



# New Zealand Federation of Bird Clubs (Inc)

## NEWSLETTER – MAY 2013

A few years back, I asked members of our Club what it was about birds that appealed. We used their replies as part of our push for new members at our Annual Show that year. The most common responses included colour and song, something all the family can enjoy, provides an enjoyable hobby quite separate from the stress of daily living, fun but challenging, each bird has a unique personality, teaches responsibility, educational, birds provide companionship, I enjoy the contacts made through birdkeeping with the shows....and so on. Most of us can probably trace our interest in birdkeeping back to our childhood, with some of the 'older' ones amongst us, remembering back to when most sections were 'quarter of an acre,' weekend shopping was non-existent, there was only one tv channel and when the 'family' (in the traditional sense of the word!) did most things together. However, separate conversations with two people in the last week made me examine just why 'I' am in birdkeeping. Both belong to bird clubs and for obvious reasons, will remain 'anonymous!' I was telling one that I was sorting out some of my older Roller Canaries for my 'retirement aviary.' His response went something like....what for you softie, why don't you just knock them on the head? I replied along the lines that I could never do that, especially since they were part of a 'team' that had done me proud in the breeding room and at the shows over time. He implied that quite a few breeders 'euthanise' their birds when they are deemed too old and some even do it if the bird is not up to the standard they desire. Well, I would rather be called a 'softie' and have some of my favourite old canaries seeing out

their days in my specially designated aviary than have their lives ended so quickly and, in my opinion, so cruelly. The second conversation revolved around how some, usually experienced breeders, 'dispose' of their birds. Constantly I hear from newcomers that it is very difficult to get reasonable stock to start off their collection. Sure, some may expect a top breeder to let them have some of their top birds, but most seem to be reasonable in their approach and requests. He said that many of these top breeders either take them to the local petshop or 'get rid of them in other ways,' rather than let others have them for 'fear of producing better birds or being beaten on the showbench!' Perhaps these brief anecdotes will get all of us to examine just why we are in birds.

*Dave Nicholson*

### National 2013 - Napier – 26-28 July

The Schedule is out for this year's National hosted by the East Coast North Island Bird Clubs: (Taranaki in Dannevirke, Poverty Bay in Gisborne, Hawkes Bay in Napier and Hastings) It is an excellent Schedule with great prizes, a wide range of sponsors, good local background information with accommodation providers and a good itinerary of the weekend's events. The dinner and bus trip look very tempting! Entries close on 12 July with the Show Sec Ray Briggs. A reminder that all remits for the AGM and nominations for the Federation executive and committee should be in to the Federation Secretary, Don Birch, by 31 May.

### Quote of the Month

*'Birds teach us something very important. To whatever height you rise, you will finally come down to the ground.'*  
*Mehmet Ildan*

## Preparing for the Show

**CLUBS!** This is your best opportunity to showpiece the hobby and your own Club. Here's some gentle reminders/tips.

- 1) **Advertise** in your area as much as possible (eg schools, vets, petshops, malls, supermarkets, library, i-site. Make sure all members have a poster for their workplace or car window. Make use of the community notices section in your newspaper or local radio station; send story/pix to your local paper & invite media & local celebs to your show. Signpost streets.
- 2) Make your entrance as **attractive/welcoming** as possible. Have a 'welcome' board up, use articulate well dressed members to meet/greet, have plenty of membership forms available (and on the sales table) and consider offering a special weekend membership deal; hand out NZ Federation brochures on Keeping and/or Showing Birds to families and members of the public who seem particularly interested.
- 3) **Environment** is important! Put up bird identification & description sheets by the actual class of birds, especially important for the hookbeaks and foreign finches. Encourage your members to chat to the public. Follow-up any names given, new members or general enquiries within 48 hours by phone/email.
- 4) At your first meeting after your Show, invite all members to give **feedback** (verbal or written)

### **Preparing for the Show – YOU & your BIRDS!** *Ideas generated from the NZ Cockatiel Society & Kapiti Bird Club with amendments.*

- 1) Decide which Shows you will enter and contact those Clubs for a Schedule. NB the close of entry dates.
- 2) Use the current Yearbook and experienced members of your local Club to help you identify the right class numbers for your birds. Remember SAE with entries/money.
- 3) Make sure your cages are painted (well aired) or clean as this can really help display your birds to their best advantage.

- 4) Select your birds carefully using your own intuition, the Yearbook 'ideal' standards and experienced breeders for advice.
- 5) 'Train' your birds. Don't catch them the night before & throw them into a showcage & expect them to 'perform!' Make sure they have plentiful seed & water supplies. Young birds may need 'treats' by the water to guide/encourage them to drink. Try wearing different clothing, caps/hats etc and different people going up close to your birds so that they get used to various situations. After a few days, hold up their cage & move it around as this is what a judge will do as part of the judging process. Even pack your cages into a box and take them for a drive so they get used to the vehicle's motions.
- 6) The day before the Show, check that the birds' feet and rings are clean. Check the Yearbook for correct placement of the stickers on the cages. Check that you have the required amount of drinkers for the cages you are taking.
- 7) Check benching times and pack your birds in the car so that the cages don't fall over if you have to brake suddenly.
- 8) Remember don't be unprepared or in a last minute rush as your birds will sense this & take longer to settle. Ensure you have your benching slip, a pen and spare drinkers.

*We want to see more young faces like this at our Shows!  
(Courtesy Oliver Li, Auckland Metro Bird Club Annual Show 2012)*



### Meet the NZ Federation Members

**Graham Evans, Committee.** Retired Air NZ aircraft engineer who worked in technical services, training & planning. Christchurch Bird Club, immediate past president and past secretary of NZ Federation. Colour Breeders Society, 22 years as Sec/Treas, Judge; British Mule/Hybrid Society, Judge. Started in birds as a junior, first National 1956. Sees the role of NZ Federation to encourage, enhance & assist parent clubs & specialist bodies. Keen to see increase in membership & to pass on knowledge & enjoyment of the hobby to others.

**Murray Hodgson, Committee.** Secretary & Show Secretary Ashburton Club. Started as a youngster with a pet Magpie then Budgies & Parrots. Doesn't exhibit but has 2 pet parrots. Lived in Auckland till 2000 & was a committee member of the Parrot Society. Believes in encouraging all associated with birds, the clubs and specialist bodies to keep trying to recruit younger members into the hobby in spite of all the other obstacles.

**Stephen Silk, Committee, NZ Fed. website organizer.** Medical Laboratory Scientist, Hutt Hospital. Secretary UH Bird Club, Gloster & Bengalese Societies. Judge of Glosters. Kept Budgies & Red Factors as a youngster, back into birds in mid-90's. Believes the NZ Federation needs to work on its website as a vehicle to keep members & the public informed. Would like to see the Federation work with Biosecurity to finalise an import health standard for the import of birds. Also believes that with few Clubs having the range of resources to host a National, members need to re-think the running of this event to make changes to ensure its survival.

### Club Profile – KAPITI BIRD CLUB

**Pres.** Adam Kake E: [president@kapitibirdclub.org.nz](mailto:president@kapitibirdclub.org.nz)  
**Sec.** Helen Kake 04 298 6291. **Treas.** Don McAlpine 06 364 7067 [www.kapitibirdclub.org.nz](http://www.kapitibirdclub.org.nz) Meet the second Wednesday of each month at Community Centre, Ngahina St, Paraparaumu. Founded 1980. Current Membership 21 single, 20 partnerships/families.

One of the most progressive Clubs in the country with two of the finest people around, Life Members Roy &

Shirley Allerby who have held virtually every position going in the Club since its inception 33 years ago. Kapiti has introduced a Junior Members' meeting at 7pm with their own guest speakers, question time & supper, prior to the main meeting at 7.30pm. The Club does not have an annual show but has an annual exhibition which has become a regular feature on the Kapiti Coast calendar with members and the public invited to display their birds and take part in various bird prize events. Attendance and bird sales were up by 50% this year (13 April) which president, Adam Kake puts down to the Club making a determined effort to promote their 29<sup>th</sup> annual exhibition as widely as possible. This included emails to all local schools, invites to local media & a stint on the local radio station as well as flyers in malls, supermarkets, vets & local shops. Over 500 visitors attended & were impressed with the new layout & the admin of the Club is to be congratulated on this after their review of last year's exhibition on ways to improve looking ahead. Nice to see the young, Kiana Clark with Best Display by a Young Member for her Border Canary and the not-quite-so-young, Tom Edser taking out the Best presented Bird with a Border Canary featuring on the prize list! The Club has a monthly newsletter written in a lively and positive way which is full of information for local members and even other bird clubs. It has its own website, is compiling a data base of birds currently kept by its members and has a wide range of seeds in varying sized bags which it sells to its members. A bonus is that since a number of members only keep one or two birds, the Club packs seed bags to any size so that quality seed can be purchased at a special rate no matter how large or small. Certainly Kapiti continues to be a Club for all ages and interest levels in birdkeeping and it is nice to see that such stalwarts like the Allerbys, Joan Bakker, Joan Stonham, Murray & Jan Davey, Tom & Nola Edser and Rob & June West are still there helping out the newer members. So if you are passing through Paraparaumu on the second Wednesday of any month at around 7.30pm, pop in and say 'hi' to a Bird Club which is well run, has a relatively short but proud history and is prepared to move ahead with the times!

### Woodchopping a winner for Huntly!

The Huntly Bird Club has a proud history & this year will be its 82<sup>nd</sup> Annual Show. In a town of just over 7,000, it is not easy to get sponsorship. Following on from last year's success, we are again cutting and bagging tea tree firewood. We have had a number of working bees and it is very reassuring for the office holders to know we have the support of Club members when they turn up to help. Our latest effort netted us 98 bags in less than 4 hours and a local service station sells it on our behalf and we also sell bags at our Show. The money raised goes directly into prize money for our Show Schedule and we think that this year's is even better than in the past. Our advice to any small Club out there is to think outside of the square, be innovative and use a local resource to raise some funds. It doesn't always have to be about selling raffle tickets or relying on the same few.

Edited report by Derry Hedley & Sharon Burke, Huntly.

### H7N9 – Bird Flu

H7N9, which was first notified in China in March 2013, is a serotype of the species Influenza virus A (avian influenza or 'bird flu.'). Several cases, including deaths from associated respiratory problems (pneumonia) were reported. These have all been in mainland China and as the World Health Organisation has confirmed, the H7N9 virus has been found only in chickens, ducks and pigeons at live poultry markets and that no migratory or domestic avian birds have tested positive. I have raised this subject because the last big 'bird flu' caused a lot of disquiet amongst bird breeders and exhibitors and the population at large in the UK and in parts of the USA. At our Shows this year, it is wise to have members of your Club familiar with the situation and to assure anyone who raises the topic of 'bird flu,' that this latest 'outbreak' is not present in any birds in NZ and that they are completely safe to visit Shows and to get involved in birdkeeping here.

### 2013 Yearbooks

These have all sold out, so if members of your Club missed out, make sure they get in early for the 2014 edition.

### Brief Tweets!

Dunedin Bird Club hosted a successful 'young bird show' which was well attended and revealed some promise for the upcoming shows. Members also enjoyed an 'aviary crawl' further south to Invercargill, so a busy April for the Club and best wishes for your 132<sup>nd</sup> Annual Show 18-19 May.

Southland Bird Club produce an interesting newsletter and the last contains some excellent articles on the Roller Canary, Toxins in pet birds and Line Breeding.

Researchers at Waikato University have completed a very detailed study on mice and their efforts to raid nests of birds. Main studies were conducted involving canary, zebra finch & quail eggs. If anyone is interested, in the results or the research in general, please contact me & I will send it to you. With the onset of winter, it is crucial that we make sure our bird rooms and aviaries are as 'rodent proof' as possible!

The Federation is looking at the concept of producing a book on cage & aviary birds as applicable to the NZ scene, with input from some of the top breeders & exhibitors in the country. Specialist bodies have been asked to recommend people who may be able to contribute to this publication. If you feel you have the knowledge and expertise to add something in your field of interest (eg type birds, line breeding, aviary design, nutrition etc) please contact Dave Nicholson, [d.nic@xtra.co.nz](mailto:d.nic@xtra.co.nz) Ph: 09 576 2535

A number of Club Schedules have been downloaded onto the NZ Fed. website ([www.birdclubs.org.nz](http://www.birdclubs.org.nz)) I have asked Club secretaries to forward me their Club Schedule and most have done so, but there are still a number who haven't as yet. I intend doing a report on these for an upcoming newsletter & the feedback may well be relevant for the discussion on allocating North Island showdates for the future at this year's AGM!

The Show season kicked off with Rotorua & Timaru. I have heard very positive reports from the Rotorua Show with plenty of visible advertising including the local tv station, lots of public in attendance, a friendly welcome from Rotorua Club members, good benching numbers and great bird sales, so well done Rotorua!

