

AUCKLAND METRO BIRD CLUB

March 2013



Lizard Canary – Courtesy Denise Taormina

Meeting Tuesday 19th March 7.30pm, Panmure Community Rooms, Pilkington Road, Panmure.

Speakers this month

Sara-Lee Sloane, President, NZ Parrot Society and Paul Dixon, Vice President.

President's Chirp & Squawk!

Can you believe this incredible summer as the long mild nights continue and daytime temps regularly hover around 26?! Not quite sure what that all means for our birds and their moult and I have many still in various stages of the process. Remember, this can be a stressful time so don't put too much pressure on them and ensure vitamins and feather improving seeds like linseed are available. Water and sand baths help too.

It was very pleasing to see so many at last month's meeting to hear Chris Agius and Sid Evans (UK) talk on their respective birds and experiences. I counted 40 in attendance, so let's try and keep this up! Sid mentioned some of the problems facing birdkeeping in the UK and there are remarkable similarities, but I still think we have the advantage way out here in NZ! He said it is hard to attract people to the hobby, especially younger people who have so many more options or just simply 'can't be bothered.' Clearly the Bird Flu epidemic from a year or two back and the strong animal activist groups that believe it is cruel to keep birds in cages/aviaries have had an impact too. He believes the better weather here is more conducive to outdoor aviaries and Sid was most impressed with the lay-out of the aviaries and birdrooms he saw, the helpfulness and willingness to talk birds of the people he chatted to and the overall size and health of our birds. It is great that his son David, has joined our Club and we hope to see Sid again on his next visit.

Our March meeting should be a very interesting one as we are lucky enough to have two of the leading parrots experts in NZ talking. Sara-lee Sloane, President of the NZ parrot Society & Paul Dixon, the Vice president will talk on their experiences with parrots, hand-feeding, the current scene in NZ and will welcome questions. Certainly not a night to miss on Tuesday 19 March!

The bird sales have already started with very mixed results from all accounts, perhaps a result of the relatively poor breeding season for most people. We will be having our own Buy-Sell-Swap Night at our normal meeting on Tuesday 16 April; an ideal time to bring along your birds & accessories, pick up new stock, chat to fellow breeders and find the odd bargain. More info next month, but ensure clean, uncrowded cages, fresh seed & water and type, sex & price of bird clearly displayed on the cage. If you intend buying only, don't forget to bring a cage or cages with you as we will not have any spare.

Taco, Vince, Alan & I visited Ormiston Senior College to check out the slight modification for this year's Annual Show. It will be held in their huge gym, with good lighting & plenty of space to welcome the hordes of people we normally attract! Start marketing our Show on 29-30 June now! We will have a session at an upcoming meeting that will hopefully attract more members into showing their birds; never think yours aren't good enough! This will include interpreting the standards and classes in the Yearbook, filling in the entry form correctly and ensuring our birds, our cages and even ourselves, are well prepared! The list of show dates are printed in this newsletter and sales in the Yearbook.

So let's see as many as possible at Tuesday's meeting, contact Mark Dullabh if you need seed brought along (09 426 3021, 021 617 093, maverc@clear.net.nz) bring back any library books, money for our monthly raffle and plenty of questions for our knowledgeable and entertaining guest speakers!

Dave Nicholson

Canaries for Sale

Yellow, White, Norwich, Gloster and Plain
Prices vary. Over 60 birds for sale
Contact Sam 021 255 2164/836 7607

BIRD RESCUE

GARAGE SALE

Saturday **March 23rd**
28D Aetna Place Henderson

Finch Sale - Sunday **April 14th**, Aorangi Street, Feilding.

Auckland Metro Bird Club

BUY SELL SWAP NIGHT

April 16th

Bring along all your birds and bird related products.
Please make sure to have clean cages, fresh seed and water and that the birds are
not in overcrowded cages.

SOUTH AUCKLAND BIRD CLUB

Huge Annual Bird Auction

Sunday, **21st April, 2013**

**Held at the Franklin A&P Showgrounds
Pukekohe**

Auctioneers will be Ian Lewis, Mark Leaming and Pat Farrell.

BRING YOUR BIRDS AND UTENSILS TO BE AUCTIONED

Between 7.30am and 10am

Auction starts approximately 10am

Phone (09) 235-0081 / 027 4974100

MID NORTH BIRD SALE

Sunday **5th May**

Hibiscus Coast Youth Centre, Orewa

NZ PARROT SOCIETY BIRD SALE

Mangere War Memorial Hall

June 2nd, 10am – 2pm

An ideal opportunity to buy birds, cages, seed and get advice on how to look after
your birds.

AMBC Club member profile : **Troy van der Voorn.**

Troy joined the club about six years ago with his father. They had been to a Pet Expo and met Roy Stone, who as chance would have it, lived around the corner from them. Roy spoke to them about the AMBC and the rest is history. At the time Troy joined he was one of the youngest members.

How did you first get involved with birds? – I have always been an animal lover right from the word go, but birds seemed to be what caught my attention the most, so that's when dad and I decided to get a few budgies, then an aviary appeared not long after that as I wanted more and more birds, Dad and I then met a few people from the bird club and went from there.

What do you like about keeping birds? – they are pretty easy to keep, all you need is a cage or aviary dependent on space, I was fortunate that we had the space for an aviary and progressed from there, I like the breeding side the most as this gives me the most enjoyment, seeing eggs or chicks in a nest is very enjoyable and means you are doing something right.

What do you enjoy about the AMBC? – you get to meet like-minded people, can talk to each other and share what you have done throughout the year etc, also gaining ideas and knowledge that could possibly work for you, eg aviary or breeding cage design.

SHOW DATES

May 2013

4 th /5 th	Rotorua
11 th /12 th	Capital & Valley Cities / Te Awamutu
18 th /19 th	Wairarapa
25 th / 26 th	Whakatane

June 2013

1 st /2 nd	Stratford
8 th /9 th	Huntly
15 th /16 th	Levin/South Auckland
22 nd /23 rd	Hamilton
29 th 30 th	Auckland Metro/Palmerston North

July 2013

6 th /7 th	Piako
13 th /14 th	North Taranaki
26 th 27 th	NAPIER(National bird show)

Simple steps to control bird stress

Simple steps to control bird stress

Domesticated birds still retain certain aspects of wild behaviour and as result a caged environment can cause anxiety to a bird if it not well managed by its owner. In the wild the way that a bird responds to stressful situations plays a large role in determining the bird's chances of survival. These situations will generally only arise periodically, however, and the bird has the power to remove itself from the source of the anxiety in many cases. For caged birds this is not an option. Excessive stress over a lengthy period can start to have a negative impact on your bird's general health.

Fortunately the most common causes of stress for caged birds result from things that we, as their owners, have the ability to control. These things include poor diet, sleep deprivation and inadequate exercise and mental stimulation. Follow the guide below to ensure that your bird's environment is as comfortable as possible.

Quiet, secure environment:

The cage should be placed in the social part of your house. Avoid the kitchen, as certain fumes can be toxic to a bird, and avoid areas where children often play. The cage should be placed against a wall, rather than in front of a window or in the centre of a room, as this helps the bird to feel secure and protected from predators. New hanging items (eg. paintings) should not be placed above the bird's cage and it should also be noted that birds will often feel threatened by the presence of helium balloons in the same rooms. It is also advisable to avoid placing the cage in a room with a ceiling fan.

Proper diet:

Your bird needs a **diet** appropriate to its species. There are **commercial diets** available for most species, comprising of a baked mix of seeds and grains. Fresh raw foods appropriate for your bird's species should always be available and comprise approximately 30% of the diet.

Adequate sleep:

Birds like routine; in the wild their sleeping habits often roughly mimic the sun rising and setting. This does not necessarily have to be precisely mirrored for house birds, but your bird will benefit from a routine of waking and sleeping at approximately the same times each day. It is preferable for your bird's cage to be moved somewhere quiet (away from the television etc.) when it is time for sleep, alternatively you might prefer to set up a small sleep cage in a separate room and transfer your bird to this at bed time each night.

Enough exercise

Birds should be housed in an appropriate sized cage relative to their size. Even if your cage is large, a bird still needs to exercise its wings by being let out in a secure environment to fly and exercise its muscles. Ideally your bird should be allowed to fly every day; before letting it do so, make sure you draw the curtains to stop it from colliding with the window and potentially hurting itself.

Mental stimulation:

Many birds, especially parrots, are social creatures. They like to interact and socialise with each other and without mental stimulation from their environment and their owners they can become stressed and lonely. Stress and loneliness can lead to various behavioural problems, like feather plucking, if allowed to go on for too long. Be sure to enrich your bird's environment by providing toys and healthy treats that the bird can occupy itself with when you are unable to provide attention. There are various stimulating **toys** available, which will help to relieve boredom in your bird.

Article from MedicAnimal.com





NEWSLETTER – MARCH 2013

This is my first newsletter and I would like to thank Stephen Silk who has been doing this very important job for the last year. Like him, I encourage ALL CLUBS to send in material and hope that all secretaries either forward the newsletter to their members, or have copies printed off and made available at club meetings.

So what do you want or expect from this newsletter? Personally, I prefer one that provides information, that provokes comment, that records the activities of bird clubs and their members, that encourages participation and that can be seen as a worthwhile means of communication so that the hobby we are involved in and enjoy can thrive and grow. So, I welcome articles, photos, club happenings and letters from members that are relevant to the NZ scene. I would also stress that comments in this newsletter are not necessarily the view of the NZ Bird Federation committee! In upcoming newsletters, I intend putting in some helpful tips for Clubs to try, whether at their shows, for their sales/auctions or to liven up meetings and newsletters. Let's be honest, there wouldn't be any involved in birdkeeping throughout NZ who could genuinely say that changes aren't needed to improve the hobby, to attract/retain more members, to make our annual shows more appealing (these after all are the main way we can 'showpiece' our hobby to potential new members and sponsors) to increase the number of judges, to provide different ideas for our meetings and to relieve the burden for the same few who in many cases, are holding some clubs together. So my main message to all readers, is that we must communicate and co-operate, to share ideas and to work together to make birdkeeping an interesting, stimulating, rewarding and social hobby. The pessimists will say it's all a 'sign of the times' (...yawn...!) and 'been there, done that!' Conversely, the optimists will say: 'Let's give it a go and if it doesn't quite work out as we had hoped, let's discuss, modify or adapt and try again!' Which camp are you in?! As clubs, we should be getting together, talking about the REAL issues (forget the politics and who upset who many years ago!) setting short and long term plans/goals and working to achieve them, with some adaptation necessary along the way. To me, the key issue facing every club is to build up the membership; just think, if every current member's goal was to introduce ONE potential NEW member during the year, numbers would be doubled! Sounds simple? So why aren't we doing it?

Dave Nicholson

Club Secretaries - Please send all your news/contributions to d.nic@xtra.co.nz or post to: 9 Pelorus Place, Pakuranga, Auckland 2010. Please acknowledge contributor.

NZ National Bird Show, Napier, 26-28 July, 2013

The Hawke's Bay, Hastings, Poverty Bay & Tararua Clubs have combined to host this year's 81st National in Napier. A big thanks to TOPFLITE, who are once again the major sponsors of this event which is the culminating highlight of the show season. Accommodation is available but rapidly filling up in the immediate area. Don Birch is Show Secretary and Brenton LeProu the Show Manager. There is plenty to see and do in and around Napier and the coach tour should be a cracker! Conveniently for all, the AGM & the Awards Dinner will be held right next door to the show venue. Entries close 10 July.

Reminder to all Clubs!

Do check that your details on the NZ Federation website www.birdclubs.org.nz are updated and 'user-friendly!' Include: first names as well as surnames of key personnel along with their contact numbers and email addresses. Other essential information: meeting venue/time, subs, sale/show dates and a brief paragraph on what your club can offer to potential members.

Buddy Club Allocation

This is the list of clubs allocated to NZ Federation committee members. Please 'use' these people and seek advice and information when required:

Dave Nicholson: Auckland Metro, South Auckland, Huntly, Hamilton, Te Awamutu, Piako, Tauranga.

Stephen Silk: Upper Hutt, Hutt Valley, Wellington & Porirua, Kapiti, Wairarapa, Levin.

Steve Parry: North Shore, Palmerston North, Wanganui, Dunedin, South Otago, Southland.

John Perry: Northland, Whakatane, Tararua, West Coast, Christchurch.

Murray Hodgson: North Taranaki, Stratford, Rotorua, Ashburton, Timaru.

Graham Evans: Poverty Bay, Hastings, Hawke's Bay, Nelson, North Otago.

We Can't Keep Losing Experience!

How many of the following names are familiar? Joe Wilkes, Les Silby, Rex Bint, Allan Gamble, Wally Payne, Shirley Newman, Jake Tilyard, Fred Rix, Bill Rogers, Bill Agnew, Jim McLay, Vic Salter, Bill Hulsegge, Tom Crook, Tom Kennerley, Hugh Nicholson, Bill Bates, Bob Johnston, Des Grant, George Howell, Owen Simpkin.....They were all 'expert' bird breeders/exhibitors and have passed on. With them, in some cases has gone their 'bloodline,' but so has a vast store of knowledge. I firmly believe we cannot let this situation continue. Reading overseas books and trawling through pages on the internet is fine, but all that advice is largely relevant to birdkeeping in Australia, UK, America etc. The NZ Finch Society has produced an excellent booklet on virtually everything to do with Finches as applicable to New Zealand. I think we should produce something similar, divided into sections with each type of bird discussed in some detail as well as the illnesses/treatments, aviary/birdroom design, show advice etc, making use of all the talent currently available AS RELEVANT TO BIRDS AVAILABLE AND CONDITIONS IN NEW ZEALAND! I intend following this up with interested parties and 'experts' while there is still.....TIME!

Aviary Plants

Many birds are so destructive with their beaks and claws, it is almost impossible to establish a balance of birds and plants in your aviary. Try rotating potted shrubs. Finches, softbills and parakeets tend to be less harsh on your planting efforts and even the materials used to build your aviary, than budgies and parrots. In general, the most suitable plants to establish should be hardy, flowering shrubs or trees which can be easily pruned. Deciduous varieties are good to use as winter sunlight can not be impeded by leaves. Planted aviaries are useful additives for the birds' diet with nectar from the flowers, insects can be attracted, while the berries and fruits can be rich in vitamins, minerals and proteins. They can also act as a perch, nest-site, windbreak or even as a refuge from more aggressive species!

Bottle Brush: Ideal for shelter/perching & flowers attract insects

Citrus Trees: Look good, provide shelter/attract insects

Conifers: Dwarf varieties, hardy, excellent nest-sites & shelter

Cotoneaster: Hardy, good for perching & berries

Creepers: Passionfruit vines, Canary creeper good for shade/shelter; honeysuckle attracts insects & birds like the berries

Eucalyptus: Dwarf varieties are hardy, look good, provide shelter/perching, flowers provide nectar & mice hate the smell!

Ferns: Great ground cover & look good

Hibiscus: Ideal! Easily established, perching, attract insects, large flowers for nectar, broad leaves provide windbreaks, takes pruning

Miniature Bamboo: Good in corners for quail & finch nest-sites

NZ Xmas Tree: Hardy, windbreak, good nesting sites, attracts insects

Privet: Hardy, perching, nesting, windbreaks, berries for health, looks good

Tea Tree/Manuka: Growing or cut is ideal for nesting, windbreak, insects

Wattle: Looks good, perching, insects. Don't plant too close to wire as it causes damage!

Perhaps at our Show/Sales we can invite the local garden centre or local growers to offer aviary friendly suitable plants/shrubs etc for sale & this could include ones suitable for discouraging mosquitoes (tansy) As well as being beneficial for our birds, a well planted aviary looks far more attractive to the human eye and in fact, can help make your aviary a showpiece in your back-garden.



This mixed collection enjoy a variety of fresh greenfood daily as well as exploring and nesting in the growing shrubs/tress at the back of the aviary and in their shelter. Do leave a clear 'flight path' for that essential exercise every bird enjoys: flying!

Quote of the Month

Grandson: "Grandfather, which is more important – to love or to be loved?"

Grandfather: "Which is more important to the bird – the left wing or the right wing?"

Lakota Indian Saying.

Marketing Your Club!

With a few exceptions, Bird Clubs in NZ are facing a drop-off in numbers and with that, a whole chain of other problems tend to arise. There are a variety of reasons that have led to this increasing decline and rather than dwell on the problems, we as a movement, should be seeking solutions. **The key focus of all NZ Bird Clubs must be to increase membership!** In succeeding newsletters, I intend putting forward some relatively simple ideas/solutions and by trying some of these and adapting them, I am certain that we will be able to increase membership, thus reducing many of the other related problems.

Marketing in its simplest form is: The process of matching a **product** or **service** with its **market**. The product is: the bird club. The service is: what we can provide eg friendliness at meetings, information at shows, encouraging non-showing members to exhibit. The market is: members of the local community eg potential new members and sponsors.

Marketing can help your Club to: 1) Identify opportunities for growth eg increase membership and funds. 2) Increase participation and enthusiasm of existing members. 3) Attract sponsors. 4) Clearly communicate and raise awareness of exactly what your club has to offer. 5) By becoming more 'visible,' create a positive image & broader profile in the community. 6) Gain wider recognition for being 'pro-active.'

Times have changed but some Clubs have not adapted & seem content to run things as they have always done. So what do people want when they join YOUR BIRD CLUB?

1) Consistent friendly welcome & not being made to feel isolated by the clique few. 2) To see & talk about birds either at your meeting or by being invited to current members' aviaries. 3) To gain knowledge and information, through a range of guest speakers/workshops. 4) To feel they have had the chance to contribute in some way, eg during discussion. 5) Fun, keep the official business to a minimum. 6) The opportunity to buy birds & accessories. 7) To feel they can ask a question or seek advice without 'feeling foolish.' 8) To feel the desire to return!

Tips on Marketing Your Club & Making Meetings Enjoyable.

1) Use local radio and newspaper's community notices section to promote your meetings.

2) Use supermarket noticeboards to give details of your next meeting.

3) Run a poster competition at the local kindergarten/school.

4) Display the winner/s or your own designed poster in high pedestrian traffic areas (eg malls, vets, petshops, schools, resthomes etc).

5) Send your newsletter or club events to local media sources, schools, vets, petshops, i-Sites.

6) Have your membership forms available at every meeting along with your minutes & financial report on a table when people arrive. Ensure every member has several membership forms & encourage them to 'recruit someone new' when they visit them to purchase a bird. Even have an award for the member who recruits the most new members during the year.

7) Consider the location/timing/day-night of your meeting venue and survey your members in case a change may be necessary.

8) Commence each meeting with a 5-10 minute talk by a member on how/why they got in to birds & some tips they can offer. It's best if they can bring along some birds, after all, *bird clubs ARE about BIRDS!*

9) Try to get a range of speakers, covering a variety of topics & subjects. Sometimes, think outside of the square & invite someone from MAF, DoC, vet, petshop, working dogs (police, hearing, sight, sniffers etc)

10) Have an occasional 'special meeting night' when you invite people from the community (eg mayor/councilors, school, retirement village, reporter, other sorts of clubs)

11) Delegate/roster duties, such as supper, welcoming guests/new members, library etc.

12) Introduce a Buy/Sell/Swap board.

13) Periodically, ensure you have all members' correct contact details, especially if you email your newsletter. Lack of contact with members for whatever reason, is one sure way of losing them!

14) Occasionally have a 'meeting with a difference.' For example, an in-house 'Buy/Sell/Swap night, organized workshops on different types of birds, a quiz or 'game night, your own in-house 'show,' ideal for newer members to bring along their birds, have them 'judges/assessed' and this may help encourage them into showing.

15) Remind members to MARKET THE CLUB!