

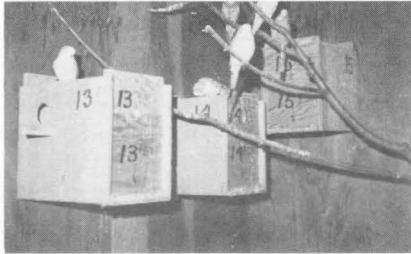
FRANK'S FEEDER

by Frank Miser

A SUCCESS STORY

Since I have received so many questions on the breeding of parrakeets, I would like to outline one successful breeding method and hopefully answer many of the questions.

The first consideration is the aviary required. Let's assume we start with 20 pairs of birds. The aviary should be 5 to 8 feet wide, 8 to 12 feet deep, and 6 to 8 feet high. One half should be totally enclosed, and the other half covered with 1/2 x 1/2 aviary netting or welded wire. Since 30 nest boxes are required, 1/3 more nests than hens, ample support area should be provided. Two feeders and plenty of perches are required. For nest boxes, I recommend the larger ones usually referred to as the English nest box. It is twice the size, has a perch all the way through, an inside perch, and the concave bottom. The entrance hole is on the side, and to the rear, so no other female can dream up trouble.



These budgies make the most of English nest boxes. Youngsters and parents have plenty of room to move around inside.

Second, you need 20 females and 21 males, in good condition, between 8 months and 2 years old, not any older, and not any younger. You may have to buy babies and hold them. With these birds you are going to build your own strong, healthy strain.

Third, feed them the best food you can buy, which is the least expensive way to go. If parrakeet mix is used, be sure it is at least 40% Canary, and not more than 10% oats, the balance in a very good grade of Millet. I recommend grated raw carrot each morning, enough to last the birds 30 minutes to an hour. It will take the birds a week or so to get used to them, so be sure you take them out after a while. Plenty of health grit, real cuttlebone, and fresh water are required.

Fourth, put up your English nest boxes as stated above (or small type). Your birds should all be in good condition and most all will go right to nest. Now the important part of this system, **SAVE YOUR FIRST CLUTCH.** After they have been flying with their parents for two or three weeks, put them into another aviary and save them. Your parent birds have gone

back to nest, and as soon as their second clutch is out flying at least a week, sell this second clutch. Now take your nest boxes down, or if you are using the English nest, remove the back, and your birds can rest. Let them rest for 2-1/2 months, then put the nest back into place. Raise a third and fourth clutch of babies and sell both clutches as they are old enough to market. Also, important, sell these breeders at the same time you sell the fourth clutch of babies. Now you can put the first babies to work in the aviary you just sold the parents out of. You will need more nests, or maybe another aviary, because you will have more breeders, since they more than reproduce themselves on their first clutch.

When your first clutches of babies come off the nest from this new set of breeders, save them as you did before. Continue the same pattern as above, 1st clutch save, 2nd clutch sell, 2-1/2 month rest, sell 3rd & 4th clutches, and also the breeders after the 4th clutch. Please use all your spare time building aviaries, for every saved clutch will increase your flock. You can adjust your putting up of nest boxes so you will have the greatest amount of salable babies in the spring and fall, and your smallest amount in July and August, when the demand and price is low.

This method of breeding parrakeets has been used in Southern Calif. for four years. In the third year the breeder put 210 pair to work, 208 pair had full clutches of 8-1/2 birds per nest average, and on this clutch he sold 1850 babies on the wholesale market. About half of them were rare, bringing more profit. No crawlers, no sick birds.

It is very hard for most breeders to sell their breeding birds when they are just in their prime, but you are saving a 3 month rest period which they would need, and you are selling them before they develop tumors, killing habits, arthritis, obesity, and above all, laziness. Also a two year old bird eats much more seed than a young bird.

To get my best possible answer for your bird breeding problem, be as explicit and descriptive as possible.

Write to: Frank Miser

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