



New Zealand Federation of Bird Clubs (Inc)

NEWSLETTER – JULY 2013

The show season is drawing to a close, culminating with the combined East Coast North Island Bird Clubs National in Napier. For those that have run Nationals, you will appreciate that there is a lot of time, effort, expense, planning, communication, tolerance and basic hard work involved. So well done to all the individuals in this 'team' effort and I hope that you are rewarded with plenty of exhibitors and birds on the bench, a good public turn-out, new members signed up and fine weather! This combined clubs approach to hosting a National may well be the trend for the future and I am sure this is a topic worthy for discussion before too long! It is pleasing to see more people standing for the committee positions and this better geographical spread of nominees can only be good for the hobby. I have heard positive comments about the more pro-active stance taken by the NZ Federation lately and following Stanley Crosby's 3 year term as president, I know we can look forward with confidence to Stephen Silk taking over. Thanks Stanley for your fine work, instigating skype meetings and your willingness to encourage others to 'have-a-go!'

Having said all that, we must be realistic about the current situation in NZ. Some clubs have plenty of members, some more active than others, but the percentage who exhibit birds is actually quite small. My main theme (sorry if I sound repetitive!) is that we must make the hobby as attractive as possible via our Shows, Sales, Meetings and even Newsletters so that a 'new generation' will come through. People will only stay in the hobby if it appeals and that means we must look after all new members, encourage them by helping them with stock and by making them feel that they can contribute to the running of the club. That is why, further on in this newsletter, I have suggested we

actually delegate specific roles to our own committee members.

Having received most Schedules and a fair number of Catalogues, a number of things are apparent. Benching numbers are down, prize money needs more careful scrutiny to ensure it is fair across the board (what is it with some clubs getting rid of 3rd, or in some cases, even 2nd prize?!) and certain types of birds are very scarce on the showbench in some parts of the country, with many sections or classes having very few (in a lot of cases, only one exhibitor) By analyzing Schedules and Catalogues and seeking input from show secretaries and other club officials over perhaps a year or two year period, I believe it is possible to put forward some recommendations as to how we can improve the situation, otherwise more clubs will be sadly forced to put their shows on hold due to lack of helpers, exhibitors, funds or suitable halls. This raises the question. Instead of talking.....no, make that.....arguing.....about which North Island Clubs deserve a weekend showdate to themselves, shouldn't we be discussing the reality of hosting shows by regions? If my understanding is correct, the proposed new showdates (version 4 or is it 5?) will come in to effect from 2015 and will remain in place for a 5 year cycle. Here's a prediction – under the present set-up and according to trends over the last 5 years, several more clubs, like Northland, North Shore, South Auckland and Tauranga, will, for a combination of the reasons just stated, put off holding a show. So what is holding us back from discussing rationally the logic of combining to hold regional shows? You decide on the answer to that one! In the meantime, my biggest fear is that the discussion about North Island showdates will be dominated by selfish and head-in-the-sand local loyalty, rather than a vision for the future wellbeing and survival of the hobby we all love!

Dave Nicholson

Points to Ponder

- 1) All newcomers to exhibiting should be able to enter their birds free-of-charge for the first year.
- 2) Members willing to take other club members birds to shows throughout the year should announce this as early as possible at their club meeting or via their newsletter so that car-pooling can be arranged with a minimal fee charged to help out with expenses.
- 3) Club Schedules should show uniformity in that there is a minimum Best Bird & Runner-up and 3rd prize amount set in each section.
- 4) Specialist Bodies should scrutinize their patronage and move into the 21st century with their allocation. eg no \$1 prizes.
- 5) The National is moved to coincide with the July school holidays which, amongst other advantages, frees up venue availability. Clubs can still hold their own show after the National regardless of when it is!
- 6) Clubs supply an annual report to the Federation, perhaps via their 'buddy liaison person, to include such things as financial status, show report, membership numbers/recruitment, ideas/prospects for the coming year.

Prevent burn-out; encourage fresh ideas – DELEGATE!

Let's be honest! Most clubs are held together by a small, dedicated, often long-serving few and whilst many things change, the ageing process doesn't! To ensure survival, to encourage newcomers to participate and to remain in the club and to avoid staleness, we must DELEGATE. One of the reasons some clubs struggle is because key or influential members are not prepared to hand over areas of responsibility, convincing themselves that there is no one else capable or willing to 'give-it-a-go!' One area that has seen 'forced' change is in the role of the Show Secretary with the show programmes now available on computer. Now that's progress!

So, think of the advantages of delegating and at each club's next AGM, why not consider the following. The Patron, President, Treasurer, Secretary, Show

Secretary and Show Manager all have duties which are fairly standard or well-documented but too often, committee members have no direction or area of responsibility. I suggest that the following 'duties' are allocated to committee members, with each reporting back to the full committee meeting on a regular basis:

- 1) Sponsorship (from within the club, local businesses, charities, organizations)
- 2) Public Relations (keep media informed, collate & circulate the newsletter, arrange guest speakers for club meetings, organize schools' colouring competition or anything similar)
- 3) Membership (initiate new member recruitment programme, liaise with & follow-up on a regular basis all members, especially new ones & those who don't regularly come to meetings or help)
- 4) Kitchen (organize a roster for meeting nights, run the raffle)
- 5) Property (update inventory of & maintain Club equipment, including Club library/resources)

Role of the President

- 1) To chair the monthly meetings and any special meetings
- 2) To liaise with other committee members, especially the secretary & treasurer prior to any meeting
- 3) To formulate (esp with the secretary) an agenda giving adequate notice to all members prior to a committee meeting
- 4) To attempt to settle any disputes within the Club or other related bodies or those outside of the bird fraternity which may impact upon that Club
- 5) To liaise with the secretary in the preparation and circulation of the agenda for the AGM and ensure that the correct procedure is followed at the AGM
- 6) To have the casting vote if any vote is deadlocked and to rule on any issues if in doubt, according to the bird club's constitution or the rules of the NZ Federation of Bird Clubs

- 7) To act in a PR/diplomatic role as far as local club members, other federated clubs or the NZ Federation are concerned
- 8) Welcome visitors to club meetings and judges to the annual show, organize procedure and presentations/speeches at annual show

Upcoming AGM & Committee Nominations

All Clubs will have received the list of nominees for the NZ Federation committee positions. You are advised to discuss these with your parent and/or specialist body club so that your reps at the AGM on Saturday 27 July know which 6 of the 8 nominees to vote for. All other positions on the Federation have been filled because there was only one nominee for each of those positions. Please note that the Friday get-together, the AGM and the Awards Dinner will now take place at the Napier RSA (Corner of Vautier st & Hastings Rd)

Steven Parry, Southland; Murray Hodgson, Ashburton; Graeme Evans, Christchurch; Malcolm Silby, Stratford; David Ingoe, Poverty Bay; Athol Fenton, Te Awamutu; Sharon Burke, Huntly; Dave Nicholson, Auckland Metro

Member Profile: BEAU HOLLYMAN– Hawkes Bay BC.

Having observed his sisters somewhat third rate canaries many years ago, Beau decided that he could do better, so built a small aviary and bought a mixed bag of canaries from the local petshop. Soon after, he was amazed at the number and colours of birds at a bird show he visited in Napier. There, he met a renowned breeder of 'red canaries,' Charlie Hawkins and influenced by his new mentor's experience and knowledge, he set about breeding and showing colour and non colour canaries. Beau comments that Charlie was very happy to share this knowledge 'unlike some exhibitors who would tell you nothing in case you beat them on the showbench!' The only drawback to visiting Charlie, says Beau is that he would serve up the worst coffee imaginable, 'like thick black treacle in which the spoon would almost stand up!' Beau had one of his best breeding years ever in his very first year and in spite of others saying it was just beginners luck, Beau has persevered ever since with some excellent results. Within three years, he had gone from one variety of birds to six and from one aviary to five much

bigger flights, with a special breeding room to follow. Realising that this could all become a bit much, he made the decision to cut down to two types, colour fed and non colour fed. At present, Beau has about 80 birds, a far cry from his early days of well over 200. Following a good deal of success on the showbench and with a natural eye for what constitutes a good bird, Beau became a judge a number of years back. 'The winners say I am a good judge but the losers usually have a different opinion!' He admits that being a judge and keen on showing, has taken him all over the country where he has made a lot of friends, largely through birds.

Beau also offers some ideas on bird health & treatment. Observe your birds constantly and you can pick up very quickly if they are sick. Fluffed up, beak opening & closing & tail bobbing up and down is a sign of air sac mite, which can be proven when you catch them & listen to their breathing. A drop of ivomec sheep drench under the wing, behind the neck or in extreme cases, in its mouth, should do the trick. 'Going light' is awful and can be a symptom of any number of illnesses, with cure being almost impossible. The bird is constantly eating and sleeping and is skinny with a really sharp breastbone. Beau proposes treating any such birds with Sulphur D product from the health shop. Feather mite, found especially in warm, humid breeding rooms can be a problem for adult birds and chicks. They usually feed on the birds blood at night. A liberal spraying of a reputable mite spray will be needed and dusting the nest pads/pans with flea/mite powder prior to the breeding season is recommended. Beau also lets off a borer bomb in his breeding room before any birds are placed in their breeding cages and is confident this remedies many problems before they even start!

*OBITUARY: COLIN GREEN, Auckland Metro.

With regret, we inform members of the passing of our Vice President, Colin Green today. Colin was very knowledgeable in all aspects of birdkeeping and was a judge of several types of birds. Our condolences go to Eric and to his family.*

To all those going to the National in Napier, have a safe journey and an enjoyable time over the whole weekend!