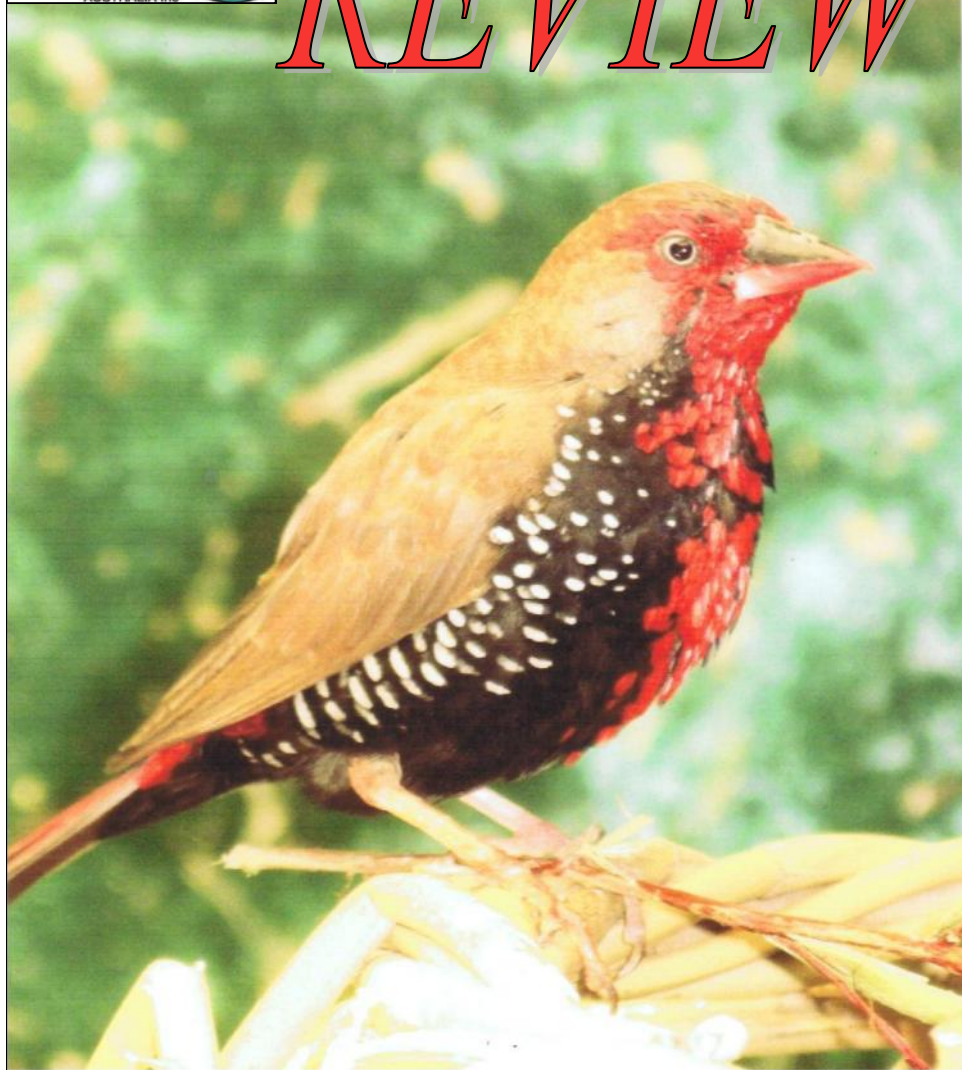




# The Finch Breeders REVIEW



November - December 2010

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# The Finch Breeders REVIEW

September - October 2010

The Finch Society of  
Australia Inc  
Postal address:  
PO Box 9

St Marys NSW 1790  
[finchsociety@optusnet.com.au](mailto:finchsociety@optusnet.com.au)  
[www.finchsociety.org](http://www.finchsociety.org)

## Meetings of the Society

Held on the second  
Wednesday of the month  
February — December  
8pm

Brenan Park  
Community Hall  
Bourke Street  
Smithfield NSW 2164

## Hawkesbury Valley Branch

Meets on the fourth  
Wednesday of the month  
January — November  
7.30pm

Castlereagh Community Hall  
Castlereagh Road  
Castlereagh NSW 2749  
[www.hawkesburyfinchclub.com](http://www.hawkesburyfinchclub.com)  
[info@hawkesburyfinchclub.com](mailto:info@hawkesburyfinchclub.com)

## Wollongong Branch

Meets on the first  
Monday of the month  
January — December  
7.30pm

Balgownie Village Community Centre  
113 Balgownie Road  
BALGOWNIE NSW 2519

## Hunter Branch

Meets on the first  
Friday of the month  
January — December  
7.30pm

Maitland City Bowling Club  
Arthur Street  
Rutherford NSW 2320  
[info@finches.cjb.net](mailto:info@finches.cjb.net)

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From AGM 8th September 2010

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Joe Gafa  
02 9636 9511

### **Refreshments**

### **Officers:**

Gloria & Peter Kiggins

## *Life Members*

- \* Ron James
- \* Stan Simmons
- \* Paul Menagazzo
- \* Neville Simmons
- \* Neville Brown
- \* Heather Brownnett
- \* Doug Hill



# Inside *this* issue:

## ★ Raffle Winners ★

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**Disclaimer**      The opinions expressed in The Finch Breeders Review do not necessarily represent those of the Finch Society of Australia Inc. No responsibility is accepted for the opinions, advice and statements contained herein. Readers should rely on their own enquiries/research in making any decisions relating to their own interests.

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# MINUTES FOR NOVEMBER 2010 MEETING

## Held at Brenan Park Community Hall Brenan Park Smithfield

**Meeting opened:** 8.05pm

**Welcome:** President Nick welcomed all to the meeting

**Visitors:** Joe Cavill, Craig Brown, John Azzarparadi, Millar Yoyholana, Bob Horal.

**Apologies:** Ross Applby, Clive Wrightsmith, Tina Stewart, Des Cartwright.

**Correspondence in:** Various reciprocal magazines.

Invoice for Cydectin plus @ \$368.36

**Treasurers report:** Balance as at 10/11/10 is \$6832.14 moved by Rosylan Davidson & 2<sup>nd</sup> by Roy Barbaro

**General Business:** Signed copies of Russell Kingston's book available at next meeting.  
Proposed aviary visit to Wollongong, expression of interest had 14 people interested.  
Proposed visit to Featherdale in March 2011  
Annual bird auction held at December meeting, registration at 6.30pm start for 8.30pm. 10% of sales go to club. Cardboard carry boxes available @ \$5 each  
Paul Henry appointed as co-ordinator of the Jacarini breeding programme  
Positive report on the singleton bird sale given by Roy Barbaro and Michael Baker  
President talked about the QFS Finch Convention  
Christmas Party to be held on 12<sup>th</sup> December At the Bossley Park Community Centre, Bellfield Rd, Bossley Park, 11.30 TO 3.30pm  
Call to participate in the Finch Census  
Doug and Heather wished well by president Nick for Karate tournament in Melbourne

**Guest speaker:** DVD on feeding and breeding livefood for finches.

**Meeting closed:** 8.32pm

**Next meeting:** 8pm, 8/12/10 at Brenan Park Community hall, Brenan Park, Smithfield.

# President's Report

Well, Christmas is just around the corner and another year is about to end. It's been a good year for the club, we have consolidated and grown our finances, increased our product range at the sales table, gotten the library up and running better than ever and had some interesting workshops and guest speakers.

This has only been possible with the help of a great committee and the support given by all you members who regularly attend the monthly meetings. Thanks must go to Don Findlater, Marcus Pollard and Mick Grixti for taking on their new roles of treasurer, editor and librarian respectively.

Special mention goes to Michael Baker whose support I find invaluable and who organized the 'Branches Picnic' and always chips in to help. Also a special thanks to Rosslynn Davidson who has been a real champion by stepping up to fill in so many ways including the taking of minutes and membership renewals. Congratulations to Glenn Johnson who was awarded life membership. Glenn has worked tirelessly at the Hawkesbury valley sub branch for over 10 years and continues to do so, well done Glenn.

Looking ahead and we have our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Auction held in place of the December meeting. Last year was a real success and word must be getting out as I've been getting calls from the south coast and regional NSW wanting to know about it. All I can say is that sellers should get in early on the night to register. Make sure to bring some money with you. Anything that is **finch** related will be accepted and as

last year 10% of the sale price goes to the club. Registration of birds will commence at 6.30pm, viewing will be between 7.30 - 8.00 before the auction begins. Also on the night, the signed copies of Russell Kingston's book will be available on balance of payment for those who ordered a copy.

We have determined to make this years Christmas party better than ever with more prizes available for the raffle. Just a gentle reminder to take note of the location - same venue as last year - the details are further along in the magazine. Also I'd like to encourage anyone who might be able to donate birds or otherwise to bring them along, oh, and don't forget to bring your carry box - there won't be any spare ones!

Remember the QFS tri-ennial Finch Convention is being held in Brisbane from 29<sup>th</sup> April to 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2011. The line up of speakers looks good so it might be worth whispering in Santa's ear about it! Just a thought.

Next year kicks off in February with the Gordon Lovegrove memorial trophy up for grabs again so start thinking about which birds you can enter. We are also looking at securing some choice key speakers for next year along with aviary visits and a trip to Featherdale so it should be fun, with alot to look forward to.

Finally, on behalf of the committee I would like to wish all of you and your families a most wonderful Christmas and a prosperous New Year. Take care, stay safe and lets all see each other in 2011.

Happy Finching  
Nick Susnjara

## Report—Singleton Bird Sale.



The weather leading up to the Singleton sale held by the Hunter Branch of the FSA was a tad “variable” to say the least but the day was exceptional – and not just for the weather!!

Mark Jolly and his hard-working band of ‘red-shirts’ had put in many long hours to ensure the sale went with the customary Hunter Valley military precision!

This year the sale was held in the Singleton Heights Sports Centre for the first time and the venue was given “two thumbs up” by all of those we spoke to. Ease of access to amenities, food stalls, disabled access and cool areas around the exterior of the venue for weary bird traders were all commented upon favourably.

So popular was the sale this year that some sellers and vendors who had chosen to try their luck without booking were sadly disappointed and I bet they'll be the first ones to contact Mark next year to ensure a place at what has the makings of becoming one of Australia's premier bird sales.

Sellers came from far and wide and the stewards had their hands full holding back the assembled multitudes prior to the 10am starting time. Did notice a couple of shady looking characters lurking with intent near the door selling some calcium powder too!!

Once inside the hall the well laid out sellers were doing a roaring trade and many birds were changing hands. A very impressive selection of finches abounded with Mark telling me around 1500 finches were benched – a terrific increase from the 720 in 2009. Just so those with hookbills wont think I'm biased some 2380 birds were benched in total so something there for all tastes!

Did manage to have a chat to Bob Collier maker of the finest hoppers about in my humble opinions and even prised his latest ‘prototype’ from his display case!!!





A few pics from the  
Hunter sale Day

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  - ◆ Dog & Cat accessories
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  - ◆ Nursery & garden supplies also

## A ‘New’ Gadget for the Live-food Feeding Finch Breeder!!

Had a few questions asked recently about the automatic fish feeder that briefly flashed through my Powerpoint talk at the September meeting so here are the facts about that device.

They are the **Resun Aquarium Automatic Fish Food Feeders AF2005D** and are freely available through the web based buy and sell website EBAY for under \$30 delivered to your door – just to be sure I double checked and counted no less than 20 for sale there recently!! There are a couple of different types available so if you want the best one to feed your live food out then stick with the AF2005D rather than cheaper types. Did see them advertised on a fish store website for \$80!! They work on the ‘gravity’ principal where a clear frontal piece rotates through 360 degrees and a small ‘bomb door-like flap’ opens when the frontal cover reaches the bottom of its ‘orbit’. When in the off position the bomb door is on top of the machine and therefore closed so mealies cannot escape. It can be programmed to drop live food 4 times a day. The original idea came from an email I received from John & Cheree asking whether I had heard of them and if they would do the job of feeding mealworms. At the time I must admit to being a tad skeptical but I did go online and order myself one for ‘research purposes’! Suffice it to say I now have around 12 of them ticking away in several aviaries and let me tell you they are worth their weight in gold if you have insectivorous finches and work full-time.

You can set it for 4 drop times during the day and it even gives you the option of a double drop at each allocated time-slot – 2 cycles of the chamber with the live food in it. Just the thing for those “Blue-cap/Pytilia blues” where I am sure it is the frequency of live food feeding rather than the volume that determines your success rate (unless feeding bulk termites of course!!!).

When I first wrote about them for a finch magazine I was hesitant to promote them too lavishly as I’d just received mine – not keen to pop my head on the chopping block yet again! Now I have no such hesitation as they perform brilliantly and can certainly say they were responsible in a

major way for the young Blue-caps and Pytilias I have bred since that time.

I did state that given the weight of the live food and the daily grind of the gizmo under that weight that I did not expect them to last too long. Well, I am pleased to say that the only thing that needed replacing were the batteries and my original one is still chugging away despite being washed several times to remove the 'guano' deposits that build up on these much loved items! As these guys churn away non-stop in some aviaries for 12 months of the year that is a phenomenal return for their initial purchase cost!

After such a great start there are just a couple of things to watch out for. The first is to ensure that your live food is dry and that the chamber that holds the live food remains dry – to that end most of the chambers are easily detached for cleaning. The reason for this is that the live food will clump together if it is moist or wet and will not flow through the 'bomb door' properly and may even jam preventing live food from going through into the feeder below.

Need to also keep it clean from bird droppings as these may prevent the proper rotation if they set in a vital position – sticky stuff that bird pooh at times!!

Of course the only uncertainty in the operation of this machine is the amount of live food dropped each rotation – can vary from just a few mealworms to a pile depending upon their orientation in the rotating head. Still, it is far better than the zero mealies you can supply if you're at work!!

In the case of Cordons and Blue-caps that eat their fill then just decapitate the rest rendering them unfit for consumption for them or other Waxbills at least it does supplies them with fresh mealies to decapitate 4 times a day! Anyhow, those decapitated mealies are much loved by Golden song sparrows that basically eat anything!!

Possibly the worst, most difficult/annoying problem you will have with this brilliant device is that many of them have the set-up instructions in Chinese!! Given that you have to program them initially and every time the batteries die then the last thing you need is a Chinese to English

dictionary when trying to do so!! Never fear, help is at hand for if you ever get stuck I have an English copy and will gladly send it to you rather than risk you flinging said gadget out into the environment never to be seen again!!

A brilliant, cheap little gadget that is literally worth its weight in gold and if you want to know more just drop me an email anytime. Also if you would like a copy of my Powerpoint presentation featuring this gizmo from the September meeting just let Nick know and he'll arrange it for you.



Fish feeder hard at work in the aviary situation.



Close –up of the fish feeder.

# Welcome New Members

Justin Moon  
Becky Stewart  
Roz & Mark Madden  
David Allen Windley

---

## Membership renewal reminder

Memberships are  
now well overdue!!!  
If you have received a reminder  
membership form  
with this issue then your renewal  
has not been received and  
unfortunately  
this will be your ***last*** magazine!!!!

# Meetings

***December 2010***

Bird Auction

Auctioneer - Ross Appleby

(Bring your birds along)

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***(No January Meeting)***

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***February 2011***

Gordon Lovegrove Memorial Shield

**Proudly supporting**



**For updates or more information on  
Save the Gouldian Fund  
Visit [www.savethegouldian.org](http://www.savethegouldian.org)**

## The FSA Picnic Day -Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> Sept.



Those that attended the picnic day at Prospect Reservoir had a great time. The day got off to a bit of slow start and we were concerned that perhaps people were not going to come in numbers. But by 11 o'clock all was good with a couple of people arriving quite early and ending up at the wrong end of the park whilst there was the inevitable lost soul but with the aid of modern telephonic direction they found their way.

It was great to catch up with the members from the other branches that arrived. We were please to see the efforts made in making the trek to Western Sydney from the regions, thanks for the efforts we were all pleased. Thanks have to go to Nick, El Presidente, for manning the wood fired BBQ with aplomb. For a while there I thought we may have to contact the fire brigade due to the smoke, because as they say where there is smoke there is fire, but fortunately it turned that the only thing that was burnt was the sausages J.

Some lively and very interesting conversation was had by all. Topics such as vegetation in the aviary, who keeps what, what do you feed, when do you worm your birds and much, much more, kept the day more than interesting.

The venue proved to be great. The Kids play area was popular as was the large open grassed areas for a bit of soccer and general kicking around of the ball, the toilets were clean and worked and there was plenty of shade amongst the trees with decent tables and chairs.

A few birds were exchanged on the day, parrot finches were the bird of choice. I think everybody who came had a great time which I believe justifies another next year.



We would like a greater turnout next year so we can get a serious soccer game or cricket game going as there was some thought given to challenging the picnicking neighbours but they looked to good for us on the pitch. Perhaps a raffle or some competitions on the day to raise a bit more interest and funds for all the branches.

The next FSA Picnic Day is now in the planning stage and we are targeting late April 2010 to become the Annual Date. If anybody has suggestions for an alternative venue if you are not comfortable with the current one please provide a location and we will be happy to put it out there for everybody to comment.

Till the next picnic day, may your birds be productive.



**Michael Baker**

# ACE COLONY BIRDS

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HOURS:  
*Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm*



# Merry Christmas



*The Finch Society of Australia  
Invites you to its Annual  
Christmas Party.*



Day: Sunday  
Date: 12<sup>th</sup> December  
Time: 11:30 to 15:30  
Where: Bossley Park Community Centre  
Belfield Road  
Bossley Park

There are loads of prizes and gift vouchers to be won. Come along and meet other members and their families. Have a great day and maybe take home a great prize.

Bring a plate of something to share.

As usual the club will be providing drinks and maybe some KFC. We will also need some assistance in the setup and tidy up. Lend a hand where you can to make it a great day for all.

-----  
So we can get an idea of numbers for catering for drinks and KFC Please RSVP to the Meeting or to the clubs Email

Number of Adults attending: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Kids attending: \_\_\_\_\_

*May your year be filled with eggs in the nest and Fledglings on the Perch*

Polly's Calcium Mix.



**HEY!!**

**Got Yer Polly's yet???**



Calcium mix for finches.

A Blend of shell grit, oyster & Canundra shell plus various Pigeon Vitamin Mixes.

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**\$25**



**CAPS \$15**



**JACKETS**



**Golf/Hand Towels**  
**\$15**

Mens long & short  
sleeved &  
ladies ¾ sleeve  
Chambray shirts  
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**Children's  
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**Limited stock available now or place an order!! All sizes available**

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**Red-whiskered bulbuls**

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or

Mixes to suit

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## NESTING MATERIALS

|                     |      |
|---------------------|------|
| Nest Grass _____    | 9.00 |
| Coconut Fibre _____ | 5.00 |
| Feathers _____      | 6.00 |
| Emu Feathers _____  | 6.00 |
| Kapok _____         | 5.00 |

## ACCESSORIES

|                        |      |
|------------------------|------|
| Seed Hoppers _____     | 5.00 |
| Drinkers (small) _____ | 2.00 |
| Drinkers (large) _____ | 3.00 |
| Drinkers (jumbo) _____ | 4.00 |
| Cuttlebone clips _____ | 1.50 |

## DIETARY

|                          |       |
|--------------------------|-------|
| Egg & Biscuit 1 kg _____ | 7.00  |
| Grit-Healthy _____       | 7.50  |
| Seed Heads 500g _____    | 8.00  |
| Seed Heads 1kg _____     | 11.00 |
| Cuttlebone each _____    | 1.50  |

|                           |      |
|---------------------------|------|
| Rat Soft Food 400gr _____ | 4.00 |
|---------------------------|------|

## MEDICINAL

|                           |       |
|---------------------------|-------|
| Coopex per satchel _____  | 10.00 |
| Baycox 100ml _____        | 30.00 |
| Cydectin Plus 100ml _____ | 15.00 |
| Polys Calcium Grit _____  | 11.00 |
| Virkon S _____            | 10.00 |

## RINGS - small or large (row of 10)

|                        |      |
|------------------------|------|
| Plain AL _____         | 3.00 |
| Double colour AL _____ | 5.00 |
| Plain AS _____         | 3.00 |
| Double colour AS _____ | 5.00 |

## NEST BOXES

|                             |      |
|-----------------------------|------|
| Cane (large or small) _____ | 3.00 |
| Finch _____                 | 3.00 |
| Gouldian _____              | 3.00 |
| Wooden _____                | 7.50 |

*If there is something in particular that you would like to see available for sale on the Sales Table please contact our Sales Table Team  
Roy Barbaro or Stan Guest*

**QUESTION & ANSWERS**  
**From the members of the FSA &**  
**Other Sources!!**



**Over the years one gets plenty of emails sent—some printable, some not so— so we thought why not start sharing a few through the FSA magazine!!**

**Got some Q's yourself—simply email me and we'll get the "brain-trust" to work on it for you!!!**

**Q1) Had a couple of emails from the far north a while back about unexplained losses in finches at night. After a bit of detective work and ruling out rats, cats and bats we arrived at a seemingly innocuous "killer"!! Seems that the tiny Gecko lizard may well have been the problem.**

**Here are a few responses from other northern fincho's with similar problems:**

A1 ) " Yes the introduced Asian gecko can be a real problem in aviaries. In urban Queensland where the geckoes are very common, there are several breeders who have lost nests of young birds through disturbance at night by geckoes moving through vegetation and around nests. There is also more direct impacts from large geckos eating finch eggs.

Solutions include sticky traps placed in places where birds can't get to them. Also insecticide sprays directed straight onto the gecko will knock them down quickly. Fly spray with one of the extended tubes that directs a fine direct spray is ideal.

I try hard to keep them out. "

Another breeder had this to offer:

" Well Marcus you have just asked the right question to the most

Gecko hating person that you could find.

Over the past 25 years we have lost eggs, newly hatched young, ( especially cup nest breeders ), had deserted nests and very unsettled birds. As soon as I see their droppings or they themselves— then out comes the Mortien fast knockdown and away I go a hunting.

They have also been responsible for killing our air conditioner and digital time clocks for our watering system.

Shame that they are soooooooooooooooooooooo cute!!!

**So if you are having unexplained desertions or deaths then maybe the cute little reptiles are your problem! There you go Tassie Boys, next time these Mainlanders force termites down yer throats just say “no Gecko’s down here mate”!!**

Q2) Marty writes:

“I have 2 young green singers that have lost their Juvenile necklace and I am uncertain as to their sex. Does this mean they are going to be cock birds, or could they be hens, and do they develop the hen's necklace again, as they mature? Both are in with known cock birds and have been carrying grass and building a nest. Will 2 cock birds behave like this?

I am uncertain as I have only ever bred young cocks before and am unsure how young hens develop. I thought hens would not lose the necklace but retain it?”

**A2)** Been a while since I’ve had young Green Singers but I did find with mine that the hen never completely lost her necklace even when acquiring adult plumage. The males tended to lose the necklace across the front of the chest, which was replaced by a lemon/yellow colouration while hens kept the stippling with only a few gaps in the centre of the necklace. Even in hens that tend to lose part of their necklace it is invariably only in the centre parts and the edging section remain.

To me the greatest indicator of the sex of a young Singer is the white, streaky cheek patches that the hen appears to get at a relatively early age and the general duller appearance of the hens heads against the brighter yellow of the male.

After racing out to look at a mates youngsters I was also able to add



that the cock bird tends to have a broader head than the females – but not much good if you only have the same sex to compare I guess!

From experience two males would be fine together until a female was introduced and then the fights would ensue to the terminal detriment of one of the males! These birds have very little sense of humour as you will find out if you try to run a trio of 2 hens and one cock – even the hens get into the ‘action’! I was once told that my trio was a bad move and, much to my surprise, as soon as I removed one female the remaining pair went straight to nest, so much for two hens being better than one!!

So, to cut to the chase, I agree with you that there is always part of the necklace visible in young hens - and mine tended to produce more hens than cocks – and don't let their behaviour fool you as my first Red Strawberries were both males and they built a nest and preened constantly and steadfastly refused to have anything to do with the two females I obtained for them.....their days were numbered!



In order to keep these pages “flowing” we need your input so jot down a few questions and send them in—hand them to any executive member or email them directly to me so we can ALL benefit from our finchey experiences and frustrations!!!

## JUST FER A LAUGH!!!!!!

**We all know how frustrating and annoying finch breeding can be at times so we thought we 'd lighten your load a bit!!!!!!**

### **The Hotel Bill**

Next time you think your hotel bill is too high, you might want to consider this:

My wife and I are traveling by car from Victoria to Prince George in Canada . Being Seniors, after almost eleven hours on the road, we were too tired to continue, and decided to take a room. But, we only planned to sleep for four hours and then get back on the road. When we checked out four hours later, the desk clerk handed us a bill for \$350.00.

I exploded and demanded to know why the charge was so high. I told the clerk although it's a nice hotel, the rooms certainly aren't worth \$350.00 for four hours.

Then the clerk tells me that \$350.00 is the 'standard rate'. I insisted on speaking to the Manager.

The Manager appears, listens to me, and then explains that the hotel has an Olympic-sized pool and a huge conference center that were available for us to use. 'But we didn't use them,' I said. "Well, they are here, and you could have," explained the Manager.

He went on to explain that we could also have taken in one of the

shows for which the hotel is famous. "We have the best entertainers from New York , Hollywood , and Las Vegas perform here," the Manager says. "But we didn't go to any of those shows," I said.

"Well, we have them, and you could have," the Manager replied.

No matter what amenity the Manager mentioned, I replied, "But we didn't use it!"

The Manager is unmoved, and eventually I gave up and agreed to pay.

I wrote a check and gave it to the Manager.

The Manager is surprised when he looks at the cheque. But sir, this cheque is only made out for \$50.00."

"That's correct. I charged you \$300.00 for sleeping with my wife," I replied. "But I didn't!" exclaims the Manager.

I said, "Well, too bad, she was here, and you could have."

### **Don't mess with Senior Citizens**



### **NIGE SAYS!!:**

"G'day, now if you are about to start keepin' finches then here's a tip for u. Make sure that yer water bowls are either stainless steel or if ceramic that they have a strong glaze. Remember that unglazed and plastic bowls are porous (full of holes!) and that those little pores can harbour all manner of nasty parasitic and protozoal bugs— Cochlosoma & Giardia to name but a few!"

Catch yers all next time!!!





## **From the Editor's Desk!!**

Whew!! First magazine down with a minimum of fuss and onwards and upwards! Huge thanks to Heather for not strangling me!

Attended the Hunter Branch of the FSA Singleton Sale in October and it was certainly a well-run affair with a terrific range of finches available and was well attended by the public looking for a bargain or a spot of new blood for the finch aviary. Congratulations to Mark Jolly and his crew for a job well done and would strongly advise any Sydney based FSA members to mark this one on the calendar for next year!

**As you will no doubt see we were sent a copy of Russell Kingston's new offering for review and I'd like to thank both Russell himself and Sheryll from Australian Birdkeeper Magazine for their generosity in doing so. Hopefully many members will avail themselves of the opportunity to grab a copy of this great work from one of the world's foremost fincho's - see review in this issue.**

**No movement on the Tasmanian Wildlife laws to date but recent talks have been promising and it may be that finch keepers will not be too badly treated in the wash-up— who'd have ever thought that finch keepers could be such a vocal lot!!!!**

**Again please send any materials in to Heather or I for inclusion in the magazine—for sales and wanted lists or pics and articles gratefully appreciated.**

**Leaves ya's all in peace! Till next time!!**

## **The Rumour Mill!!!**

Can anyone shed any light on the report that a former president and life member of the FSA was recently seen heavily disguised in a local bird outlet purchasing Saddleback Zebra finches?

There are worries he may have fallen BACK on the wagon— our investigation continues!!!



## For The Book Worm! FSA BOOK REVIEW.

### “The Finch a Breeders Companion” By Russell Kingston



Anyone that's ever kept or bred a finch knows that anything from the Indruss stable has to automatically be a winner for us literature starved fincho's!

Well, this one is definitely no exception to the rule and contains a life spent with finches by one of the world's foremost breeders and for that reason alone is worthy of inclusion on any bird room book shelf— mind you not that this book will remain on that shelf for long given its plethora of solid finch keeping tips!!

With much more writings in the style of a narrative it contains more of Russell's recollections than other finch-type books and this is an aspect that will appeal to those that have kept finches for an extended period. As a huge fan of this style I loved it rather than the “you must/must not” type of material that abounds these days.

Don't panic it still contains the customary taxonomic and scientific updates and attention to detail that you would expect from Russell but there is much more of the personal side of his time with a huge range of finch species that all finch breeder will find invaluable.

The first 110 pages detail the everyday general keeping of finches from transport through to a plethora of dietary and housing regimes that will interest all keepers.

The book contains some excellent new photos from Russell himself plus a host from Pieter van den Hooven—which are great profile shots of many of the finches unavailable to us here in Australia. Included in this are shots of aviary set-ups from around the globe so definitely something for all tastes there.

The species information is, as mentioned, a more narrative style and will assist all tiers of “the game” whether a beginner working on a first species list or the old hand seeking a new challenge.

All species receive the same comprehensive treatment and this is a tome that will spend more time on the coffee table than on the book shelf—especially in those long winter months when all fincho's are in need of motivation. Trust me, this book is a **MUST HAVE** for that!! We can all learn from Russell's life spent with finches.

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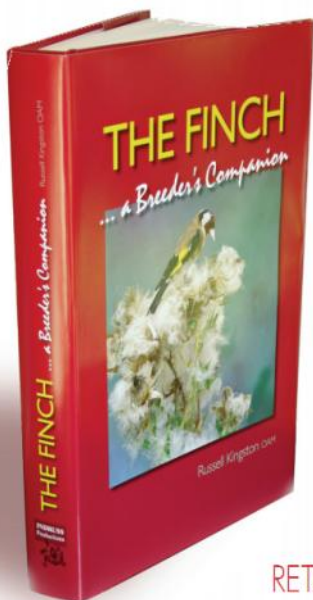
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