



The Avicultural Society of New South Wales (ASNSW)

(Founding in 1940 as the Parrot & African Lovebird Society of Australia)

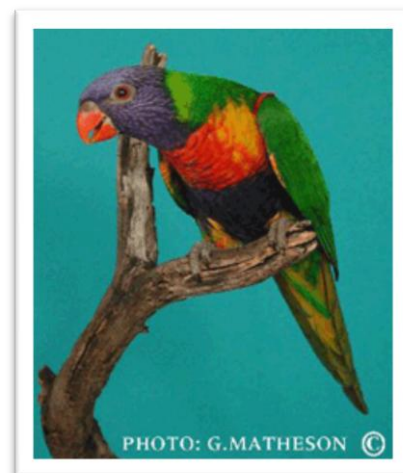
PO Box 248, Panania NSW 2213, Australia

Rainbow Lorikeets and their Mutations (Trichoglossus haematodus)

Article and photos supplied by Glenn Matheson

The rainbow lorikeet has been and still is a very popular and desirable parrot. The reasons for this are its personality and clown like character, its ease of keeping, hardiness and of course the beauty of its plumage.

Over a period of time we have seen different colour mutations come to light such as olive, jade, blue-fronted, cinnamon and of course a blue, which for the time being is lost to aviculture. I believe these mutations enhance the keeping and fascination of the rainbow as some are just as beautiful, if not more so, than the original. One such mutation is the cinnamon which was first bred and established by Bill Connor and Russell McAllister from Cessnock in NSW Australia.



In June of 1995 I was fortunate enough to purchase a cinnamon cock and split hen from Bill and Russell. These were placed in a suspended cage but were only young, the cock being the cinnamon was 4 months and the split was 7 months old. The waiting game had to take place before any breeding was to eventuate. The pair first laid in July 1996, the age of the cock was now 17 months. The eggs were then put in the incubator, unfortunately but not surprisingly, only one of the two eggs was fertile with this chick being a split. They laid again three weeks later and both were fertile with one proving to be our first cinnamon. We kept the first couple of cinnamons and out crossed them with totally unrelated stock. We now have enough unrelated stock to further enhance the mutation list by mating a cinnamon to an olive to which a mustard will be produced.

The colour changes that have occurred within this mutation are stunning with the normal green being replaced with a rather subtle lime, the blue head and abdomen is replaced with lilac and their feet are lightly coloured. This mutation is sexually dimorphic with the cock being a lighter lime than the hen. They are recessive in inheritance so one coloured bird, cock or hen, with the opposite split will produce cinnamon and splits in both sexes of the progeny (see table below for possible results). I'm not sure if it's good luck or good stock (I would call it good stock), but as you can see from the photos you can have a good run of cinnamons. Out of the last 8 chicks, 7 have been cinnamon.

On hatching, cinnamon chicks are easily distinguishable from normal rainbows. The normal rainbow hatches with a wispy silver down which changes to a thick grey secondary down at around 10 days of age, their feet and their nails are dark and beak is black. The cinnamon on the other hand hatches with a white wispy down which is replaced by a thick white secondary down, their feet and nails are light and they have (what I call) a horn coloured beak. The cinnamons' eyes are heading towards a plum where-as the normal has a definite black eye.

As I previously mentioned we rear nearly all our chicks. In doing so we have tried a wide range of hand-rearing formula's and have found Lake's combined with Heinz apples and mixed vegetables, to work extremely well. This is given from 7 days of age until weaning is completed. From hatching the chicks are fed Hartman's solution for the first 2 days. The Hartmans is then replaced with Ensure mixed with distilled water to day 6.

These results can be expected with the following pairings:

cinnamon x cinnamon = 100% cinnamon.

cinnamon x normal = 100% normal split cinnamon.

normal split x cinnamon = 50% cinnamon, 50% normal splits.

normal split x normal split = 25% cinnamon, 50% normal, 25% normal split.

The problem with this mating is you cannot tell what is normal and what is split.

By introducing an olive the following results will prevail:

cinnamon x olive = 50% normal split cinnamon, 50% olive split cinnamon.

olive split x cinnamon = 25% normal split, 25% cinnamon, 25% mustard, 25% olive split.

I will stop it there as I could go on and on with the different split combinations.

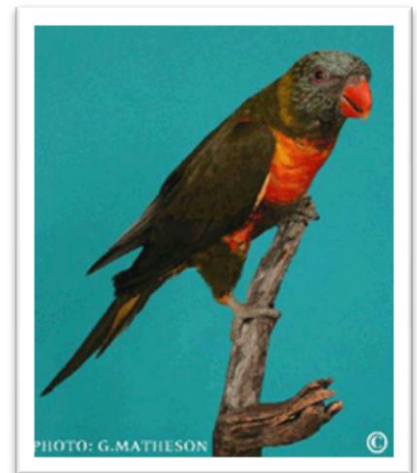
I believe with the out crossing we have done in our own aviaries and of course the original efforts of Bill and Russell, we have a lorikeet that is not only beautiful in its plumage but a mutation that will never be lost to aviculture and with the involvement of the other colour mutations as previously mentioned, who knows what may unfold in the future.

Mutations

The Grey-Green Rainbow Lorikeet

Often and wrongly referred to as olive, the grey-green rainbow was produced by well known Aviculturist Stan Sindel, by crossing the rainbow to a grey-green scaly.

The blue-fronted rainbow is recessive in inheritance, it apparently originated in Victoria and after some patchy years it now seems fairly well established. By breeding the blue-fronted with other colours within the rainbow such as cinnamon or grey-green new colours will be produced.



The Jade Rainbow Lorikeet

The jade rainbow is dominant in its inheritance and is considered by many as a dull looking bird. However, it's not until this lorikeet is in full sunlight that the true beauty of its colours, especially its aqua coloured abdomen, is appreciated.



The Cinnamon Rainbow Lorikeet

This mutation is sexually dimorphic with the cock being a lighter lime than the hen and is recessive in inheritance.

On hatching, cinnamon chicks are easily distinguishable from normal rainbows, as the normal rainbow hatches with a wispy silver down which changes to a thick grey secondary down at around 10 days of age, their feet and their nails are dark and beak is black. The cinnamon on the other hand hatches with a white wispy down which is replaced by a thick white secondary down, their feet and nails are light and they have (what I call) a horn coloured beak. The cinnamons eyes are heading towards a plum where-as the normal has a definite black eye.



By breeding the cinnamon to a grey-green (so-called olive) a mustard can be achieved.

The Mustard Rainbow Lorikeet

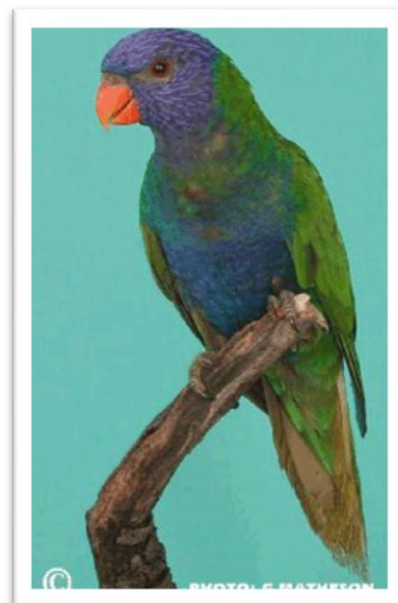
Recessive in inheritance and sexually dimorphic, the mustard rainbow is the result of breeding a cinnamon with a grey-green.

This mutation was first bred in Queensland and is still extremely low in numbers with only three birds in existence, with the bird pictured the only hen, at the time of writing. This bird is owned and was bred by Glenn Matheson of Sticky-Beak Aviaries.



The Blue-fronted Rainbow Lorikeet

The blue-fronted rainbow is recessive in inheritance. It apparently originated in Victoria and after some patchy years, it now seems fairly well established. By breeding the blue-fronted with other colours within the rainbow, such as cinnamon, or grey-green, new colours will be produced.



The Lutino Rainbow Lorikeet

This is the first Lutino Rainbow Lorikeet in the world. It was developed by Glenn Matheson at Sticky-Beak Aviaries in Sydney by breeding the Rainbow Lorikeet to a Lutino scaly-Breasted Lorikeet.

Although the bird pictured is $\frac{3}{4}$ Rainbow, Glenn has continued to develop this mutation and now has split Lutino cocks in $\frac{7}{8}$ form.

On hatching chicks have red eyes and white toe nails, the initial wispy down is yellowish in colour and this is replaced with heavy white down at 9 days old.



Some people think that this colour has been around for some years in the Rainbow. In fact that's partly true, but there is a difference. These coloured birds, which are wrongly called lutino or peds, are in fact an acquired colour. These birds rarely, if ever, reproduce coloured chicks, whereas the lutino, being a sex-linked mutation, is guaranteed to reproduce.

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