



# SEPTEMBER 2020 NEWSLETTER

## Nepean Budgerigar Society

### UPCOMING EVENTS

16<sup>th</sup> October 7.30pm  
BCV Triennial AGM

(subject to restrictions)



### PRESIDENTS REPORT FROM JOHN FREEMAN

Welcome to September and Spring when your budgies should be jumping out of their skins to breed. The days are getting longer, and the sun is shining, and your birds will benefit greatly from a daily dose of UV if possible.

It seems like such a long time since we have been able to go to shows and auctions, or to just visit each other and enjoy the birds and have a good old chat. Hopefully, it will not be too much longer until we can visit each other. But as for the shows and auctions, who knows they maybe later this year or even next year.

I have been watching some of the online budgie auction results with some birds going for some very high prices. Be very careful if you are wishing to purchase birds this way. As unless you know the breeder personally, or you

can get in contact with the breeder prior to bidding, you may not get what you have hoped for, as still photos can be deceiving. If I can give any advice, wait until people can get out and about again, and get in contact with some breeders or wait until the auctions start up again, there should be plenty of birds available.

The BSSA have been conducting virtual online aviary visits each month to some of Australia's best and over sea's most successful breeders, if you have time have a look on the web site of the BSSA for a very informative watch, each one goes a bit over an hour but well worth the effort for a wealth of online learning. The website is [www.bssainc.org.au](http://www.bssainc.org.au)

Hope to see you all soon.

John Freeman

**A big welcome to our new Nepean member Brad Griffon!**

**Our club members look forward to meeting you soon.**

Nepean Budgerigar Society

Would like to



You!

## [New Member Enquiry](#)

It has been wonderful to see such an increase in enquiry the past few months. Some enquiry is for membership, others have been in relation to help finding local breeders to purchase budgies as pets.

While we have been in lockdown, and so restricted to our homes, people are realizing they need a home hobby! Some are revisiting past passions from their youth, while others are discovering their feathered friends for the first time. Either way, it is good to see our hobby growing! Looking forward to our club members being able to catch up to meet out new members.

## [Current Restrictions](#)

In line with the current restrictions, all Nepean club events are still 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. This is also the case with other club events, and the BCV State UBC Show.

## [2021 National Young Bird Show](#)

The BCV have confirmed that Victoria will be hosting the 2021 National Young Bird Show. The ANBC made the decision to push back the 7 year rotation one year so Victoria did not miss out.

## [BCV Triennial Annual General Meeting](#)

*(This is subject to lifting of Covid restrictions allowing it to still go ahead, you will be kept informed of any rescheduling / changes )*

***All welcome!***

When: 16th October, 2020 - Friday 7.30pm

Where: Kingston Trophies Boardroom 141 Woodlands Dr, Braeside VIC 3195

Closing Date for Nominations will be Wednesday, 2nd of October, 2020 at Midnight to "The BCV Secretary"

Nomination Form is available from your Club Secretary on request, the completed form needs to be sent to the BCV Secretary:

BCV Secretary,  
James Smith

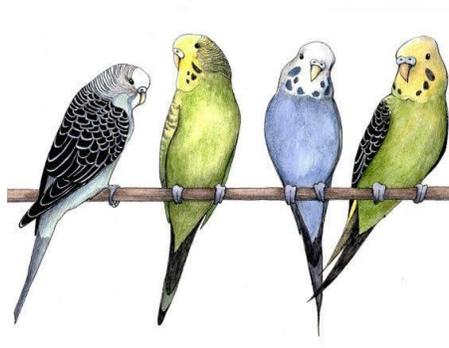
PO Box 5129, Cranbourne, VIC, 3977  
OR email [budgeman77@hotmail.com](mailto:budgeman77@hotmail.com)

## Monthly Chuckle...

**What was born to succeed? A budgie with a blunt beak!**



*There was an elderly couple who in their old age noticed that they were getting a lot more forgetful, so they decided to go to the doctor. The doctor told them that they should start writing things down so they don't forget. They went home and the old lady told her husband to get her a bowl of ice cream. "You might want to write it down," she said. The husband said, "No, I can remember that you want a bowl of ice cream." She then told her husband she wanted a bowl of ice cream with whipped cream. "Write it down," she told him, and again he said, "No, no, I can remember: you want a bowl of ice cream with whipped cream." Then the old lady said she wants a bowl of ice cream with whipped cream and a cherry on top. "Write it down," she told her husband and again he said, "No, I got it. You want a bowl of ice cream with whipped cream and a cherry on top." So he goes to get the ice cream and spends an unusually long time in the kitchen, over 30 minutes. He comes out to his wife and hands her a plate of eggs and bacon. The old wife stares at the plate for a moment, then looks at her husband and asks, "Where's the toast?"*



## *This Month's Article*

### **Feeding & Weaning Chicks**

Once hatched, the nest box must provide a secure home for the first thirty to thirty-five days of a chick's 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 pedialyte 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 an 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.

**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

Website : [www.nepeanbudgerigarsociety.org](http://www.nepeanbudgerigarsociety.org)