

# Make a Place for Finches

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With the steady decline of imports for a variety of reasons (which I need not drill into you here) will come the steady decline of avian species available in the U.S., especially finches and softbills. Although this sounds quit obvious, have you, as an aviculturist, thought about it?

While we are all busy scrambling around for a particular parrot species, during the time when imported birds are still available, have we thought about the \$10 a pair Red-eared Waxbills or the \$20 a pair Strawberry Finches, Green-singers and the like? These birds have been available through the years in such numbers and at such low prices, that only the true finch breeders or those that enjoy a garden aviary have tried to work with them.

Many Australian finches have found their place in aviculture. Although some are imported from European breeders, the abundance are produced in self-sustaining captive breeding populations here in the U.S. Prices on most have remained stable and many breeders work with them because of the nice price they can bring, \$75 a pair and up.

But why work with \$10 a pair species? There is no profit or has not been until now. Prices will, however, soar in the future as not only will imports stop, but many breeders will not be able to produce these birds because, we, as aviculturists, have not spent the time to understand their needs, which often are not necessarily similar to those of their Australian counterparts.

You need not be a "finch" person

to set up a place to work with finches. You only need to be an aviculturist or a bird lover who doesn't want to lose sight of a beautiful species. Most finches are not difficult to care for and do not require a lot of room. They can be kept in cages, in indoor aviaries and outdoor flights. They can be kept as individual pairs, some can be kept in colonies, while many do well in a mixed collection. The mixed collection can include other types of finches, doves, softbills and many hookbills including cockatiels, Neophemas and other Australian parakeets. Finches are quiet and most human neighbors won't complain about the noise your finches make. And now you have even more motivation for working with finches because think of all the profit you can make breeding Orange-checked Waxbills when they claim the price of \$100 a pair or Cordon Bleus at \$125 a pair.

So, let your greed take over and when you see a pair of Tri-colored Nuns at the pet store for \$30 a pair, buy them and don't think, "Gee, I could be buying these wholesale for half the price," because can you?●



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