

Cinnamon Quakers: A New Mutation

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I believe that my wife and I are the first people to breed a new mutation of Quaker Parakeets. They are cinnamon in coloration and are definitely different in color from normal Quakers. The few people that I have shown them to also agree that they are very beautiful birds.

My wife and I have been breeding Quaker Parakeets for about five years. I became interested in them after talking to Mike Underwood of Avi-Sci pelleted diets. Mike said that Quakers are easy to breed, make good parents and the babies are exceptionally tame when hand-fed.

We purchased a few pairs of Quakers from a bird farm in Florida and set them up in a breeding situation.

We had fairly good success and were pleased with the birds and the babies, which indeed were very tame and made affectionate pets.

In April 1988, I noticed a different looking chick in one of our nest boxes. It had light yellow down,

whereas the others had the normal grayish-green down at hatching to a few weeks old.

The parents were visually normal in coloration except that one of the birds had a pied feather on its wing. It disappeared after the bird's first moult. Unfortunately, we did not think anything of it and we did not remove it to check its sex. Looking back, I would have checked its sex and kept all of the young they produced. We would have even kept the young that looked normal.

When the chick feathered out, we visually observed that the bird was definitely different in coloration from the others. All of its body feathers were a lighter lime-green, and the top of its head and bib area were almost yellow in color. The color of its nails and beak were lighter than normal, and it had a light yellow-white band running across its wing on the primary and secondary flight feathers.

I talked to Tony Silva in 1989 about

the birds and he seemed to think that they were cinnamon mutations even though they did not have red eyes. He said that many New World parrots showing the cinnamon mutation color do not have red eyes.

When one breeder we talked to said the baby was sick with a liver disease or was lacking something in its diet, we decided to have the bird checked by our vet. He concluded that there was nothing wrong with its diet which consisted of pellets and an addition of soft fresh fruits and vegetables. He also did blood tests, gram stains and cultures all of which turned out normal.

All the chicks produced by this pair have been held back since we noticed the first one in 1988. Some of the chicks in each nest were normal looking while others were cinnamon in coloration.

After they were all over 1-1/2 years old, I took them to one of Dr. Scott McDonald's sexing clinics in Toledo,



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The cinnamon (left) Quaker Parakeet appears to acquire more yellow coloration in the head as they go through each succeeding molt.



When first reproducing the cinnamon Quaker, the birds showing this coloration were all hens. This mutation of the Quaker Parakeet does not have red eyes.

Photos by Tom and Karen Nemerovskiy



The Nemerovskys also bred a different mutation that appears pied. Further generations will prove if this is a true mutation.



Back view of birds in top right photo.

Ohio and had all of them sexed. They both included the cinnamons and the normal colored young.

All of the cinnamons were hens and all of the normals were males. This further proves that they are, indeed, cinnamons. The father must be a cinnamon carrier and his offspring would genetically be cinna-

mon hens and normal looking males that possibly carry the cinnamon gene.

We now have all of the new mutations paired in test mating situations. We can now possibly start a strain of pure breeding cinnamons which would include both male and female birds.

As the cinnamons grow older, the yellowish areas of the head and bib seem to be acquiring more of a pure yellow coloration as they go through each new molt. Their breast feathers, like other cinnamons, seem a little rough-looking.

We also have recently bred a baby Quaker from another pair that has large pied areas on its wings and chest. This bird will also be held back for test breeding in hopes of breeding Pied Quaker Parakeets in a true strain.

The pied baby is still young and we have not had it sexed.

I will update our findings after we have some young from our test pairings. ●

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