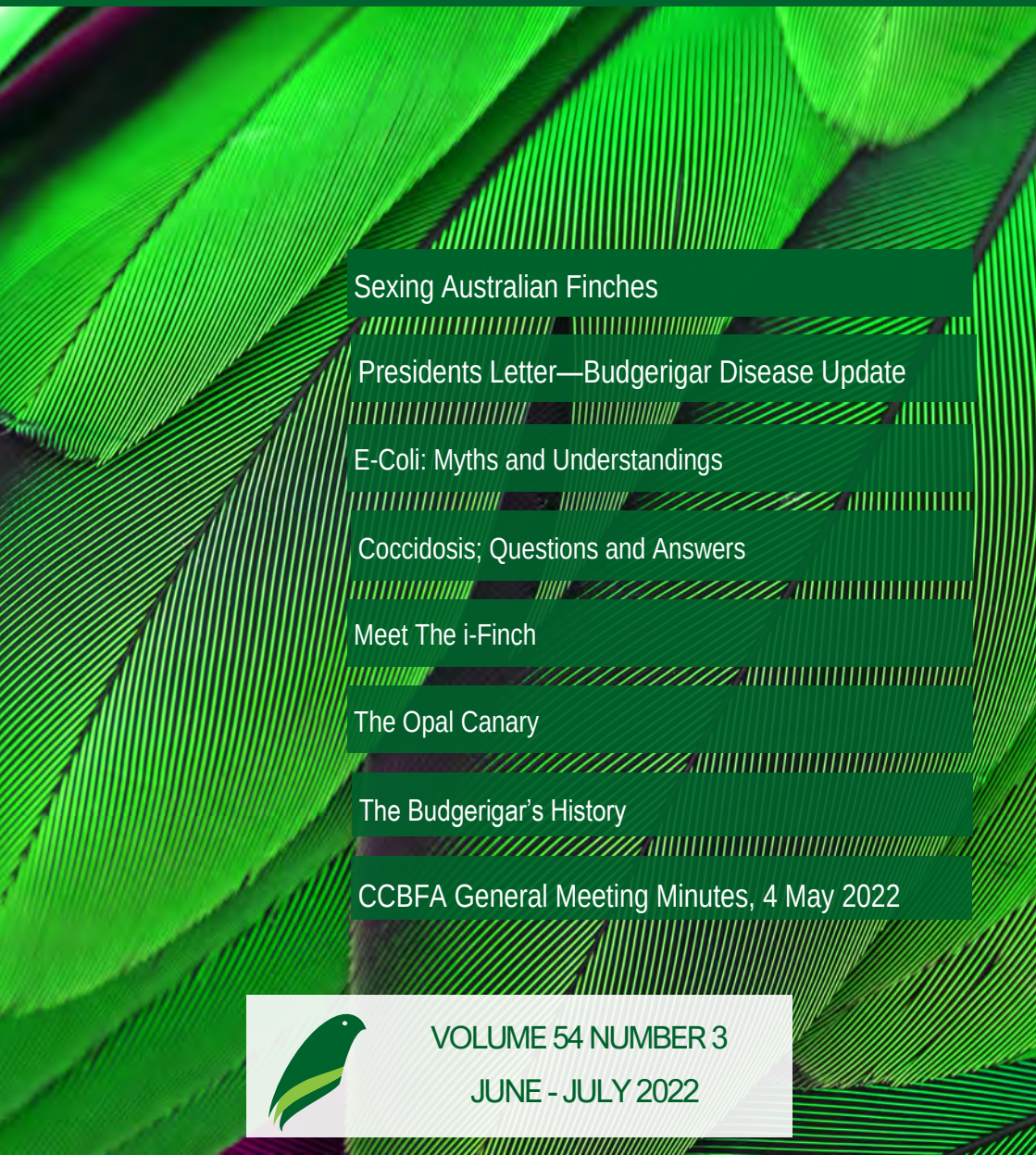
FEATHERED WORLD

CANARY AND CAGE BIRD FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA INC.



VOLUME 54 NUMBER 3

JUNE - JULY 2022

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Canary & Cage Bird Federation of Australia Inc.

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- The editor welcomes contributions, but retains the right to amend articles and reports accordingly.
- The opinions expressed by the authors are their own and not necessarily those of Federation or the editor.
- Articles may be copied from *Feathered World* Magazine, providing the author and magazine are acknowledged appropriately.

Canary & Cage Bird Federation of Australia Inc.

ZOOM MEETING DATES 2022

General Meetings 6th July, 7th September & 2nd November
AGM 1st March 2023

Meeting commences at 8:00 pm

NOTE: Meetings at Anzac Room, Ashfield RSL, Liverpool Road, Ashfield Will be confirmed in advance at previous Zoom meeting

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IMPORTANT NOTICES!

NOTICE TO ALL AFFILIATES

For legal and insurance requirements, affiliates are requested to notify the Federation Secretary of changes in office bearers, public officer and delegates, also changes of the club's meeting location, email and postal address.

Notification should be on club's letterhead or if required a hard copy or electronic copy of the *Office Bearer's Information and Privacy Provision Consent Form* is available from the Secretary.

Ron Robertson, Secretary, The Canary & Cage Bird Federation of Australia Inc. PO Box 230, Frenchs Forest ,NSW 1640 ; Phone: 02 9452 2396 ;Email: federationbirdclubs@aapt.net.au

2022 RING ORDERS

Supplementary orders can be arranged for all species during 2022.

Clubs requiring an order form, should contact the Secretary / Ring Officer.
Clubs requiring an order form, which must be completed, should contact

Secretary, Ron Robertson, Email: federationbirdclubs@aapt.net.au

Have you updated your club details?

Send in reports on your club's activities and news.
Feathered World is your magazine, so contributions are welcome.

Please send in any club detail changes, including changes of position to the secretary asap. Thank you.

SEXING AUSTRALIAN FINCHES *(by Dave Edwards)*

Over the past few months I have been asked about sexing finches, so I decided to update an article I wrote for Finch News in November 1986.

If you have two birds of a species and want them to breed, you need a true pair. How do you make sure you have a pair?

Of the eighteen Australian native finches, half are difficult to sex. Those species that have sexes that are obviously different are known as being *sexually dimorphic*, whilst those that have similar sexes are known as *sexually zoomorphic***.** Most experienced breeders have picked up a tip, a clue, or a "feeling" that helps them to establish a true pair.

Remember that age, time of year and general condition can change the appearance of your bird. A poor male may be made to look duller and, therefore be mistaken for a female whilst the reverse can be true for a strong female. Always use good sunlight when checking the plumage it does make a difference.

Checking a single bird can be fraught with danger as one has no base for comparison. Try to look at as many birds as possible, even if your are not buying, you may one day want to purchase a pair of that species. Listen to the hints and clues of the owners; read as many books as you can and remember what you have learnt.

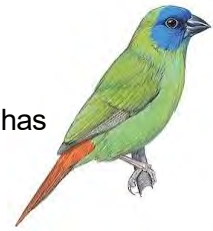
Also remember it is possible to sex birds by their behaviour, so if you have the time just sitting and watching them can be just as useful as any other method. The "crowing" action of the males of the Lonchura family is diagnostic.

In the following I have set out a description of all eighteen finches, male and female. When describing the "difficult to sex" species, the differences are only slight and female may have the characteristics of a weak male.

However, listen, read and remember any clue, one might work for you!

1. ***Blue Faced Parrot Finch*** **-** *Erythrura trichora*

Male: A grass finch with a blue face and throat. It also has a dull scarlet rump and upper tail converts.
Female: Duller with less blue on the face.



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2. *Beautiful Firetail Finch* - *Emblema bellus*

Male: The general colour is an olive brown finely barred with black, finer bars are on the head. The wings are black. Rump and upper tail coverts are crimson. Under surfaces light grey barred. The centre of the abdomen and under tail coverts dull black. Lores and the ring around the eyes are black.

Female: Similar to male except centre of abdomen barred and not black. Black eye ring is less extensive.

3. *Black Throated Grassfinch* - *Poephila cincta*

Male: A pinkish fawn bird, tending brown on the wings, with a blue grey head. The bib, tail and trouser stripe are black. The subspecies Poephila cincta cincta has a white rump, and the subspecies Poephila cincta atropygialis has a black rump.

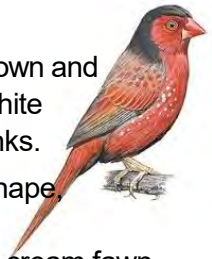
Female: Bib smaller and rounder. Trouser stripe narrower.

4. *Chestnut Breasted Mannikin* - *Lochura castaneothorax*

Male: Top of the head grey-brown or silver, back a rich brown. Rump and tail feathers straw-coloured. Face, breast-bar and undertail coverts are black. The breast Is chestnut brown. The belly is white and black and white barring on the flanks. Beak is silver blue.

Female: Paler and duller. Bill less silver.Top pf the head less silver. Black chest band thinner. Thinner and narrower bill.

5. Crimson Finch - *Neochmia phaeton*



Male: A slender upright crimson finch, which has a grey Crown and nape. The belly and undertail are black, except in the white bellied subspecies. It also has fine white spots on its flanks.

Female: The female is a duller crimson, and the crown, nape, back and wings are olive brown, and the belly is a pale cream fawn wings are olive brown, and the belly is a pale cream fawn

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6. Diamond Firetail Finch - *Emblema guttata*

Male: A bold finch which has a grey head and white throat. The back and wings are olive brown. The belly is white, below a black chest band, which extends down the flanks and it is spotted white. The rump is crimson. The beak is maroon and the lores black.

Female: The beak is coral pink. The lores are brown and narrower.

7. Double Barred Finch - *Poephila bichenovii*

Male: A neat small black and white finch. It has white underparts with two narrow chest bands. The face is white with a black " owl-like" border. The wings are black spotted White, the tail is black. The subspecies *Peophila bichenovii Bichenovii* has a white rump, whilst the subspecies *Peopohila aunulosa* has a black rump.

Female: Duller or yellowish belly. Narrower band. The black does not reach as far back in width behind the beak.

8. Gouldian Finch - *Chloebia gouldiae*

Male: An elegant colourful finch with a lilac-purple chest, yellow belly and a green back. The rump is cobalt blue The tail is black, and "pronged" with two feathers. The head is black, red or yellow, depending on the race, out lined by cobalt blue. The beak is ivory with a red tip.

Female: Duller with noticeably paler chest colour. The beak turns grey during breeding.

9. Longtailed Grassfinch *- Peophila acuticauda*

Male: Back and wings fawn brown. Bely and lower breast fawn. Head blue grey. The lores, bib, trouser stripe and the long tapering tail are black. The rump is white.

Female: Bib smaller and rounder. Trouser stripe narrower

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10. Painted Firetail Finch - *Emblema picta*

Male: A slim brown backed finch with a scarlet face, rump and mid belly. The rest of the belly and the flanks spotted white.

Female: The red is very limited on the face and belly, and the white spots on the flanks are larger. Otherwise smaller.

11. Pictorella Mannikin - *Lonchura pectoralis*

Male: A black-faced grey-brown finch tending to brown on the wings.It has a white breast mottled with black. Belly and underparts are buff. There is a cinnamon crescent over the eye and the ear to the side of the neck. There are fine white spots on the wing.

Female: Similar, except the face is brownish-black and more black on the breast.

12. Plum Head Finch - *Aidemosyne modesta*

Male: This finch is olive brown above with white spots on the wings. It is white below barred with brown. The forehead, crown and chin are claret-red. Lores and tail are black.

Female: Similar except she has no claret chin spot. A thin white line above and to the rear of the eye.

13. Masked Grassfinch - *Poephila personata*

Male: This bird is brown above and buff below. It has a black mask and chin, a black trouser stripe, and a black tapering tail. The rump is white.

Female: The mask is smaller. Paler.

14. Red Browed Finch - *Aegintha temporalis*

Male: Olive grey above with slight yellow-golden shoulder. Grey below. Tail dark brown. The rump, eyebrow and sides of the bill crimson.

Female: Duller. Eye stripe shorter.

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15. Red Eared Firetail Finch **-** *Emblema oculatus*

Male: The general colour above is olive brown, finely barred lackish-brown, the bars closer towards the head. Rump and tail coverts crimson. Central tail feathers grey ish olive barred black. Patch behind eye crimson. Below barred on the belly, finer barring on the chest. Naked skin around the eye is blue.

Female: Identical to male except during the breeding season when the eye patch is orange scarlet. At other times the female

16. Star Finch - *Neochmia ruficauda*

Male: Dark olive above, yellow olive below. The chest, Flanks, rump and tail spotted white. Tail dull brown scarlet. Face bright red.

Female: Duller with less red on the face.

17.Yellow Rumped Mannikin - *Lonchura flaviprymna*

Male: This solid finch has a pale grey head. The back and wings are cinnamon brown, the underparts are creamy buff, while the throat is whitish. The tail and rump are straw yellow.

Female: Head less silvery. Paler and duller. Beak

18.Zebra Finch - *Peophila guttata*

Male: Grey head, grey brown back and wings. White rump, and a black and white striped tail. White abdomen. There is fine black barring on the chest. The flanks are chestnut with white spots. Chestnut ear patch. Black and white tear stripes.

Female: Head, back, wings and tail as male. Breast and abdomen pale buff. She has no ear patches nor flank markings.

Source: : This article is reproduced from Finch News the Official Publication of The Queensland Finch Society Inc.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER _ BUDGERIGAR DISEASE UPDATE

CANARY AND CAGE BIRD FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA INC.

ABN 26 077 908 938
HON. SECRETARY/TREASURER RON ROBERTSON
PO BOX 230 FRENCHS FOREST NSW 1640
E: secretary@ccbfa.org.au P: 02 9452 2395

24/4/2022

RE: Update on reported disease in Budgerigar aviaries

On behalf of CCBFA, I've received further advice from the Chief Animal Welfare Officer NSW, Dr Kim Filmer, as follows.

> *Fortunately no exotic disease was discovered.*
>
> *The final report shows that potentially this was a multifactorial process of*
>
> 1. *coccidiosis*
> 2. *E coli*

Coccidiosis and e-coli spreads easily within an aviary complex, particularly during wet weather and given that Budgerigars are known to eat their own faeces. Please advise CCBFA of any new cases that your club suspects may indicate the problem spreads from one aviary complex to another. Currently we are unaware of such indications.

Based on the above, CCBFA reaffirms its position that the issue is not widespread, there is no evidence of it being infectious, is unlikely to be caused by an exotic disease and is unrelated to any particular seed source.

We recommend clubs consider a focus on wet weather preventative management practices at their meetings and in their publications. To assist, CCBFA plans to publish articles on coccidiosis and e-coli in an upcoming edition of Feathered World.

Regards,

Sam Davis
President - CCBFA
E: samdavis64@icloud.com

E.COLI - MYTHS AND MISUNDERSTANDINGS

Many of us are using pathology to get a diagnosis of problems in our birds. We do this so that we can make informed decisions on the way to treat disease or how to prevent disease getting into our aviaries. Our intentions are good. What is causing alarm to me is the amount of misinformation and outright garbage being fed to the birdkeeper by people (including veterinarians) who should know better!

The classic example is the rubbish that is being peddled as “fact“ about the bacteria E.coli. Lets look at this bacteria and try and get some things straight. For the sake of accuracy, the facts presented here have been checked and verified by a senior veterinary pathologist with a large Government laboratory.

What is an E.coli and where does it live?

E.coli. (Escherichia coli) is a member of a group of bacteria that live in the gut of most animals. Mammals have E.coli. in their intestines as part of their normal bacteria, this is why the Water Board measures E.coli. levels in drinking water. The number of E.coli. present give a guide as to the amount of faeces (of various animals) entering the water supply. The presence of the E.coli. itself is not a major concern, it is simply an indicator of contamination.

In birds this bacteria may or may not be a normal part of their gut. For example Psittacines (parrots) do not normally carry E.coli., whereas pigeons and poultry have it as a normal inhabitant of the intestine.

There are many strains of this bacteria, some can move themselves (motile) others cannot. Some have capsules around them, others do not. It is very difficult to know which of the many types of E.coli. that are found by simple cultures in the laboratory are a problem in birds.

The strains of E.coli that affect man and other mammals may not be a problem in birds! They seem to have a different set of E.coli. that act differently in their intestines.

Even the presence of a nasty form of the bacteria in the gut of a parrot does not automatically mean it will get sick. There are many factors that determine if disease will occur. The lab test can only determine the presence of the organism - not its effect on the bird.

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What does an E.coli infection look like in my birds?

It depends on how the bird got the infection. Most cases involve the bird swallowing the bacteria from contaminated food or water. Then if it is a nasty strain the bird may get an enteritis (infection in the gut) with diarrhoea as the common sign. However the symptoms vary widely with some of these infections leading to sudden death.

Septicaemia (bacteria in the blood) caused by E.coli can lead to kidney damage, infection in the joints and liver damage.

Hens may get E.coli. infections of their uterus, which will lead to chronic infertility. Chicks with an E.coli infection in the navel will often get a yolk sac infection that is fatal. Typically a bird with an E.coli. infection will look fluffed, become lethargic, stop eating,, lose weight and may have diarrhoea.

The vast majority of E.coli that get into a bird are passed uneventfully. In a survey done by a Dr Flammer (Avian Diseases 32: 79 - 83, 1988) it was found that from population of clinically normal birds (mostly cockatoos), up to 84% of the birds could have E.coli. detected in swabs taken from their cloaca - these were normal birds not sick birds. What is the value of a flock screen from healthy birds that shows the presence of an E.coli? - the answer is nil.

It is important to realise that the bacteria are in the environment all the time and that only a small percentage of them are capable of causing disease and that the birds own defence mechanisms can take care of most cases of infection.

How do I find E.coli. in my birds?

You cannot look down a microscope at a dropping sample and say that the bird has E.coli. Even if the slide is stained, you cannot know that the bacteria you are looking at is an E.coli.

You cannot send dropping samples to the lab (unless specially preserved) and know that what they grow is actually what is in the bird. E.coli. can multiply quite happily in the unpreserved specimen. If proper transport swabs are used, the lab may be able to grow bugs that were actually in the bird - but are they significant? As we have discussed, all E.coli. are not the same, it takes a specialist laboratory to type these bacteria into those known to produce disease and those that are just passing through.

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OK then, how do I get a proper diagnosis of E.coli?

If birds are ill and a transport swab is used to collect a fresh, uncontaminated dropping sample, and the lab grows predominantly E.coli. and other underlying causes have been excluded, then you can be satisfied that it is the cause of your problem.

The most accurate way of diagnosis is to get a series of swabs collected at a post mortem examination that grow pure (or predominantly) cultures of E.coli.

This coupled with the changes in the tissues and the symptoms in the aviary gives you the best diagnosis. This is not a “two minute“ diagnosis. Some of our best pathologists have spent years working with these bacteria and they still do not have an easy way of getting a diagnosis - how can you expect to get the correct answer by sending a lump of pigeon poop, wrapped in plastic, via the mail to a laboratory that hasn’t the ability to sort the dangerous from the innocuous.

I just want to clean out my birds to prevent problems.

Lets get real. You are talking about a bacteria that exists in all mammals and many birds as a normal organism - how do you expect to rid your birds of it! In a vain attempt you could use large amounts of antibiotic continuously. But even then you would suppress not eliminate the organism, and you would create antibiotic resistance problems as well as yeast and fungal overgrowth (not to mention the possible long term toxicity problems from the antibiotic).

If an individual bird is ill and it appears to have an infection then by all means treat with antibiotics. If there is illness sweeping through your aviary then of course you should begin medication to stop the spread of the disease. But do not for a minute think that if you treat your flock in May with the wonder drug for E.coli that they cannot get a outbreak of E.coli. enteritis in June! If only the world was that simple.

If you want to promote good health in birds you need:

Source: Dr Tony Gestier BVSc MACVSc at VETAFARM

COCCIDOSIS - QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

What are coccidia and where are they found?

Coccidia are microscopic motile parasites. They are found in the small intestine of birds. Their eggs, called oocysts, are passed in the droppings. The two main species are Isospora and Eimeria.

What is the route of transmission?

Coccidia are often ingested through food or soil contaminated with infected droppings. The oocyst (egg) has a hard shell and can survive on the ground for a long period of time.

What are the clinical signs of Coccidiosis?

- Diarrhoea with or without blood
- Weight loss and depression
- The bird may stop eating
- Poor growth and/or death in young or unwell birds
- Some birds can carry these organisms and may not show signs of illness

In which bird species are coccidia seen?

Coccidia are commonly seen in budgerigars, pigeons, doves, chickens, turkeys and geese. They are less frequently seen in canaries, finches and lories. Coccidia can be seen in any species of bird.

How are coccidia identified in the live bird?

Fresh warm faecal smears of the droppings will display the eggs (oocysts). Eggs do not show up in every faecal smear. Flotation of a dropping sample may be necessary to find the coccidia if they do not show up in a faecal smear.

What is the treatment for Coccidiosis?

Birds can be treated with Baycox (Toltrazuril) in water for 2 days. A repeat treatment may be necessary. The cage should be cleaned thoroughly daily and then disinfected.

Treatment of secondary infections caused by bacteria may also be necessary.

How is Coccidiosis prevented?

Frequent cleaning of the aviary or cage

Quarantine all new birds until they are examined for coccidia

Regular droppings checks for coccidia. This maybe performed at the annual health check or, in some cases, every 3 months.

Source:/www.birdexoticsvet.com.au

MEET THE iFINCH

Scientists have created a set of special bird-sized headphones as part of an experiment into how the brain adapts. The team combined them with microphones to trick finches into thinking they were singing out of tune and adapt their songs. They hope the research could eventual have implications for how human brains adapt, leading to new behavioral therapies for vocal rehabilitation.

The Scientists studying how songbirds stay on key have already developed a statistical explanation for why some things are harder for the brain to learn than others.

'We've built the first mathematical model that uses a bird's previous sensory experience to predict its ability to learn,' says Emory biologist Samuel Sober, who led the research.

'We hope it will help us understand the math of learning in other species, including humans.'

Sober conducted the research with physiologist Michael Brainard of the University of California, San Francisco.

HOW IT WORKS

The experiments were conducted on adult Bengalese finches outfitted with

light-weight, miniature headphones.

As a bird sang into a microphone, the researchers used sound-processing equipment to trick the bird into thinking it was making vocal mistakes, by changing the bird's pitch and altering

Their results, showing that adult birds correct small errors in their songs more rapidly and robustly than large errors, were published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS).

Sober's lab uses Bengalese finches as a model for researching the mechanisms of how the brain learns to correct vocal mistakes.

Just like humans, baby birds learn to vocalize by listening to adults. Days after hatching, Bengalese finches start imitating the sounds of adults.

'At first, their song is extremely variable and disorganized,' Sober says. 'It's baby talk, basically.'

The young finches keep practicing, listening to their own sounds and fixing any mistakes that occur, until eventually they can sing like their elders.

Young birds, and young humans, make a lot of big mistakes as they learn

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to vocalize. As birds and humans get older, the variability of mistakes shrinks. One theory contends that adult brains tend to screen out big mistakes and pay more attention to smaller ones.

'To correct any mistake, the brain has to rely on the senses,' Sober explains. 'The problem is, the senses are unreliable. If there is noise in the environment, for example, the brain may think it misheard and ignore the sensory experience.'

The link between variability and learning may explain why youngsters tend to learn faster and why adults are more resistant to change.

'Whether you are an opera singer or a bird, there is always variability in your sounds,' Sober says.

'When the brain receives an error in pitch, it seems to use this very simple and elegant strategy of evaluating the probability of whether the error was just extraneous 'noise,' a problem reading the signal, or an actual mistake in the vocalization.'

The researchers wanted to quantify the relationship between the size of a vocal error, and the probability of the brain making a sensorimotor correction.

The experiments were conducted on adult Bengalese finches outfitted with light-weight, miniature headphones.

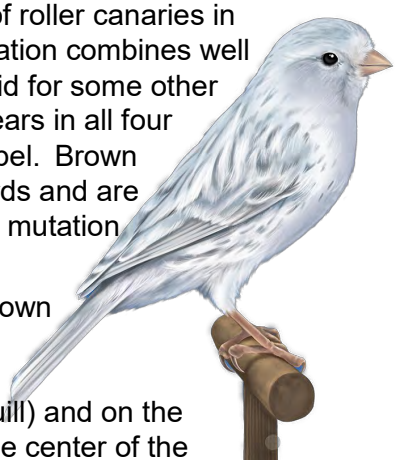
As a bird sang into a microphone, the researchers used sound-processing equipment to trick the bird into thinking it was making vocal mistakes, by changing the bird's pitch and altering the way the bird heard itself, in real-time.

'When we made small pitch shifts, the birds learned really well and corrected their errors rapidly,' Sober says. 'As we made the pitch shifts bigger, the birds learned less well, until at a certain pitch, they stopped learning.'

The researchers used the data to develop a statistical model for the size of a vocal error and whether a bird learns, including the cut-off point for learning from sensorimotor mistakes.

'We hope that our mathematical framework for how songbirds learn to sing could help in the development of human behavioural therapies for vocal rehabilitation, as well as increase our general understanding of how the brain learns,' Sober says.

THE OPAL MUTATION CANARY



The first opal canary was bred from a pair of roller canaries in Germany around the 1950's. The opal mutation combines well with all ground colours, which cannot be said for some other self-mutations of coloured canaries. It appears in all four classic series, green, agate, brown and Isabel. Brown or Isabel opals are virtually clear looking birds and are considered not to be ideal show birds. This mutation follows the recessive pattern of inheritance.

The opal mutation inhibits phaeomelanin brown and changes the eumelanin black of the feather to a steel grey colour. These markings are displayed down the center (quill) and on the underside of the feather. On the topside, the center of the feather is of a lighter colour to the underside.

In the green series, a good specimen will show distinct, wide and unbroken in length eumelanin black markings which change from black to a dark steel grey colour. Ideally, these markings should be present on the head, back, around the chest, flanks, wings and tail. The underflue of the green series opal canary is of a dark silver charcoal colour. Horny parts such as beak, legs and claws in the green series opal must be as dark as possible, ideally jet-black.

In the agate series, the ideal specimen should display fine, unbroken in length, well defined and spaced markings, of a silvery grey colour. These markings are present on the head, back, around the chest, flanks, wings and tail. The underflue of the agate series opal canary is of a pale silver charcoal colour: Horny parts are flesh coloured.

The brown or Isabel series opal canary often appears as a clear bird. A good specimen in the brown series will display narrow and pale eumelanin brown markings. The underflue of a brown opal is of a beige colour. The Isabel opal is a dilute version of the brown, the eumelanin brown markings are invisible and the underflue is of a pale beige colour.

Horny areas in the brown and Isabel series are flesh coloured. The opal feather has a tendency to curl. This feather fault is more prevalent when pairing opal to opal, especially in the green series. This problem is mainly eliminated by pairing an opal to a normal carrying opal. To improve feather quality, type and markings, opal canaries are often successfully out-crossed with green series self variety canaries (classics). Ideally, the

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green series self canary (preferably of intensive feather type) which will be paired with an opal canary, should show distinct eumelanin black markings and minimum amount of phaeomelanin brown markings, i.e. have a clean green and black appearance. The diluted lipochrome mutations, i.e. the rose and the ivory, will also improve feather quality and will, in general, correct the feather faults mentioned earlier.

Both cocks and hens can carry the opal factor. Normals carrying opal cannot be identified visually, only by test mating. Opals or normals carrying opal carriers can be produced from the following pairings:

1. Opal cock x Opal hen = Opal cocks and Opal hens.
2. Opal cock x Normal hen (or reverse pairing) = Normal cocks and hens carrying the opal factor.
3. Normal cock carrying opal x Opal hen (or reverse pairing) = Opal cocks, Opal hens, Normal cocks and hens carrying opal.
4. Normal cock carrying opal x Normal hen carrying opal = Opal cocks, Opal hens, Normal cocks and hens carrying opal, Normal cocks, Normal hens.
5. Normal cock carrying opal x Normal hen (or reverse pairing) = Normal cocks carrying opal, Normal hens carrying opal, Normal cocks, Normal hens.

Pairing No. 1 is not recommended because of the possibility of feather faults mentioned earlier.

Pairings No. 4 and 5 are not recommended as it is impossible to distinguish between normals and normals which are carrying the opal factor.

The Yellow Black Opal

As you can see from the above breeding chart you have to start with one pure opal and one normal which could be a yellow black. You pair these two together and in the first year you will breed all yellow blacks split yellow opal which means the yellow black will have a yellow opal gene. The second year you can then pair a yellow black split to a yellow black opal from that you should get yellow blacks and yellow black opal's. Some people like to pair opal to opal but this is not a good idea as you may get trou-

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By using a yellow black this will help the markings on the opal by turning them from brown to a silvery grey. You need the opal to have nice black beak and legs. With the yellow opal there is no need to colour feed.

The White Black Opal

You breed the white black opal the same way you breed the yellow black opal. If you pair white black opal to white black you will get all white black split opals. With the white black opal you need to get them as white as possible so that the dark markings show up with the legs and beak being as black as possible. You can achieve this by selective breeding from the white black carrier which will also help with poor feathering which you can get if you pair opal to opal. The other thing to remember is that the opal is recessive and is not sex linked which makes it difficult to sex a young bird and it is also very hard to work out which is non intensive or intensive.

THE RAIN HAS ARRIVED!

Now that we are experiencing some rain up the east coast of aus i thought i would say to every one that has outside avaries to be careful , with the moisture in the air and the temp going down the birds will be open to illness such as coccidiosis and enteritis , make sure your birds have somewhere to shelter from the wind and rain , when the rain stops try and dry out your avairy , make sure your grit isnt wet remove if possible before the rain and replace once it has stoped , remove all droppings that have gotten wet especially from the avairy floor, make sure the seed is dry and fresh , most of all keep an eye on them they can go down hill quickly so quick intervention can save a life .

P.S. I slightly acidify my water during rain spells by using cytric acid crystals , one teaspoon to the litre and then from this mix 10mls to the litre given to the budgies , its natural and keeps the droppings tight during wet weather, warding off infection and allowing the natural immune system to stay strong.

If you have slightly acidic water anyway then you wont have to worry .

Source: https://forums.budgiebreeders.asn.au/index.php?/topic/15841-rain/

THE BUDGERIGARS HISTORY

The information for this article was obtained through discussions I have had with the curators of birds at the Australian National Museum, Sydney - Australia. Feather, as the theory goes is a modified scale with a very long history. It is put forward by Palaeontologists, the budgerigar of today has prehistoric ancestors, meaning it has evolved from some Dinosaur like creature. The reason for their conclusion is; both scales on reptilian type creatures and feathers on birds are formed subcutaneously (under the skin). Moreover when feathers and scales fully emerge from the skin they are dead and cease to grow any further, both are held in follicles which lie beneath the skin.

Supposedly the common ancestor linking Birds and Reptiles is a prehistoric creature that existed some 140 million years ago, called Archaeopteryx. That's a mouth full! It is the first fossil which had scales along with feathers, the feathers growing down the side of its long tail and its' front legs appeared to indicate early wing formation. Archaeopteryx could not fly.

Once Australia, Africa, South America, India and Antarctica were joined together making up one very big land mass, generally referred to as Gondwanaland. Approximately 100 Million years ago Gondwanaland broke up, the countries separated and started drifting toward their current positions on the globe. Roughly 15 Million years ago Australia was covered by Forests and the centre of the Continent had massive inland lakes. Somewhere around this time the climate began to slowly change, the Forest areas died leaving Deserts and large depressions where the inland sea as it was called previously existed.

The above bit of history is very important to mention and take note of because our little friend the Budgerigar could have been very different then, to the bird that exists in the wild today. My thoughts in this regard were sort of legitimised when it was pointed out by the Museum, the Budgerigar, Rosella and Night Parrot all have common ancestors. DNA testing has apparently validated this. The Wild Budgerigar therefore could have been much bigger than it is today. It would have had a very constant and rich food supply, it would not have had to fly the long distances it does today, the climate would have been more temperate with a less hostile temperature range and there would have been an abundance of water.

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Maybe these points substantiate my beliefs. If the above theory is correct, then "have we seen the maximum size our Exhibition birds can attain"? Maybe not, most of the emphases of improving the exhibition bird has been put into feather increase, because this is definitely the simplest route over the short term.

However over the long term, and probably well past our life times, I think the dimensions of the actual frame of the bird can be increased dramatically, even to the size of its' distant relatives. This has happened with many other forms of livestock. Look, how far we have progressed with Budgerigars over the past forty years. I have seen some truly massive individual Budgerigars in my travels.

According to the Museum, they have recently found a cave at one of their 'dig' sites, located in South Australia. This cave was the home of an extremely large carnivorous Bat that consumed large numbers of budgerigars. This Bat evidently took the Budgerigars back to the cave to feed its' young. In the process it dropped a large quantity of bits and pieces on the floor of the cave and these became fossilised. The fossilised Budgerigars have been dated at approximately four million years. This would establish the wild bird of today has, remained almost unchanged for at least the past four million years.

The above was a remarkable find because the bird being so small and its bones so fragile, it would normally disintegrate long before being frozen in time. Also Budgies were prime fodder for the other inhabitants of the arid areas, which meant they would not last long on the ground if dead, wounded or ill. The wild Budgerigar is a real survivor being able to fly on leaving the nest at about four weeks of age. If the wild bird resembled our exhibition type budgerigars which take a while to get airborne after leaving the nest, they would have been gobbled up long before they had a chance to pass their genes on for prosperity. Also the wild Budgerigar has an unbelievable tolerance to salty water and can go without water for long periods of time. Both of these traits are necessary in their inhospitable environment. Again natural selection process and survival of the fittest.

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From the above information about our little friend the wild budgie you can see it has remained almost constant for at least four million years.

All the domestic budgies we keep originated from this wild stock. When you have four million years of genetics working against you, it is understandable why exhibition type improvement is so difficult. It would also explain why when improvement is made it is so difficult to maintain. Regardless of how good ones' stock is or how experienced you are as a breeder, every season there seems to be a few birds produced which resemble their wild cousins.

Source: Article kindly supplied by Robert Manvell, Budgie Breeder,Tamworth

THE CANARY & CAGE BIRD FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA INC.

Minutes of the ZOOM GENERAL MEETING Wednesday 4th May 2022.

The President opened the meeting at 8:08 pm, thanking the delegates for their attendance.

ATTENDANCE:

There were 11 delegates in attendance including, S. Davis, R. Robertson, C. Gruntar, B. Barnes, J. Forrest, M. Gallagher, J. Tadgell, N. Love, B. Whiting, M. Cameron, M. Godwell,

VISITORS: Mark Surace (Shoalhaven) Tim Hartung (The Exhibition Zebra Finch Society of Qld.) Ian Brown (N.FS.A.)

APOLOGIES:

Apologies were received from W. Wilson, I Ward, G. Fitt, M. Reynolds, C. Isbister – moved B. Barnes and seconded, J. Tadgell apologies be accepted - Carried.

MINUTES: All minutes published in *Feathered World* and on our web, ccbfa.org.au/journals

The minutes for the 2nd March AGM were distributed and received on a motion from N. Love and seconded by C. Gruntar - carried. The minutes for the 2nd March General Meeting of Federation had been distributed and read by the delegates. It was moved N. Love and seconded M. Gallagher that the minutes be adopted as a true record of the March General meeting – Carried.

Matters arising out of the minutes: *None other than matters that can be held over for Reports and General Business*.

CORRESPONDENCE:

In-coming correspondence as follows:

- Affiliated clubs, notification of office bearers and delegate
- Affiliated clubs, requesting assistance with matters regarding the insurance.
- Affiliated clubs, receipt of 2022 ring orders.
- Affiliated clubs, payments for ring orders from various affiliates.
- Affiliated clubs, notification of 2022 updates of show, sale and auction dates.
- Shoalhaven avicultural Society, submission requesting the use of wire cages at bird sales outlining areas of concern on a practical level, having the welfare of birds at the fore front.
- President / Govt Liaison Officer. Sam Davis- ongoing communication, received in response to communication with Federal Government and States Govt. Departments.

Newsletters / Journals – Received from various clubs, with notification of club events for insurance:

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- Animal Care Australia ACE March'22
- Downs Bird Breeders Association Inc. Newsletter Feb., March, April'22
- PET Industry News. Newsletters March & April'22
- Central Coast Avicultural Society. Newsletter March & April'22
- Newcastle Budgerigar Club Inc. April'22
- Shoalhaven Avicultural Society Inc. Bird Tales March & April'22
- Gloster Fancy Canary Club of NSW Inc. April – May'22
- Fleurieu Peninsula Cage Bird Society Inc. March'22 Newsletter.
- Hunter Valley Finch Club Inc. Hunter Finch Fancier March & April'22
- Bundaberg Canary & Caged Bird Society Inc. Newsletter April / June'22
- Coral Coast Bird Club Inc. Newsletter Chitterings # 278 March & 279 April'22
- Native Cockatiel Society of Australia Inc April, May, June'22 NCSA News.
- The Parrot Society of Australia (NSW) Inc. March – April'22 Newsletter.
- The Avicultural Society of NSW Inc March - April'22
- FSA The Finch Breeders REVIEW Jan - Feb'22
- Australian Fife Fancy Canary Club of NSW Inc. Gazette March'22
- Fancy & Utility Pigeon Society March'22 Newsletter.
- Far North Queensland Bird Breeders March / April'22

Out-going correspondence as follows:

- Change of Office Bearers and Privacy forms sent to various clubs.
- Details of affiliation and insurance provided to clubs requesting information.
- Various affiliates invoicing and dispatch of ring orders on receipt of payment.
- Shoalhaven Avicultural Society, following a telephone conversation, I inform your members that the CCBFA, "NSW BIRD SALES AND AUCTIONS CODE OF PRACTICE (STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES)" is as it states on the top of the paperwork and that they are a guide that clubs are encouraged to comply with when running sales and auctions. This code of practice is not law and has not been sent to any Government Department (DPI). CCBFA encourages clubs to abide by our code, but we in no way claim to have the right to insist your club does so.
- President / Govt Liaison Officer. Sam Davis- ongoing communication with Federal Government States Govt. Departments

Matters arising out of correspondence: *None other than matters that can be held over for Reports and General Business*.

It was moved by B. Barnes and seconded by M. Gallagher that the correspondence be received and the secretary's action endorsed - Carried

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TREASURERS REPORT

The accounts were submitted for endorsement. It was moved by J. Forrest and seconded by B. Barnes that the payments and the Treasurers actions be endorsed - Carried

REPORTS:

President Sam Davis presented the following detailed report.

Proposed National Registration Scheme for Native and Exotic Live Birds.

Ongoing communication with Canberra regards the release of the Thinkplace report and recommendations. Advise this week from the head of wildlife trade in Canberra indicate further delay due to election and hence government in caretaker mode.

I am quietly confident there will be no recommendation for an exotic bird registration scheme in the report, however, there remain hurdles to overcome, therefore I have requested input to the Minister's office once the report is provided to the new Minister.

The head of wildlife trade was willing to address this CCBFA meeting, however we decided there was little point until the report is released. Certainly, he will attend the meeting directly after the report's release.

Budgerigar Disease Update

Refer attached notification to clubs.

Are any delegates aware of further cases or evidence of transmission?

Draft Animal Welfare Bill (NSW) 2022

On 21/3/22 I provided evidence to the parliamentary inquiry into the Draft Animal Welfare Bill (NSW) 2022. Main concerns were in regard to restricting right of entry into residential properties by inspectors and ensuring aviculture continues to self-regulate.

Regarding right of entry, subsequent correspondence with senior policy staff at DPI indicates the wording will be tightened to ensure inspectors can only enter residential premises (includes land) with permission from the owner, with a warrant or when there is imminent danger of a cruelty offence occurring. Currently RSPCA (not AWL) officers are entering properties, including forced entry, whenever they deem an animal trade to be taking place – this includes having bred a puppy/kitten some time in the last 5 years.

The new Bill, should it become law, includes mandatory care for all animals based on the 5 freedoms/domains. Essentially this means everyone must ensure basic food, water, shelter, etc. is provided for animals in their care. There are then prescribed enforceable standards which will be specific to particular animals, events or practices. For example, dog breeding, rodeo, pet shops, etc. On behalf

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of CCBFA (and ACA) I have been arguing that our codes prove we are self-regulating very successfully therefore prescribed mandatory standards are not required. Instead, our codes (such as our new bird sale code) should be ratified so they can be used as a defence should anyone, club in this case, ever be charged with an offence or perhaps more importantly become the subject of allegations by animal rights extremists.

A similar system of mandatory care and prescribed standards is likely in all states. I will continue to argue that self-regulation for aviculture has worked for decades and continues to work, therefore should continue.

Details of the Parliamentary inquiry including evidence provided by Michael Donnelly and I from ACA into this draft Bill are here...

https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees/inquiries/Pages/inquiry-details.aspx?pk=2853

The draft Animal Welfare Bill 2022 is here...

https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/animals-and-livestock/animal-welfare/animal-welfare-reform

NSW Native Animal Licensing

NPWS has now appointed a leader for the new reform process along with some assistants. I will join the expert panel which has just been formed to finalise the review process. Brian Read and Murray MacPherson, who assisted during the earlier review will act as backup should I be unable to attend, and we will appoint further expertise as needed.

Native bird licensing is the first priority, and we continue to be assured it will be completed by October this year. I must admit to remaining sceptical but have agreed to work with the process until/unless it degenerates.

Other “stakeholders” include a reptile keepers’ representative, RSPCA NSW, Taronga, AVA, WIRES, ACA, NSW DPI. I have formally opposed RSPCA NSW and WIRES. RSPCA NSW has, by their own admission, no expertise in avian welfare. WIRES is a rehabilitation organisation and of no relevance to captive native animal keeping. I have also requested a qualified avian vet be appointed by the AVA; however I am aware this has not occurred and is unlikely as few if any avian specialists are AVA members.

NSW Bird sales and auctions code of practice.

The Fairfield sale was held on Sunday 1/5/22. 1500 copies of the new code were distributed as well as posters with the QR code to the sale. I personally walked around talking to sellers prior to the sale commencing. All were understanding of the need to restrict all wire cages, have a limit of 4 birds per cage and to ensure

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suitable boxes were used by buyers. I anticipated opposition, but this was not my experience.

One man with large numbers of gold finches and Gouldians wondered how he would manage but accepted we must both ensure welfare and be cognisant of how animal rights extremists may view how our birds are offered.

Another seller noted some inconsistencies with the Conure species that are on and off the list of species smaller than a rainbow lorikeet, so it seems this list requires further refinement.

We have received further representation from Shoalhaven Avicultural Society arguing once again that all wire cages should be permitted for all species, including those smaller than a rainbow lorikeet. Given there was no representative from the Shoalhaven club at the March meeting when the matter was put for debate, I recommend we add the issue to the July meeting for further discussion

The current code is here...

https://www.ccbfa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/CCBFA-NSW-Bird-Sale-and-Auction-Standards-and-Guidelines.pdf

Extensive discussion from delegates ensued around the best way to resolve the issue of all wire cages with a focus on finding a solution acceptable to all clubs.

As a result, the meeting endorsed the following 2 proposals which will be put to the July CCBFA meeting for discussion and vote. Note that Proposal 2a and 2b are essentially the same – 2a allows wire cages for doves, 2b does not.

Proposal 1.

Change Standard 4.1 and Standard 4.8 into guidelines. Essentially this removes all restrictions on all wire cages.

OR

Proposal 2a.

Replace Standard 4.1 with the following and delete Standard 4.8.

4.1 For finch and quail species all wire cages are not permitted. For these species seller cages to be open at the front only. They should be enclosed on both sides, the rear and the top and must be solid and non-transparent.

OR

Proposal 2b.

Replace Standard 4.1 with the following and delete Standard 4.8.

4.1 For finch, quail and dove species all wire cages are not permitted. For these species seller cages to be open at the front only. They should be enclosed on both sides, the rear and the top and must be solid and non-transparent.

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For both Proposal 2a and Proposal 2b footnote 2 would remain, which states…

> *Approved standard show cages, as specified by the CCBFA endorsed species specific standards, are acceptable for use in all cases. It is noted that show cage standards for large parrots and some canary breeds specify or include all wire cages and these are permitted.*

All clubs to be emailed the above the proposal well in advance of the July CCBFA meeting.

Many clubs have emailed requesting printed copies of the code and poster. If your club has not done so, please advise. Given above concerns, I will delay printing further quantities of the code until after the July CCBFA meeting. The QR code will remain the same.

Psittacine Birds Import Risk Analysis

The process of finalising this risk analysis is well and truly dragging on. Since our March CCBFA meeting I have written to the federal Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment twice with no substantive reply received to date. They now appear to be backing away from their commitment the final document would be "released first half of 2022".

Moved I. Brown, and seconded by B. Barnes that the Reports be accepted, and Reporters thanked – Carried

GENERAL BUSINESS:

- **2022 Ring Orders** supplementary orders can be arranged for all species during 2022. Clubs requiring an order form, should contact the Secretary / Ring Officer.
- **Sydney Royal Show update.** In the absence of I Cindric the President gave a brief report advising there were just over 500 entries. The Finch judge Bruse Whiting stated the overall display was terrific and a tremendous opportunity to display the hobby. Ian Brown s[poke briefly about the Brisbane EKKA (Royal) on the 5th to 14th August, the aviary display will only be for 5 days.
- B. Whiting, mentioned that the March minutes stated that the May meeting was also to be held at Ashfield R.S.L., the President stated the reason for changing to only Zoom, and had advised all attendees in his email notifying them the details for the May Zoom meeting. It was move by R. Robertson seconded by B. Whiting that the 6th July meeting be Zoom only.

The President thanked the delegates for attending, as there was no further business closed the meeting at 9:36 p.m.

Notice of the next ZOOM (only) General Meeting

Wednesday 6th July 2022 at 8:00 pm

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