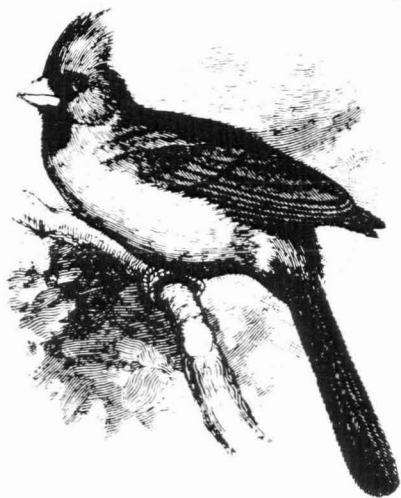


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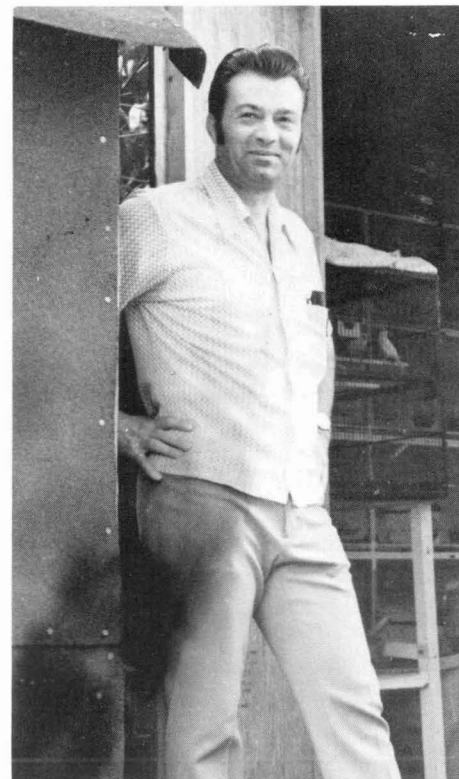
## A.F.A. Visits A Member's Aviaries

by Jerry Jennings

In the canary fancy there are numerous options open to the breeder. He can breed for type, song, or color. In the latter category a great deal of enthusiasm has developed and been expressed through the formation of societies devoted exclusively to care and breeding of nu-color canaries.

One of the better known and more successful nu-color canary breeders is Domenic Tenuta — a native of Cosenza, Italy, a small town in the district of Calabria located near the heel of the Italian "boot".

*Domenic Tenuta at door of breeding room.*





*Nu-color canaries  
feeding on comfrey.*

Domenic arrived in the U.S. with his wife, Ida, in July 1954, settling in Chicago. After returning home to Italy twice "to stay" — once for four months — Domenic decided the American lifestyle was too much to his liking and moved to Southern California, where he purchased a home in the city of Hawthorne.

Birds were a part of Domenic's life from his earliest days as a child. Southern Italy is the wintering grounds for a great number of European finches. As a young boy Domenic learned to hand rear baby birds taken from nests in Cosenza. European Goldfinches were quite common and, prized for their song, were kept as pets by the local inhabitants. Often families would remove Goldfinch nests from nearby trees and place them in cages set in the kitchen window. The undaunted parents would continue to feed the babies through the cage bars and sing endlessly to those indoors.

Domenic's uncle had been a canary fancier for a number of years and influenced Domenic as a young boy to take up canary breeding. When Domenic was fifteen, his uncle gave him a pair of yellow canaries, which began a hobby lasting seventeen years until Domenic emigrated to the U.S.

Life in Chicago was very busy for Domenic with his new job, language, and the rigors of beginning life anew. Consequently, very little time or space was available for birds. Once he decided to become a permanent resident of the U.S. Domenic began to think of returning to the fancy. Shortly after moving to his new home in California Domenic's first breeding room was under construction and a pair of Red Factor Canaries was acquired. From that point the collection has expanded.



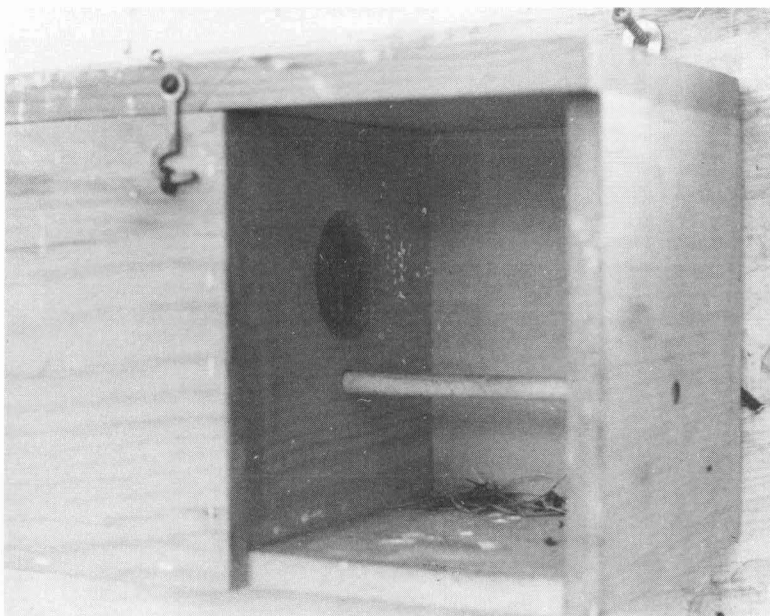
*Inside breeding room.*



*Male Venezuelan Black-hooded Red Siskin*

In 1969 Domenic imported from Italy a variety of then rare canary mutations including Inos, Bronze, Ivory, and Green Pastels from which he has developed a good breeding stock. In 1974 he acquired a Satinet carrier, which led to his present stock of that color mutation. In addition to the above varieties he also breeds Opals and is specializing in a "Carnation Pink", he says is a combination of Red-Orange, Agate, Ivory, and Opal.

*continued on next page*



*Lady  
Gouldian  
nest box.*

On top of the canaries Domenic keeps a few finches including Lady Gouldians, European Goldfinches, and, of particular interest, Venezuelan Black-hooded Red Siskins, which are on the Endangered Species List. He hopes to help establish the Venezuelan Siskin as a viable captive breeding population.

The Tenuta canaries are cared for meticulously. Aviaries and cages are spotlessly maintained — the birds in excellent health, thanks to a well-rounded diet. Supplementing the usual seed requirements Domenic provides a Romaine Lettuce, Chicory, Comfrey — all grown in his garden, and corn on the cob, which the canaries especially enjoy. All the canaries are color-fed with canthaxanthin in the water and in the nestling food, wherein the latter case it is first diluted with cornmeal before being added to the mixture.

Domenic's nestling food recipe is as follows:

- 2 cups bread crumbs
- 1 cup high protein Gerber's Baby Food
- ½ cup wheat germ
- 3 oz. 100% Soya flower
- 3 oz. yellow cornmeal
- 3 oz. non-fat dry milk
- 3 oz. poppy seed
- 1 tsp. Torumel Yeast
- 2 tsp. Vionate Pet Vitamins
- 4 oz. Quaker Oats

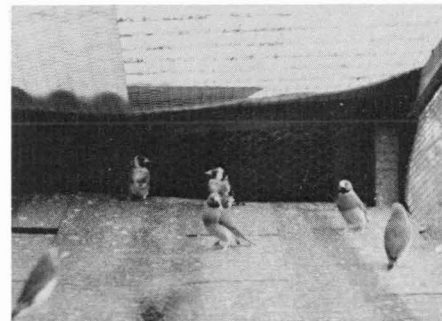
Mix the above thoroughly, boil ten eggs for five minutes, then allow to stand in water until cool. Mix cooled eggs to above mixture. Number of eggs may vary according to moisture content desired. The nestling food without the eggs may be fed daily to the birds. During breeding season, however, the eggs should be included.

Domenic's breeding program has certainly proven productive. In 1975 he reared over three hundred birds, which he ships all over the continental U.S., Hawaii, and Puerto Rico. He is a nationally known exhibitor and will enter birds in the National Cage Bird Show in Elizabeth, New Jersey, this Fall.

A successful bird breeder is usually a strong supporter of bird clubs and Domenic is no exception. In addition to A.F.A., he also belongs to the Southern California Bird Club, Cascade Canary Breeders Association (Washington state), Great North American Color Bred Judges Association, and the National Institute of Red-Orange Canaries.

Domenic currently works for American Airlines as a maintenance engineer and hopes eventually to move to larger quarters, where he will have room to expand his hobby.

As Domenic Tenuta grows in the fancy, the fancy will surely grow. He is always ready to encourage and assist other breeders and would welcome correspondence from those who need advice or have interesting ideas to share. He may be contacted through A.F.A. and we are sure aviculture will benefit from his continued contributions. ■



*Lady Gouldians and Goldfinches.*



*Indoor aviary for holding canaries.*

*Collection of Domenic's Nu-color canaries.*

