

## **The Double-Barred finch - A Favourite**

*David Over MPAS*

Being a favourite of mine, I have always had a few of these finches in my aviaries. They have placid natures and are great in mixed collections; however they will defend their nest site if the need arises. There are two sub-species; the White-rumped form, the natural range of which is from Cape York right down the east coast of Australia into northern Victoria and the Black-rumped which ranges from the Kimberley's in Western Australia to Western Queensland.

For many years I only kept the white-rumped, however about seven years ago i started keeping the black- rumped which is a slightly smaller bird than the more common white-rumped.

Sexing double-bars can be difficult. The cock generally has a wider bottom black bar on it's chest and is whiter between the two black bars. Also the width across the top of it's head between the eyes is wider than the hen. The hen generally has a narrower black bar and is a dirty white colour between the chest bars.

They are an ideal beginners bird as they are easy to breed and don't require any special diet, whatever you are feeding your other finches will be fine. They don't require live food to rear their young.

You can keep them in a colony, however I prefer to house them one pair to an aviary, as I do with most of my other species, mixed with single pairs of other finches. I believe this leads to better breeding results. Between three to six eggs are laid, incubation takes around thirteen days and the young fledge around twenty-one days. Four weeks later, I remove the young to a holding aviary, this allows the parents to go back to nest.

For a little black and white bird, they are a joy to have in your aviary.