



Budgie Bulletin



MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 2013-2014

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VOLUME 35

ISSUE 3

FEBRUARY 2014



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 2014)

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 2014 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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NEBS Newsletter Editorial

Welcome to the first edition of Budgie Bulletin for 2014.

As I put pen to paper.....(yes , I still do that !) We have just endured one of the hottest weeks I care to remember. I admit to having a bit of fun with a young group of European backpacker tourists. Hot!? No! It's just warming up!!

With any luck the birds will be able to stop getting up close and personal with the concrete floor of the aviary for the remainder of summer.

As you may be aware, the ring issue date will be changed this year, back to the first of January. This will have the effect of an extended breeding season with the current 2014 (black) rings. Hopefully, as a result, we will all have hundreds and hundreds.....well, at least a few more birds to put into shows this coming year and the next.

On the subject of showing, the committee has come to realize that the current weight of our trailer is generally, far beyond the capabilities of the average cars towing capacity. Replacing our show shelving with aluminium, will reduce the weight by about two thirds of what it is presently. When you consider that the galvanized steel shelving we currently use, contributes to our trailer weighing in at just under two tonnes, it's a significant reduction!

The old show shelving will be offered to anyone who has an interest in purchasing some.

For those of us who ventured out to the January meeting, it was quite obvious we were missing two of our friendly faces. Unfortunately, Helen Edwards had an unplanned visit to hospital and so I'd like to take the opportunity, and I'm sure you will join me, in wishing her a speedy recovery.

Yours faithfully

Graeme Alchin
Show Manager.

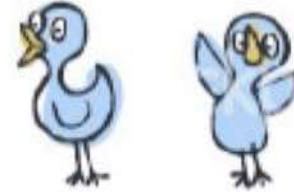
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Minutes of the North East Budgerigar Society General Meeting

HELD: Kilburn Hall, 49 Le Hunte St. Kilburn on Wednesday January 8, 2014

WELCOME: Vice President Peter Glassenbury declared the meeting open at 8.04 pm

Reminder to members to wear nametags to be eligible for the \$10 door prize

APOLOGIES: Geoff Murch, Shiralee Reardon, Ian Marshall, Lloyd & Helen, Barbara Fisher

Members Attending: 23

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: Taken as read

BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES:

1. New powder coated show cage fronts have been received and are available from the Trading Table for \$8.50 per unit or \$80 in multiples of 10
2. Club is placing its ring order for the entire year at the end of this month
3. Christmas raffle was drawn at the December dinner: First Andrew Stock, Second Sarah Tebbey, Third Lea Todd

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

1. Southern Cagebirds December Newsletter
2. Budgie Digest November – December from BSSA
3. ANBC Working Group Report

CORRESPONDENCE OUT: Nil

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE CORRESPONDENCE: Copy of the ANBC Working Group Report is on the table to take if you wish, and will be in the February magazine. If any of you wish to comment on this give your thoughts to Peter, Dennis or John as your BCSA delegates, or to any of your Committee members by April please

TREASURER'S REPORT: Term deposit \$19,000; Incentive Saver Account \$3213.60 Cheque Account \$3155.57; Total funds \$25,369.17

Christmas Raffle Profit: \$210

RING OFFICER REPORT: 350 at the moment

TRADING TABLE REPORT: Show cages available: New \$40. Used \$25

NEW MEMBERS: Bob Deverson. Welcome back Bob

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND GENERAL BUSINESS:

1. Helen Edwards is in hospital. Get well card is on the table for members to sign
2. Corrections to the 2014 monthly events program distributed last December:
 - a. There will not be a Bird of the Month for April since this is a dinner meeting celebrating the 40th anniversary of NEBS
 - b. Both green and black rung birds are eligible for the May Rare Variety Show
3. Schedule for the March Minishow will be available next meeting
4. February will be the last magazine for members not yet financial
5. Night Show results for 2013 (Show cage or \$30 voucher): Novice: Andrew & Lucy; Intermediate: Vicki Sanford; Open: Dennis Lomman
6. Geoff Hay has a bank of 15 breeding cages sitting on a 6 door cupboard for sale for \$100. Good condition. Included are jars and drinkers to the value of \$85 making the cages a steel at just \$15! Ph 0418264040

ENTERTAINMENT: Discussion on Penalty and Disqualification Clauses moderated by Peter Glassenbury

NIGHT SHOW: Thanks to John Mulley the judge for the night

Best Novice: NO entries; Best Intermediate: Vicki Sanford; Best Open: Dennis Lomman

Bird of the Night: Clearbody won by Andrew Stock

QUESTION AND ANSWER SECTION: Nil

LUCKY ENVELOPES: Brian Johnson - \$20.00

DOOR PRIZE: \$10 Trading Table voucher to John Mulley

NIGHT RAFFLE: First: Tina Wilson-Smith; Second: Collin Norris; Third: Murray Bray

ANY OTHER BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR: Nil

REMINDERS: Please sign get well card for Helen if not already done so

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday February 12. Bird of the night will be darkeyed clear and the talk will be on that variety

MEETING CLOSED: 9.24pm

Peter Glassenbury, Vice President

Some articles for this magazine are supplied from:

Budgerigarworld.com

The international website for the hobby worldwide.

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BCSA and NEBS New Websites

The new **BCSA** website is now live and can be viewed at www.bcsa.com.au.

The new website provides all the information which was available on the old site but in a much more attractive and user friendly manner.

One of the features of the new site is the Photo Gallery where photos of the winning birds at Club and State Shows can be viewed.

The site will also feature information about the 2104 Nationals in Adelaide. Detailed information about the Nationals will be posted when and as it becomes available. Initial information about the venue and accommodation is already posted on the site.

The new **NEBS** website is a subset of the BCSA website and can be accessed by clicking on the NEBS logo on the BCSA Homepage or directly at www.bcsa.com.au/?page_id=992. Information currently available on the site includes the NEBS Monthly Meetings Program and the Night Show Schedule.

So if you want to know what is coming up at the Monthly Meetings and cannot locate your hard copy of the program, then look it up on the website.

Check out the results of the NEBS Fisher Show and Young Stock Show and view the photos of the winning birds in the Photo Gallery.

ANBC Nationals – Adelaide 2014

The Budgerigar Council of South Australia is hosting the 40th Australian National Budgerigar Council Championship Show in Adelaide in June 2014

When: 20th – 24th June 2014

Where: Hotel Grand Chancellor on Hindley
65 Hindley St Adelaide
One Stop Shop Venue for Accommodation, Show, Dinners and Lecture. See BCSA website for accommodation details.
Phone 08 8231 5552 and select option 1 for room reservations - For Accommodation bookings Quote: TBC



What: Meet and Greet Friday evening
Judging Saturday and Sunday Mornings
Show Birds on Display after Judging
Bird Auction Sunday after Judging
Dinners Saturday and Sunday Evening
Daniel Lutolf Lecture Monday Evening

Details: **Further details are now available** on the BCSA Website at:
www.bcsa.com.au/nationals/
OR – from our BCSA delegates:
Peter Glassenbury, John Mulley or Dennis Lomman

Daniel Lütolf – Lectures in Adelaide, South Australia June 2014

The Budgerigar Council of South Australia is privileged and honoured to be able to present to the Australian fancy and overseas guests a lecture from Daniel Lütolf on Monday the 23rd June at the Hotel Grand Chancellor.



This, the 40th Australian National Championship show deserves something special and the acceptance by Daniel and the wonderful venue in Adelaide in 2014 should give all fanciers something to celebrate.



Daniel had been breeding budgerigars for a number of years now and is considered one of the most influential budgerigar breeders of our time.

Daniel Lütolf

“First of all I would like to introduce my person and how I became a budgie breeder. I am currently working as a college teacher for students of the age between 14 and 17 years.

Show budgie breeding became a hobby for me since 1980. It is a very intense hobby that became a very important part of my life since more than 30 years now.

The rest of my free time belongs to my family: Together with my wife Daniela I have two girls (Rubina and Neve), aged between 6 and 1 years. Another hobby is soccer. I am currently active as a coach and player for the veterans of FC Würenlos. I am also enjoying some good books and like to discuss them in a literature club forum“.



This is a once in a lifetime opportunity for fanciers serious about the hobby to obtain an understanding of Daniel and his breeding principals and understand how he has changed the style of birds over a period of time.

Daniel will be available to chat with fanciers over the weekend as well as giving us of himself on the Saturday and Monday.

Please welcome Daniel, Daniela, Rubina and Neve to South Australia and give them the good old Australian hospitality that we are known for.

The Budgerigar Council of South Australia

BSSA NOVICE CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW AND SOCIAL FUNCTION

On Saturday 29 March, the BSSA will host their Novice Championship Show and Social Function. All Novice exhibitors in South Australia are invited to attend this event with entry of birds open to all Novice members regardless of which club they belong. This event will be based on the ANBC Show Schedule and, providing sufficient birds are benched on the day, the winners will qualify for Status Movement points. Show schedules for this event are available from any member of the BSSA Committee or can be downloaded from the BSSA website www.bssainc.org.au

Note:

- (1) In the NEBS Event Calendar for 2014 the BSSA Novice Show is **incorrectly** shown as being on the 22 March 2014.
- (2) The Calendar also **incorrectly** states that the Mt Gambier UBC will be held on Sunday 20th October. The correct date is Saturday 25 October 2014.

The Calendar also includes two separate dates for the Mt Gambier Young & Adult Show. The correct date is Saturday 7th June 2014.

IMPORTANT - Changes to Ring Issue Date and Supply Arrangements

New Ring Issue Date

At its meeting in June 2013 the ANBC decided to **change the ring issue date from 1st September to 1st January.**

The ANBC has since decided that the **new issue date will apply from 1st January 2015.**

2014 Black Rings

This means that the **current Black 2014 rings will continue to be used until the 31st December 2014** and will therefore cover two breeding seasons.

Most breeders will therefore need to acquire additional Black 2014 rings for use during the additional breeding season up to 31st December 2014.

NEBS has already placed an order for additional rings with the usual supplier, Chapmans Rings Pty Ltd, including NE coded and personally coded rings.

2015 Red Rings

Chapmans Rings Pty Ltd will not be able to supply the ANBC with rings for 2015 and onwards.

The ANBC will **source the 2015 and all future rings from an overseas supplier** and this arrangement is already well advanced.

The NEBS ring order for 2015 will need to be submitted to the ANBC by 30th June 2014 in order for the rings to be available by 1st January 2015.

There will be no NE or personally coded rings available in 2015.

All rings will be coded with an ANBC symbol and a relevant State symbol only.

This situation may change in later years once the new supply arrangements have been fine-tuned and subject to any pricing implications.

The ANBC will place one or two bulk orders only on the overseas supplier each year and no State will be able to deal directly with the ring supplier as is currently the case.

The ring samples provided by the overseas supplier indicate that high quality rings can be expected.

Please contact the NEBS Ring Officer if you have any queries regarding the above.

Dennis Lomman
NEBS Ring Officer

ANBC Working Group Report

Please give feedback to any of the NEBS BCSA delegates or any Committee Member by April

1. The ring issue date.

There was little support for reopening the issue, but the observations that were made on the topic deserve to be placed on record.

- a) The matter was decided at the ANBC meeting without the extended discussion that would have brought out the issues that are being raised belatedly, now.
- b) The National Show is for “Young Birds”. What is the definition of a young bird? If a bird has produced young is it still a young bird? If a bird is older than twelve months is it still a young bird?
- c) How does the ring issue date relate to the budgerigar breeding cycles? Do breeding cycles vary across the country?

2. ANBC decision making.

This topic arose from the discussion of the ring issue date.

- a) The decision at the 2013 ANBC meeting may ensure more thorough discussion of issues before decisions are taken.
- b) Should we refer some matters to a vote of all members of clubs and branches? Should matters relating to the National Show be limited to members who participate in that show by making their birds available?
- c) What is the role of delegates to the ANBC meeting? If they have no action to take but to cast a predetermined vote why is it necessary to meet at all? Could delegates be given the task of bringing together the varying discussions that have taken place and formulating a proposal to be put to a vote of member bodies?
- d) Could the ANBC be made more widely representative by having additional member bodies on the model already in place in Queensland? Could Victoria and NSW each have three memberships and stage three teams representing distinct geographic areas?

3. Holding cages.

This topic has not led to any extensive discussion, but there appears to be a general reluctance to commit to a very expensive ongoing commitment to freighting show cages and holding cages around the country.

- a) A possible better alternative could be to centralise the National Show in the South Eastern states. This would have the added benefit of making freighting of birds to the show less arduous and stressful.

4. Major Faults

This topic has been addressed in a preliminary way, but requires extended discussion before any resolution is reached.

- a) In the context of the National Show the proposal is that the Standard should be applied strictly at the upper end of each class where it can be expected that all birds should reach a very high standard in type and variety.
- b) Some regard the identification of some faults as “major” is contrary to the notion of positive judging. This leads to the question, “What is positive judging?” It does not mean that faults

should be ignored. Rather it suggests that the judging focus should be on reward for excellence in desirable features.

c) There is some support for identifying flecking as the only major varietal fault requiring special attention.

5. The future of the ANBC Show

This topic has opened as a result of consideration of the options that will be put to the 2014 ANBC meeting. Two alternative models (the three bird entry and the two bird entry) are to be considered. The ANBC has already ruled out return to the status quo that existed before 2011. The classes that have been trialled in 2012-13 will be considered for inclusion in the show.

At this stage little discussion has taken place, but some interest has been expressed in considering whether the show weekend could be restructured and expanded especially in the light of the proposal to centralise the show.

MONTHLY MEETINGS NIGHT SHOWS
POINTS AWARD 2014

*****INTERMEDIATE*****

Andrew and Lucy

6 points

Vicki Sanford

10 points

*****OPEN*****

Dennis Lomman

20 points

Diana Trevarthen

6 points

The year has started again and we had 12 birds exhibited at our night show in January. John Mulley was the judge and the BEST CLEARBODY was won by Andrew and Lucy with Diana Trevarthen getting 2nd and 3rd places. Best open on the night was won by Dennis Lomman with Vicki Sanford winning the Intermediate section. Well done to all the members who exhibited their birds.

Bird of the night for February is Dark Eyed Clear and then the month of March we will have a MINI SHOW for Green and Black rung birds only. The entry forms will be available at February's meeting.

Marion Stafford Assistant Show Manager

Night Show Results for 2013

Novice section was won by Andrew and Lucy with 28 points with Brad Nunn coming runner up with 20 points.

Intermediate section was won by Vicki Sanford with 28 points with Geoff Murch coming runner up with 11 points.

Open section was won by Dennis Lomman with 27 points with Mulley and Stafford coming runner up with 19 points.

Congratulations to the winners who each received a \$30 voucher or a show cage.

Thoughts From Tanglewood Part Two – Gerald Binks UK

Terry Tuxford continues his conversation with Gerald Binks



In the last edition of *The Budgerigar*, Gerald Binks told us about his years in the hobby since starting in budgerigars in 1945, and how he has sustained his enthusiasm over some 67 years. He makes the point that in this hobby you never stop learning and underpins this statement in this edition by telling us of the changes he has made in recent years and what he would do if he started again.

However, I began by asking Gerald about the development of the hobby and what he felt were the highs and lows for him.

The Highs and Lows

The high point was in the 1980's when a certain pair 16 comprising two grey green normals just happened to breed an outstanding nest of awesome birds for their day. Suddenly everyone wanted to buy anything related to that nest and for years after. The top bird was a grey green cock, BA23-43-86, a bird which would still win today, but not at top level in 2013. I showed it at the Budgerigar Society Club Show and at the Budgerigar World Open Championship at Blackpool; both shows had in excess of 4000 benched exhibits.

This cock was the forerunner of birds with width of face without the inferior “keyhole” effect and narrowness either side of the cere eventually leading to “the buffalo effect”, but a very low point now emerged at the former show, which was disgraceful. Everyone knew that the Grey Green was the best in the country, but I was up against the fact that I was heading the *Budgerigar World Magazine*

and had staged the Budgerigar World Open Championship at Sandown Park Racecourse which had set new standards and just a few officials were resentful of my efforts. As a result the Grey Green was put down for Best in Show to an interior Opaline Cinnamon Light Green cock. So Best in Show at the BS for me was politically blocked and everyone knew it, however just weeks later the same Grey Green went to the BW Show and Won Best Budgerigar In Show with a 4500 entry. So anybody today, who even thinks I am afraid to Show – think again. I accept losing with equanimity.

This time had a profound effect on me. What was the point of showing if people who were supposed to be respected as judges were prepared to lose their credibility out of sheer spite of someone who was making efforts to improve the hobby for everyone's benefit? Today's General Council has greater integrity than in my days of heading up Budgerigar World, which is very satisfying and inspires me to Show again.



2013 Cobalt cock 5 weeks old and one of five and still in the nest

Your editor has also asked me what ambitions I have today. Come out and show again and try to do well at the Budgerigar Society Club Show. I will be 80 at the next event, so it will not be easy as I always start breeding in mid-October. But I will make every effort and I shall enjoy being with all the fanciers who attend, who hopefully will approach me if they are juniors, beginners, novices or any other category. I will be delighted to chat to anyone who has a wish to do so. We are all just budgie fanciers – nothing else.

Changes and Innovations

I then went on to talk to Gerald about the changes he has made in terms of applying up to date innovations to improve his efficiency and management in the hobby. This was his reply.....

Certainly I have had to learn how to use the computer really well to communicate faster and more efficiently with the hobby world-wide. I had to learn to type from scratch and with the demise of Budgerigar World magazine that I founded in 1982, then under the County Press in Bala, North Wales I spotted an opportunity to launch a free on-line magazine with in-depth articles, which I did successfully.

I switch from film to digital photography has been profound and linked to the computer has created a massive improvement in speed and efficiency in both personal advertising and article illustration. My effort in devising methods of depicting budgerigars in colour (there were none before BW) are well established in The Challenge. One area I find difficult is when buyers abroad request photos of birds that are available. Yes, easy to photograph, but when out of condition can give the wrong impression entirely. Basically I try to avoid it and ask fanciers to rely on my experience and credibility.

Lastly, the recent near withdrawal of the well known Vitamin B12 solution under the Trade Name of Cytacn; the chemical name is Cyanocobalamin. It is essential to get your chick embryos acquiring great energy and popping out easily from their shells and being fed by the hens immediately because an active red-coloured chick will always call for food. So many fanciers called

me in frustration that I trawled the Net and eventually found a source – and a far better source as I will explain – called FORCE 12 and is sold by Aviform. Why is it better? The reason is that the earlier Cytacon is syrup based and if a bird has any fungi in its system, the syrup feeds it beautifully and it grows massively and you have a very sick bird(s). By contrast FORCE 12 is Vitamin B12 without syrup but is water based and thus vastly superior.



Grey Green – 18 weeks old

Starting Again

So armed with 67 years of experience I asked Gerald what approach he advice he would give to someone just starting up.

If I were young again and just starting up, I would spend 12 to 18 months doing nothing in terms of aviary construction or buying stock. That time would be spent getting all the information I could acquire from books, magazines, the internet, visiting aviaries all over the country, attending lectures and noting everything down. Naturally going to shows would be essential and watching judges who were breeding top quality birds themselves, so they knew what they were doing. In that

way my eyes would be able to be trained – to the millimeter as to what are all the good and difficult features to be exhibited and by the same token the tiny faults that separate one good bird from its competitors. Then I would start!

Before ending I would like to make an observation. After so many years trying to encourage the Budgerigar Society to attack the marketing aspect of our hobby to the public at large, and being actually told recently by a top official that it was a, “waste of time and money”, I was really pleased to see that the General Council has taken a different view and engaged a fancier with some marketing experience into that role.

Finally, another bit of praise to this time Grant Findlay, who was interviewed on Radio by Chris Evans in mid-March this year. Grant gave excellent opening answers but later very skillfully fended off some traps set by Evans that had been deliberately laid. Great answers Grant – thinking on your feet and super publicity for the BS and all fanciers. I have said for years that unless you let people know we exist, we will continue to get the same result we have always got – a declining membership!



About the Author: Gerald Binks began breeding budgerigars when he was 12 years old and is now arguably the most knowledgeable budgerigar fancier in the world. He has bred his fair share of Best in Show birds, judged in no less than 20 countries, founded the World Budgerigar Association, and has published two of the three classic books on the hobby. His stud in the UK attracts fanciers from near and far and is always high on the list for those wishing to purchase BA23 quality budgerigars.

Meet The Breeder – An Interview with Daniel Lutolf Switzerland



Daniel Lutolf is one of the top budgerigar breeders in Europe today with his interest in birds stemming back to his childhood. As a small boy he was fascinated in anything to do with flight and had aspirations of becoming a pilot. Initially he showed interest in larger type birds but around the time he was 12 years old he was given a pair of budgerigars by his relatives. From these birds he soon had youngsters and this was due in part to buying a new pair of shoes. He took the new shoes from the box and placed the box in the bird cage. The hen laid

eggs, hatched and reared the young in the shoe box. This led to Daniel purchasing more birds; mainly in “nice colours” like Violet and Lutino.

Daniel takes up the story.....



When I was 15 years old I met Heinrich Ott for the first time and I got my first real show birds from him. After some years we became good friends as we still are today. Budgerigars from the studs of Emil Schweizer and Janos Pece followed. Janos won the prize for the Best Bird in Switzerland twice and I had the lucky chance to get two brothers of this bird. Janos Pece birds originated from Hans Ruosh and he in turn got his from Joseph Speck who very well known in those times. The birds from Joseph Speck were based on the famous studs of Sadler, Ormerod, Finney, Moffat, Lane & Son and Mrs. Moss. The combination of Ott birds, which had very large feathers and the very fine and elegant Pece birds took me a big step forward.

Are your present birds from these same bloodlines and if not, what bloodlines have impacted most within your stud?

Yes, I still have these bloodlines. Until 1996 I only had birds from Switzerland. After 1996 I got birds from Ralph Jenne, Richard Kuhr, Joseph Mannes. Kurt Vogt, Bernd Stegemann, and in the last few years from Reihhard Molketin. In 2005 I brought in birds from Pat de Beer that did really good for me. In the last two years I brought in birds from the UK with background of John Wilson bloodlines. These birds are rather small, but have a wonderful blow to the head. I also work with Kurt Vogt and Bruno Steffen of Switzerland. Mike Ball, Willie Dokter and Andreas Conrades also became breeder friends and they work with my bloodline and we regularly exchange birds.



How do you prepare for the breeding season?

All of my birds fly in the main flights together; barheads, young birds, adult cocks and hens. The reason for this is that the young birds see the entire behavior of the adults, like mating and soon learn what to do. If the sexes are kept separate, then when the young birds go into the breeding cages they have much more to learn. This wastes time and is the cause of many infertile eggs.

I feed the same diet all year round, so there are no changes in the diet. I cut the vent feathers; I do not pull them out but just cut them short, not back to skin level.

Pedigree or Visual

When pairing up do you go by pedigree or visual appearances, or both?

When pairing up I like to let the birds select their own partners whenever possible. When I see two birds paired up in the aviary, I place them in show cages to assess them for compatibility. If all appears fine I have a look at their pedigrees and if they are not too closely related I put them down to breed. Where possible I don't put best to best otherwise the result could be feather dusters or often clear eggs and even disappointing youngsters.



How closely do you mate your birds and what related matings have been the most successful?

The closest I mate my birds are cousins – you don't marry your sister! It is the same with Budgerigars. I don't use line breeding as I feel this brings with it too many problems and in particular feather problems. It may work for a few years, but eventually you will have problems. I like breeding with older birds at the age of 3 to 4 years old, or even 5 years old. I prefer to pair an old partner with a young one.

What variety mixes do you use for improvement, if any, or is it best to best?

I breed normals, opalines, spangles, recessive peds, dilutes, clearbody, cinnamon and this year I have started with clearwings.

At different times I have put spangle to everything; I still do, it doesn't matter what the colours are as long as the birds are super birds. The hen doesn't have to be a super bird, these hens usually breed far better and you can make a choice at the end of the breeding season when you are getting 10 or 15 chicks from one pair.



Pair selection is probably the most important aspect of the hobby. I see many breeders that sell the wrong birds. They just look at the phenotype (visual quality) and not the genotype (pedigree) and so they lose exactly what they need. I always bring in new blood so as not to get too closely related birds. If I can buy a super bird I do, but they don't have to be because I outcross and then cross back again. If there is no quality they go unless they are from a super pair.

How many chicks and rounds do you allow your birds to have?

Show hens have two rounds of eggs and raise 3 to 4 chicks, if they lay again the eggs are transferred. The cocks breed from October till May or June, if they stay in condition.

What features are the hardest to put on a bird and how does one go about establishing and retaining it?

I have found that it is usual to have small birds with good head qualities or big birds with small heads. Many times if the birds have good length they don't have the head qualities. The best way to fix this is to put these two types of budgerigar together and slowly improve both length and head. I think in the future the most important feature will be directional feather.



Exceptional Depth

You have got an exceptional depth in your stud, quality of directional feather abounds. Please give a summary of how you have got the birds to where they are today, and can fanciers go too far?

This question has been mostly answered in the previous questions but five years ago I used mostly Cinnamons and Dilutes with good results, then it all

changed when I bought in a particular bird; an opaline grey green hen. She was a grand daughter from the old opaline grey green cock born August 1997. He was the very best bird I ever bred, but he was a french moult and so I could never show him. From this bird I produced 47 chicks in 3 years and with different hens. Generally I bred some outstanding birds in the nineties and got these birds to breed well.



Breeders definitely go too far if their birds get feather problems and cysts or can't fly anymore; always remember we are breeding Budgerigars and not chickens!

What is your feeding programme during the breeding season and does it differ during the non breeding season?

I have my own seed mix sponsored by Melior of Switzerland; you can find the exact contents on my web site. Every second day the birds are provided with soft food and soaked oats. My soft food contains eight boiled eggs (shells included in mix), as many organically grown vegetables as are available (cut up small), olive oil, Weizen oil (wheat), honey (for pollen content), and Algan (seaweed). This is fed to all birds breeding and non breeding.

Please describe your aviary design, size, flights, breeding cage design and number of cages etc?

I have 2 flights, a big and a small one plus one big breeding room with 70 cages, all located in the cellar of our lovely house.

Do you use preventative medication during and pre breeding season and if so what and why?

Yes, I treat with tetracycline pasta and baytril.

What do you see as the greatest asset of being in the hobby and where do you see the hobby heading with so many breeders leaving today?

As everybody can see, many of our breeders are getting older and only very few people are starting with the hobby. We need young breeders and we need to give them as much assistance as they require, we also must ensure that they get it. More publicity could do well for our wonderful hobby also.



What is the benefit of having a national show?

These are the best shows for me. We get international judges at these shows. It gives you a better idea of how you are going. Also I enjoy the competition. I take part in the three biggest shows in Switzerland and the European Championship in Karlsruhe.

Advice To A Novice Breeder

How would you go about pointing a novice breeder in the right direction to enable them to reach the top bench in around five years?

I suggest it would take a lot longer than 5 years to reach the top bench. New breeders should buy cheap birds first and work with them, handle them and learn the ropes. Read everything available and ask questions of the experienced breeders. Experience and knowledge is the key. Then buy expensive birds. If they buy expensive birds first and things go wrong, they get frustrated and leave the hobby. Always remember it is a hobby, not a business.



What do you do with birds with feather disorders?

French moulters can be used, one of my best birds ever was an opaline green cock with French moult but a magnificent bird otherwise. He bred a lot of excellent chicks with no feather faults. If you do use them, they must be of the best quality. And if you get chicks from them with French moult, stop breeding with the parents, clean out the nesting quarters thoroughly, wait four months and start again. If feather problems continue, it is genetic so don't use them again!

Who has inspired you the most in the fancy?

Definitely Heinrich Ott but I have met many other great personalities all over the world.

Last but not least, given all of the above, do you have any other tips or hints on how to improve and sustain an exhibition budgerigar stud?



Keep the best chicks, especially many hens and sell the rest. Mix the colours, mix the factors. Example opaline grey green/blue and cinnamon cock with a cobalt cinnamon spangle hen, dark green or grey green or olive x lutino, violet x albino. All birds should fly well and have all feathers for showing. Show birds must be in proportion. It is better to have a small bird in proportion than a large one that is not. Keep all the babies from your best birds even if they look like rubbish. Let the birds choose their partners; you'll get many more fertile eggs. Try to create your own style of bird that everybody will recognise immediately. Keep the birds clean, change the water at least once a day. Buy birds with good backgrounds. It makes no sense at all to sell your best birds.

About the Author:

Daniel Lütolf is a teacher for students between the age 14 and 17 years.

His introduction to budgerigars began in 1980, "It is a very intense hobby that became a very important part of my life." The rest of his free time is devoted to his family; Daniela and two daughters, Rubina and Neve.

He started budgerigar breeding at the age of 11, which was more a coincidence than planned. A classmate showed him his budgerigars which caught his interest. Some months later, relatives of his mother gave him a pair of budgerigars as a present – against the will of his parents. From this pair he was able to breed youngsters, in an old shoe box.

That early success intensified his interest even more. In 1986 Daniel met Heinrich Ott, who was one of the top Swiss budgerigar breeders at that time. From him he purchased his first really good show budgerigars. The Ott birds had an excellent background and came from the very best English bloodlines, mainly from Ormerod and Sadler.

Since those early days quality birds from other UK, European and South African breeders have been introduced to develop today's superb stud.