familiarises itself with its new home and starts to eat properly. Once the bird settles into its cage and starts to recognise and know its new owner, the cage can then be moved to a busier area. This is particularly so for

intelligent birds such as parrots, which quickly become bored. Placing the cage in front of a window or even outside can help to prevent any cage boredom with a more established pet. However, it is important to remember that the sight of any natural predators such as magpies, raptors and cats, will not only cause significant stress but may lead to physical injury due to the bird panicking and flying around the cage.

The temperature and humidity of the area in which the cage is placed are also important. Ideally the temperature for most birds should be in the range 20–25°C and the humidity about 60%. Birds can, of course, cope with much higher and lower levels of both, however, a significant change in either value over 24 hours, e.g. cold nights and hot days, has been shown to be a significant stress factor. Draughts (which are essentially cold currents of air through warmer air) should be avoided.

Because most time spent in the air by birds is involved in horizontal rather than vertical flight, it is better if the pet bird's cage is a rectangle lying on its side rather than its end. This will make the cage much more usable for the bird. It should go without saying that the cage needs to be big enough for the species kept. It is unfortunate that many larger cockatoos are kept in cages that are too small for them to even fully extend their wings, let alone fly. Cages measuring

Stress Part 1

Identifying Possible causes and Improving Management to
Minimise its effect on Disease

By Dr Colin Walker BSc, BVSc, MRCVS, Victoria, Australia

Throughout their lives, birds are exposed to many organisms that have the potential to cause severe and sometimes even fatal disease, but often the birds do not even become sick. Why is this? Healthy, happy birds have a natural resistance that prevents these organisms from causing disease. Avian veterinarians describe much of the clinical disease seen in birds as being stress induced or stress related. What exactly does your veterinarian mean when he says that your bird has become stressed? Essentially, he means any physical or psychological factor that decreases the bird's ability to resist disease. Birds under stress become what are termed 'immuno suppressed'. This means that their immune system is less able to mount an immune response, making the birds more vulnerable to disease. If we want our birds to live long and happy lives we should understand some of the common causes of stress and how we can avoid them.

Stress and the New Pet Bird

The acquisition of a new bird is always exciting. However, for the new bird, there are always many inherent and often unavoidable stresses associated with transport and rehousing. This is particularly so with young birds because often this time is also associated with weaning. Not only are they separated from their parents but there is also a

possible change of diet. A bird in a new cage must find where the food and water are, and, if weaned into a cage with other birds, must find its own space and territory.

Having the cage ready and correctly set up will help to settle the new bird more quickly and avoid any unnecessary stress. Considerable thought should be given to cage size, design and placement. For many birds, the cage represents their own space or territory and acts as their refuge if they feel threatened. It is therefore important that the cage promotes this sense of security. Remember the old zoo cages that used to house animals such as tigers, which were entirely constructed of wire? They are no longer used in zoos and yet are commonly used to house pet birds. A skittish bird sitting in a cage with four wire walls and a wire roof must feel very exposed and vulnerable. It is beneficial to have a solid roof or one or two solid walls fitted, even if this simply means attaching some cardboard sections with string. Placing the perches high in the cage promotes security and, of course, the perches should always be of uneven diameter and have a variable surface to avoid later foot problems. Natural branches are best. Many commercially available cages have a removable wire floor for ease of cleaning. Many birds do

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ORLUX DRY / ORLUX WITH HONEY EGG FOOD for young chicks

The End of Aviculture in Natal ???

At the meeting of the Avicultural Forum held at the offices of the KwaZulu-Natal Nature Conservation Department in Durban on 13 March 2003, those present were advised that as from April 2003 Environmental Impact Assessments would have to be carried out on all foreign birds entering the Province of KwaZulu-Natal from other provinces, and furthermore, this would apply to importation of birds from other countries. The fee for such a E.I.A. would be R250.

The Department of Environment Affairs and Tourism has for some time been worried about alien flora and fauna becoming invasive in this country. The KwaZulu-Natal Conservation Department for this reason established a Reptile Forum and an Aviculture Forum to discuss this problem with those persons interested in keeping reptiles and birds. To my knowledge they do not have a marine or tropical fish, mammal, invertebrate or flora forum. The forums meet approximately every 3 months, and at these forums the Nature Conservation authorities advise us of their concerns and the legislation they wish to impose upon us to prevent

Continued on page 12

WHY SHOULD THE BSSA BE CONSIDERING CHANGE?

By Sam Rosslee

1. As we all know change is not an end but a means to an end, i.e. we do not change something just for the sake of changing it but because that something, in most cases, is not working properly so we try to change it so that it does. In many cases, there is nothing fundamentally wrong with that thing before you change it – it has just remained relatively static while things around it have changed and therefore it no longer has the desired effect.
2. But people who know will say “Hold on, we **have** changed the Society a lot over the last number of years – why just look at the quality of our birds; the introduction of points at Additional Championship Shows, The Budgerigar Bulletin, software to assist at shows, etc.” Which is of course all true but if we look at the decreasing number of members in the Society we come to the realisation something is still wrong as more people are leaving the hobby than those joining it!
3. So what then is wrong? That is the million-dollar question. The bottom line, however, is that the outflow exceeds the inflow, i.e.
 - a. Outflow: Do people not get as much pleasure out of the hobby as they used to when compared to other alternatives? Is our

approach too management orientated and less people orientated? Do we have enough support systems to keep members in the fancy who are struggling?

- b. Inflow: Is time, money, work pressure, etc is too tight to allow for a hobby? Do people out there not know of the advantages of breeding and showing budgerigars? Do we try to entice old members back who are no doubt missing the birds and the camaraderie?
4. If any of the above is true, obviously a change to address that problem will be a step in the right direction, i.e. if we do nothing we still have the problem, if we make considered changes we at least have a chance of getting it right! We might, however, have to make further changes, as this first change may impact on something else which is no longer in line.
 5. It does not help changing a fuse if there is still a short in the wiring, i.e. small changes will not necessarily, by themselves, give you the desired result! You therefore have to look at the whole system to identify all the problems and fix them together if you want to succeed.

Continued on page 9

Why should the BSSA be considering change? - Continued

6. It is clear that without change the Society will slowly dwindle away to nothing. Too little or badly considered change may have to same effect! The 2003 BSSA Indaba has identified a number of areas that are candidates for change, and such changes may lead to a further requirement for change. Our ability to embrace change and your constructive feedback will help us to get it right. ♦



Top: Club members from the Pretoria area.



Top: Neville Greyling (Chairman Jacaranda Show Budgerigar Society), Reinhard Molkentini (world renown champion budgerigar breeder and international budgerigar judge), Gerald Binks (world renown champion budgerigar breeder and author of "The Challenge" Breeding Championship Budgerigars) and Sam Rosslee (Chairman Budgerigar Society of South Africa).

Gerald Binks visits South Africa

By Sam Rosslee

Gerald visited South Africa from England where he spent a few days at the Molkentin Stud (Reinhard and Holger Molkentin).

Reinhard and family moved to South Africa from Germany a number of years ago and their partnership has won Champion of Champions on many occasions since then. They won Best Bird and Best Opposite Sex at last year's National Championship Show.

Gerald was the founder and first editor of the Budgerigar World, the world's leading glossy budgerigar magazine and in fact has been at the forefront of many of the new developments in the international budgerigar arena. He is an author and has a number of publications to his name, including "The Challenge" Breeding Championship Budgerigars, which is considered by many all over the world to be the best book available on the subject today.

Gerald agreed to answer some questions and lead a general discussion on show budgerigars with club members from the Pretoria area. Afterwards a delightful braai in true South African tradition was enjoyed at the Molkentin home. ♦