



# APRIL 2020 NEWSLETTER

## Nepean Budgerigar Society

### UPCOMING EVENTS

2021 Rings &  
2020 Club  
Registrations  
due by 15<sup>th</sup> April



Nepean Budgerigar Society

Would like to



You!

### PRESIDENTS REPORT FROM JOHN FREEMAN

Most people out there are breeding at present ( except for me, hopefully get my new bird room up and running over Easter ). From what I hear most of our members are having a really good start to the breeding season. Ringing good numbers of birds and having very good survival rates of the young.

It is really hard at the moment not being able to do aviary visits as a club or even on your own just visiting friends due to the Corona virus. I would really like to make comment on the state of affairs regarding the virus, but I am not an expert. Maybe best to just say heed all the warnings and stay safe.

For those members wanting to buy birds at present hold off as long as you can because on the other end of the pandemic I think there will be a lot of good birds up for sale.

Good luck to all and have a safe Easter

John Freeman

Pics of John's winning Yellow Face & Opaline birds from the Adult State Shield



## Government Regulation Updates

As you know, our federal government recently put in place new regulations prohibiting sporting & hobby community events until at least the end of May. At such time, we will be notified of any extension or change of the law.

In line with this, all events until the end of May relevant to the Nepean club, all other clubs, and BCV events including our registration & ring ordering evening, meetings, club show selection, club shows, state show and national show are now cancelled or postponed.

Disappointing we know, but as most of our members fall into a high risk category for contraction of the Covid-19, we believe it is the right thing to do.

## Registration Night -2020 Club and BCV Membership and 2021 Ring orders

**With the new regulations, we will now be asking for our club and BCV registration, and 2021 ring orders to be offered remotely.**

A couple of week ago, all members were emailed the following forms to be returned:

### **Nepean Membership Form**

This is for your Nepean membership. The annual fee is now \$40, up from \$35. This is the first rate increase in around 6 years.

### **BCV Membership and 2021 Ring Ordering Form**

Rates remain the same. There is provision to order 2021 coded rings on this form, and if you think you will need a ring top up for this year, you can also order uncoded 2020 rings.

Forms will need to be filled out please and sent back. You may:

Photograph or scan and email them to: [info@nepeanbudgerigarsociety.org](mailto:info@nepeanbudgerigarsociety.org)

Or post to: 25 Creighton Way Mornington 3931

**Payment for the Nepean membership, BCV membership and ring order is to be made directly into the Nepean bank account as set out below. NOT in the BCV bank account on their order form. This can be made in one transaction. Please use your surname as the reference. Please let me know when payment has been made, and how much.**

National Australia Bank  
Nepean Budgerigar Society  
BSB 083 136 ACC NO 50 003 8921

**\*\*Please ensure the forms and payments are sent back by 15th April\*\*.**

**We need to have forms sent to the BCV by the week after, so need to have time to collate and post.**

## *Bunnings BBQ*

Due to the Covid-19 Virus, Bunnings have cancelled all of their fundraiser events, including the community BBQ's until further notice. This means our April 18<sup>th</sup> fundraiser day is cancelled.

## *Monthly Chuckle...*

### **The old rooster**

A farmer went out one day and bought a brand new stud rooster for his chicken coop. The new rooster struts over to the old rooster and says, "OK old guy, time for you to retire."

The old rooster replies, "Come on, surely you cannot handle ALL of these chickens. Look what it has done to me. Can't you just let me have the two old hens over in the corner?"

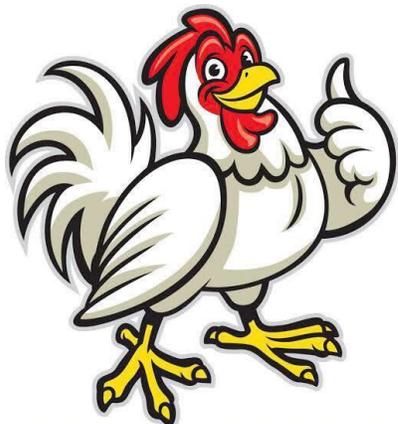
The young rooster says, "Beat it. You are washed up and I am taking over."

The old rooster says, "I tell you what, young stud. I will race you around the farmhouse. Whoever wins gets the exclusive domain over the entire chicken coop."

The young rooster laughs. "You know you don't stand a chance, old man. So, just to be fair, I will give you a head start."

The old rooster takes off running. About 15 seconds later the young rooster takes off running after him. They round the front porch of the farmhouse and the young rooster has closed the gap.

He is only about 5 feet behind the old rooster and gaining fast.



The farmer, meanwhile, is sitting in his usual spot on the front porch when he sees the roosters running by. He grabs his shotgun and - BOOM - he blows the young rooster to bits.

The farmer sadly shakes his head and says, "Darn. Third gay rooster I bought this month."

## *This Month's Article*

With most members in breeding mode with no shows happening, this may be a handy article for over the next few months.

# Feeding & Weaning Chicks

Once hatched, the nest box must provide a secure home for the first thirty to thirty five days of a chicks life. Initially, the hatchling is fed only crop milk from the hen. As other hatchlings emerge from the egg at a rate of approximately one every other day, the youngest/smallest is fed first, with progressively larger hatchlings being fed in sequence. The consistency, texture and ingredients of the crop milk fed vary from the youngest to the oldest chick.

Occasionally a hen will not feed a newly hatched chick. This is often especially true of immature or inexperienced hens. If within an hour or two of hatching, you cannot observe a small whitish patch or bulge in the chick's crop it has probably not been fed. A useful tip is to take a youngster that is 3 to 6 days old from another nest and place it in the box with the unfed chick. This older chick which is stronger, louder and more demanding of being fed, will usually, stimulate the hen to feed. Once she does, she will also feed the younger chick.

If an older chick is not available, administer a couple of drops of warm lactated milk solution with 20% dextrose or pedalyte to the unfed chick. It is usually enough to strengthen it and sustain it until the hen is stimulated to feed.

One additional action needs to be taken if the hen still will not feed the chick. Locate a nest in which an egg is about to hatch (17 to 19 days) and foster the chick to this nest. Usually, most hens are accommodating and are easily fooled into thinking this is their own newly hatched chick.

When all of the chicks have progressed to the point that partially broken down foodstuffs from the crop have replaced the previously pure and mixed crop milk, the cock becomes more active in feeding not only the hen but the chicks also. By the time each chick is about ready to exit the nest box, the cock has normally replaced the hen as the primary feeder, although she too is still active in the process.

## **Weaning**

The process of progressing from dependent feeding to independent feeding, takes place over a span of approximately 55 days.

At about 3.5 to 4 weeks Budgerigar chicks consume limited amounts of food but they do not eat enough to survive on their own without supplement from the parent. By about 6 to 6.5 weeks, the chick is able to sustain itself, although there is some weight loss.

While very little has been written about the weaning process in Budgerigars, weaning in Cockatiels appears to be a process brought about by maturation and development rather than through learning or deprivation. Efforts to speed up the process by reducing the amount of food fed by hand resulted in increased begging behaviour rather than increased eating behaviour. It was not until the chicks had matured to the point that they could alter their behavioural response of increased begging to increased eating that they could be weaned. Learning also appeared to be of little importance as chicks, which had no prior experience with voluntary food or water intake, weaned rapidly when presented with food and water at the expected weaning age. One third of the chicks with no prior experience of eating on their own or seeing other birds eat, weaned immediately upon presentation of food.

The only factors, which seemed to influence weaning age, were the growth rate and body weight at between 8 and 30 days of age. Even though at 35 days of age all chicks had achieved about the same weight, chicks which grew faster and weighed more during the 8 to 30 day period weaned more rapidly than those which weighed less and grew more slowly during the same time periods.

As it is highly likely that weaning in Budgerigars closely assimilates that of Cockatiels, do not be in a rush to separate the chick from its feeding parent. You will be able to see a diminished begging response and increased eating response as the chick matures, a process that we are not likely to speed up. Then, and only then is it advisable to remove the chick to separate quarters.

Many experienced breeders when making this transfer, prefer to move a group of similarly weaned chicks at the same time. This way, the odd chick that may not be totally weaned will often receive a supplemental feeding from another of its age group who is stimulated by the begging response. It is also good practice to have a steady, older cock in the weaning cage to show the youngsters "the ropes".

### **Hand Feeding**

On occasion, you may find yourself with a chick that has not been weaned and without a parent or more matured offspring that will feed it. It is too late to foster as once a chick has feathered it will be perceived as an intruder and attacked if placed in another breeding cage. This is true even if there are other same age youngsters in that cage. The remaining option is hand feeding until it is able to feed itself.

Hand feeding Budgerigar chicks is not a difficult process. Commercial formulas are readily available in most pet shops and any that work for Cockatiels will work for Budgerigars. Mix a level teaspoon full for an individual chick according to the instructions. Using a syringe with a one inch long soft rubber/plastic tube attached to the end draw up the mixed formula. Take the chick in your left hand with its back in the palm, thumb and forefinger on each cheek, and remaining three fingers across its chest and abdomen with your little finger just above the legs. As you are looking at the bird, the tubing is passed over the tongue and down the left side of the oesophagus into the crop. You will feel the tube as it touches the bottom of the crop. Eject the formula and remove the tube.

### **The Second Round**

The second round of breeding is generally in progress at about the time that the fully fledged chicks begin to leave the nest box (between 4 and 4.5 weeks). While eggs may or may not have been laid, mating behaviours and copulation most probably have begun.

While the process used to protect chicks from attacks by parents is described in another Chapter of this book, this is often the time that attacks are most likely to happen. One indicator that some aggressiveness is already occurring is that you will find small areas on the back of the head of one or maybe more chick where it appears that several feathers are missing. What has actually happened is that the hen has been pecking at the chick in order to force it out of the nest box or out of her 'territory'. If you have not done so already, this is the time to take the recommended actions to protect the chicks.

One method is to remove the hen, when the first chick emerges from the nest box as it affords the breeder the opportunity to assess the results of the first round before a second round is begun. If you are satisfied that the pair has produced the quality or features that was expected, pair them together again. If for some reason you are not satisfied with the offspring, the hen has already been separated from her mate long enough to diminish the pair bond. As she is rested and ready to begin a new round, you have a better chance of her accepting a new mate that may produce the improvements you are seeking.





Do you have anything bird related for sale you would like to advertise in our newsletter? Or are you looking for something?

Please email Mim on [info@nepeanbudgerigarsociety.org](mailto:info@nepeanbudgerigarsociety.org) with a short description, and a image if you have one. Also please feel free to email through any news, information or tips you think may be of interest in our newsletter.

## 2020 Nepean Syllabus March to June

**\*ALL CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE\***

March 17th, Tuesday 8pm. Meeting night

April 21st, Tuesday 8pm. Dingley, 2020 Nepean and BCV registration & ring order evening

May 9<sup>th</sup>, Saturday. Time and venue tba. Day event. Club selection for the State Young Bird Show.

June 16<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday 8pm. Dingley, Nepean AGM: **NEW DAY AND TIME TBA**

\*venues, dates and times subject to change.

**Would you like to join a family friendly budgerigar club?**

**Please call or email one of our club contacts. We would love to hear from you!**

### Club Contacts

Emails – [info@nepeanbudgerigarsociety.org](mailto:info@nepeanbudgerigarsociety.org)

Venue – Dingley Community Centre

President: John Freeman 0419 146 911

31b Marcus Rd, Dingley Village

Secretary: Mim McQualter 0421 085 974

Treasurer: Rohan McQualter 0428 857 897