

Bill Schembri – BS9

Bill's interest in budgies started after his retirement. Being a very active person, he felt that he needed a hobby to occupy himself, even though he and his wife Rita are living on a large block in Kinglake West.

His involvement was triggered when visiting a friend that had aviaries breeding several species of birds including Budgies. So after making some enquiries he heard about a bird show being held at Northland Secondary College (a Shield show) which he attended.

Bill said that he was initially intrigued by the size and colours of the show birds, as against the pet birds he had seen in aviaries.

The first show birds Bill purchased were a couple of pairs when he visited Alan Rowe, where Alan spent time with him on a tour of his aviaries and breeding room. Bill found Alan to be very welcoming and helpful.

So after further enquiries in 2012 he decided to join his nearest club, United.

His first breeding season was with 3 pairs. Now, after converting his old gardening shed into a breeding room, and building all his cages himself, Bill has 30 pairs up and breeding. He rings about 150 chicks a season now.

Apart from the normal varieties he breeds Dominant & Recessive Pied, Lutino and Albinos.



Bill is proud he was elevated this year (2016) from Beginner to Intermediate by points. He has improved the quality of his flock through a very good breeding program, not by spending big money on purchasing expensive birds.

His achievement has meant the winning of the Albino class at the 2014 Unbroken Cap Shield, which was an exciting milestone. There have been many other well placed sectional birds at Diploma shows and he also has his birds selected in the United Shield teams. Quite an achievement given the competition and that he has only been in the hobby for 4 years.

There are many aspects of the hobby that Bill likes. One is the time spent in the bird room, which he finds tranquil and relaxing, where he is able to zone out and de-stress.

Another is the social side of the hobby which both Bill and Rita enjoy. Going to country shows, meeting people with a common interest, making new friends. Bill & Rita have been to the last two Nationals at Mandurah and Hobart where the bird shows were great, and they had a wonderful time with the other exhibitors.

The hardest part of the hobby has been learning the varieties, identifying them, learning the genetics and the most important, pairing up to achieve the potential outcome of “That winning bird”.

Even though it’s nice to win, Bill gets just as much enjoyment from breeding a quality bird that is competitive and always up there in the finals. The bird the judges always take a second look at. He feels it is recognition for his time and effort he puts into his birds.



Bill’s vision for the future is for the hobby to grow, to get younger people involved. He sees the need for the hobby to be promoted by positive thinking, with another possible market being retirees like himself.