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Canary Culture

by Tony Bucci

In this article, we'll discuss the Crested canary and its genetic makeup. Crested canaries can be traced back to the seventeenth century. Some of the earlier varieties that carried Crest included Lancashire and Norwich canaries. The most recent of the type breeds which carries Crest is the Gloster canary.

When referring to Crested Gloster, it is proper to call it CORONA, and the plain head (Crest bred) is referred to as the CONSORT. Male or Female can be Consort and/or have Corona. The Crest that we breed on canaries is a flat round rosette type, therefore better named by Gloster terminology as Corona. Genetically, Corona or Crest is heterozygous dominant. This semi lethal-dominant

characteristic is the same as in dominant white canary. Knowing this characteristic, we should not mate Crest x Crest. Mating Crest to Crest will produce 25% of chicks which will probably die.

Please refer to Fig. 1. Here we can see mating 1-3 which has a double dose of Crest referred to as lethal chick. Proper mating should include the plain head (Crest bred). Crest bred is the plain head which is the result of Crest x Plainhead mating.

Refer to Fig. 2. Here we can see Crest x Plainhead mating and the four theoretical results based on mathematical averages. The result is 50% Crest and 50% Plainhead (Crest bred).

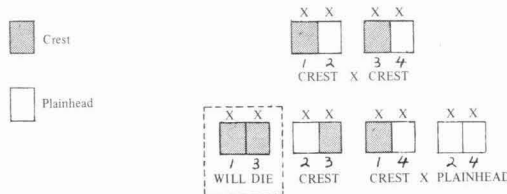


Figure 1.

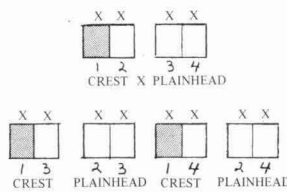


Figure 2.

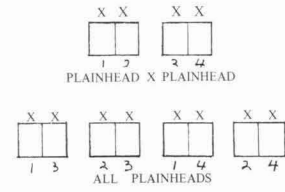


Figure 3.



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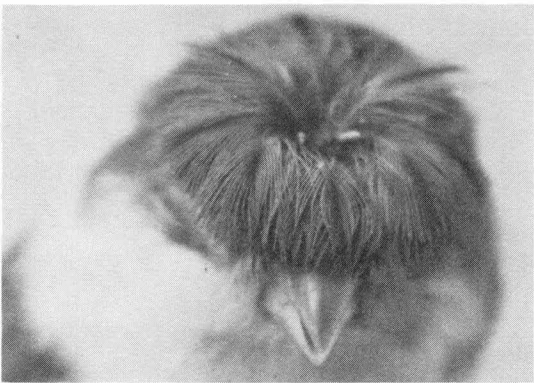
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photos of Crested Canary by Toni Buccini

If we analyze the schematics in Fig. 1, 2, and 3, we can see that Corona is always HETEROZYGOUS due to the lethal factor. A HETEROZYGOTE is the technical name used in genetics to describe a CARRIER. Therefore a Corona is always a carrier of a Plainhead. A Plainhead (Consort), even though Crest bred when mated to another Plainhead, will always produce all Plainheads. Therefore, a Plainhead is HOMOZYGOUS. A HOMOZYGOTE is a technical name used in genetics for the bird which breeds true to its looks.

We can conclude that we need a Crest to produce a Crest, and that two plainheads will not produce a Crest. Also we must use a Plainhead (Crest bred) to produce a good Crest. If we do not use Crest bred Plainheads, we will produce a very bad Crest. A Crest bred Plainhead will contribute to the quality of the Crest. Contribution will be in the form of a larger Crest and better shaped Crest (Corona), as indicated in pictures. The pictures are of a Gloster Corona.



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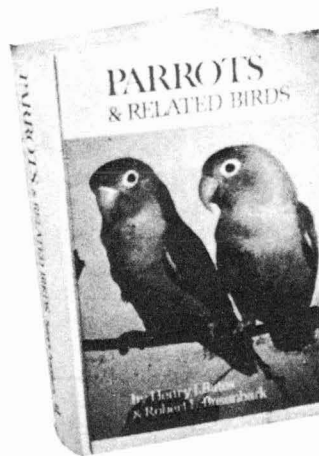
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