



Budgie Bulletin



MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 2013-2014

<u>POSITION</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>PHONE No.</u>
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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 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

Editorial: The Show Season and Bird Welfare

Currently we are in the middle of the show season in SA. As usual this time of year I hear about shows causing stress in budgerigars and the spread of disease and failure of budgerigars to breed if they are selected for the national show.

Regarding the breeding situation, most of us understand that the best budgerigars are the most difficult to manage in the breeding room. Our best budgerigars behave like that irrespective of whether they go to the national show or not. Personally I've not noticed any difference between my birds that travel and my birds that don't and I think I've had birds in the State Team every year for more than two decades. Most exhibitors successful in having budgerigars selected supply around 1-3 birds in the State Team so it's not clear to me how definitive conclusions can be drawn from such small numbers. There was an article in the July-August 2013 issue of the BSSA Budgie Digest where the author states that "of the pairs you put down to breed 1/3 will produce well, 1/3 not-so-well and 1/3 not at all". I can relate to that, especially in relation to stock likely to breed birds competitive at state level. Now that I have more time I will in future try and give more attention to finding ways of increasing the proportion that breed well, if that is possible.

Regarding disease, I think BCSA is the only Zone which has a current Risk Assessment Statement for shows and bird sales. We are fortunate in this state that we don't have the levels of humidity prevalent in the eastern states so our birds are not at the same level of risk to infection that such conditions promote. Having said that, we need to be vigilant whenever we buy birds interstate and we need to implement the usual quarantine measures for these acquisitions. There have been disease issues within some of the Zone Teams in recent years however, which has prompted the ANBC to set up a Committee to compile minimum Guidelines for Budgerigars travelling to and from the National Show. I am the BCSA representative but won't pre-empt at this point any of the recommendations likely to arise from that. I will make further comment on that aspect when the national recommendations are finalised and likely we will publish the Guidelines in this magazine once they are agreed upon nationally. Suffice to say that stress due to travel should not be a factor for SA birds this year with the show being held in Adelaide.

John Mulley

Some articles for this magazine are supplied from:

Budgerigarworld.com

The international website for the hobby worldwide.

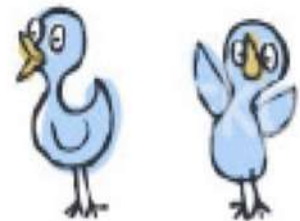
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| ▶ Red Panicum | ▶ Medications | ▶ Garden requirements |
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Minutes of the North East Budgerigar Society General Meeting

HELD: Kilburn Hall, 49 Le Hunte St. Kilburn on Wednesday April 9, 2014

NEBS 40th ANNIVERSARY DINNER

Members Attending: 38

Election of BCSA delegates 2013-14: Peter Glassenbury, Dennis Lomman and John Mulley

Announcements:

Handouts on the table:

1. Registration forms for the National Show. Deadline for registration is April 30
2. Fisher Annual Show schedules
3. Rare Variety Mini Show Schedules
4. Young Stock Show Schedules
5. June tender sale application form
6. Logan Shield Show schedule
7. National Show Program

Could ladies and unattached males please bring a salad to the Fisher Annual Show

BIRTHDAY DINNER: Scrumptious roast dinner, dessert and 40th birthday cake enjoyed by all.

Members enjoyed a good chat among themselves, there being no birds on the night

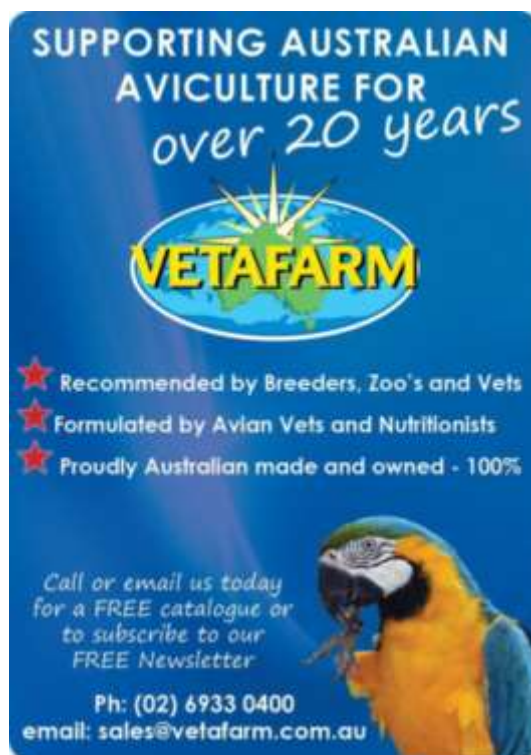
EASTER RAFFLE: First prize Trevor Wilson-Smith; Second prize Polly Heel

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday May 14. Rare Variety Minishow

MEETING CLOSED: 9.30pm

Peter Glassenbury,

Master of Ceremonies for the night



Minutes of the North East Budgerigar Society General Meeting

HELD: Kilburn Hall, 49 Le Hunte St. Kilburn on Wednesday May 14, 2014

WELCOME: President Lloyd Edwards declared the meeting open at 8.04 pm

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

APOLOGIES: Lea Todd, Sherilee Reardon, Barbara Fisher

MEMBERS ATTENDING: 32

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: Taken as read

BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES: Nil

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

April/May Feathered World Newsletter from Canary and Cagebird Federation of Australia; March-April Budgie Digest from BSSA; April and May Newsletter from Southern Cagebird Society; BRASEA Budgerigar Auction Catalogue and Autumn Bulletin; Zoo Times; April Newsletter, seminar notification and affiliation fee reminder from United Bird Societies of SA; May Newsletter from Fleurieu Peninsula Cage Bird Society

CORRESPONDENCE OUT: Nil

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE CORRESPONDENCE:

1. BRASEA Bulletins are on the table to take if wanted

TREASURER'S REPORT: Term deposit \$19,000; Incentive Saver Account \$2217.97 Cheque Account \$1063.74; Total funds \$22,281.71

RING OFFICER REPORT: Plenty of rings available. Black rings right through to December. Derby and Oaks will be black rung birds and last year's Derby and Oaks rings still valid and you can buy more Derby and Oaks rings for this calendar year

TRADING TABLE REPORT: Plenty of new and second hand show cages for sale. A new shipment of moulting aid plus a whole range of other items vital for the health of our budgerigars are on the Trading Table. Special tonight on Breeding Aid

NEW MEMBERS: Nil

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND GENERAL BUSINESS:

8. Registration forms for the National Show in Adelaide are on the table. Registrations now overdue but everyone with a job at the show or attending any functions associated with the show has to register
9. Young Stock Show Schedules have been sent out by email on the club's distribution list, hard copies put on the table by the door and mailed with the April magazine to members not on email and who don't attend meetings
10. Similarly for the Tender Sale Application Form
11. Similarly for the Logan Shield Show Schedule
12. BSSA Auction catalogue for next Saturday is on the table
13. Bank of holding cages/breeding cages are on display as a BCSA fundraiser for the national show. See John Mulley for tickets at \$2 each

ENTERTAINMENT: Judging of the Rare Variety MiniShow with commentary from Peter Glassenbury and John Mulley on how to improve each of them and faults to look out for

MINISHOW RESULTS: Thank you to our judges Ian Marshall and Peter Glassenbury and to all exhibitors who provided this great display of birds

Novice: First: Brad Nunn

Intermediate: First: Vicki Sanford; Second: Andrew and Lucy; Third: Geoff Murch

Open: First: John Mulley; Second: Murray Bray; Third: Lloyd and Helen Edwards

QUESTION AND ANSWER SECTION: Covered while judging in progress

LUCKY ENVELOPES: Nil

DOOR PRIZE: \$10 Trading Table voucher to Lloyd Edwards

NIGHT RAFFLE: First: Brian Marshall; Second: Bob Deverson; Third: Jeanette Melbourne

ANY OTHER BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR: Nil

REMINDERS:

1. Remember to pick up the various handouts on the table
2. Don't be shy about entering birds into the Logan Shield. This is an interclub competition with points down to 12th place. Within each variety it is a good opportunity to see where your birds sit compared with others, especially for rare varieties where there is limited competition at club shows

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday June 11. Budgerigar sale by tender

MEETING CLOSED: 10.15pm

Lloyd Edwards, President

BCSA and NEBS New Websites

BCSA and NEBS Websites

The **BCSA** website can be viewed at www.bcsa.com.au.

Results of all Club and State shows are posted on the website. The Photo Gallery features photos of the winning birds.

The **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/nebs/. Information available on the site includes the NEBS Monthly Meetings Program and the Night Show Schedule.

Ring Issue – 2014 and 2015

Members are reminded that 2014 Black rings will continue to be used until 31 December 2014.

I currently have plenty of these rings in stock.

The new 2015 Red rings are being imported from an overseas supplier and will be available as from 1st January 2015.

As no coded rings will be available for 2015, NEBS will include in its bulk order sufficient rings to meet the requirements of those members who normally order personally coded rings.

Ring officer

DERBY AND OAKS NIGHT SHOWS – 2014 and 2015

The July night meeting is our Derby and Oaks Show night.

If you paid for D&O rings with your first purchase of 2014 Black rings make sure you bring your birds along in July.

Members will again be able to pay for D&O rings with their first purchase of rings this year even though these will still be 2014 Black rings.

What this means is that in July 2015 you will be able to bring to the show any bird with a 2014 D&O Black ring irrespective of its age.

To enter members must nominate either the **first** ten or **first** twenty ring numbers that they purchase. The cost of nomination is 50 cents per ring and payable to the Ring Officer at the time of purchase of the rings.

As well as an Open section there will also be a combined section for both Novice and Intermediate breeders.

Cocks and Hens will be shown in separate classes.

Judging on the night will be done “out the front”.

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

No matter how long you have been in our hobby there is still always a need to be prepared to learn. I have three small articles on this theme.

Alistair Home

Learning from each other Part One: Decision making

I have been reading a paper written by Mick Arnold, a budgerigar breeder from New South Wales. The paper is concerned with the ring issue date and how it might impact on breeding programs. It emphasises the difficulty of breeding in the hottest months, January to March. He also raises a very important point concerning decision making, one that had never really become clear to me before. He suggests that decision making is too often based on pursuit of personal interest. He confesses that when asked for an opinion in the past he had usually supported views that gave a local advantage. On thinking about this I realised that the voting system used in ANBC meetings encouraged that approach. The decision making by the ANBC has been very faulty over the last few years, *not because delegates have not followed the instructions of their State or Zone*, but because decisions have been made without consideration of all points of view and without adequate gathering and sharing of information.

When I thought about all of this I came to the conclusion that the annual ANBC meeting should focus on sharing of ideas and perspectives. The function of the meeting should be

- to consider any matters brought forward,
- to listen to the views of all parties
- to determine the kinds of information is needed to enable a good decision to be made
- to determine what action should be taken.

The outcome should not be a decision on the day. The proposal should be referred back to member bodies for decision.

A good decision is one that takes into account everyone's needs. That is why delegates should not be tied down. They should be briefed very thoroughly so that they can represent the views from their state or zone. The outcome should be a recommendation from Council to member bodies for vote later. This method has been used successfully in the past. It is certain that some will still be dissatisfied whatever the outcome, but if the Council has done its best to come to a decision for the overall good, we cannot ask for more.

What it boils down to is that the delegates in the meeting have three duties. The first is to represent the views and feelings of the membership of their state or zone, the second is to seek to understand the views and feelings of members elsewhere and the third is to formulate a plan that is the most balanced outcome for all in the context of an overall duty to ensure the welfare of the birds in our care.

It is not the job of the delegates to try to win the argument in favour of their State or Zone!

Learning from each other Part Two: Varieties

I was around when Spangles first appeared. I was visiting Frank Gardner, the leading Budgerigar man in Victoria back in the seventies when he showed me a bird of the new variety he called “Spangle” that he had just obtained. I still have the very blurred photograph that I took that day.

Spangles rapidly became very popular and quite soon a Standard was set for both Single and Double Factors. It was supposed to be interim, but it very rapidly became accepted as a good description of the variety and a useful guide concerning excellence. Unfortunately down the years somehow we have never quite come to terms with how the variety really works. The Normal and Opaline forms are easily confused and the Cinnamon form is not well understood.

It is one of the varieties that are only expressed in combination with another variety. I am hoping that having separate classes for Spangle AOSV will lead us to a much better description of the Spangle in its Normal form and in combination with other varieties. I also hope at some time we look into the Spangle DF and ask the question, “Is pure Yellow or White the ideal expression of the form?” There are other pure Yellow or White varieties, whereas the Spangle DF very stubbornly reverts to expression of colour that is more than just a suffusion.

We now have another variety being developed, the “Whitecap”. A lot is being learnt and the appearance of green birds with white caps is particularly interesting. Nigel Tonkin produced such a bird very early in his breeding program as did Don Burke who is of the view that this is the Double Factor expression of the variety. I guess the next step is mating these White Cap Greens to Normal Blues and Greens. I will be fascinated to hear of the outcome of these matings. The very early appearance of a Green bird with a white cap intrigued me very much because it was so unlike the greenish hue that is so common in the Golden Face.

It is important not to leap to the conclusion that the mutation is a variation of Yellow Face (in any of the forms that are known). It may turn out that it is, indeed, another member of the Normal Blue group, but we should not leap to that conclusion. It may be a mutation of the Yellow Face, or it may be that the appearance of Sea Foam colouration was coincidental and some other explanation of its breeding patterns is needed. It is possible that the Sea Foam appearance is not integral to the variety at all. Or it may be that it is a mutation that is linked to Yellow Face, but not a variation of Yellow Face. We'll see.

Learning from each other Part Three: Arguments

I've been a bit inspired by the piece written by Mick Arnold about the ring issue date. He is concerned that the return to January 1st may lead to people breeding across the hottest months January-March to the detriment of the birds. The response has been that no-one is forced to breed at any particular time. It is a matter of choice. This difference of opinion raises a number of issues.

What are the facts?

We all know that Budgerigars are native to the semi arid areas of Australia and it has been commonly observed that in the wild they are opportunistic breeders. The males typically have low levels of fertility in the months of most extreme temperatures; the hottest and the coldest months.

Budgerigars die in their thousands when there is a heatwave from which they cannot escape. We know they breed when the rains arrive and the grasses and shrubs flourish.

Do we know just when people breed the budgerigars in their aviaries? Many assumptions are made, but I would like to know some facts before I come to any position on this question. Do many breeders have birds breeding in January-March? If so, is this more common in some areas than others? Even if there are birds being bred at this time, does this lead to any great advantage in the breeding room or on the show bench?

There is not a lot of value in basing our decisions on vague beliefs or on what we know to be true for some people with whom we happen to be acquainted. There is no point in debating about facts. We need to determine just what the facts are before we start to discuss any topic.

For me, though, this is not the most interesting thing that has come from Mick's paper. He led me to think about just what things are within our control and which things are simply the facts of life that we must accept. Concerning the ring issue date there are three things that are within our power to decide.

We can decide

- when and how rings are to be issued.
- when we are to hold our shows.
- how we define the age of a bird. When is a bird in nest feather? When is a bird a young bird? When is a bird an adult?

When should we issue rings?

The simplest model is to view the rings as being a means of keeping records, breeding results, relationships etc. In that case we should use commonly accepted cut off points. I would suggest calendar year with rings supplied ready for use from January 1 or financial year with rings supplied ready for use from July 1. For record keeping purposes other dates do not seem particularly sensible.

The question to be decided for the purpose of record keeping is only which of those two dates is more useful and convenient. Since we need to mark the rings by the year the calendar year makes much more sense. My records are wholly based on calendar years. Every bird and every pairing is identified in my database by year.

Any other proposed date needs a very pressing reason to discard the convenience and logic of the calendar year for record keeping. If the breeding behaviour and needs of the birds do not fit to the calendar year an alternative may be needed, but, as I have suggested above, we don't know if there is any factual basis for concern from this point of view.

When should we hold the National Show?

The ring issue date is also influenced by the date set for the ANBC Championship Show. For many years this show was held over the weekend of the fourth Saturday in May. This date was chosen because it was believed to suit the moulting pattern of the birds whose main moult typically commences in mid March and is complete in mid May. The Show date recently was changed to mid

June because it was felt that many birds, particularly those bred in the previous September and October were not fully through their moult by this time. For these birds this, their second moult, marked the transition to adult feather whereas for birds bred earlier in the year this would often be their third moult.

At the last meeting of the ANBC this decision was reversed. The decision seemed to be because the show date did not fit with the dates for school holidays. The proposition that the later date might be beneficial had not been tested before it was discarded. In my view these decisions should have been based on sound factual evidence derived from observations of the birds. Without good, careful observations decisions are based merely on opinion. Only if it has been established that the two alternative dates are of equal value in relation to the birds can consideration be given to such things school holidays and airline schedules.

The Show date has great relevance to the ring issue date. If it is established that breeding of our show birds is most undesirable in January – March, only moderately effective in March-May **but most effective in July – December**, then the show must be held when the birds bred in that period have the greatest possible opportunity to be in the mature feather required.

When is a bird a “young bird”?

The third item that is within our power to determine is just how we define a bird to be young. I suppose we can all accept that nest feather lasts for the first twelve weeks approximately. After the first moult most birds are substantially in mature feather, although, we can often see some signs of juvenile feathering until the second moult. It would seem to me that a young bird could be defined to be a bird bred in the previous twelve months that is in mature feather. Birds bred earlier than that, I would define as adult birds. I am aware that, in the wild, birds breed when they are very young, but in general, I would propose that if a bird is mature enough to have participated in a full breeding cycle, it is no longer a young bird.

Since the move to January 1st as the ring issue date it has been commonplace for birds older than twelve months to be exhibited at the National Show. Since the move to September for the issue of rings it has been possible to exhibit as young birds, birds that are twenty months old that have been used in a full breeding program. I would suggest that for many years the ANBC Show has not been a young bird show.

My conclusion from this is that if we really want the National Show to be a Young Bird Show we should return to a ring issue date of July 1st as it was when the show was first established. On the other hand if we want to issue rings on January 1st each year we should hold the show in mid to late June. If we want the show to be held in May we must either make the show an Any Age Show or allow two year old birds to be entered.

FISHER ANNUAL SHOW RESULTS

Held at the KILBURN HALL on May 10th 2014

GRAND CHAMPION	John Mulley	Grey Cock
CHAMPION OPP SEX	Dennis Lomman	Spangle AOSV Hen
RESERVE CHAMPION	Dennis Lomman	Grey green Cock
RESERVE CHAMPION HEN	Dennis Lomman	Spangle Hen
THIRD CHAMPION COCK	Sue & Colin Norris	Normal Blue
THIRD CHAMPION HEN	Dennis Lomman	Grey Hen
FOURTH CHAMPION COCK	Dennis Lomman	Violet Cock
FOURTH CHAMPION HEN	Dennis Lomman	Spangle Hen
FIFTH CHAMPION COCK	Doug & Ruth Lange	Blue Cock
FIFTH CHAMPION HEN	Dennis Lomman	Violet Hen
BEST OPEN BIRD	John Mulley	Grey Cock
BEST OPEN OPPOSITE SEX	Dennis Lomman	Spangle AOSV H
BEST INTERMEDIAT BIRD	Andrew and Lucy	Green Cock
BEST INT OPPOSITE SEX	Andrew and Lucy	Opaline AOSV Hen

BEST IN COLOUR IN SHOW

Normal Green	Andrew & Lucy	Spangle D/Factor	N/E
Normal Grey Green	D. Lomman	Opaline ASC	D. Lomman
Normal Blue	S & C Norris	Opaline AOSV	Andrew & Lucy
Normal Visual Violet	D. Lomman	Clearbody	Andrew & Lucy
Normal Grey	J. Mulley	Lacewing	Marshall Family
Eng Yellowface	D. Lomman	Fallow	L & H Edwards Aust
Yellowface	V. Sanford	Spangle	D. Lomman
Black Eyed Self	John Mulley	Spangle AOSV	D. Lomman
Dilute	Andrew & Lucy	Recessive Pied	Marshall Family
Albino	Marshall Family	Dark Eye Clear	S & C Norris
Clearwing	John Mulley	Crested	D & R Lange
Greywing	Andrew & Lucy	Any other Variety	N/E
Cinnamonwing	Andrew & Lucy		

Judges were Malcolm Loveridge:- Major Award and Floor Judges John Mulley and Peter Glassenbury.

There were 196 birds entered and 166 birds benched.

YOUNG STOCK SHOW RESULTS

Held at the KILBURN HALL on May 31ST 2014

GRAND CHAMPION	Dennis Lomman	Cinnamonwing Hen
CHAMPION OPP SEX	Sue & Colin Norris	Grey green Cock
RESERVE CHAMPION	J & W Weidenhofer	Cinnamonwing C
RESERVE CHAMPION HEN	Sue & Colin Norris	Spangle Hen
THIRD CHAMPION COCK	Doug & Ruth Lange	Grey Cock
THIRD CHAMPION HEN	Sue & Colin Norris	Dominant Pied Hen
FOURTH CHAMPION COCK	J & W Weidenhofer	Greywing Cock
FOURTH CHAMPION HEN	Doug & Ruth Lange	Crested Hen
FIFTH CHAMPION COCK	John Mulley	Opaline AOSV Hen
FIFTH CHAMPION HEN	Dennis Lomman	Normal Green Hen
BEST OPEN BIRD	Dennis Lomman	Cinnamonwing H
BEST OPEN OPPOSITE SEX	Sue & Colin Norris	Grey Green Cock
BEST INTERMEDIAT BIRD	Andrew and Lucy	Cinnamonwing H
BEST INT OPPOSITE SEX	Andrew and Lucy	Opaline ASC Cock

BEST IN COLOUR IN SHOW

Normal Green	S & C Norris	Spangle D/Factor	J. Mulley
Normal Grey Green	S & C Norris	Opaline ASC	D & R Lange
Normal Blue	D. Lomman	Opaline AOSV	J. Mulley
Normal Visual Violet	J. Mulley	Clearbody	D. Trevarthen
Normal Grey	D & R Lange	Lacewing	Marshall Family
Eng Yellowface	D. Lomman	Fallow	L & H Edwards Aust
Yellowface	J & W Weidenhofer	Spangle	S & C Norris
Black Eyed Self	John Mulley	Spangle AOSV	L & H Edwards
Dilute	n/e	Dominant Pied	S & C Norris
Lutino	J & W Weidenhofer	Recessive Pied	Marshall Family
Albino	Marshall Family	Dark Eye Clear	J. Mulley
Clearwing	John Mulley	Crested	D & R Lange
Greywing	J & W Weidenhofer	Any other Variety	N/E
Cinnamonwing	D. Lomman		

Judges were Nigel Tonkin :- Major Award and Floor Judges Ian Marshall and Wayne Weidenhofer.

There were 172 birds entered and 153 benched.

RARE VARIETY SHOW

We had our RARE VARIETY SHOW at our last month's meeting. There were 57 birds benched by 8 members.

The Judges for the night were Peter Glassenbury and Ian Marshall who both gave interesting chats on the birds they both judged.

Winners on the night were :-

NOVICE:- 1st Brad Nunn

INTERMEDIATE:- 1st Vicki Sanford

2nd Andrew and Lucy

3rd Geoff Murch

OPEN:- 1ST John Mulley

2nd Murray Bray

3rd Lloyd and Helen Edwards

Winners were awarded vouchers to be used at the trading table

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FISHER ANNUAL SHOW

The Fisher show was held on the 10th of May at the Kilburn Hall. There were 11 exhibitors entering 196 birds.

Judges for the day were Malcolm Loveridge Major Award and Peter Glassenbury and John Mulley were Floor Judges

Congratulations must go to John Mulley for Grand Champion bird and Dennis Lomman for Reserve Champion Bird. To all other winners and competitors are to be commended for participating.

Results for this show will be in this magazine.

YOUNG STOCK SHOW

It has been a busy month for shows and the Young Stock show was held on the 31st May at the Kilburn Hall.

There were 172 birds entered and 153 benched.

Major Award Judge we Nigel Tonkin and floor Judges were Ian Marshall and Wayne Weidenhofer.

Grand Champion bird was won by Dennis Lomman and Reserve Champion bird by Sue and Colin Norris. Congratulations go to these members and all other members who won awards and participated on the day.

Result will be displayed in the magazine.

Thanks must go to all members who helped set up, steward, runners, ticket writers and the ladies in the kitchen for lunches for both these shows. Great team work and a job well done.

Marion Stafford. Assistant Show manager.

* * * * *

VETAFARM AWARDS

2 Vetafarm Vouchers are to be awarded. One to the Open exhibitor and One to the best Intermediate or Novice exhibitor who accumulates the most points in the FISHER and YOUNG STOCK SHOWS.

The winner in the Open Section was Dennis Lomman with 78 points and runner up was Sue and Colin Norris with 67 points.

The other winner was Intermediate breeders Andrew and Lucy who accumulated 68 points and runner up was Geoff Murch with 61 points.

Congratulations go to Dennis and Andrew and Lucy for winning the Vetafarm Awards.

The National Show: for the whole country? Timing the ring issue date to suit the needs of breeders and the welfare of the birds Alistair Home

There are two dates that are set by the ANBC that have considerable impact in the hobby: **the National Show weekend and the ring issue date**. The dates are selected to try to give all the member bodies a chance to compete on an even playing field. We cover a very large area and have very great variation in the climate conditions under which we keep our birds and the recent changes in those dates have been attempts to make sure no-one is at a disadvantage. My guess is that it is just about impossible to find such an even balance.

I have also been thinking about the larger issue, the health and well being of our birds. I guess you are all sighing, saying, "Here he is, on the hobby horse again." We, yes, I am. I believe it is the most important issue facing the fancy worldwide. I just revisited the BS magazines from the mid eighties in which there were numerous photographs of the winning birds of the day. They were strikingly different from the birds we are exhibiting now, showing real substance combined with style and presence. The extreme feather that we regard as so important was not present at all. I remember that it was just about then that we, in Australia, began to seriously plan to import birds.

In 1989 I visited Eric Lane's stud in Leamington Spa, one of the leading studs of the time and saw many outstanding birds. One bird I recall seeing had much more head feather than was common at the time. Eric commented that it was a real pity that such an excellent bird never grew its tail feathers! I had never seen this phenomenon before. Now it is a regular part of the hobby worldwide, and, what is more, we now face further problems - feather lumps, short life spans and inability to fly adequately, if at all. Our hens must be in the breeding cabinet in their first year because they probably won't be able to breed later and our top show cock birds have limited life spans, often not reaching two years of age.

That is our "Brave New World" of Budgerigar breeding. Is it what we really want? I have tried to think of a way to change our emphasis, but we seem to have built in processes that make a change of direction nearly impossible

I want to suggest an alternative approach that might do two things at once. It would go a long way towards making the competition even and I think there is a good chance that it could lead to a long term improvement in the health and longevity of the birds. It seems impossible to change the

interpretation of the Standard, but if we can create a selective pressure in favour of vigour and health, maybe we can create a change in direction.

Once upon a time we regarded the exhibition of adult birds as being the major element of every show. Sometimes in the smaller shows of, say, three to four hundred birds we would be concerned to make sure that at least one hundred would be young birds. I recall classes of twenty five adult birds in a class even in quite small shows. The advent of the National Show that became truly national in the mid eighties, a show for young birds only, turned all the emphasis onto the young bird and over the years this has become so entrenched that in some shows very few adult birds are shown. In addition to this, we imported birds from the UK in the early nineties and naturally, the young birds produced were leading us in a new direction. We saw them as an improvement on the birds we had here in Australia.

I am not advocating a return to the type of bird we had before 1990, but I am anxious to see us pull back from the precipice resulting from extreme feather and size.

I am also responding to the arguments that continue about the ring issue date. It is eminently logical that rings issued for a certain year should be used in that year. The change back to September as the ring issue date was not the result of any consideration of such a rationale. It was concerned with extending the age range of birds eligible to be shown at the National Show. There were good reasons for this. Many excellent birds simply never had the opportunity to compete for places in the various teams because they were bred too late in the year. The change was aimed to open up opportunities. Unfortunately, it seems it also created inequities between the member bodies since breeding seasons differ across the country.

So my suggestion is that we should make the National Championship Show an Any Age Show in which the winning birds win the accolade of being the best bird of each variety/colour on show in Australia, not just the best young bird bred in the previous year.

I propose this because it has the following advantages:

1. The birds on show would be the best examples of their variety/colour from each member body, not just the best young birds. They would be truly the best.
2. Breeders across the country could breed at whatever is the optimum time for them without being concerned about what colour ring is to be put on the bird.
3. No state or zone would have an advantage created by the ring issue date.
4. A true champion bird could win more than once, demonstrating its continued robustness over more than one year.
5. A winning young bird would have shown its superiority over the best adult birds as well as the best young birds of its year.
6. We would be recognising longevity and robustness not just show features that may be transient.
7. The ring issue date would return to being simply a part of the breeding record maintained by exhibitors.

In response to some objections that I can anticipate I offer the following:

1. A bird winning more than once is demonstrating its true quality as a champion, not merely repeating its previous success. In other fields true champions win more than once.
2. There would be a strong incentive to breed healthy and strong quality birds.
3. If it is suggested that very few birds would remain in good showing condition for more than one year, then my argument that we are breeding weakness into our birds is strongly reinforced.
4. It may be claimed that the National Show itself is stressful on the birds exhibited. Showing a bird twice would be unduly increasing this level of stress. This has not been demonstrated to be true, but, if that is so, the show itself is not justified. Three day shows are commonplace in other parts of the world and many birds have to travel considerable distances to these shows.