



Budgie Bulletin



MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 2012-2013

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NORTH EAST B.S. NEWSLETTER

Issued bi-monthly for the members of the

The opinions and ideas expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the North East Budgerigar Society of South Australia Inc.

CLUB OBJECTIVES

TO PROMOTE FEELINGS OF GOOD FELLOWSHIP AND SPORTSMANSHIP AMONG ITS OWN MEMBERS AND ALL OTHER PERSONS INTERESTED IN THE BUDGERIGAR.

TO PROMOTE THE IMPROVEMENT OF EXISTING VARIETIES AND THE PRODUCTION OF NEW ONES.

TO ENDEAVOUR TO PROMOTE, ENCOURAGE AND STIMULATE THE BREEDING OF BUDGERIGARS.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

All subscriptions become due 1st January 2014
(Except new members who joined after 1st October 2013)

SINGLE \$15.00 DOUBLE \$22.50

FAMILY Single fee (\$15.00), plus 50% single fee for each person over 18 years of age.
Under 18 years – no charge in family situation)

JUNIOR \$9.75 (65% normal fee)

PENSIONER Single \$12.00 (80% normal fee) **Double \$18.00**

PARTNERSHIP \$11.25 per person (75% normal fee)

5 YEAR MEMBERSHIP 4 times the applicable membership fee.*

BCSA Membership fee: \$15.00 per person.

Members must be financial with North East Budgerigar Society and BCSA to purchase 2013 rings.
Please ensure that your membership card accompanies your order for rings.

Newsletter will be forwarded to financial country or interstate members bi-monthly.

Metropolitan financial members' newsletters will be available at club meetings.

If not collected they will be posted out 3 times per year.

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EDITORIAL

Birds that are rung with a current 2013 Green Ring are the birds, potentially, that will represent South Australia at the ANBC National Show to be held in Adelaide in June 2014. This is a great opportunity for SA exhibitors to not only attend the National Show but to also see their birds being judged against the best that Australia has to offer.

The Show will be held on the 21-22 June 2014 at the Hotel Grand Chancellor in Hindley St. Further detailed information will soon be available through the Clubs and also on the new BCSA website; which is to be launched shortly.

As usual, some breeders have bred lots of birds this season while others have had disappointing results. If you are one of the latter then you may already be thinking about having another round in Autumn. However, if you have not already factored the 2014 Nationals into your 2013 Green Ring breeding program then you will need to start thinking about pairing your birds up in Autumn for a last ditch effort to breed a stunner for the Nationals.

That leads me onto an issue that all Ring Officers face each year. As we get toward the end of each ring year, it becomes a bit of a guessing game as to how many more rings breeders are going to need.

The initial ring order placed by NEBS is based on the previous years ring sales. However, actual ring sales are subject to year by year fluctuations depending on how good or bad the breeding seasons have been. Any unpurchased rings at the end of the ring year are destroyed at a financial loss to NEBS. This is why I encourage members at the monthly meetings to let me know what their ring requirements will be late in the ring year. It takes one month to order and receive new rings, so I need to know well in advance of any unexpected requirements for rings in order to ensure that there are enough rings to meet breeder's requirements while at the same time ensuring that NEBS is not left with unsold rings. Quite a balancing act !!

If you are intending to breed in Autumn (and/or during Winter) please ensure that you let me know your anticipated ring requirements.

**Dennis Lomman
Ring Officer**

Minutes of the North East Budgerigar Society General Meeting

Minutes of the North East Budgerigar Society General Meeting

HELD: Kilburn Hall, 49 Le Hunte St. Kilburn on Wednesday January 9, 2013

WELCOME: President Lloyd Edwards declared the meeting open at 8.15pm

APOLOGIES: Bill and Kate Davis, Lucy Muggleton, Bruce Stafford and Barbara Fisher

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: Taken as read

BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES: Nil.

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

1. Advert for the 2013 Budgerigar calendar
2. Minutes of Associated Birdkeepers of Australia AGM
3. Southern Cage Bird Society December and January Newsletters
4. Budgie Digest for November – December from the BSSA
5. Flyer from Adelaide Zoo seeking volunteers to adopt a cheetah
6. Zoo Times magazine from Adelaide Zoo
7. Animal Expo offering display space at this years' Animal Expo
8. Robert Worrall the Clearwing Society rep seeking clearwing results from our shows

CORRESPONDENCE OUT:

1. Clearwing results to the Clearwing Society (they present awards to the leading clearwing exhibitor in each state/zone at the clearwing luncheon every year at the national show)

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE CORRESPONDENCE: Nil

TREASURER'S REPORT: Term deposit \$19,000; Cheque account \$6,808.88; Total \$25,808.88. Christmas raffle raised \$200. Thanks to all those who sold tickets

RING OFFICER REPORT: Plenty of green 2013 rings in stock

LIBRARY REPORT: Nil. TRADING TABLE REPORT: Travelling lighter tonight

NEW MEMBERS: Nil

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Entry fee for the monthly night shows has been abolished
2. Double rung birds will not be allowed at any of our shows (night shows, mini-shows, annual shows) with the exception of UBCs
3. Vetafarm have again supplied \$50 vouchers for use at our shows in 2013
4. Club memberships are due
5. Coded ring orders due with the ring maker by April 1

GENERAL BUSINESS:

1. 2012 night show results and awards (\$30 or a show cage)
 - a. Novice Winner with 26 points Andrew and Lucy
 - b. Intermediate Winner with 41 points Vicki Sanford
 - c. Open Winner with 32 points Mulley and Stafford

LUCKY ENVELOPE: Not yet filled; SHOW CAGE ENVELOPE: Dianna Trevarthen

ENTERTAINMENT: Matrix and Blue Series by Peter Glassenbury. The major change has been the repositioning of the yellowfaced blue in recognition that it is a colour. This has implications for all varieties below yellowfaced blue in the matrix. We then looked at a variety of birds which included cobalts, violet skys, violets and mauves. Separating cobalts, violet skys and poor coloured violets from each other was challenging. Copies of the new matrix will be available at the next meeting which will prove essential for entering birds into the correct classes. The new Standard released in November 2012 can be downloaded from the internet in its entirety

NIGHT SHOW: Judged by Sue Adams. A large number of birds were benched tonight which was remarkable given the January weather conditions in the lead up

Birds of the Month: Normal blue series Dennis Lomman; Normal grey Libby Thomas; Opaline AOSV Andrew and Lucy

Best Junior: Ashley Wenham; Best Novice: Andrew and Lucy; Best Intermediate: Geoff Murch; Best Open: Dennis Lomman

QUESTION AND ANSWER SECTION: Well covered during the presentation

DOOR PRIZE: \$10 Trading Table voucher to Andrew Stock

NIGHT RAFFLE: First and Third: Tina Wilson-Smith; Second: Tim Campbell

ANY OTHER BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR: Nil; REMINDERS: Nil

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday February 13. MEETING CLOSED: 9.55pm

Lloyd Edwards, President

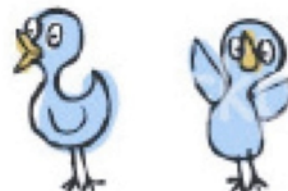
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| ▶ Red Panicum | ▶ Medications | ▶ Garden requirements |
| ▶ Canary seed | ▶ Paswell products | ▶ Rat traps...and more! |



**Do you want to sponsor a colour series at the 2014 Nationals?
For \$150.00 you can.**

Contact the B.C.S.A Secretary for more details

The Committee had decided to make several changes to the Derby and Oaks Night Show in order to encourage more entries from members. As from the issue of 2013 rings, breeders will be able to nominate either their first 10 or first 20 ring numbers for the D&O Night Show. There will also be a combined section for both Novice and Intermediate breeders.

The cost will be 50 cents per nominated ring number.

Ring numbers must be nominated and entry fee paid at the time of the initial purchase of rings each year.

All moneys collected will be put into prizes for the best three cocks and best three hens.

Non NEBS members and those members who purchase their rings through other clubs will also be able to enter by simply nominating their first ten or twenty rings and paying the entry fee.

The Show is held on the night of the July General Meeting.

BIRDS ELIGIBLE FOR POINTS AT CLUB NIGHT SHOWS

Members should note several changes to the rules for night shows. Young birds rung with the two latest ring colours are to be exhibited together (this includes Mini shows).

Young birds rung with the earlier of the two colours cease to be eligible as Young birds at night shows on September 1 of each year, to coincide with the issue of the next ring colour, which then takes over as one of the two eligible ring colours. For example, **purple rung birds cease to exist as Young birds on September 1, 2012.**

UBCs will be judged separately and for them ring colour is immaterial.

Points will be accrued for both Young (as defined above) and UBCs.

Bird of the night will be chosen from Young birds, except for **October and November** when bird of the night will be chosen from UBCs.

Best bird of each status will be chosen from Young birds, except for **October and November** when best of each status will be chosen from UBCs. Any birds, Young or UBC, entered for club night shows **must be owner bred.** **Birds older than Young birds** as defined above are **not eligible** for night shows.

Certificates will replace trophies for bird of the night.



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Exhibitor	Status	Total Points
Andrew & Lucy	Novice	5
Sue Adams	Open	55
Laurie Barber	Novice	25
Graham Bell	Open	10
Brodhi Carracher	Novice	5
T&L Cripps	Open	10
Geoff Edwards	Open	30
L&H Edwards	Open	35
Stephen Elliott	Open	120
Graham Evans	Open	10
Barb Fisher	Open	40
Peter Glassenbury	Open	35
Tracey Haskell	Novice	25
Geoff Hay	Novice	10
Holmes Family	Intermediate	25
G&B Jones	Novice	25
Kakoschke & Rice	Open	475
Olivia Kernot	Novice	5
D&R Lang	Open	35
Dennis Lomman	Open	110
Malcolm Lverage	Open	35
Adam McMahon	Novice	10
Marshall Family	Open	100
Mulley & Stafford	Open	95
S & C Norris	Open	20
Neville Richardson	Intermediate	15
Peter Simic	Open	85
R&D Simpson	Intermediate	20 (2012 only)
Ray Slade	Open	65 (2012 only)
K & A Smith	Open	25 (2012 only)
Frank Tilley	Intermediate	25
Nigel Tonkin	Open	70
Diana Trevarthen	Open	5
J&W Weidenhofer	Open	130

Congratulations to **Laurie Barber, Tracey Haskell and G&B Jones** who will all advance from Novice to Intermediate; effective from the 1st January 2013.

Further details are available on the BCSA website at www.bcsa.com.au. Details include at which show the points were awarded and for which birds

MONTHLY MEETING - NIGHT SHOW POINTS AWARD 2013 as at January 30th.

OPEN	Dennis Lomman	3 points
	Mulley and Stafford	5 points
	Graeme Alchin	10 points
	Marshall Family	3 points
	Diana Trevarthen	6 points
INTERMEDIATE	Vicki Sanford	9 points
	Geoff Murch	11 points
NOVICE	Andrew and Lucy	9 points
	Libby Thomas	3 points
	Brad Nunn	6 points
	Tim and Kaye	3 points
JUNIOR	Ashley Wenham	3 points

What a great night of bird entries we had on the first meeting this year. There were 44 birds entered by 11 exhibitors. The Judge for the evening was Sue Adams. Winners on the night were **Best Junior** :- Ashley Wenham, **Best Novice** :- Andrew and Lucy, **Best Intermediate** :- Geoff Murch, **Best Open** :- Dennis Lomman.
Best Blue :- Dennis Lomman, **Best Grey** :- Libby Thomas,
Best Opaline AOSV :- Andrew and Lucy.

At the March meeting we will be having our **MINI SHOW**. This will be for Gold and Green rung birds only. Entry forms are available at the meeting tonight or see John Mulley or Marion Stafford. We hope to see many of the members enter birds.

**Our April meeting the Birds of the night will be
LACEWING – GREY GREEN AND FALLOW.**

**Graham Alchin and Marion Stafford
Show Manager Assistant Show Manager.**

MONTHLY MEETING - NIGHT SHOW
POINTS AWARD 2012 as at November 30th

<u>OPEN</u>	Dennis Lomman	23 points
	Mulley and Stafford	10 points
	Graeme Alchin	11 points
	Sue Adams	5 points
	Sue and Colin Norris	8 points
	Lloyd and Helen Edwards	17 points
	Wayne Weidenhofer	4 points
<u>INTERMEDIATE</u>	Vicki Sanford	41 points
	Geoff Murch	13 points
<u>NOVICE</u>	Andrew and Lucy	21 points
	Brad Nunn	19 points
	Tim and Kaye	6 points
	Geoff Hay	12 points

There were 45 birds entered for the night show . Winners on the night were **Best Junior** Ashley Wenham, **Best Novice** Lucy and Andrew, **Best Intermediate** Geoff Murch and **Best Open** Mulley and Stafford. Congratulations to these members and everyone else who participated on the night.

WINNERS OF THE END OF THE YEAR POINTS AWARD WERE.

NOVICE:- Andrew and Lucy **INTERMEDIATE:-** Vicki Sanford

OPEN:- Mulley and Stafford. Congratulations to these members who were awarded a Show Cage or a \$30 voucher from the Trading Table.

Graham Alchin and Marion Stafford
Show Manager Assistant Show Manager.

**As an option, this magazine can be emailed to members instead of receiving a paper copy.
You will be sent it as soon as it is sent to the printers.
It will be in colour
You can read it on your computer, smart phone, I pad, and eBook reader or you can print it.
If you can't come to nightly meetings, you don't have to wait up to 4 months for your magazine.
If you would like to take up this option please contact the club secretary John Mulley**

The Gould Award for 2013



Warren J. Wilson

The World Budgerigar Organisation established the Gould Award to recognize individuals for "Meritorious Services to the World of Budgerigars". One award per year is made with the first in 2012 to Joe Mannes. Warren was nominated by Germany for the 2013 award and was the successful nomination from an international field of nominees. This is a great honour for the hobby in Australia, from where the budgerigar originated. Congratulations Warren.

BLAST FROM THE PAST **1960 BSSA ANNUAL SHOW**

I was able to read the contents of the Budgerigar Society of South Australia year book for 1960 and thought I should share with current members some of the content of the showing schedule in that period.

Of particular note from the figures below is the size and scale of the show and also the level of entries in classes that we now view as rarer variety birds.

Included is also an exert from the Treasurers report stating that “ring sales fell from 41,700 in 1958 to 25,554 in 1959 and these factors contributed to a small show attendance”

Colour or Variety	Class Numbers	Old birds	Young Birds
Light Green	1-2	42	39
Dark Green	3-4	19	27
Olive Green	5-6	10	8
Grey Green	7-8	17	18
Light Yellows	9-12	25	25
Sky Blue	13-14	43	42
Cobalt	15-16	23	36
Mauve	17-18	16	7
Violet	19-20	49	41
Grey	21-22	10	14
Albino	23-24	14	8
Lutino	25-26	42	31
Silver	27-28	6	7
Cinnamonwing	29-40	39	55
Cinnamon Yellow	41-42	9	15
Opaline	43-52	22	18
Greywing	53-60	16	13
Pied Evenly Marked	61-72	17	25
Pied Unevenly Marked	73-84	50	57
Pied AOV	85-90	10	8
Fallow	91-98	17	21
Yellow Face	99-102	7	4
Clearwing	103-116	28	43
AOV	117-118	4	5
Pairs	119	-	11
Ladies	120	-	6
Total		535	584

Oh how things have changed!

Are you interested in Budgerigar Exhibition?

In this section the President of the PBS invites individuals, from time to time, to share their views on specified subjects – in the December issue I asked John Carter to comment on the recently issued amendment to The Standard with particular emphasis on the pied varieties and in this issue I am asking a similar question of the author of the very popular Budgerigar Variety Bible and budgerigar expert, Ken Yorke to express his views with respect to the 2012 amendments as far as the pied varieties and the yellow face varieties are concerned, and this is what Ken had to say in response to my question to him on:

"Ken, what are your thoughts with respect to the 2012 amendments to The Standard".

I am delighted to be included in the PBS discussions on the 2012 amended Standard, and first off I would like to say that even though I have some misgivings about the new Pied section its inclusion is nevertheless a significant improvement over the old Standard.

The three genetic mutations of piers are:

- Australian Dominant,
- Dutch Dominant and
- Danish Recessive.

It has been proven that it is almost impossible to control the quantity and location of pied marked areas on most birds and animals.

Even genetic clones of pied mammals which have been scientifically produced

to date have significant phenotypic variations from the donor parent phenotype despite being genetically identical. (There is a slight argument in some species that by careful selection that humans might have a minor degree of influence, but not total control, over the quantity of pied areas where such areas are perhaps additionally influenced by modifier genes or tandem repeat DNA etc.)

Based on the fact that, certainly in budgerigars, we have virtually no control over the distribution of the pied pattern (i.e. the degree of variegation) in a specific bird, then each of the 3 genetic types (Australian, Dutch and Danish) can appear in a myriad of phenotypic variants.

A simple proof of this is why NOBODY has ever created a sustainable, consistent repeatable family of Australian Banded Peds.

As such Australian Dominant Peds could have a myriad of phenotypes, it just happens that we humans gave names to some of the ones that appealed to us and in early days some thought (in error) that they were even separate mutations. i.e. Australian Banded Peds, Australian Clearflighted Peds, Australian Reverse Peds, Australian Ringneck Peds and everything else was a catch-all Australian Variegated Pied.

Likewise the original Continental Clearflighted Peds just happened to be visually clearflighted by chance. They soon produced all sorts of random patterns such as variegated, clearflighted, reverse (sometimes called Penguin peds) (and probably even some banded etc. etc.).

The quantity of grizzling not only affects the wing markings, but also the body, creating the Frosted variant.

In error some older people thought that the clearflighted ones were a separate genetic mutation to all the others.

As such people tended to call the clearflighted ones Continental Clearflighted Pied and all the other phenotypic variants were called Dutch Dominant Pied.

I may be splitting hairs here but this is why I have a problem with the new standard saying that the Dutch is a subset of the Clearflighted group.

It is better to call the entire group Dutch Dominant Peds and recognizing that some Dutch Peds just happen to be Clearflighted variants.

There is an argument that the variety should be named after its original form i.e. Continental Clearflighted Pied and in fact that perhaps the ideal should strongly promote the clearflighted variant and perhaps penalise the variegated, frosted, penguin etc. variants.

Unfortunately nature will continue to throw up non-clearflighted variants so I do not believe this is the correct path. (It is a little bit like the Australian Yellow Face situation where our standard is written to promote the double factor and penalise the single factor, yet single factors will always be produced - and in fact are the majority)

All these phenotypic variants can also equally apply to the Danish Recessive too, it is just that we do not bother.

In summary, in my opinion it is simpler to have 3 genetic based standard groups (that is Australian Dominant, Dutch Dominant and Danish Recessive) as each of these have distinctive consistent identifiable features from each other. (It is also a shame that the current standard drops the term "Australian" from the name of the Australian Dominant Pied.)

The written description for each of these three should be broadly based around the variegated phenotypes allowing random pied marked areas as nature does.

For those clubs that wish to specialise in some of the phenotypic variants within each of these three groupings, then optional guideline descriptions can be provided for those variants (for example Australian Clearflighted Pied, Australian Banded Pied, Australian Reverse Pies, Dutch Clearflighted Pies, Dutch Penguin Pies, Dutch Frosted Pies etc.).

The new standard is a definite improvement - but to my mind not quite there.

A decision on the true naming of the "Dutch" genetic group needs to be made. I prefer not to call the genetic group "Clearflighted" because these birds throw lots of birds which are not phenotypically clearflighted.

* * * * *

As for the rest of the matrix.

I fully support the moving of the yellow faces up the matrix and treating them as a colour rather than a variety as I have previously promoted this very thing for many years.

I believe that the Black Eye Self primary group should include the combination of Cinnamonwing (penalising of course any visible cinnamon markings).

The reason being that 99% of birds which meet the ideal description for a Black eye Self, do so by being combined with cinnamon.

Our Black Eyed Selves, in Australia, have been combined with cinnamon for decades and yet the current matrix makes this combination illegal.

In other words the existing standard rewards us for cheating.

If you do the correct thing by the rules and breed Black Eyed Selves without cinnamon then the vast majority of them get heavier markings and body colour

suffusion and consequently no longer meet the ideal for the Black Eye Self but instead need to be shown in the Suffused class.

At least by formally allowing Cinnamonwing in the Black eye Self class it removes the theoretical cheating aspect and also helps our breeders retain the ideal Black Eye Self features.

In another radical suggestion which probably will not get general support within the budgerigar exhibition fraternity, I broadly believe that most primary groups should not include combination varieties.

This is required to ensure the clarity (integrity) of the respective variety features and avoid combinations causing visual detriment to particular variety features.

The classic example is the Spangle should not allow combination varieties.

In my opinion the only groups where combinations might be permitted are Crested (and maybe some Dominant Pies and Recessive Pies).

The exceptions being Cinnamon Black Eye Self (as above) and perhaps Opaline Clearbody as these combinations are generally helpful - I would make Greywing Fallow combination non-standard.

An even more radical approach (and my preferred approach) is to have a separate primary section at the end of the matrix solely for combination variety birds (i.e. ASV Combination) and remove the vast majority of combinations from their existing primary groupings into this section.

Societies can then break up this last primary combination section as they see fit to promote particular combinations such as ASV Combination Opalines, ASV Combination Spangles, Rainbows etc.

In this way you preserve primary variety features in their own primary sections and also promote unique combinations like Rainbows which at present get buried in their existing sections.

The long term future of the hobby is actually going to be variety breeders.

People who can breed colours they like and be recognised for their efforts in breeding true variety features without necessarily being a grand champion of show (just like the National Show) - and variety breeders have no problem selling their culls to the general public, the same cannot be said to those who only breed predominantly grey green normals!

Sustainability of the hobby has to be kept in mind when writing The Standard.

I would swap the points distribution to 40 points for type and 60 points for colour and markings to also help with the emphasis on variety features.

The other thing in The Standard I would change immediately is the wording of the scale of points for colour and markings (even if the 60 type/40 colour is retained).

It is too wordy and complicated for Mr. and Mrs. Average (not to mention for the judges) to work out what the “emphasis” and “weightings” are for the respective varieties. (N.B. Emphasis and Weightings are the terms used in The Standard).

It could be better achieved by using a clear table of scale of for decades.

It is simple to understand without all the words and achieves a more accurate consistent point-score system without the imprecise “emphasis” through the written words.

It would also be helpful to have a break up of both the 60 points and the 40 points into more categories, e.g. Size, Department, Condition, Head, Markings, Colour etc.

When I did the judges' training years ago this breakup existed and was taught to trainee judges.

Having a category breakup leads to more consistent scores, and hence more consistent judging, not to mention the exhibitors have some idea of what to expect.

Well how's that Bob? I hope now that you are not too sorry that you asked for my opinion and that my comments are of interest to your Members!

Ken Yorke.

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John

Seeds We Find In Our Mixtures – Terry Tuxford, UK

There are a variety of budgerigar seed mixes on the market for us to use, or we can buy straight seeds and mix our own. Over the years there has been a changing view as to the ideal mix for our budgerigars. One thing that we do know is that seed never gets any cheaper and it is therefore important that we minimise our waste. The obvious way to do this is through observation and watching which seeds our birds eat and which are discarded and then balance our mixtures accordingly.

Here is information on the various seeds we have available to us.

Energy Sources

Carbohydrates are the main energy source provided through the breakdown of sugars and starch. Many budgerigars gorge themselves on carbohydrates such as canary seed, buckwheat, millets and oats.



Canary Seed

This tiny grass seed is very popular with budgerigars and usually constitutes at least 50% of their basic seed mixture. It has a pale, shiny surface, but a much darker kernel. It is grown in many parts of the world including Canada, Australia and in small quantities in the UK.



Buckwheat

This is a cereal grain, cultivated in large quantities in the USA and Canada, buckwheat is now included in quality seed mixtures that fall under the small parakeet category by suppliers in the UK. It is a tri-cornered seed that is high in carbohydrates.

Oats (Groats)



This grain has been a tremendous source of nutrition for farm animals and horses for years. It is a universally used seed with a distinctive shape; groats being the product after its double-layered hull has been removed. Oval on one side with a long depression on the other, the kernel is soft and powdery-white with a high energy value and is a nutritional must in small quantities. In years past many budgerigar breeders fed their breeding pairs on small quantities of soaked oats.

Millets

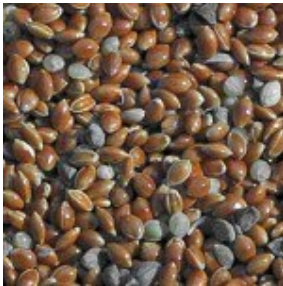


These can be either in sprays or in bags. Millet sprays are a firm favourite amongst budgerigars and the birds will wait in anticipation if they form a regular part of their diet.

Millets are the smallest of all seeds and are a favourite of most birds. They are harvested from grass-like plants, which are cultivated in many countries throughout the world. In the UK, mixed mixtures with four or five different kinds are available.

Available Millets include white, yellow, panicum, red and Japanese millets. In appearance, white and panicum can be difficult to separate, but the difference is that white millet is twice the size of panicum and paler in appearance. Yellow looks like a yellow coloured white millet and Red millet also is equal in size to white millet. The Japanese is light brown in colour, very small and appears to be crinkly.

Protein Sources



For protein value we have sunflower, hemp, niger, linseed and rape which, although high in fat oils, also contain small quantities of carbohydrates and a very small mineral value.

Linseed



A small, oval-shaped seed with a flat, shiny surface and is available in a tan and golden colour. Linseed is usually included in a diet for smaller birds such as finches and canaries. It is unlikely to be found in a budgerigar prepared mixture, other than in Tonic Seed. Despite its size it is probably the most effectively balanced seed. It makes more sense to offer small birds small seeds that provide the nutrients they need, rather than expecting them to manipulate seed like sunflower, which provides a similar food value.

Aviary-housed breeding pairs gain most from linseed and budgerigars instinctively know when to eat seeds containing fat oils; especially when the weather is cold. It offers great benefits for egg production and subsequent feeding when rearing a brood of youngsters. Outside of these two important calendar periods, linseed should be withdrawn. However, I am not convinced that budgerigars eat this seed.

Niger Nigeris a small dark seed that contains a high fat oil value. It also has a significant amount of protein and carbohydrate, but like all these seeds in this section it is low in mineral value. It is small, narrow and straight and varies in length and can appear to be black in colour. However, it is more of a dark grey and should not be confused with mouse droppings!



A more serious concern about nigeris that broken seed left lying on the floor of the cage or flight can quickly become rancid, especially if in contact with other foods such as green-food, causing mould to build up. The secret is to place the nigerin food pots and make sure the floor surface is clean and dry. Leave it in place for a few days and then remove any spillage.



Rape

Rape is in red and black and both forms look very much alike. This seed is small and round, but bigger than millet. Red rape can be difficult to distinguish from black rape when mixed together, but when separated the red rape millet is a more maroon colour. Both these seeds are normally included in mixtures intended for finches and canaries, but do offer it to your budgerigars. They might show no interest at first, but given time it can become welcome – especially during the breeding season. Its fat oil content is particularly high.



Hemp

Hemp is often included in small parakeet mixtures and is a small round seed that is grey/brown in colour. It is another high fat oil seed, similar toniger, with perhaps a lower mineral content.



Sunflower

This is the easiest of all seeds to recognise because of its size and variety of colour. It is available in black, white and striped, and either large or small. It dwarfs the remaining seed in a normal millet based mixture. Despite being enjoyed by budgerigars, it is not regarded as a well-balanced, seed. Proteins and fats are present, but it is low in carbohydrates which must be found from other seeds.



Safflower

Similar in appearance to sunflower, safflower is a smaller, white seed. There are mixed opinions about its popularity for budgerigars, although some birds develop a craving for it at certain times of the year.



About the Author:

Terry Tuxford first began breeding budgerigars in 1979 and joined the BS in 1980. He was elevated to Champion in 1985 when he went into partnership with Brian Poole. This partnership is probably one of the longest existing partnerships in the UK hobby today having lasted some 27 years so far and is still going strong. Terry and Brian are also partnered by Yvonne Tuxford who joined the BS in 1990.

Terry demonstrated his penmanship early in his budgerigar career and wrote in the second edition of Budgerigar World. Little did he realise then that in just over 8 year's time he would become editor following a 20 month apprenticeship with founding editor, Gerald Binks. Terry went on to edit a total of 245 editions up to May 2011.

In 1993 Terry took his Budgerigar Society Judges final examination and was awarded Subsidiary Judge of the Year and has gone on to judge the Budgerigar Society World Show on three occasions as well as many top shows at home and abroad. He is also an accomplished speaker and has been a guest at societies throughout the UK as well as Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada and many other European countries.