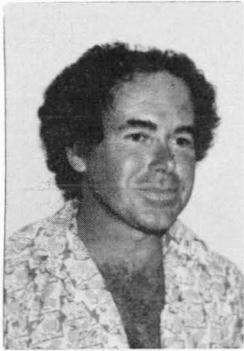




# agapornis acres

by Lee Horton

## AGAPORNIS ROSEICOLLIS THE PEACH FACE LOVE BIRD



Lee Horton

The most domesticated of the Agapornis family is the Peach Face (*Agapornis roseicollis*). Today, after many generations in our aviaries, the Peach Face have proven themselves to be consistent breeders, with good fertility and low mortality. We, as aviculturists find them to be good parents with few diseases or feather problems.

In recent years the Peach Face has produced many mutations that, along with easy care, and good breeding results,

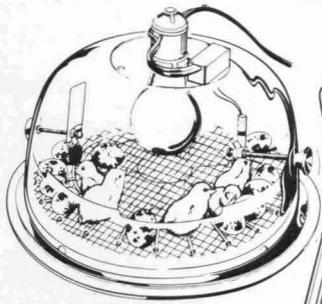
make them a very popular aviary bird. The First mutation to be established was the Pied form. This was done here in Southern California. In Japan the Yellow was established. They called the Peach Face "Cherryheads" so in turn they named their mutation "Golden Cherryheads or Imperial Cherryheads". Today with regard to other mutations that have occurred and also the combination forms that are being produced, I feel that we have here a misnomer. This mutation should be called "yellow" or "dilute yellow". I personally have a preference for the term dilute since the bird is not a pure yellow like the Lutino, but dilute meaning that it has some green in the pigment. This is also further intensified by the fact that there is such a diversity in the depth and purity of the color. Recently, upon close comparison, I feel that we have more than one mutation involved here. For this reason, I have set up

certain pairs for test breeding this season. This should prove that there is a greying mutation. This would be a bird halfway between yellow and green, similar to the greying mutation in the Budgerigar. To further complicate this color of yellow we now have also another new mutation that has occurred, totally unrelated to the other. This mutation I call "Cinnamon" It occurred in a commercial aviary in Texas. The body color of this bird is a light apple green, not yellow like the dilute yellow. The wings are more gold and their flights are cinnamon colored instead of greyish white as in the dilute yellow. The rump of this bird is a cobalt blue instead of the turquoise white of the dilute yellow.

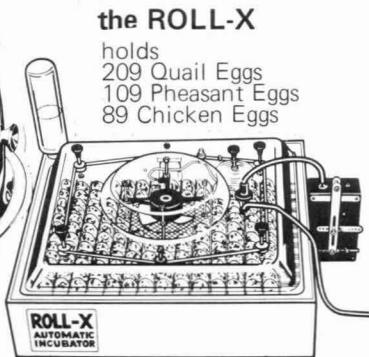
The next mutation I will discuss is totally unrelated to any form of yellow, it is a "Blue". This mutation occurred and was established in Germany. It is not the cobalt blue of the Black Masked but a beautiful turquoise blue with an apricot forehead in place of the usual red.

The last mutation, which is probably the most striking, is the Lutino. This bird is a pure golden yellow with a red forehead and red eyes. It occurred here in San Diego County and has been established by David West and a very few other aviculturists.

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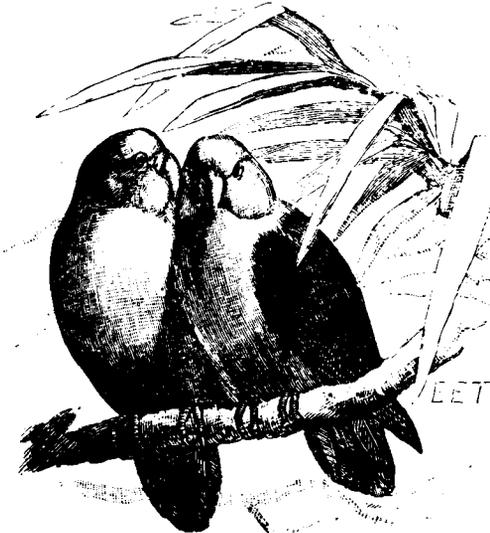
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Many other reports of mutations have occurred from time to time, but these have never been established. The newest in this category is the "olive". Some col-



lectors in Holland have these. From the description received, it is brownish green in color. It is not an established mutation, and because of this, it is difficult to obtain. Attempts are now in the process to get some of these birds in the country so that we can have another color form of Peach Face established here.

Combinations of two or more of the above mutations on a single bird will produce, in its visible form, still more color variations.

The pied and the Blue together produce a beautiful bird. The light areas are pale lemon yellow and the dark areas turquoise blue. The forehead is apricot and the rump cobalt blue. This bird in its lightest forms is truly a very striking sight.

The Yellow forms and Blue also produce interesting colors. The dilute yellow and Blue produce a very pale blue, or as I prefer to call it, a dilute white. (This bird also is being called the "silver Cherry-head.") The dilute white also ranges a great deal in depth and purity of color as does the dilute yellow. Once again I feel that we can produce a greywing version of this combination.

The Cinnamon and Blue combined on the same bird has not yet been produced. The cross is now being made in our aviaries. The results, I feel, will be far more attractive than the dilute Yellow and Blue combination — the dilute White. The Cinnamon in the blue form should be very pale turquoise, not greyish as in the dilute white. It should in turn have a Cobalt blue rump of good depth and Cinnamon colored flights, which should stand out much better on this blue bird. The forehead will be a light apricot in color. This should be a truly beautiful bird and a great addition to our "new"

color forms of Peach Face. Another note that should be added on the Cinnamons is that unlike the dilute yellows or the dilute whites, the Cinnamon is always a very even shade of color and all birds are exactly the same depth of color.

Combining the Dilutes (white or yellow) or the Cinnamons with the Pies is not advisable in my opinion. The true beauty of the Pies is in the contrast of the light and dark areas on the bird. Thus, in these paler forms this contrast of color would be lost. The dilute Yellow and Pied form has already been produced primarily with the goal of a more pure yellow. However, with the arrival of the Lutino mutation, with its perfect color, this should not be necessary.

The Lutino is truly a dynamic mutation in any Parrot type bird and the Lutino Peach Face is no exception. The body is pure golden yellow, the forehead and the eyes are red, and the flights and the rump near white. This mutation is now being bred in small numbers, and hopefully in a few years many aviculturists will be able to have them. The Lutino and the Blue have already been crossed and soon this new color should appear. A great deal of discussion has taken place as to what this bird will look like. Many insist that it will be an Albino, that is, a pure white bird with red eyes. I feel that it will be a pale lemon yellow in body color, a color that should be very much like the lightest lemon yellow of the Blue Pied. Only time will tell. In any case, it will be another lovely addition to our color variations of Peach Face.

The Olive color of the Peach Face holds great hope for new color combinations, even though the bird itself is not an attractive color. In the Pied form, there would be much greater contrast between the light and dark areas. In the dilute form, I feel the bird would have a deeper and more golden yellow color. In the Cinnamon, the apple green body color would be altered to a more brownish shade, and, considering the Cinnamon flights, it could be a very interesting bird. But most of all the hope lies in the production of a new Blue form. The Olive hopefully, as with the mutation in the Budgerigar, will have an added dark factor. If this is so in the blue form, we may be able to produce a much deeper shade of blue. Hopefully it will be more Cobalt in color. Then again, we may only produce a blue that is very grey, yet deeper in color. Whatever the results are, the excitement is still there for yet more color variations.

In the next issue we will discuss the genetics and proper matings of these new colors, as well as the more established older colors. ■

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