

# *FINCH BIZZ*



August 2014

# Finch Bizz—August 2014

---

The Hawkesbury Finch Club.  
A branch of The Finch Society of Australia  
Committee Members

---

## **President**

Glenn Johnson

## **Vice President**

Peter Berry

## **Secretary/Treasurer**

Ron James

## **Raffle Stewards**

Debbie & Amelia Thompson

## **Supply Steward & Email Coordinator**

Neville Simmons

## **Media Steward**

Craig Barnsley

## **Editor**

The Johnson Family

## **Website Planner**

Roy Peake

[www.hawkesburyfinchclub.com](http://www.hawkesburyfinchclub.com)

---

## **Finch Bizz Contact — Glenn Johnson**

[garswood@tpg.com.au](mailto:garswood@tpg.com.au)

(02)47332061



## **Life Members**

- Neville Brown
- Heather Brownnett
- Doug Hill
- Ron James
- Glenn Johnson
- Paul Menagazzo
- Neville Simmons
- Stan Simmons

.....

## **Inside this Issue**

Editorial	3
Last Meeting	3
Raffle	3
Hand-Rear Finches	4
Focus Group	5
FSA Questions	7
Meeting Dates	9
Breeding Superb	9
Blue Wrens	

**Next Meeting: 24th September 2014**

# Editorial

Another well attended meeting last month considering the erratic weather. Again it's so pleasing to see, all the regular faces along with many newcomers and with our healthy number of younger members. Why not bring the family along to some of the meetings, with many younger members in attendance, long term friendships could be made.

Many members reported visiting bird sales recently and most were pleased with the numbers and variety of finches available. So if you have been to a sale recently, why not write a small report of your experience.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the old committee for the great work that they have done over the last twelve months. The club can only function as well as it does, because of the good people working behind the scenes.

## Last Month's Entertainment

Another professional and informative talk by our Dr Geoff Robards, on bird nutrition. Geoff has given this talk a few years back; however we have many new members since then, so it was all new for many.

Everyone enjoyed the talk with heaps of questions asked, I think everyone went home loaded with ideas of how to change a few things in their bird's diets to get, hopefully better results. So thanks again Geoff, it just goes to show the wealth of knowledge that exists in our own membership.

## Raffle

1 <sup>st</sup>	Parson Finches (Pr)	dnt Garswood Birds	wn Keira B
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Canaries (Pr)	dnt Ron James	wn Liam B
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Bundle of Magazines	dnt Garswood Birds	wn Ron James
4 <sup>th</sup>	Bundle of Magazines	dnt Garswood Birds	wn Brian Fitzgerald
5 <sup>th</sup>	1 Book	dnt Garswood Birds	wn Nick
6 <sup>th</sup>	2 Magazines	dnt John Martin	wn Ron James
7 <sup>th</sup>	T-Shirt	dnt Neville Simmons	wn Peter Baldry
8 <sup>th</sup>	Magazine	dnt Neville Simmons	wn Brian Fitzgerald
9 <sup>th</sup>	Painting	dnt Neville Simmons	wn Glenn Johnson
10 <sup>th</sup>	Thermos	dnt Neville Simmons	wn Caitlin Larkin
11 <sup>th</sup>	Chocolates	dnt The Larkin Family	wn Liam B

12 <sup>th</sup> Teapot Bromeliad	dnt Peter Berry	wn Mikayla Larkin
13 <sup>th</sup> Blue Wren Mug	dnt Peter Berry	wn Craig Barnsley
14 <sup>th</sup> Mystery Birds	dnt Ken Smith	wn Geoff Robards
15 <sup>th</sup> Mystery Birds	dnt Ken Smith	wn Sacha

## How to Hand-Rear Finches — By Karl Lieberman

– Supplied by Ken Smith

*Note: Hand-rearing birds is not for the novice bird owner. If you don't do it correctly, you can injure or even kill the baby bird. Only professional bird breeders and hand-feeders should hand-rear. These professionals continually educate themselves, work with avian vets and mentor under other experienced bird breeders to breed the happiest, healthiest birds possible.*

Sometimes finch parents fail at raising babies; so on occasion human intervention is the only option. Hand-raising finches is a delicate and time consuming job. Get direct assistance from someone familiar with the process. Be sure you can totally commit and train yourself well to this task if you decide to take it on. Also know that the older the baby finch, the greater the odds of successful hand-rearing.



Day One baby finches should be given a tiny droplet of warm electrolyte formula, such as Pedialyte, for the first feeding. This is easiest to do by using a ½-cc Tuberculin syringe with the needle removed. This hydrates the baby bird, gives a boost of electrolytes and simple sugars while starting up the digestive system. Repeat this process for the first three feedings every two hours.

Hand-rearing finches is a delicate and time consuming job. Get assistance from someone familiar with the process.

Start subsequent baby bird feedings at two-hour intervals using commercial hand-rearing baby bird food mixed with Pedialyte. This mixture should be extremely thin and served warm. Continue this process from approximately 6 am to 11 pm for the first two days. Do not feed the baby birds between the hours of 11 pm and 6 am because the digestive system needs to completely empty in order to restart properly the next morning. Night feedings usually result in sour crop and bacterial infection.

Between feedings, the baby finch needs to be kept very warm (approximately 86 to 89 degrees Fahrenheit) in a small bird brooder. Use soft bedding. Check the brooder frequently and adjust the temperature as needed. Proper warmth is vital for baby bird digestion.

Change bedding between every feeding and clean all formula from the baby's beak and face using a slightly damp Q-tip. Bacteria can quickly grow on baby bird formula.

By the third day, the formula can be thicker, but not so much so that it does not readily draw into the syringe. Pay close attention to the baby bird's crop to evaluate fullness. The crop is located at the base of the neck and will appear as a yellowish nodule when filled because the formula can be seen through its ultra-thin skin. Be extremely careful not to overfill the crop and do not feed the baby finch again until the crop appears close to empty.

The thickness and quantity of the baby bird formula can be considerably increased by the fifth day. From that point on, the baby food can be made with sterilized warm water rather than Pedialyte. Add a tiny amount of lactobacillus powder to the formula at each feeding to encourage the growth of beneficial intestinal bacteria.

Space baby bird feedings out to 3½ hour intervals from the seventh day on. The odds of success rapidly increase every day from this point.

Never reuse baby bird formula, and carefully wash your hands before and after feedings.

<b><i>Produce Direct &amp; Pet Centre</i></b>	
<i>For all your produce requirements</i>	
<i>All Stock Feed Cat &amp; Dog food, accessories Seed &amp; Grit available in kilo lots Hand Rearing Mixes Large range vermin traps</i>	<i>Egg &amp; Biscuit Large Selection of bulk bird seeds Bird medications &amp; supplements Soft Food &amp; Insectivore Mixes  Water Tanks &amp; Pumps</i>
<i>Stocks Vetafarm, Passwells, Elliots We Deliver (02)4736 5375 1974 The Northern Road, Orchard Hills Opposite Penrith Golf Club</i>	
<i>We are happy to sponsor The Finch Society of Australia Hawkesbury Branch</i>	

## Focus Group on Minimising Risks Associated with Non-Indigenous Avian Species

– Supplied by Neville Simmons & Sam Davis

*I will be attending the meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> August regarding the Vic. Exotics issue. Craig Smeelie will also attend – great to have a Vic. member along for the ride!*

*An update on the DEPI's revised policy is prior to lunch and I imagine this will include their foreshadowed refined list of birds. Focus group questions (see attached copy) after lunch. We briefly considered the focus questions at our recent Smithfield meeting and I've attached a draft summary of the responses. – Sam Davis*

Aim – The Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI) to help facilitate discussions on exploring ways in which to minimising risks associated with the keeping of non-indigenous avian species.

Key Stakeholders Participation Goal – To partner with key stakeholders to discuss methods used to minimise risks associated with escapees.

Promise to Key Stakeholders – DEPI will look to stakeholders for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions.

Date – 26<sup>th</sup> August 2014

Time – 2:30 pm – 4:30 pm

Proposed activities:

- ♦ Discussion about key questions
  - Which methods are you using now to prevent birds from escaping?
  - Are there any differences in the methods you employ to house high cost species versus low cost/abundant species?
  - When birds have escaped, what methods have you taken to recapture the bird.
  - If you are unable to catch a bird what do you do? Do you report the escape?
  - Do you think that Eremaea Birds and BirdingAus are useful resources for identifying feral or wild populations of non-indigenous birds?
  - Do you think developing generic guidelines would be valuable (by consensus)?
  - If so, how should the guidelines be disseminated?

Stakeholders who expressed an interest in participating in the focus group:

- ♦ Invasive Species Council
- ♦ Zoos Victoria
- ♦ Birdlife Australia
- ♦ Victorian Avicultural Council
- ♦ Mornington Peninsula Avicultural Society
- ♦ Finch Society of Australia (incl. Tasmanian Finch Club & Avicultural Society of Tasmania)
- ♦ National Finch and Softbill Association
- ♦ Avicultural Society of Australia (ASA)
- ♦ Parks Victoria

# FSA member thoughts in response to Victorian DEPI Focus Questions for 26th August 2014

– Supplied by Neville Simmons & Sam Davis

We feel the questions below are framed with the assumption that escapes are a major risk of establishing wild populations. Our early submission and subsequent correspondence makes it clear that captive bred birds are incapable of surviving in the wild and all evidence since aviculture in Australia began reinforces this fact.

It is generally accepted that the mean viable population (MVP) for most species is in the order of hundreds or even thousands of individuals. Most escapes are single birds that have slipped past the keeper or have found an escape route through a hole within the aviary. These type of escapes have no doubt been occurring regularly since bird keeping began in Australia. They have not resulted in the establishment of a single sustained feral population. For a hundred individuals of a species to escape simultaneously would require a major catastrophe at a large breeder's facility. For example, a storm event causing destruction of an extensive aviary complex. Although establishment in this case still remains unlikely we make a commitment that our association will mobilise resources to rapidly trap, or failing that, eradicate all escapees.

## 1. Which methods are you using now to prevent birds from escaping?

- ♦ The larger the aviary the lower the risk
- ♦ Low doors
- ♦ Double doors
- ♦ Ability to service aviary from outside without entering
- ♦ Walkway or service ways
- ♦ Mesh under roofing material
- ♦ Heavy gauge wire
- ♦ Self-closing doors
- ♦ Insect curtains – strips – similar to Fish'n'Chip shops.

## 2. Are there any differences in the methods you employ to house high cost species versus low cost/abundant species?

- ♦ Much more secure and substantial structurally - to stop theft
- ♦ Definite use double door arrangement to prevent escape
- ♦ Double wiring in some cases to prevent predator attack

## 3. When birds have escaped, what methods have you taken to recapture the bird.

- ♦ Finches are lucky to survive the initial hour or so after release due to predation
- ♦ Most exotics remain close to the aviary to remain close to their own species or mate.
- ♦ Virtually all exotic finch escapees are either recaptured or perish within hours

- ♦ Catch in the walkway or double door area
  - ♦ Trap with caller bird and/or feed
  - ♦ Trap with mate is even better
4. If you are unable to catch a bird what do you do? Do you report the escape?
- ♦ Finches are either predated rapidly and if not they rarely leave the area
  - ♦ Exotic pet parrots are routinely reported to online sites and via local advertising at stores, on telegraph poles and so on. It is surprising to many people to learn that most pet parrots are returned. Unfortunately finches do not survive.
5. Do you think that Eremaea Birds and BirdingAus are useful resources for identifying feral or wild populations of non-indigenous birds?
- ♦ Yes, although to our knowledge they record very few exotic finch sightings (apart from those species already established via acclimatisation societies).
  - ♦ In the rare event that finch species are detected we are willing to accept responsibility for trapping and/or eradication.
6. Do you think developing generic guidelines would be valuable (by consensus)?
- ♦ This is better done via self-regulation by avicultural societies.
  - ♦ We do not view government policies or guidelines to be an effective avenue and will likely prove to be counterproductive to our aims due to some who will simply choose to operate outside the system with little chance of detection.
7. If so, how should the guidelines be disseminated?
- ♦ Guidelines should be developed by and distributed through avicultural societies and clubs. Most already have a code of conduct which could easily be amended to add appropriate clauses.

## MDS AUSTRALIA

### Avian DNA Specialists

Simple, quick and accurate

- Avian DNA Sexing only \$16.30\*
- Avian VIRUS Testing only \$33.00\*
- Single SCKit Pack only \$20.00\*
- Sample Collection Kits & Certificates available
- Volume discounts on 10+ tests



PCR TESTING FOR PATHOGENS IN:



- Poultry
- Canine
- Feline

Other tests available  
on request. Only \$33.00

All species - stress-free. [www.mdsaustralia.net](http://www.mdsaustralia.net)



# Dates for Our Meetings for 2014 - 2015

24<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2014  
22<sup>nd</sup> OCTOBER 2014  
26<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2014 CHRISTMAS MEETING  
NO MEETING IN DECEMBER  
28<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2015  
25<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2015  
25<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2015  
22<sup>nd</sup> APRIL 2015  
27<sup>th</sup> MAY 2015  
24<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2015  
22<sup>nd</sup> JULY 2015  
26<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2015 AGM – SUBSCRIPTION DUE

*Thanks Ron that's saves me from doing it, good job - Susan*

## Breeding Superb Blue Wrens – by Jim Cunningham – taken from Finch News – July 1988

Our Wrens arrived on 4th October, 1986. One pair were coloured and the other uncoloured. We began feeding them a variety of live food to find out their preferences. Mealworms, white ants and moths were their favourites. The small black ground cockroaches would only be eaten if there was nothing else left. Gentles were completely ignored. Madeira cake and grated cheese were nibbled at occasionally.

By November they had settled in, the young cock bird was fully coloured and was being very aggressive toward the hen as was the adult cock bird toward his hen. For the next few months both pair became friendlier, cleaning each other and chattering continually.

By March 1987 the older cock bird was out of colour and by April the younger cock bird was also out of colour, both pair being much quieter- So we had to sit back and watch and wait until they coloured again before we had any hope of breeding them.

By the end of June both pair were fully coloured and the cock birds were driving the hens, hardly giving them time to sit and rest. The binoculars came out and the Wrens didn't have much privacy from then on. We gave them all sorts of building material. Cobwebs, cotton wool, fibre from a palm tree, feathers and moss.

By early July we were rewarded for our efforts when we found a partially built nest from the young pair. It took some finding but we knew their building materials was disappearing, mainly the cobwebs and fibre. It was directly above their feed dish and very well disguised in a dead bush. It took them a week to complete the nest. About the same time the older pair were building also, but we were unable to find their nest for 2 weeks. There is much more ground cover in this aviary and this pair seemed to be very secretive, always out in the open when they saw us approaching. We eventually found the nest in a clump of guinea grass about 12 inches from the ground. We had fruit in both cages to attract fruit fly also the flying ants from the white ants nests. This made the Wrens fossick for their food. We kept food in their trays all day. Both pair would sing and chatter all day. We are just feeding and watching and hoping they are laying eggs. It is very hard to see them going in and out of the nest. We don't touch or go near their nests.

By the middle of August we knew the young pair had young. When we went in to feed them the hen dropped to the ground from the nest in a tumbling action. Then she hopped around on the ground to try to draw our attention away from the nest. The hen and cock were both feeding the young every 15 to 20 minutes. The cock bird is also giving the hen food to take to the young. They are only feeding white ants to the young at this stage, even though they have the same variety of live food. Five days later we heard the young chirping so we knew there was more than one. The sixth day they started feeding the young a few mealworms and gentles but still mainly white ants. Twelve days after they hatched 2 young left the nest. I had gone in to feed them and was attacked by dive-bombing Wrens. I found the young close to the nest looking very healthy. I retreated to another cage and sat and watched. It took the parents about an hour to coax their young into their heavy cover of the Lantana and there they stayed for 4 days. The fifth day they started leaving the Lantana for short times. The parents were still feeding mainly white ants and encouraging the young to the feed tray.

While we have been so interested in watching the young, the hen has been building another nest; we noticed both hen and cock pulling the old nest apart. So another search and find. This time it's in the shed also in a dead bush almost impossible to see from outside.

Early September and we haven't been able to watch the older pair as closely. Their nest must not have amounted to anything as the young would be flying by now. The younger hen is sitting on her second nest and by early October another 2 young are flying. The first 2 young are taking a great interest in the new ones. We are fairly sure the older hen is sitting. By the middle of October the older pair have 2 young flying and the younger pair have their third nest. By the end of October the young pair's young have hatched and the adults were feeding the young. A week later we noticed the adults had stopped feeding the young.



ph/fax: (08) 8391 1713

email: wombaroo@adelaide.on.net

web: [www.wombaroo.com.au](http://www.wombaroo.com.au)

On checking the nest we found the young had disappeared. A little later the nest had fallen down. We had been watching the younger pair's young (4 by now) continually go to the nest after the young had hatched. We had read that the young would - help feed the hatchlings in the wild and this is what we thought they were doing. We now believe it was the young who interfered with the hatchlings and the nest.

The older pair did not seem to be having much luck. We cleaned all the grass from the floor of the aviary to force them to nest higher. This brought results and they had their second nest producing only one young this time.

Late November the younger pair built their fourth nest. The 4 young at this stage were becoming very aggressive toward the hen so we separated them from the adults. Early December another two young were flying. We lost one of these when it became caught in some grass.

In March 1988 the younger pair have their fifth nest and the hen is sitting. We are happy to have had the opportunity to keep the Wrens and successfully breed them. It has been an enjoyable challenge and we know we have accomplished what we set out to do. We can hope for further success in the future for everyone involved in this project because it is for the benefit of all aviculturists. We cannot possibly work as one, but the unity of groups could achieve overall success.



# GARSWOOD AVIARIES

❖ AUSTRALIAN & FOREIGN PARROTS.

❖ AUSTRALIAN & FOREIGN FINCHES.

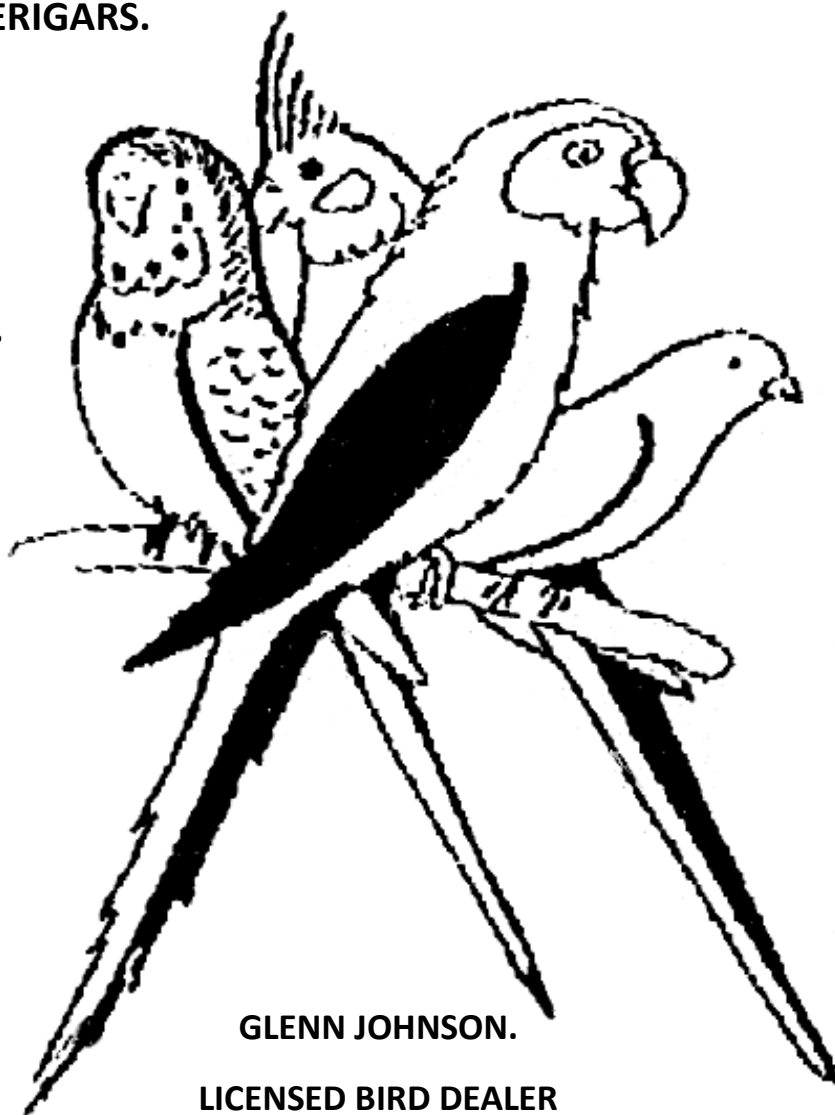
❖ SHOW BUDGERIGARS.

❖ DOVES.

❖ QUAILS.

❖ CANARIES.

❖ ACCESSORIES.



GLENN JOHNSON.

LICENSED BIRD DEALER

LIC. No: FBD 1510.

69 THE LAKES DRIVE,  
GLENMORE PARK  
NSW 2745

[garswood@tpg.com.au](mailto:garswood@tpg.com.au)

TELEPHONE No:  
(02)47332061  
(041)9638474