The season is underway for many breeders and excitement mounts as we await the colours and the number of hens versus cocks in our nests!!

Cover image thanks to Phil Hill
The BSNZ is proudly affiliated to the World Budgerigar Organisation

www.world-budgerigar.org

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

President’s Patter - Tony Grinter
Letters to the Editor - Sheryl Baron - The Role of Bulletin Editor
A Different Perspective on Genetic Selection in Aviculture - Dr Hamish Baron
Christchurch Bird Club Show & Sale
Obituary for a BSNZ Life Member - Murray Waldron
French Moult Article - Dr Rob Marshall
Obituary for a past President of the BSNZ - Neville De Malmanche
Huntly Bird Club Social Show and Sale
The Bird World Beyond our Shores

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Topflite’s Sprouting Mixes

THE BENEFITS OF SPROUTING SEEDS

Topflite’s sprout mixes include easily sprouted seeds that release stored nutrients as they begin to grow. Sprouting of a seed or grain indicates that enough nutritional value is present for development into a larger plant, given the right conditions.

Soaked and sprouted seeds are an all natural superfood. When a seed sprouts, greater amounts of amino acids and antioxidants are available and are more easily digested by birds.

Topflite has two varieties of sprouting mixes available:

SUPER SPROUT

A mix of sproutable larger seeds and grains for larger birds ( kakariki to macaw)

Ingredients: maple peas, white peas, clover peas, buckwheat, mung beans, lentils, popcorn, whole maize, NZ sunflower seeds, wheat

Available sizes: 2kg, 5kg, 20kg

Sprouting instructions over the page >

SOAK & SPROUT

Suitable for all birds. This mixture includes a range of sproutable seeds and grains plus Ribbed maze and peas for feeding soaked.

Ingredients: maize, oats, wheat, oilseed, bird rape, radish, peas, mung beans, canary seed, NZ sunflower seed, buckwheat. Typical analysis: Protein 120%, Fibre 6.5%, Fat 3.4%

Available sizes: 2kg, 5kg, 10kg, 20kg

Sprouting instructions over the page >

For a helpful video to help you with the process of sprouting your seeds please go to: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J69kZF20_dg
Welcome to the start of the next breeding season, I expect that most of you will have your birds down breeding by now and some of you will have been hoping for early delivery of your rings as your chicks are starting to hatch. You should have them by now as Vince delivered many to the AGM at the weekend and will have posted the rest out by now. The Huntly show was a small, casual event and we were given an indication of how different the budgerigar judging requirements are from many of the other species of birds. We had the services of well known finch breeder and judge, Brendon Le Prou judging the budgies and the birds that he selected had very clean markings and smooth feathering as is required in the finch classes but not the directional feather and buff appearance normally
expected in the budgie classes.

We are very grateful to the Huntly Club for providing a room for us to hold the AGM which was attended by about 20 members. The new Ring Registrar is now Martin Dutchburn from Whangarei and we welcome Malcolm Silby from New Plymouth to the Council. I thank Vince Huston for his work as Ring Registrar over the last few years and would also like to thank Stu Phipps from the South Island for his time on the Council. Also, I would like to thank Dave Goulden from Christchurch for making the effort to come to the AGM and also for his excellent work as Secretary at the meeting (we may find a job for him). He has been on the council as a seconded member but now his position is official, after being voted in at the meeting. The first remit to remove the minimum age limit from the Junior Classification was passed and the second remit about rewording of the number of members on the Judges Panel was passed after some discussion and revision as the notification sent out included both the old and the new number of panel members. It is now 3 members plus the President and for this year they are Keith Flockhart, Herbie Duston and after a second vote due to a tie for third Dave Ingoe. I thank Phil Hill for his time on the panel. It was always intended to be 4 members total but the wording was ambiguous and could be interpreted as 4 plus the president. We then went over the voting for the Federation AGM and by a show of hands decided the Society votes to be presented to the Federation. I must also thank Clayton Putt for acting as scrutineer for our voting.

We are finally getting close to moving to our new home in Tauranga. It has taken nearly 20 months, so far, and we still have not even got a permit from the council for the aviary, so we are going to move the 4 sheds that we have here over to the new property until the aviary is completed and then we will have to sell them from there. It is just fortunate that it has a big section. We are also in the need of a new Bulletin editor as Sheryl Baron who has been doing such an outstanding job has decided that she needs a change, so if there is anybody in the Society that feels that they would like to try their
hand at the job, please contact her or the Council. So, I hope that everyone has a successful breeding season and a safe return to almost normal after the issues this year.

Tony Grinter
President Budgerigar Society of New Zealand
The Role of Bulletin Editor

Dear Members of the BSNZ at large!
I would like to reiterate Tony’s note that I have resigned as Bulletin Editor effective immediately.

I would like to take this time to thank members most sincerely for their support of me over many years in my role as Bulletin Editor. I have really enjoyed the role, for the most part, and have appreciated those of you who have taken the time to comment on the publication, write articles of interest or find material that might be useful for inclusion. It has been sincerely appreciated. It is time for me to move on from this role and I would love to invite someone new to take on this fun challenge. I am VERY happy to teach someone the skills of working in Mail Chimp and I am certain that the contacts that I have made in
the bird world will be very pleased to continue to assist any new person to the role. I know that the three Vets that we have on board will be delighted to continue to provide articles of interest to the membership. If you are interested please be in touch and I will help to set it all up for you! With thanks and warm regards
Sheryl Baron
Ex-Bulletin Editor

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**A Different Perspective on Genetic Selection in Aviculture**

Dr Hamish Baron

BVSc (Hons)
FANZCVS (Avian Medicine and Surgery)
Registered Avian Specialist Veterinarian
The Unusual Pet Vets, 210 Karingal Drive, Melbourne, Australia
I have owned and bred budgerigars since I was ten years old. I’ve had them for nearly two-thirds of my life and have seen a huge evolution in the exhibition standards, feeding regimes and the “quality” of the birds during this time. It was budgerigars that pushed me to follow my dreams of becoming a veterinarian and, later, an Avian Specialist. When thinking on a edition of the Bulletin, I tossed up between a number of common disease conditions and how we manage them in the vet clinic. I then thought about writing a piece on disease prevention and avicultural management leading up to the breeding season. As I formulated these articles in my mind, each one ended up back at the same starting point, and rather than an answer, the articles always started with the same question – why do we see so much disease in the top breeding
I am currently writing my PhD on *Macrorhabdus ornithogaster* in budgerigars and I am trying to establish a more effective treatment modality. Macrorhabdus is, without a doubt, one of the most devastating conditions in budgerigar, canary, finch and other psittacine collections and, to-date, we do not have an effective cure. As part of my research, I have looked at co-morbidities (a fancy word for diseases occurring at the same time, in the same bird) and tried to establish whether birds with multiple issues, are more affected by the yeast and more likely to develop clinical disease. It appears as though they are. However, this research has raised more questions than answers. Most importantly, why do these birds have so much disease to start off with – some of the budgerigars I have sampled have been infected with three different viruses, protozoal infections and *macrorhabdus ornithogaster* – a lot of disease for a little bird.

This is the reason I have changed my perspective somewhat on the way we select birds for breeding. Traditionally, those with the most unique colour, the mutation or the genetic anomaly were selected and propagated to ensure the maintenance of the new mutation or morph. More recently, selection in some species (specifically budgerigars) has been for deportment, directional feather, length of feather and depth of mask. Very little, if any consideration is given to longevity of life, ability to withstand stress, ability to fly, fertility or the ability to withstand and fight disease. It is time, I believe, that this perspective changed.

Constantly treating breeding birds with antibiotics, antifungals, supplements and fertility boosters is not the way forward, in my opinion. There will come a time when these drugs and supplements are no longer considered acceptable – think of all the discussion on disease resistance and the use of antibiotics in food producing species. We need to find a different way to maintain a healthy stud of birds, and I believe the way to do that is by selecting healthy, robust individuals for the breeding program. These birds can still have desirable
features, be it unique colours or carrying special characteristics, but we should be moving away from actively breeding birds with feather diseases (French moult, feather cysts, straw feathers or other feather dystrophic diseases) or birds that are closely related.

We are in a unique position as aviculturists in that we have complete control over the direction the birds under our care will head. Selecting rare mutations or birds with outstanding traits is always going to be desirable, but breeding these birds with robust, healthy and disease-resistant outcrosses is a decision that needs to be made by the fancier. I recently did some work for a budgerigar fancier who was experiencing losses in a line of outstanding Texas clearbodies and the fancier proudly told me that the entire line stemmed from a cock bird that was on the national team 15 years ago. Since then, the birds had been “line-bred” with parents being mated to offspring, offspring to grandparents and aunts and uncles and the genetics had been kept very close. This had led to a very consistent line of birds that had some very desirable features – because they’d all inherited the same genes. However, the birds of the last two generations had started to die at 1 year old, healthy in the aviary one day and dead on the floor the next. I was presented with some live birds and some dead birds for examination. We performed a post-mortem examination on a number of the dead birds and all had died from the same condition – severe dilation of the heart with cardiac dysfunction. When we radiographed the live birds, each of them had a severely distended heart and cardiac murmurs on auscultation with a stethoscope. Somewhere along the line, one of these birds’ common ancestors had a large number of desirable traits, but also apparently had heart disease and as these birds had become closer and closer genetically, their congenital abnormalities had come to the fore. This is just one example of birds that have been selected for desirable traits, without consideration for other, perhaps arguably more desirable traits, such as a long life.

It is difficult, as a fancier, to fathom how we can shift our focus from the
traditional selection methods we use, to a method, which incorporates a more holistic view, but this shift does not have to be monumental. It merely takes a slight change in focus. A very basic example of this shift could be a situation where you have a light green bird that won the TopFlite National Show. Shortly after he turned one, he dropped his flights and his tail, and has been running around on the floor of the flight with an absolutely magnificent face since then. In the aviary, you also have his brother and two sisters, who are lesser birds, but at three years old have maintained fitness, appear robust and healthy and are in prime breeding condition for 10 months of the year. Classically, many fanciers would select the national selection cock bird and put him with as many hens as possible before he dies, hoping to get at least a couple of chicks from him to continue his line. My argument is that you have the genetics in the aviary for both outstanding birds, AND birds that don’t drop their flights and tail and can still fly at three years old. Put them in the breeding cabinet and propagate the same genetic line, without propagating the fault(s).

If we are able to shift our focus from simply breeding the biggest, most mutated colours and take into consideration some of these disease resistance, longevity and other health characteristics, in two or three generations we will have a collection of birds that requires far less input from a disease management point of view, we’ll have higher fertility and greater breeding successes and we will have bird fanciers that are happier and less frustrated by the difficulties we face getting the birds to stay healthy. Next time you come to pair up, I challenge you to consider some of these points, and together we might be able to move the captive population into a more robust and healthy place.
Christchurch Bird Club Show and Sale

July 11, 2020

Sincere thanks to our Upper South Island Area Rep, Kerriann Pinnell for collating these images of winners at the only South Island Show held this season. Sincere thanks to Christchurch Club for hosting this non-Federation Show for the benefit of South Island members who could get there.

Grey Green Normal cock, bred by Herb Duston

Overall winner in Show
Best Novice
overall/Best
Novice
Any Age: Grey
Dominant Pied cock, owned by Alistair Bull

Second Best

Novice: Grey

Green Dominant Pied cock, owned and bred by
Kerriann Pinnell

Best Novice CYCR: Grey Cinnamon

ten, bred by Pamela Jackson

Obituary for a BSNZ Life Member

Murray Waldron

June, 2020
During the Covid-19 lockdown, the BSNZ was informed by his son, Keith, that Murray Waldron, a Life Member of the Budgerigar Society of New Zealand (Inc.) had died.

Murray joined the Budgerigar Society before he left Christchurch to move to Wellington in 1959. He was interested in breeding birds to show them but also became a judge and was involved for a long period on the Judges Panel. Murray was the Secretary of the Society
for nine years from 1967 until 1975, when he moved into the role of President of the Society, a position which he held from 1975 until 1978. At the time that Murray was actively working for the Society, the era of bird breeding was really at its zenith with over 600 members active within the Society.

When he was interviewed for an article in the NZBS Bulletin of February 2016, Murray said that he had noticed many changes over the years and recalled a time when it was against the rules to de-spot your birds. He remembers an era when breeders were aiming to breed for a perfect set of six spots and if a breeder used opalines to strengthen the mask on their birds they ended up not being able to show them as they had too many spots!

Murray’s fondest memories were of travelling around the country to attend Shows and he specifically recalled one weekend when he won at two Shows on the same weekend. He usually tried to attend six Shows every season and also was an active judge at Shows around the country.

We salute this great servant of our Society in years gone by and we extend to all his family our sincere condolences in their time of loss and sadness.
In my opinion, French Moult is the most serious disease of the modern day exhibition budgerigar. However, most experienced fanciers do not consider it so and continue to select birds with signs of French Moult for breeding. Feather abnormalities are usually the only sign of French Moult

- French Moult itself. Using birds with French Moult or carrier birds as breeders is the starting point for an outbreak.
- Poor food (mould disease possibly from mould spores on seed) damages the immune system, predisposing the flock to
and the majority of youngsters regrow new healthy feathers very quickly. This is why most fanciers are not concerned about French Moult. However, it is the permanent damage inflicted by the French Moult virus -Polyomavirus, on the immune system of the chicks that makes it such a serious disease. Infected youngsters are susceptible to many other diseases; notably Chlamydiosis and Megabacteria that eventually lower the reproductive and show performance of the entire aviary. There are no drugs to treat French Moult, but the fact that French Moult infects baby birds and not adult birds helps us to combat this complex disease. The disease is controlled and prevented by selecting birds for breeding which are free of the French Moult disease.

The Disease

French Moult is a peculiar viral disease infecting budgerigars under the age of three weeks. It appears that the virus, Polyomavirus, by itself is relatively harmless and the apparent random nature of French Moult in the breeding cages is explained more by the immune response of the individual birds to the virus rather than the virus being particularly nasty. French Moult Polyomavirus. Other diseases (especially Chlamydiosis and Megabacteria) damage the immune system.

- Inadequate nutrition during breeding.
- Over-breeding. Most modern day budgerigar families can only tolerate rearing two rounds of babies unless special energy rich food is provided daily when rearing young. The exertion of rearing a third round of chicks lowers the natural resistance and is usually the trigger for an outbreak.
- Red mites. These bloodsucking mites weaken the immune system of the breeding birds.
- Poor hygiene and excessive dust levels. The massive amounts of feather dust produced in the budgerigar aviary must be reduced. It creates an infectious atmosphere not only for French Moult but also for other airborne diseases such as Circovirus, Chlamydiosis, Mycoplamosis and Staphylococcus.

The Cause of a First Round Outbreak

The most common causes of a first round outbreak are:
- New breeding birds with French Moult - first year breeders are most contagious.
places the entire health of a stud at risk, because the virus inflicts permanent damage to the immune system of the young birds. They remain infected for life and perpetuate the French Moul to future generations of nestlings. The elimination of French Moul from the budgerigar aviary is a high priority and one of the most important steps for creating a healthy aviary.

The Symptoms

The symptoms of French Moul vary according to the age and condition of the budgerigar when it is exposed to the virus and include:
• Addled eggs or dead in shell.
• Swollen abdomen and retarded growth in 10-15 day old babies.
• Deaths of babies.
• Feather abnormalities.
There are more baby deaths when the infection occurs under the age of 15 days. Some die at the time of hatching and others develop normally for 10-15 days then die suddenly without warning signs. The dead babies may have a distended abdomen, haemorrhage under the skin and reduced formation of down and contour feathers. They may also show nervous signs of tremors, fits and staggers before dying. Budgerigars infected when older than fifteen days of age are
• An underlying disease - most commonly Chlamydiosis or food related disease (Mould Disease).
• A nutritional problem.

The Cause of a Second or Third Round Outbreak

More often outbreaks occur in the third round with the earlier rounds experiencing one or two nests only having French Moul. The underlying causes of such outbreaks are:
• Another disease (Chlamydiosis, Megabacteria, Red Mite, Mould Disease).
• Over-breeding and inadequate nutrition.
• A build-up of dust levels in a breeding room with one or two French Moul nests creates a Polyomavirus and Chlamydiosis rich environment, which may then quickly infect previously healthy nests.

The Treatment of an Outbreak of French Moul

The following treatment starts after the cause of the immune system damage is understood:
• Identify the infected and ‘carrier” birds by looking at each nest carefully for signs of French Moul. Record the results of previous rounds and the details of nests with
considered relatively resistant to the disease. They rarely die but show varying degrees of feather abnormalities. It is not known how much the virus damages the immune system of these older chicks. Many adult carriers of the virus show a loss of flight feathers or tail feathers. Frayed and bent tails are also seen in many carrier birds as a result of other health problems.

The Causes of an Outbreak of French Moult

As a rule, Polyomavirus infections reside in a latent state and infections become active following periods of stress. Each breeding season most aviaries experience one or two nests with French Moult. This is not an outbreak situation, but the babies from these nests are best culled before they reach the young bird aviary. One or both of the parents must be a carrier and the carrier bird(s) must also be culled. An outbreak is present when many nests experience French Moult in an aviary previously free of the disease. Most importantly, an outbreak of French Moult indicates a damaged or tired immune system. The cause of the weakened immune system must be identified and rectified before the outbreak can be controlled. The cause of a damaged

French Moult. Write down the ring numbers and breeding details of those birds without French moult. The nests with no French Moult will be your foundation pairs for future breeding seasons.

• Cull every chick with French Moult in the nest boxes and aviary.
• Check every parent for signs of French Moult. Cull adults with signs of French Moult.
• Remove and vacuum clean all dust, sand, food, grit from breeding cages.
• Disinfect the breeding cages, breeding room, aviary, food and water containers. Repeat each week for four weeks.
• Identify and treat the underlying cause of the immune system damage. For example, get new food or treat for Chlamydiosis and so on.
• Fortify the nutrition of the birds with vitamins, protein and energy during and for four weeks after the treatment programme.
• Re-pair selected pairs. Monitor results carefully.
• Control re-entry of French Moult by careful new bird selection and quarantine.

The Control of French Moult

Keeping the aviary free of French Moult is achieved by applying the following rules:

• New birds with French Moult are
The immune system is usually one or more of the following:

- French Moult itself. Using birds with French Moult or carrier birds as breeders is the starting point for an outbreak.
- Poor food (mould disease possibly from mould spores on seed) damages the immune system, predisposing the flock to Polyomavirus. Other diseases (especially Chlamydiosis and Megabacteria) damage the immune system.
- Inadequate nutrition during breeding.

- Good nutrition and the prevention of other disease allows the flock to naturally resist French Moult.
- Regular cleaning and disinfection will minimise the levels of virus in the breeding cages and aviary.
- Every baby and adult bird with feather signs of French Moult is culled.

Acknowledgement

This article by Dr Rob Marshall is supplied by the World Budgerigar Organisation (www.worldbudgerigar.org), as part of their encouraged exchange of research information, and supplied to the WBO with kind permission by The Budgerigar Society, U.K. Sincere thanks to the WBO and The Budgerigar Society, U.K. for supplying this interesting and helpful article for the members of the BSNZ.
Obituary for Neville De Malmanche

We extend our love and thought to the family of one of our ex-Presidents on the loss of their beloved husband and father.

During the time between Bulletins, we also have to report the untimely death of another stalwart of our hobby, Neville De Malmanche. The time between his diagnosis with pancreatic cancer and his death was way too short and we send our sincere condolences to his family as they contemplate a future without him. Neville was President of the Budgerigar Society in 1999 and 2000. He had been active on the Committee of the Society during the 1990s and this was a time a great change in the hobby. It was in this era that we saw the changes from painted cage fronts to chrome, when the BSNZ joined the World Budgerigar Organisation, and the
drinkers as we know them today were introduced. Neville had to retire from breeding budgies when his health declined with a lung issue exacerbated by the budgie dust and dander. A number of local members of the BSNZ attended Neville's tangi which was held at his home in the Tauranga area.

Huntly Bird Club Social Show and Sale

July 25-26, 2020

Best Budgerigar in Show

Best Novice Budgie
A few members of the BSNZ at the Show in Huntly.

Sincere thanks to the Huntly Club for welcoming the BSNZ and our Annual General Meeting held on the Sunday morning of their Social Show and Sale.

Sincere thanks to the BSNZ members who sent me images of winning birds at this fun social
The Bird World Beyond Our Shores

With each edition of the Bulletin we include a small section that helps members of the BSNZ to look further afield than their own backyard. This month we share a local newspaper article from a visit Rob Marshall made to England.

In line with our WBO article on Rob Marshall, here is an article with Ghalib Al-Nasser presenting Rob with a painting to thank him for speaking at a local Show during his visit to England.
Famous bird vet impresses fanciers on his second visit to England

By Laura Welch

BUDGERIGARS

A RENOWNED AUSTRALIAN bird vet and author gave only his second ever UK club talk last month, this time to a budgerigar society in the South.

On April 30, more than 30 members and friends of the London & Southern Counties Budgerigar Society (L&SCBS) met to listen to Dr Rob Marshall and his more than 30 years’ experience in treating birds.

Author of The Budgerigar (currently out of print) – an impressive 415-page definitive guide to budgerigars with more than 2,000 colour photographs and illustrations – Dr Marshall, from New South Wales, is much admired in the hobby and regularly presents scientific papers at national and international veterinary conferences.

"Stomach Dysfunction in Exhibition Budgerigars" was the focus of his presentation to the L&SCBS, which also touched on stress as the main trigger for mega-bacteria, going light, pH levels of drinking water, vitamin D usage, strengthening the birds’ gizzards and why brewer’s yeast is an excellent source of B vitamins.

The presentation was recorded and a DVD will be available from the club in due course.

Those in attendance included the well-respected retired British avian vet, Alan Jones – a regular contributor to his paper Speaking to Cages & aviary Birds, he said: "I had never before met Dr Marshalls, but was aware of his name within the avian veterinary field, and his many writings on the subject of avian medicine and nutrition.

"Rob seemed genuinely pleased that I was present and involved in his presentation, by asking my opinion and seeking back-up on various comments."

The following day, Dr Marshall gave a presentation to a veterinary congress in London before flying back to Sydney.

Ghali Al-Nasser, L&SCBS chairman and secretary, commented: "With Dr Marshall’s wealth of knowledge about birds and budgerigars in particular, this was an opportunity not to be missed.

"I was extremely pleased to see our own avian vet Alan Jones in the audience and that impressed Dr Marshall as well as our members."


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Top Flite has been supplying New Zealand consumers with VetaFarm products for four months now and this is an enormous benefit for members of Bird Clubs in New Zealand. If your Club is not selling TopFlite seed, you need to introduce the concept, so that you can have your Veta Farm products delivered alongside your monthly seed order. This is an outstanding benefit for members of Federation Bird Clubs and is a real incentive for bird breeders to join local Clubs.

Vetafarm are one of the world’s leading brands in bird nutrition. TopFlite sees that the VetaFarm range of highly specialised pelletised food and nutritional supplements as being very complementary to their natural range of quality seed and treats.
Our mailing address is:

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