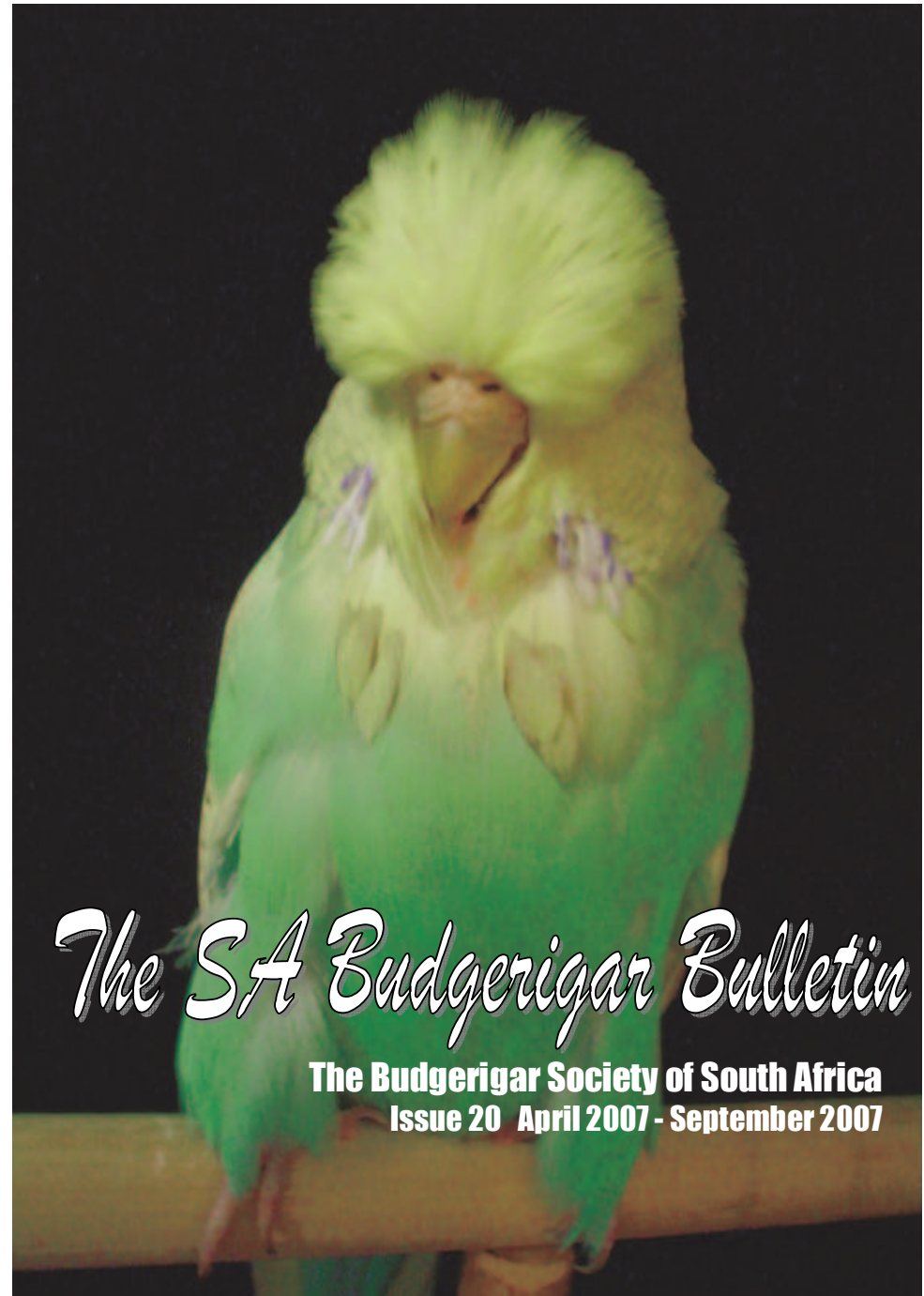




Western Cape Rare Championship Show
Best Bird on Show
Grey White Cock
Deon Davie



The SA Budgerigar Bulletin

The Budgerigar Society of South Africa
Issue 20 April 2007 - September 2007



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www.showbudgies.co.za

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Visit the South African Budgie Sites

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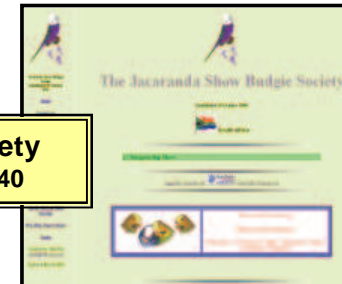


Please contact the Editor to add your site.

East London Budgerigar Society
www.Geocities.com/elbudgerigarsociety



Jacaranda Show Budgie Society
www.Geocities.com/Petsburgh/5240



Molkentin Stud
www.Geocities.com/molkentinstud



Budgie Fun
Across – (1) Cobra, (2) Spangle, (3) Glen
Down – (4) Cam Judge, (5) Brown Wing, (6) Harry



From the Chair

Show	Show Dates 2007	Date
KwaZulu Natal Championship Show		26 May
Western Cape Championship Show		9 June
Gauteng Championship Show		23 June
National Championship Show		11&12 Aug
Western Cape Additional Championship Show		6 October
Show	Show Dates 2008	Date
Eastern Cape Championship Show		5 April

The Quarterly Bulletin Advertising Rates Advertising Options

A 6 cm x 4 cm advert will cost you R25 A Quarter page will cost you R50
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Adverts

BSSA Affiliation Fees for 2007

Affiliation fee (adult)	R150.00
Affiliation fee (junior)	R 0.00
Affiliation fee (partnership – family at same address)	R200.00
Affiliation fee (all other partnerships – per member)	R150.00
Fee for registration of a partnership	R150.00
Fee for registration of a personal ring code	R100.00
Price of Rings (per ring)	R 3.00

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A NEW YEAR, NEW POSSIBILITIES

We are at the beginning of a new year with the benefit of new opportunities. Be it work related, in our personal life or with our hobby. We at Management would like to wish every member a prosperous 2007 Budgie Breeding/Exhibition year.

Statistics

Based on statistics over a long period combined with stats from abroad it seems as if the average breeder exhibits between 12 to 15 birds per show. If we can average 15 entries per exhibitor with only 30% of our members entering (15 x 100 members) we can average 1500 entries.

As you all know an entry of over 1500 the last couple of years in South Africa would be considered a very good entry. My plea to all members is to try and encourage as many members to participate on our shows as you can. I know cost of travelling and accommodation is ever increasing, and I do not want to promote that you only show in your area, but if we can encourage our members to firstly support their local shows it may just be the stimulant that is needed to participate on more shows per year.

News from abroad is that the so-called Brownwing has re-emerged in

Australia.



In the January From the Chair I mentioned that JSBS will be doing a question and answer session with a judge, while judging (A DBC suggestion).

JSBS took it one step further with their Additional show on the 24th February, making use of modern technology. A small camera and microphone was mounted on Tom Lynch's cap.



The images and sound were then played to a television on the outside of the hall, for all interested to experience and learn what was going on inside the hall.

Another first was surveillance cameras in the hall, adding to the security. ♦

NEWS FROM LARKWOOD AVIARIES

By Suzanne Lucas (the not so sleeping partner of Larkwood aviaries)

So where exactly has the time gone since our last article? Don't ask me!!! All I know for sure is that someone swiped half the weekends that used to be on my calendar. The rest have been taken up with visits by clubs, which are ALWAYS welcome, shows and unfortunately for Johan, work – the kind that pays his salary I mean!!!!

After my last piece written for the magazine, I had a husband with his nose severely out of joint, at the lack of enthusiasm on my part for the things he has actually done to the betterment of Larkwood aviaries. So with great gusto he decided that the next time I put 'pen to paper' he would make sure I had plenty to write about.

He set about with such enthusiasm one fine Saturday morning, and had Wilfred up at the crack of dawn sifting sand, measuring cement and swooshing it all together to make a good mix for making windowsills. It took the whole day for the two of them to measure out the length, get the angle right and build up and plaster seven such sills. If anyone knows Johan as I do, he is a perfectionist of note and whatever job he tackles is done with precise detail. When he is finished he will look back on whatever it was he just tackled and know with confidence

that 'it is good'. He has done his best, he is satisfied. This was just so with his day of labour on the window sills. The two of them cleaned up, washed off the tools and packed everything away – with just enough time to watch the rugby. It was a great day, warm but not too much so. The sun shone brightly and at the end of it all the window sills looked perfect. The first job was complete, and time next week to tackle something else. Suddenly, it clouded over, the wind came up, it became dark and the sky turned angry with a wrath that we have not seen since moving here. The heavens opened and the rain poured down, lashing out with such viciousness that Johan's face fell flat upon looking out of the kitchen window at the sight of all his hard work disappearing before his eyes. His perfectly measured and squared off windowsills ran all the way down the aviary wall until there was just about nothing left of them. Wilfred shook his head in amazement and did not have words to console his boss, nor did he have energy to do anything else that day.

After that fiasco, Johan decided he would rather tackle something else on the aviary 'to do' list than sort out the sills again. So once he was over the catastrophe of his previous task he decided that he should do something to alleviate the excessive

1932

- o Three Fallow mutations occurred in England which became known as the English Fallow. In Australia these have been genetically classified and identified as the Dun Fallow or Grey-Brown Fallow (aka Australian Fallow). The Beige Fallow or Pale-Brown Fallow has been classified in South-Africa, but no reference seems to be available on this particular mutation.
- o A recessive Anti-dimorphic Pied (aka Danish Pied) in Denmark.
- o A Dominant Pied (aka Australian Pied) in Australia.

1933

- o Green Clearwing (aka Yellow Wing) and Dominant Grey-Factor appear in Australia.
- o Both the NSL & the SL Lutino gene occurred in England and continental Europe.
- o Three Opaline mutations occurred. An Opaline Green hen was captured in the wild and sold to S. Terril in Adelaide. It was later-on reproduced and is most probably the ancestor of all Opaline specimens in Australia. Two sudden captive-bred Opaline mutations occurred in England and Holland.

1934 Recessive Grey Factor in England.

1935 The Yellow Faced Blue and Golden Face dBlue occurred in several locations.

1939-46 Clear-Flighted Dutch Pied in Belgium.

1948

- o Texas Clearbody (aka SL-Clearbody) in the U.S.A.
- o Dominant Clearbody in the U.S.A.
- o The first Cinnamon-Ino crossover (aka Lacewings) mutation was produced in Australia.
- o The first Dark Eyed Clear variety was produced in Belgium by combining the ADM Pied (aka Danish/Recessive pied) with either one of the two Dutch Pied varieties.

1970-74 Single Factored and Double Factored Spangled specimens were produced in Australia.

1975 Saddleback specimens were produced in Australia.

Notes

It is probable that the Greywings mutation survived as the ancestor of all actual Greywings. However, it is possible that the mutation laid dormant in asymptomatic mutant specimens until it was re-established between 1918 and 1925. Blue Greywing specimens were produced later on in 1928.

It is very likely that all Suffused mutation specimens and their varieties are descendants from the first captive mutant specimens. This means that Suffused is the oldest sudden captive-bred colour mutation of the budgerigar species. ♦

Budgerigar Timeline

By Wikipedia - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Budgerigar_genetics

In the first few decades of the 1900s, especially in-between World Wars I and II, the keeping and breeding of the budgerigar had become very popular all around the world. Consequently, various mutations occurred and were soon established during this period.

Time line

1870-75 The very first registered sudden captive-bred colour mutations were Green Suffused (aka Dilute Green), Green Greywings and either one of the two types of Lutino (NSL-lno &/or SL-lno) mutations. All three occurred in aviaries in Great Britain or Europe. Of these three mutations, only the Suffused Green (aka Dilute Yellow) has survived. This was easily reproduced in great numbers and is nowadays very well established. The first Lutino mutation quickly vanished but it was re-established in Europe some time between 1931 and 1933.

1878 The first Sky Blue budgerigar appeared in Belgium.

1880-85 The Blue mutation suddenly occurred in continental Europe, most probably in Uccle, Belgium. Surprisingly, this variety was not imported in England until 1910.

1915 Simple Dark-Green (aka Dark-Green) in France.

1916 Double Dark-Green (aka Olive) in France.

1918-25 Greywings Green and

Greywings Blue appeared in England and continental Europe.

1920

- o Crest-Factor in Australia.
- o Suffused Blue (aka Dilute White) in England and France.
- o Simple Dark Blue (aka Cobalt) in France.

1921 Double Dark Blue (aka Mauve) in France.

1930

- o Simple Violet-Green (aka Violet Factor) in Australia.
- o The first Clearwing appeared, developed by H. Pier in Sydney.

1931

- o Cinnamon in England, Australia & Germany.
- o An unknown type of Fallow in California, U.S.A. This soon vanished.
- o The German Fallow in Germany, recently been genetically classified and identified as the Bronze Fallow (aka Brown Fallow).
- o A plum-eyed mutation, similar looking to Fallow mutations, occurred in England. This vanished or at least became very rare. This mutation was most probably the Brownwings, one of the rarest colour mutations of the species.
- o The first Albino specimens were produced in both England and continental Europe.

heat that hovers around in the bird room, especially in the late afternoon and at the end of the day. He was going to make up and weld together security gates that he could fit on the outside of the two doors, so that we could safely leave the doors open during the day to allow free flow of air. Knowing how much he loves to be able to do everything on his own, but also being realistic to the plan at hand, I gently persuaded Johan that it would be far, quicker and easier for him to buy ready made gates and then he could be finished in a day – instead of a few weeks. So off he went to Builders Warehouse and purchased two gates and on returning proceeded to fit them both. By the end of the day, we had both gates on AND they were each fitted with a small gauge wire from top to bottom JUST IN CASE we ever have any escapees!!!! Such a good idea it was too to fit the wire as our budgies are real Houdini's in disguise. If they can work a latch or a door or even squeeze through a gap, then they will do it. And as you can imagine there have been a couple of days that I have gone into the bird room and had a budgie or two flying around enjoying their new found freedom.

Well those are the major adjustments that have been made so far – alas, as I said before, weekends have disappeared never to return and with Johan's increased workload there has not been an opportunity to spend more than a couple of hours at a time doing anything on the home

front. He is busy planning a third aviary and is hoping to start on that in the near future. Otherwise he is sorting, pairing, ringing etc etc.

Before I end off I must quickly regale you with a story that brings shivers to the spine and will make you open your nest boxes with a little less vigour and a lot more caution. (I know that some of you have already heard this tale – but for those of you who do not know – read on!!!)

One Thursday morning Johan made up the birds food as usual, and took it through to Wilfred to feed the budgies. He then came back into the house to eat his own breakfast before going out to the bird room again before going to work. When he walked inside, Wilfred said to him that there was 'something not right with some of the birds' and then proceeded to lead him to the set of 8 breeding cages just at the end of the main aviaries. There in the bottom of the lowest 2 cages were both pairs –dead? Weird hey!! Then when Johan looked closer he realised that the pair in one of the cages just above didn't seem to be around!!! STRANGE? Being the wise person that he is he put 2 and 2 together and somehow came up with 6!!! Six dead and/or missing birds could only mean one thing. We must have had a visitor and he/she/it may very well still be a guest at large. Slowly and very carefully he opened the lower nest

boxes up to reveal – nothing, but when he lifted the door of the box above, he was confronted with a very dozy spitting cobra languishing in a very comfortable new bed.



When Wilfred saw there was a snake he was out the door before Johan could say 'Jack Robinson'. Even though he had 'lost' 3 pairs of budgies – and good ones too mind you – overnight, he enthusiastically ran into the house to call Nicky and I and tell us to bring the camera with us.

He then carefully lifted the nest box off the front of the cage, covering the back at the same time, and then proceeded to move outside with it – far from both the house and the aviary.

He put the box down and then pulled up the front opening with great caution. Needless to say this 'house guest' had no intention of moving in a hurry, if at all. Johan poked and prodded him/her/it until it very lazily uncurled itself and slithered out onto the grass.

Unfortunately that was the end – Johan who was obviously overcome by a burst of adrenalin chopped its head off with a spade.

It was 2m in length and we could see the 2 bumps in the abdomen that were proof of where the other pair of budgies had disappeared to.



(By the way this happened before the gates were fitted and we guess it came in under the door.) Since our visitor though, we have closed every single little gap available with some 'Sista' crack filler, just to be certain that no other unwelcome creatures will show up and surprise us.

So on that little anecdote, I complete this chapter. Time now to spend more time in Larkwood aviaries and less time sitting at the PC.....♦

See Article page 11 – Cape Cobra

of shows you could attend. Admittedly many of the diseases we are worried about could be limited by a 14 day period (influenza, reovirus) but still this would limit the number of exhibitions a fancier could attend. Disinfection should be with a DEFRA approved disinfectant on clean surfaces, at the required dilution for the required contact time. This is certainly a major stumbling block for the exhibitions as many shows were using inappropriate disinfectants for too short a time period. Also there is resistance from some foolish, more senior members and judges based on my experiences over the last few years. The only disinfectant that I would recommend is F10SC® as this is effective but also safer than many others, bearing in mind both our birds and we ourselves are exposed to the disinfectant.

Diseases of clinical significance

Macrorhabdus ornithogaster

The lay mans term for this is Megabacteria, it causes a chronic wasting disease and is caused by a type of yeast. This is endemic within our fancy now. Clinically it presents as going light and regurgitation. Passing whole seeds can be a feature. Occasionally a bird will regurgitate blood and die due to stomach damage. The only effective treatment is amphotericin B. This is available as a water-soluble formulation or as a lozenge. The difficulty with Budgerigars is getting them to drink sufficient to control the infection. Reportedly conversion to a more digestible diet will lead to fewer clinical cases.

Chlamydomphila

This can pass onto humans. It can cause conjunctivitis, sinusitis, green droppings, fluffed up birds and sudden deaths. This is endemic within the fancy but only occasionally leads to significant outbreaks, usually associated with high

stress levels on the birds or due to poor husbandry. Testing can be problematic and the best test is to test the bird faeces collected over three days. It is important not to treat with any antibiotics prior to collecting them. It is impossible to certify a stud free of infection under any circumstances. The treatment of choice here is doxycycline.

Conjunctivitis and sinusitis

These are becoming increasingly common and can be due to a variety of agents including *Chlamydomphila*. Once introduced into a stud it can be difficult to eradicate and I would not wish to acquire any birds from a stud with signs of this condition. Treatment includes many different broad spectrum antibiotics with activity against the *Chlamydomphila* or *Mycoplasma*. Taking culture samples will help to identify the most appropriate drug to use.

'French Molt'

This is caused by one or both of two viruses. This has been proved many times. If a fancier tells you otherwise they are talking rubbish. These two infections are Psittacine Beak and Feather Disease (Pbfd) and Polyoma Virus. These cannot be treated and are spread by feather dust. Control is by reducing the environmental viral load by using F10SC® and reducing bird density. In severe cases stopping breeding and resting the birds is required to limit the outbreak severity.

Acknowledgement

This article by Kevin Eatwell is supplied by the **World Budgerigar Organisation** (www.world-budgerigar.org), as part of their encouraged exchange of research information, and supplied to the WBO with kind permission by the **Budgerigar Society and Kevin Eatwell** based on his presentation at the Budgerigar Society Convention at Southport in June 2006.

PREVENTATIVE MEDICINE IN EXHIBITION BUDGERIGARS

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Preventative Medicine

Preventative medicine is of vital importance to the Budgerigar fancy. Recently outbreaks of viral disease have led to increased disease precautions being undertaken at exhibitions.

When controlling disease it is important to understand how infectious agents may be spread. This can be by direct contact between birds, feather dust, air droplets or via contaminated surfaces (such as show cages). Mixing of birds is probably the most significant factor for disease transmission.

Mixing of birds occurs all the time when new birds are bought, birds on loan, birds travelling to and from exhibitions and at the shows themselves. If the birds were mixing with disease free individuals that would be fine but we cannot and must not trust anyone to have disease free stock. Thus any birds that have been recently mixed (for whatever reason) should be considered as potentially infected. It may not be that the supplier is knowingly lying, but they themselves are unable to guarantee the disease status of their own birds.

Disease Control

Disease control of the fancy as a whole is not possible and so disease prevention should be your concern on your doorstep. This is the only way to know your birds are protected. Economics does play a role and this may limit

extensive testing for disease. However one thing that can be done is quarantine. All birds may be carrying diseases and you may not know what diseases your birds have. There is little point trying to exclude a disease you already have, but you certainly want to keep novel infections out! So what should our quarantine facility be like?

What Should Quarantine Facility Be Like?

Firstly an all in all out policy should be rigidly kept to. Quarantine should be for at least 42 days. Individual housing will enable food and water intake and dropping consistency to be critically appraised. The cage should be easy to disinfect between birds. A metal cage with a newspaper substrate is the easiest to maintain. Any sick birds should be either euthanased and a post mortem examination or a clinical diagnosis with appropriate treatment. It is important to delay the entry of all birds in the group until you are satisfied of their disease status.

Birds should be quarantined after every mixing event. This includes upon their return from a show, prior to a show (to reduce the risk to other birds at the exhibition). Ensuring the exhibitors' birds have a certain level of disease free status and enforcement of a quarantine period before and after an exhibition would control infections far more effectively than any current measures in place. Sadly this means we would have to rely on individual fanciers and trust their judgement. Would you trust all the exhibitors at your local show? Quarantine of birds in this situation has another limitation, as it would reduce the number

SEED WASHING MADE EASY

By Deon Davie

Cleaning your seed need not be a daunting task. I have built myself a seedwashing tray in less than an hour and for less than R80.

Material needed includes aluminium, shade net and a couple of pop rivets and washers.

An aluminium frame with a support in the middle is assembled after which the shade net is stretched firmly from one side to the other. Pop rivets with washers are used to ensure the net stays stretched out and in place.



The idea was to make it small enough to fit through a door in case of rain or when the seed is not thoroughly dry.

There is room for improvement on

the tray. I would add a spout on the one corner by raising the sides by 20cm, leaving a small gap to pour the seed out once dried.

Start off by getting rid of any excess dust from the seed. This can be done by means of pouring small quantities from one bucket to another or a winnower machine.

The seed is then placed onto the tray and spread evenly. Ensure that the seed is adequate for the tray as too much seed will take too long to dry and can cause the shade net to stretch too much.

Rinse the seed with running water. The excess water will pour through the shade net.



The tray is left in the sun to dry. Care must be taken that wild birds don't have access to the seed. Ensure that the seed is 100% dry before feeding to the birds or storing. ♦

A JUDGING DILEMMA

By Ian Bleasdale



Around the world and in South Africa as well, the debate concerning quality vs. variety continues.

Judging light greens, grey greens, sky's, cinnamon greens etc. has never been a problem because it is very seldom that their colour or wing markings differ from the standard. Occasionally a normal may display opalescence or an opaline may have a wishy-washy body colour and subsequently both these faults are penalized accordingly.

The problem arises when we are judging varieties that are defined by their markings or lack thereof as the case may be. In this regard I am referring to spangles, clearwings, recessive and dominant peds and lutinos for example.

The above varieties present challenges that are far greater than when breeding the so called 'normal' varieties and quite often the points structure is geared to meet these challenges. Breeding lutinos does not just mean breeding a bird to compete on size and shape alone but also on colour intensity.

To breed recessive peds to the standard of good normals is a very difficult task and then on top of it there are the wing markings to consider. Clearwings with greater size and shape tend to have wing markings which is not what is required at all.

The challenge to breed a budgie to the ideal standard is difficult enough but when all these other requirements also have to be considered, then the breeding of these specialist varieties is made even more difficult and presents a real challenge. The question to be asked is why breeders accept the challenge of breeding these difficult varieties.

I believe the answer is two fold in that it represents two groups of breeders. The first group are those that are fairly successful with the 'normal' varieties and by using these better normals hope to improve on the size of the budgie and thereby gain extra points. They care little for the actual variety and what makes it special. The second group are those that are dedicated to the variety, be they lutinos or clearwings for example. They endeavour to breed the variety to the ideal shape and size but equally importantly to the colour standard.



Budgie Fun

Across

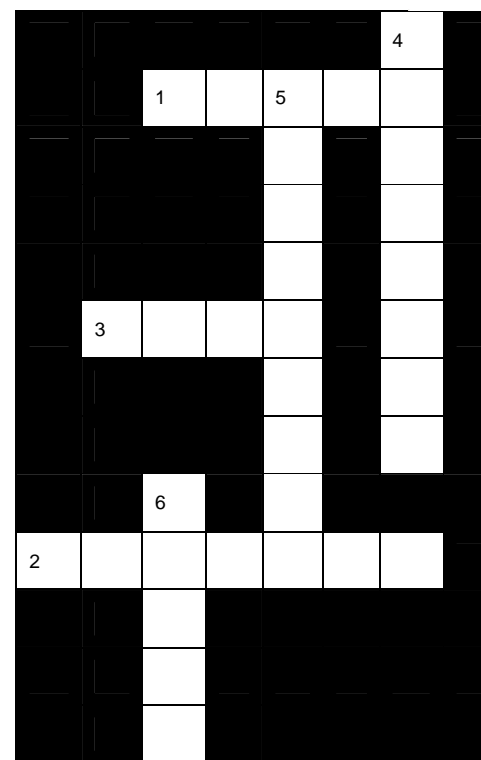
- 1 – In a nest with Larkwood Aviaries.
- 2 – Changes when factors are doubled.
- 3 – Best for the first time (Name).

Down

- 4 – Tom Lynch was one.
- 5 - Back in Australia.
- 6 - No beak.



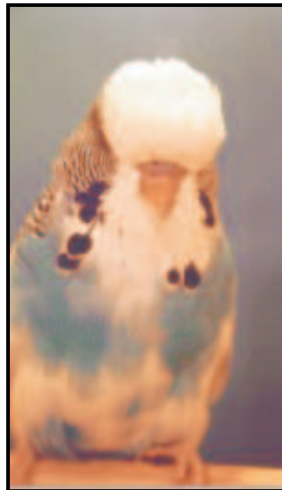
Answer on page 35.



From the Past - 2004 Gauteng Championship Show



Above Left: Best Bird on Show – Heino Artus
Above Middle: Best Opposite Sex on Show – Thistle Aviaries
Above Right: Best Grey Green on Show - Thistle Aviaries



Above Left: Best Novice on Show – D Dawood
Above Right: Heino Artus and Assistant after winning Best Bird on Show



The problem is that this becomes a most difficult exercise and often with a sense of despair when they are beaten by a bird of superior size but lacking any recognition to the variety's colour standard. The following examples illustrate their disillusionment; Lutinos with a very pale body colour, recessive pids with 90% wing markings, clearbodies with no visible body colour difference to normals and clearwings that resemble full bodied greywings

A move is afoot to split the spangles into normals, cinnamons and opalines. The idea being that opaline spangles are discriminated against when compared to slightly weaker but well marked normal spangles. This reminds me of a couple of years ago at the Area Show in Pietermaritzburg where I did the opposite by awarding best spangle to a quality budgie that resembled a double factor green spangle. Yes, it was a very good bird and better than all the rest regarding size, shape and head but an extremely poor example of a normal coloured spangle. What message was I sending out to all those dedicated spangle breeders who had left such birds at home. I believe I made a mistake in not paying attention to such detail.

At the Judges Conference a few years ago the question of bird first or variety first was debated and a decision was taken that variety had to play a major part in the decision. In other words should a lutino of brilliant colour be competing against a slightly stronger lutino with very poor colour, then the bird of better colour was to receive the award.

This certainly does not mean that poor birds of brilliant colour were to be put above good birds of poor colour. That type of attitude would be of no good to either of the groups of breeders that I mentioned previously. The first group of breeders cry quality first and the second want recognition given to variety markings.

Yes, quite a dilemma but I believe that we need to consider both quality and variety content and thereby rewarding those that are dedicated to improving the variety in all its aspects. Neither quality nor special variety requirements should take precedence over the other but a balance of the two is needed. ♦

Test Your Knowledge of Genetics

What dominant varieties change appearance when they have two genes for the trait?

Test Answers
 Spangle, dominant pied and yellow face change appearance as double factors

SHOW PREPARATION

By Glen Furniss

After winning Best Bird on Show at the JSBS Additional Championship Show where a total of 33 exhibitors benched 579 birds I would like to share my method of preparing for a show. This will be useful for those starting out in the budgie fancy but as always "Do what works for you."

1: Before any birds are entered for a show, the birds are caught in the aviary and the tail and flight feathers are checked. (Normally 3 to 4 weeks before a show)

2: Once I have chosen and entered the birds I like, 2 weeks before the show they are caught out and put in smaller holding cages with show cages on the ends.

3: At this stage I stop feeding any greens and soft food such as carrot and spinach. The seed mix stays the same but every day they get soaked canary and groats. I also continue to feed sunflower seed, this they get dry.

4: The water stays the same until 3 days before the show, every morning I give the bird's carboasil right to the day of the show, this I believe keeps them fit and perky throughout the show

5: Once the birds are in the holding

cage they get sprayed every day with plain water, first thing in the morning.

6: One week before the show I catch the birds out and do the spots and the head, I like to do the spots a week early because if any fall out or if I pull the wrong spots then it gives me time to look for a replacement bird. I use a small hack saw blade that I got from Heino Artus to clean all the wax off the head. If I find a blood feather that starts bleeding when I do this, I pull it completely out and wash the head with cold water. (This normally takes about 3 days to come clean)

7: The next day, only after I have done the spots do I start spraying again, but I now use baby shampoo in the water (I use a 500ml spray bottle). I continue to spray every day up to the day of the show. (1 week before the show)

8: On the Thursday of the show I will catch the birds in the early afternoon and physically wash their heads and beaks if they are dirty or not. I use a tooth brush and baby shampoo in warm water. Any excess spots or wax on their heads are also removed at this time. Their tails are also dipped in the warm water. (I also wash the vent if necessary)

9: On the Friday morning I spray the birds for the last time with baby

2007 JSBS Additional Gauteng Championship Show - Picture Report



Top (left and right): The Cam Judge, Tom Lynch, explains the judging which is wirelessly transmitted to the viewing station outside the venue (TV left). Security cameras data is displayed, TV right, and recorded.



Bottom Left: Ian Bleasdale flanked by judges Malcolm Taylor and George Sutton...is there money changing hands ☺

Bottom Right: Frank Gerber benches while Val Nagel assists and Clarence Marks waits for birds to place on the staging.

2007 JSBS Additional Gauteng Championship Show - Picture Report



Top Left and Right: Glen Furniss and Best Bird on Show
Bottom Left: Best Opposite Sex on Show – Molkentin Stud
Bottom Right: Best Intermediate on Show – Wemarc Stud

shampoo. That evening at about 6.30pm, after the birds have eaten, I catch them out and put them in the show cages and put the covers on.

10: My birds are sprayed at the very least twice every 7 days that they are in the aviary.

11: One thing I should do but don't, is give my birds show cage training. I don't like to handle them to much when they are in the small holding cage, so they don't get show cage training from me; the only training they do get is if they choose to go into the show cage that is on the holding cage. I usually put seed and millet spays (if I have) in the show cages, so they get a treat if they go in them. (They love this and spend lots of time going in and out of these show cages)

Notes:

A good time to do show cage training is when you are busy in the breeding room, catch a few of your show team birds out and put them in show cages were you are working. They get used to the cage and movement very quickly.

A lot of breeders have a bottle of 20% peroxide with them at shows, this they use if their birds get blood on them for any reason. The peroxide cleans the blood off very well. (Done before the birds are benched)

It is also a very good idea to wash all the seed that you put into the show cages. All the seed that we buy is dirty and dusty. It is no use taking all the time and effort to prepare your birds so well and then put dirty seed at the bottom of the show cage. ♦

The Cape Cobra



The average length is 100 – 180 cm (max. 200 cm)

Colour is very variable and includes the following:

- plain yellow,
- plain orange brown,
- coppery brown,
- dull brown and
- dark brown.

The Cape Cobra prefers the hot, arid areas of the Western Cape, Northern Cape, Northwest provinces and southern Botswana and Namibia.

Road deaths and intentional killing by humans are the biggest threat to this species.

Reference: Cape Nature
www.capenature.co.za/index.php?fArticleId=590

AN EXTRAORDINARY WEEK IN THE LIFE OF HARRY, THE BUDGIE

By Harry's owner and keeper

Sunday, the 7th of January 2007, seemed as if it was going to be an ordinary day. However, late in the afternoon, I looked at Harry, my budgie, where he was perched on top of his cage. He seemed a little quite with his feathers all fluffed up. When he turned to look at me, I realised that his top beak was completely gone. I was shocked, totally horrified! I guessed it must have been the result of a brief interlude with my Ringneck. All that was left of the once cute little budgie's face was a bloodied mess. I am not an expert on birds and I had no idea on what to do.

I left poor Harry where he was and sat down to try and collect my thoughts. All I kept thinking was that he was finished, a dead bird in waiting. Surely there could be no possible way he could survive.

After the shock subsided a little and little Harry returned to his cage, I realised that I needed to do something, and fast. I logged onto the internet and started looking for budgie specialists, vets – anyone and everyone who might be able to offer some advice. I found emergency vet who was prepared to be called out to his surgery – which was about 25 miles away but my car was at the repair shop and in truth, I would have struggled with the approximately £100.00 fees I had been quoted over the phone. All these factors meant that poor Harry would have to wait until the next morning, Monday morning, for some

professional help.

The next morning I took Harry to a local veterinary surgery. The vet looked him over and prescribed antibiotics and pain relief medication. He also prescribed some critical care formula which was to be mixed 1 unit of the formula x 3 units of water. This had to be put in a pot for Harry. The vet also recommended *Harrison's Adult Mash* formula. Harry would need to change his diet if he was to survive and a soft food diet was the only option.

I brought Harry home and nursed him with his medication. It nearly broke my heart to hold his tiny frame in my hand while forcing the medication into his battered and broken mouth. Harry wanted nothing to do with the critical care formula, the mashed food formula, and more worrying, he would not take water. He was looking very sorry for himself! I thought he was going to die at any time!

I called the vet in the afternoon and updated him. I was now advised to mix the critical care formula with some water and put it into a syringe and administer it by hand, 1 ml three times a day, and monitor him. I hated manhandling poor Harry from his cage, stressing him further and then forcing all these solutions into him. It was proving to be a horrible ordeal, both for Harry and for me. He still wanted nothing to do with the mash and a couple of half hearted attempts by him to eat his seed appeared hopeless. He just could not break it to feed himself.

JSBS ADDITIONAL GAUTENG CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW

On the 24th February 2007, 579 exhibits were benched from the 594 which were entered. A total of 313 Champion, 152 Intermediate, and 114 Novice exhibits were benched by 16, 9, and 8 exhibitors respectively. The Team award went to the Jan O'Kelly, Mario Cosani, and Des Stow team. See picture report on pages 26 and 27.

Major Awards were allocated as follows:

Best Bird on Show	Glen Furniss
Best Opposite Sex on Show	Molkentin Stud
Best Any Age on Show	Glen Furniss
Best Young Bird on Show	Molkentin Stud
Best Champion on Show	Glen Furniss
Best Intermediate on Show	Wemarc Stud
Best Novice bird on Show	D Stow

Challenge Certificate Winners were allocated as follows:

Best Light Green	Willrich Aviaries
Best Dark and Olive Green	Glen Furniss
Best Grey Green	Ian Bleasdale
Best Skyblue	Nagel Aviaries
Best Cobalt and Mauve	Smarny Telery
Best Violet	Glen Furniss
Best Grey	Smarny Telery
Best Cinnamon Green Series	Molkentin Stud
Best Cinnamon Blue Series	Molkentin Stud
Best Spangle Green Series	Molkentin Stud
Best Spangle Blue Series	PALM Aviaries
Best Double Factor Spangle	PALM Aviaries
Best Lutino	Jan O'Kelly
Best Albino	CJ Oberholzer
Best Lacewing	JJ Duvenage
Best Opaline Green Series	HG Artus
Best Opaline Grey Green	Larkwood Aviaries
Best Opaline Blue Series	Phillips Prtshp
Best Opaline Grey	PALM Aviaries
Best Opaline Cinnamon Green Series	Bob Hirst
Best Opaline Cinnamon Blue Series	CJ Oberholzer
Best Yellowface	Molkentin Stud
Best Dominant Pied	Glen Furniss
Best Recessive Pied	Molkentin Stud
Best Greywing, Clearwing, Yellow & White	D Davie
Best Any other Colour or Variety	PALM Aviaries

WESTERN CAPE RARE VARIETY AND SPANGLE SHOW

On the 24th March the first Rare and Spangle Show was held in the Western Cape. This proved to be very successful with a lot of the local exhibitors.

Major Awards were allocated as follows for the Rare Variety Show:

Best Rare on Show	Deon Davie	Grey White Cock
Best Rare Opposite Sex on Show	Die Besters	Grey White Hen
Best Rare Any Age on Show	Deon Davie	
Best Rare Young Bird on Show	PALM Aviary	
Best Rare Champion on Show	Deon Davie	
Best Rare Intermediate on Show	Phillips Partnership	
Best Rare Novice bird on Show	Maree Aviaries	

Major Awards were allocated as follows for the Spangle Show:

Best Spangle on Show	PALM Aviary	Yellow Face Sp Hen
Best Spangle Opposite Sex on Show	PALM Aviary	Grey Spangle Cock
Best Spangle Any Age on Show	PALM Aviary	
Best Spangle Young Bird on Show	PALM Aviary	
Best Spangle Champion on Show	PALM Aviary	
Best Spangle Intermediate on Show	Phillips Partnership	
Best Spangle Novice bird on Show	A van Eck	



Far Left: Best Spangle Opposite Sex on Show – Grey Spangle Cock

Left: Best Spangle on Show – Yellowface Spangle Hen

By Tuesday I began receiving replies from all over the world. I was absolutely amazed that such kind hearted folk would take the time to even bother to try and come to Harry's rescue. One of my new correspondents was Harlan Flora from the American Budgerigar Society who I had written to while seeking advice about my little friend's condition. Harlan and many others gave brilliant advice and were positive. They informed me that budgies are resilient creatures and can adapt. All this gave me hope.

Other people were negative, telling me that Harry would never accept his new diet and that if he survived the next few days, he would need to be fed with a syringe for many months, if not years, and they questioned whether this was any quality life for the poor little bird.

By Wednesday afternoon Harry was still not taking food or water by himself. So then, what to do? Force feed him by hand for months or possibly years in the hope that his beak might grow back? Or consider the kinder option? A heart wrenching decision was needed. Do I have this wonderful chap, all six inches from top to tail, but with a personality 6 foot tall, put to sleep? Suddenly I had an inspirational idea! He loves his mirror. So I took it from his cage, wet it with water and coated it with the mashed food formula, and then I put it back in his cage. It must have taken all of one minute for curiosity to get the better of Harry. He went over to the mirror, had a good look at it and started to lick and scrape the food off the mirror with his bottom mandible. It was somewhat of a eureka

moment! It is a week later. I have been coating his mirror with the mash, sprinkling the food on all his favourite haunts, including a table, speakers and door stops. I put a mirror in his original food tray and he now scoops his new food directly from there. I hope the coated mirror will become redundant as a feeder shortly, although I may keep it as a supplementary source because I believe he enjoys scraping his food from it. I can honestly say that I've never known him to eat so much. And he is drinking his water too. What is more, Harry seems to be back to his normal self; chirpy and happy, flying around, exploring and getting into all kinds of mischief. It is wonderful to see!

If this story is to really have a happy ending, it will only come about if other budgie owners and experts read about Harry's miraculous recovery and then spread the word that: With care and affection, a little ingenuity and patience, our little feathered friends can cope after some horrendous accident. Budgies, it would appear, are tougher than we give them credit for. Yes, they need pointing in the right direction though if they are to adapt to new conditions. But if we love our pets, it is worth the effort to go that extra mile for them!

Finally, just to say a big thank you from Harry to all those people who offered the time and effort from their busy lives to give him the help and support that ultimately saved his life.

◆

INTER CLUB SHOW - COMBINED GAUTENG BUDGERIGAR CLUBS by Roy Bennet

The Combined Gauteng Budgerigar Clubs hosted an Inter Club Show, on Saturday 4th November 2006, at Witdeep Primary School, Witfield, Boksburg. The participating clubs were ERBS, KBC, PBC & WBK.

Johan Lucas and Deon Davie were the officiating judges.

There were a total of 197 entries.

The results were as follows:

Best Bird & Best Champion,

- Ian Bleasdale.

Best Opp.Sex & Best Champion Opp.Sex,

- Bob Hirst.

Best Intermediate,

- Milella Partnership.

Best Intermediate Opp.Sex,

- Mario Cosani.

Best Novice, Best Novice Opp.Sex,

Most Points on Show,

- Des Stow

Team Shield,

- ERBS

Nikie Lucas assisted with the presentation of prizes, all of which were donated.

Suzanne Lucas assisted with the draw for the raffle of a liquor hamper, which was won by E.Eagers.

Our judges were very complimentary of

the organisation of the show, the atmosphere and of the standard of the birds. They really enjoyed the day with us.

Johan commented as follows:-

The quality of the birds awarded the top prizes was solid. In particular, the Grey Green Cock exhibited by Ian Bleasdale is, in my opinion, one of the better birds one will have the privilege of seeing, on the show bench this season. Bob Hirst also exhibited a very neat Opaline Cinnamon Grey Green hen, that took the Best Opposite Sex award. The general condition of the birds was good, through all the classes. As is a normal occurrence at many shows, the quality varied but not substantially.

Deon commented as follows:-

I am of the opinion that the two winning birds will stand their ground at Championship Shows and I will not be surprised if they compete for the same major awards, at other shows. Especially the Best in Show. This is a pure power bird. I would love to see this bird in top condition, on a show. I was impressed with the overall quality of a lot of birds, in all three sections. There seems to be good depth of quality in the birds, at the show.

FREE STATE RARE VARIETY AND SPANGLE SHOW

The first 2007 show on the South African Show Calendar was the Free State Rare and Spangle Show that took place on 17th February 2007 in Welkom. The combined two clubs put on a good show as we have come to expect from them over the years.

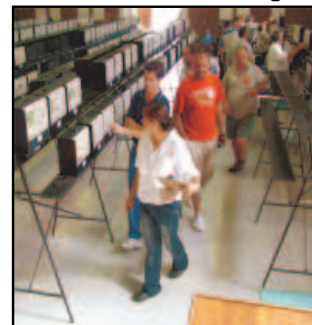
Major Awards were allocated as follows for the Rare Variety Show:

Best Rare on Show	Molkentin Stud	Recessive Pied Cock
Best Rare Opposite Sex on Show	Die Besters	Grey White Hen
Best Rare Any Age on Show	PALM Aviary	
Best Rare Young Bird on Show	Molkentin Stud	
Best Rare Champion on Show	Molkentin Stud	
Best Rare Intermediate on Show	HJ Venter	
Best Rare Novice bird on Show	Gernicor	

Major Awards were allocated as follows for the Spangle Show:

Best Spangle on Show	PALM Aviary	Grey Green Sp Cock
Best Spangle Opposite Sex on Show	Molkentin Stud	Double Factor Hen
Best Spangle Any Age on Show	Molkentin Stud	
Best Spangle Young Bird on Show	PALM Aviary	
Best Spangle Champion on Show	PALM Aviary	
Best Spangle Intermediate on Show	Gert Pieters	
Best Spangle Novice bird on Show	Maree Aviaries	

JSBS Additional Gauteng Championship Show



Left: The SPCA is taken around the hall. **Right:** Exhibitors at the prize giving.

A decision was taken a few years ago by the Judges Conference to favour the latter and so judges are obliged to give appreciation to variety markings and colour.

It is therefore extremely concerning to read that a proposal has again been tabled to remove the word "Buttercup" from the colour description of the Lutino. What this in effect means is that the challenge and sole purpose to breed these colours has been removed. Therefore any wishy washy lutino with the better department or head will win.

In the same vain we must remove the word "buttercup" from lacewing, the word "clear" from the description of the wings for clearwings and can add that spangles need have no markings. Even diluted, yellow and streaky bodied opalines must be judged on physical shape only. The only logical conclusion is that all budgies could then be put into one single class and judged on only what is closest physically to the ideal in outline. Judges could all be colour-blind for that matter.

I personally do not breed any of the challenging colours or varieties but I certainly appreciate the efforts of those that do. To breed the deep buttercup yellow lutinos is too wonderful to behold and the whole point of the variety and to think that the winner could resemble a yellow face albino is a very, very sad contemplation indeed.

I truly believe that if you are not prepared to try and achieve the requirements of more difficult varieties then do not breed them. Leave them to those dedicated to the variety but do not try and change the standard to suit what you are unable to achieve. Goals must be difficult to achieve or the point of it all becomes meaningless. ♦

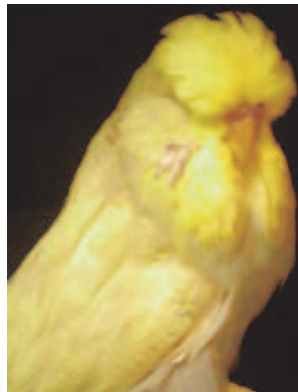
2nd NGC-DBS Open

International Internet Baby

Show 2007 - www.ngc-dbs.nl/

PALM Aviaries

We entered in the 2nd NGC-DBS Open International Internet Baby Show 2007. This was our first time to enter and we only entered two birds and we won Best in class as well as 2nd Best Cock on Show with entry 263. Our entry numbers were 262.11 & 263.9.



Above: Exhibit 263

It was very pleasing to see the number of visitors that we had; some ex-members and some potential new ones.

Many thanks to all the Committee Members, for all their hard work, as well as all the support from the members of the four clubs. A special THANK YOU for all the donations that made it possible to boost our finances, for the 2007 Gauteng Area Show.

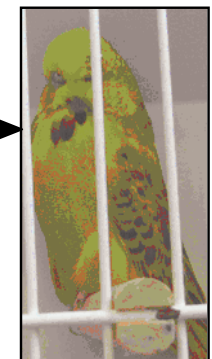
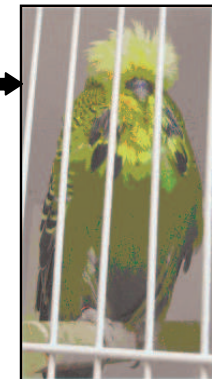
We look forward to seeing everyone at Witdeep Primary School, Witfield, Boksburg, on Saturday 23rd June 2007.

The CGBC will do everything possible, to make this a memorable day. ♦

Best of Colour on Show Winners were allocated as follows:

- Best Light Green
- Best Dark and Olive Green
- Best Grey Green
- Best Skyblue
- Best Cobalt and Mauve
- Best Violet
- Best Grey
- Best Cinnamon Green Series
- Best Cinnamon Blue Series
- Best Spangle Green Series
- Best Spangle Blue Series
- Best Double Factor Spangle
- Best Lutino
- Best Albino
- Best Lacewing
- Best Opaline Green Series
- Best Opaline Grey Green
- Best Opaline Blue Series
- Best Opaline Grey
- Best Opaline Cinnamon Green Series
- Best Opaline Cinnamon Blue Series
- Best Yellowface
- Best Dominant Pied
- Best Recessive Pied
- Best Greywing, Clearwing, Yellow & White
- Best Any other Colour or Variety

- Des Stow
- Glen Furniss
- Ian Bleasdale**
- Des Stow
- Des Stow
- Glen Furniss
- Ian Bleasdale
- Glen Furniss
- Bob Hirst
- Mario Cosani
- Malcolm Taylor
- Jan O'Kelly
- Jan O'Kelly
- Chris Oberholzer
- Des Stow
- Pottie & Helen
- Bob Hirst
- Jan O'Kelly
- Heino Artus
- Bob Hirst**
- Des Stow
- Heino Artus
- Bob Hirst
- Chris Oberholzer
- Gert Haasbroek
- Chris Oberholzer



Available Items

Items can be obtained from the Administrator. Tel (011) 693 1790

Sales Items

Show cage drinkers @ R3.00 each + Postage & handling fee.

Colour prints (A4) of the painting of the Ideal Budgerigar of the BSSA:

- Unlaminated @ R5.00 per print & Laminated @ R10.00 per print
- Unlaminated, signed by Roy Aplin (artist) @ R15.00 per print
- Ring cutters @ R55.00 each + postage & handling fee.

Videos

The following videos can be hired @ R50.00 deposit:

- Show Budgerigars by Gerald Binks
- Budgerigar Breeding for Beginners by John Scull
- Jeff Atwood on Budgerigars
- New video by Frank Silva entitled "I did it my way"

Lapel Badges

Badges (with new BSSA logo) can be ordered by club secretaries as follows (6/8 weeks delay for delivery):

- With club's initials on scroll R30 each
- Badge only without scroll R20 each

Personalised Ring Codes

Members are reminded that they can buy personalised ring codes with a maximum of 4 digits for R100.00 from the Administrator.

DVD and Video on Colour Identification

DVD and Video on Colour Identification given at the Judges' Seminar held on 5 February 2005 can be obtained from the Judges' Committee through Deon Davie. Tel/Fax (011) 760 6095 or 082 377 7686:

- Video - R100.00
- DVD - R200.00

DILUTING THE COLOUR STANDARDS

By Ian Bleasdale

Budgerigars and their incredible ability to continually evolve new colours, have fascinated people all over the world since John Gould in 1850 brought back the first light green budgerigar from Australia. Since then there have been many new varieties and literally hundreds of combinations to satisfy all tastes.

The exhibiting of budgerigars at shows has been going on for over 100 years and in that time countries have established societies so that order could be established regarding the various aspects of exhibiting on shows. Part of that order has been the establishment of how the ideal should appear, how the hobby should be run and what the various colour standards should be.

It could be argued that not all budgerigars are the same because certain colours appear easier to breed to the ideal depiction than others. The challenge over the years has not only concentrated on breeding birds to a certain physical appearance but also to the colour standard as laid down by the local Society or latterly by the World Budgerigar Organisation's.

The colour standard recognises the challenge and is one of the aspects

that keeps us in the hobby and creates the desire to breed the ideal budgerigar according to its specifications. In other words the light green, grey green or grey need to be of a certain colour to fall into this category. Generally this is not a problem. Other colours are far more difficult to not only breed to the same physical appearance as the light green, grey green or grey for example but also to their specific colour description. Examples are clearwings, albinos, lacewings, spangles and lutinos to name a few.

These varieties offer a special challenge to breeders and require a tremendous dedication as it is not only difficult to breed them physically equal to the light greens etc. (ex. spangles) but to achieve their colour specification is even more challenging (inc. spangles)

There has been much debate over the years regarding the judging of varieties where colour and variety markings plays an enormous part. Some judges have opted for judging the budgie first and the variety second whereas others have recognized the enormous challenge they represent and tended to favour variety markings etc over physical appearance.

Continues on page 22

- Try to buy more hens than cocks. You will always need more hens in the breeding season than cocks. Never buy cocks first and expect to buy hens later – you will not be able to buy them.
- Buy the colours you like if possible, however, always be prepared to compromise.
- Make sure the birds are fit and healthy. This means no obvious problem. Birds in a heavy moult tend not to move from one birdroom to another without a problem. A bright eye is a good indicator.
- Never buy birds unseen. Visit a birdroom and select your birds you want to buy.
- If you select birds that you wish to buy – have the money available and be prepared to take them away. Try to avoid going back another time to collect the birds – they might not be there!

What features should we be looking for if we want exhibition birds?

- You should be looking for something that resembles what you think of as an exhibition type Budgerigar. That knowledge will come from reading, looking at pictures and visiting birdrooms.
- Try to avoid obvious faults – drop-tails, flecking on the head, missing tails and flights, and birds with very buff feathering. Feather problems are a huge challenge for Budgerigar fanciers

with exhibition birds. Keep away from them for as long as possible.

- Avoid being too specific about the colours you want to keep – unless its one of the specialist varieties, like Lutinos or Recessive Pieds. Buy a range of colours and never reject a good bird because of its colour.
- It's a difficult concept to understand in the early days but try to buy birds of the right shape and form but avoid the huge birds for now
- Looks for those fit, healthy birds that are likely to breed well. If you buy birds that are unlikely to breed quickly, you are probably going to become disappointed and interest will fail

What should a new fancier do if they started incorrectly?

If you have really started with the wrong birds and you are convinced you have made a massive mistake – breed with them if you can for a year, get the experience of keeping, rearing, fostering and become totally familiar with the management. At that stage, be prepared to cut your losses – and start again. Experience is never lost!

This will probably provide you with the best background to make a second start. Everyone can make a mistake but make sure you do not make the same mistake again. Take your time, never rush into anything and plan ahead. By now you will probably have been able to find a fancier who you can trust and who is prepared to assist you with birds and more important – advice!



WASHED SEED = HEALTHY SEED

By Pierre & Maja Swart

Have you ever found your birds to be having diarrhoea or vomiting or having respiratory problems? When you buy a bag of seed, have you ever worked your hands through it and saw that your hands are full of dust and even coarse sand? It is most disgusting and might be the cause of your sick birds. This same dust is taken in by your birds when they de-husk their seed. Nothing can convince me that this could be healthy - not for you breathing that dust and not for the birds eating this contaminated seed.

No one knows where the seed has been laying or what fell onto it. It could be mice / rat urine, bird droppings, even where seed is stored in large quantities in hangers, the owners of these hangers sometimes spray or fumigate these hangers to get rid of insects and rats. This fumigation spray attaches itself to some of the seed which in actual fact poisons the seed.

Sometimes mould on the seed can be observed which lowers the quality of the seed and changes the nutrients such as vitamins, minerals and carbohydrates and they can also change the character of the grain by making it unpalatable.

Both of these scenarios introduce the production of mycotoxins on the

seed which have a detrimental effect on the birds that consume the seed. This can increase mortality, reduce feed efficiency and reduce fertility. Also kidney, diarrhoea, vomiting, crop and feathering problems as well as respiratory problems can all be linked to these mycotoxins.

For the past two years we have been washing our seed on a weekly basis. Twenty kilograms of seed is washed at a time. We have made a wooden frame covered with 80% shade cloth and the seed is thrown onto it and rinsed with clean tap water for several minutes. Thereafter the seed is checked for impurities and re-washed. The seed is left to sun dry for several hours. Regular checks and turning of the seed ensures that it dries evenly. We are very fortunate in the Karoo the days especially in summer time when it only takes at most two hours to dry the seed. Lots of vitamin D is absorbed into the seed, as the birds do not get direct sunlight onto them.

The clean seed is then stored in our seed bins. The birds love the clean seed and it is quite nice to work with clean seed. ◆

Beginning with Budgerigars - the correct way

by Fred Wright

If only we could all start the right way!!! The problem is that we rarely have the background information, the knowledge and the money – all at the same time. We mostly start with a pet quality bird, think about a second bird – try and breed, and know nothing about showing. Probably we do not even know that shows for Budgerigars even exist.

Usually we find ourselves two years down the line with a “collection” of Budgerigars, an assortment of cages, perhaps a flight – and we sit back and say, If only I had two years experience of Budgerigars before I bought the first bird. That never happens!

Perhaps the important things to think about when you are starting are listed below

- Do not spend too much money so you can cut your losses – and start again if needs be
- Read as much as you can before making any decisions. At one time we would be suggesting books and magazines but now it's the internet too – but be careful. There is a lot of rubbish on the internet so be prepared to filter out what is useful to you
- Whatever you build – be sure it can be extended or you will be knocking it down and starting again. Build as large as you can – a birdroom or aviary is never big enough
- Join a local club and through that

club you will join the National society and in South Africa that is BSSA, and/or talk to other fanciers. Visit them in their birdrooms and once you think you are making a bit of a nuisance of yourself – you are probably on the right track. All genuine fanciers will be delighted to have new fanciers under their wing to help and advise.

- If you think you are interested in showing the birds you breed, try and visit a club show in your area before you start buying birds. You will get the “feel” for what a show bird is about, you will meet people and the show will be an informative experience for you.
- You can either start with pet quality birds that are cheap – or start with exhibition-type birds. It's your decision!

Where should I go to purchase birds?

It all depends on the type of birds you want to make your start with. I would always suggest a private breeder rather than a shop or dealer that sells birds. Most private breeders are reliable – but always trust your own judgement.

If it is your intention to keep them, breed with them and possibly sell the surplus as a pet – buy the pretty colours that attract your attention. Buy the colours or the varieties you like. A word of warning is rarely given to new fanciers that if they breed lots of Grey

Greens and Greys, any surplus is going to be difficult to sell. Specialist colours – even just blues are easy to sell to others. You might be thinking that you are not breeding Budgerigars to sell but you will for sure wish to sell your surplus at some stage in the future.

If you want to breed exhibition Budgerigars, it's important to choose the right breeder, and by that you need someone who is reliable and will not sell you birds that will not breed. A club member might be able to help but if you are able to talk with other fanciers, someone will suggest a name of someone who can help you to get started and will sell you some decent, young birds.

Some people would suggest buying from a successful breeder, but I believe it's more important to buy from someone who is recommended, has some quality birds and it matters little if they are a beginner or a champion.

Far too many people walk into a birdroom and they leave their good common sense at home. If the birds you are offered look unwell, and not the type you want – walk away. Make up your mind about how much money you wish to spend. If the seller starts talking far more than you wish to pay – thank him or her for their time – and walk away.

If you are a beginner, ask questions of the seller but always listen to the

answers. It sounds obvious but nothing upsets the seller more than to be bombarded with a set of questions and the answers not being considered. Try to keep on the side of the seller who is more than likely trying to help you.

Should I buy birds from more than one person?

If you can find one person to help you get started and he is prepared to help you with birds, you are lucky. If you are fairly sure you really are getting help and the right birds, be content with a single seller before you move on to try and buy from another breeder. At a later stage, it's probably worth finding another breeder to sell your birds.

Should the beginner approach as many as possible or only a few exhibitors?

In the initial stages talk to as many fanciers as possible – but understand that not all the information you are told will be correct. Your job will be to sort the information and apply it to your circumstances. The more experienced fanciers will probably be able to offer better advice although a novice will be much closer to your circumstances than the champion.

What to look for when you are buying birds.

We come back to pet quality birds or exhibition birds? Let's look at the basics first that apply to both types.

- Buy young birds or birds that are current year bred. Most birds will have a closed ring with the year of breeding. Exhibition birds will have BSSA rings that are coded with the year on them.

Continues on page 20