



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

The Scaly-Breasted Lorikeets and their Mutations (Trichoglossus chlorolepidotus)

Article and photos supplied by Glenn Matheson

Apart from the Rainbow Lorikeet the Scaly must be the most commonly kept lorikeet within Australian aviaries.

It makes for a great aviary subject and a hand-reared individual can be a delightful pet being quite mischievous and acting like the normal clowns that lorikeets are. They are about 23-24 cm in length, very hardy and easily maintained.

Their diet should consist of three parts, a dry mix, a wet mix and a variety of fruits and vegetables. Dry and wet lorikeet mixes are readily available from pet shops and produce stores with most of these being nutritionally satisfactory.

Scalies can be kept and bred in a colony system or in individual pairings. They breed readily and once they have started can and sometimes do, nest all year round. If there is to be a break in their breeding pattern it normally occurs late February to early May.

They will nest in logs or boxes of any size but a box measuring about 20cm square x 30cm deep seems pretty much ideal.

The clutch normally consists of two eggs with one or three eggs being not uncommon. Hatching occurs 22 to 23 days after incubation has commenced with the young leaving the nest about 57-58 days.

The age of fertility, that is the age when one can produce or fertilize an egg, varies with sex and individuals. Some hens produce fertile eggs at 10 months and cocks can fertilize hens when just 12 months of age, although these birds would normally be paired to much older mates.

It is impossible to sex Scalies visually without getting some wrong so the only way of being sure you have a pair is by surgical or DNA sexing, both now commonly used.

Mutations

The Grey-Green (Olive) Scaly Lorikeet

This mutation has been around for quite a long time, the colour is in fact Grey-Green and not Olive as it is incorrectly but commonly known.

The inheritance of the Grey-Green scaly is dominant and it does carry single and double factored characters. By breeding this mutation with the Cinnamon, the Mustard will be achieved.



The Cinnamon Scaly-breasted Lorikeet

The Cinnamon scaly apparently first appeared in the early 1980s somewhere in northern NSW and today it is well established within aviculture. The mutation is recessive in inheritance and it is also sexually dimorphic with the cock being darker in colour than the hen.

This bird has been combined with the Grey-Green to produce the Mustard.



The Mustard Scaly-breasted Lorikeet

The Mustard scaly is a combination of the Grey-Green and Cinnamon mutations. Like the Cinnamon its inheritance is recessive with it also being sexually dimorphic (cocks being darker than the hens). The Mustard scaly has single and double factors as with the Grey-Green.

The mutation has had its ups and downs with getting established properly with quite a number of aviculturists reporting breeding failures when pairing a Mustard with another Mustard or Grey-Green split. With out-crossing by these and other aviculturists over the last couple of years the mutation now appears to be in good shape.



The Lutino-breasted Scaly-breasted Lorikeet

Truly a gem the Lutino is sex-linked in inheritance and until now there has only ever been hens in existence. Glenn Matheson has recently bred a cock which he believes to be the first within aviculture.

Chicks hatch with red eyes and white toe nails. They have white wispy down which is replaced with a white thicker secondary down at 9-10 days of age.



With the initial breeding by Bill Connor and Russell McAllister of NSW and the concentrated effort at Sticky-Beak Aviaries the Lutino is now well on its way to being fully established within aviculture.

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