

The Australian Fife Canary - Tips & Tricks

by Peter Ailwood

The CINNAMON – an attempt to demystify

In this article I am as far as possible, going to try to avoid the genetics and look at the outcomes rather than why. The Fife Canary is no different to any other Canary when it comes to cinnamon, and cinnamon does cause confusion even



Lightly Variegated, Cinnamon Yellow: Photo by PA.

with the most experienced breeders. Cinnamon was first seen c.1709 and probably arose as a mutation in the gene producing melanin, which produces the dark pigment in feathers.

Cinnamon is a sex-linked gene and can be passed on from either the hen or cock, and the young produced, will depend on the level of cinnamon being carried by the parents. All cinnamon chicks will be born with PINK eyes, however the eyes will become so dark as the bird gets older, that it is almost impossible to see in an adult bird. Cinnamon carrying Cocks however will have BLACK eyes. Cinnamon can be Clear and should not be confused with Cinnamon carrying Cocks. To identify Cinnamon birds I ring all pink-eyed birds on the left leg and normals on the right leg.

Cinnamon is usually used by the experienced breeder, to improve feather quality, and or to reduce feather bulk.

When pairing, type should be the first consideration because

the use of cinnamon over time, without considering type will lead to loss of type and very fine-feathered birds.

The following is a combination of pairs and the expected chicks produced. In the following pairings a green hen or cock represents a bird carrying no cinnamon, or cinnamon markings.

PAIRING	PROGENY
GREEN COCK X GREEN HEN	= All GREEN no cinnamon or cinnamon carriers
GREEN COCK X CINNAMON HEN	= GREEN CINNAMON CARRIER COCKS & GREEN HENS
GREEN CINNAMON CARRIER COCK X GREEN HEN	= GREEN CINNAMON CARRIER COCKS & CINNAMON HENS & GREEN COCKS & GREEN HENS
GREEN CINNAMON CARRYING COCK X CINNAMON HEN	= GREEN CINNAMON CARRYING COCKS & CINNAMON COCKS & CINNAMON HENS & GREEN HENS
CINNAMON COCK X GREEN HEN	= GREEN CINNAMON CARRYING COCKS & CINNAMON HENS & NORMALS
CINNAMON COCK X CINNAMON HEN	= All CINNAMON COCKS & HENS

At the end of all your breeding you end up with the following:

A COCK MUST BE ONE OF THREE THINGS

1. Non-cinnamon [BLACK eyed]
2. Cinnamon carrier [BLACK eyed]
3. Cinnamon [PINK eyed]

A HEN MUST BE ONE OF TWO THINGS

1. Non-cinnamon [Black eyed]
2. Cinnamon [PINK eyed]

She cannot, like a cock be a cinnamon carrier. She has only one X chromosome and on it she must receive either the cinnamon gene or the normal allelomorph (alternative) gene



Faun

Photo by Peter Ailwood

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FAWN

When cinnamon is bred with a white ground bird, the cinnamon progeny on white ground are called Fawn.

To make things complicated however, there are two types of White bird, being "Dominant" and "Recessive". How do you tell the difference; the dominant white usually carries just a tinge of yellow on the outer edges of the primary flight feathers (wings). The Recessive white however, shows no yellow at all. With recessive white, a pairing of white to normal can produce normals carrying white, with Dominant white there are no white carriers other than white or faun or blue which are all white ground. The majority of whites found in Australia are Dominant, with this in mind all the comments below refer to Dominant White.

Pairing two dominant white ground birds together will result on average of 25% of the young dying. This is because the dominant white gene is lethal when it is present on both sides of a pairing. Also because a fawn has the dominant white gene this same principle applies. A youngster produced from a dominant white ground bird but does not show to be of a white ground but is normal in appearance will not carry the lethal gene because it is not sex linked like the cinnamon gene.

Below are some examples of pairings with dominant white ground birds, which may produce fawns, and some pairings of fawns and the young they may produce. Note a "Blue" is a white ground bird with the dark melanin over, rather than the light or Cinnamon melanin over which is the Faun.

PAIRING	PROGENY
BLUE COCK X CINNAMON HEN	= BLUE CINNAMON CARRIER COCKS & GREEN CINNAMON CARRIER COCKS & BLUE HENS & GREEN HENS
CINNAMON COCK X BLUE HEN	= BLUE CINNAMON CARRIER COCKS & GREEN CINNAMON CARRIER COCKS & FAWN HENS & CINNAMON HENS
BLUE CINNAMON CARRIER COCK X CINNAMON HEN	= BLUE CINNAMON CARRIER COCKS & GREEN CINNAMON CARRIER COCKS & FAWN COCKS & CINNAMON COCKS & BLUE HENS & GREEN HENS & FAWN HENS & CINNAMON HENS
BLUE CINNAMON CARRIER COCK X GREEN HEN	= BLUE COCKS & BLUE CINNAMON & CARRIER COCKS & GREEN COCKS & GREEN CINNAMON CARRIER COCKS & BLUE HENS & GREEN HENS & CINNAMON HENS & FAWN HENS
FAWN COCK X CINNAMON HEN	= FAWN COCKS & CINNAMON COCKS & FAWN HENS & CINNAMON HENS
CINNAMON COCK X FAWN HEN	= FAWN COCKS & CINNAMON COCKS & FAWN HENS & CINNAMON HENS
FAWN COCK X GREEN HEN	= BLUE CINNAMON CARRIER COCKS & GREEN CINNAMON CARRIER COCK & FAWN HENS & CINNAMON HENS
GREEN CINNAMON CARRIER COCK X FAWN HEN	= CINNAMON COCKS & FAWN COCKS & BLUE CINNAMON CARRIER COCKS & GREEN CINNAMON CARRIER COCKS & BLUE HENS & CINNAMON HENS & FAWN HENS & GREEN HENS

References include: The Complete Book of Canaries by G T Dodwell & Our Border Canaries by W Cummings