

The Official Zebra Finch Standard

Approved by the National Finch and Softbill Society November 1992

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Poephila guttata

CONFORMATION	40 POINTS
Head and Body	20 Points
Wings	10 Points
Tail	10 Points
CONDITION	20 POINTS
COLOR AND MARKINGS	30 POINTS
DEPARTMENT AND PRESENTATION	10 POINTS

CONFORMATION (40 POINTS)

Distributed as follows:

Head and Body: 20 points.

The ideal Zebra Finch will measure about 4" from the tip of the beak to the end of the tail. The head should be large and proportional to the body, broad from all angles, blending into the shoulders, back and front, with a slight nip at the neck when at rest. The eyes must be round, with the lower edge of the eye just above the line where the mandibles meet. There is a noticeable brow in the ideal bird, resulting from the slight indentation of the feathering at the eye. The beak should be coral in color; deeper coral in the cock bird, broad at the base, and centered in the face.

The crown rises up from the top of the upper mandible in a rounded arc through to the neck. The neck should be broad and expand smooth, from the neck through the tip of the tail, except in the displaying bird (see Tail below).

The sides are slightly rounded from the shoulders through the tail. The bird is full-bodied, showing good substance. The bottom line bows outward deeply, smoothly rounded, from just below the chin through to the vent, the deepest and broadest point being between the chest and the stomach. The stomach feathers of the ideal bird are just above the perch because of the roundness of the bottom line, but not because of poor position.

From the perch the legs rise slightly from the horizontal. The thigh is not exposed. The feet grip the perch properly.

Wings: 10 points.

The wings should be carried evenly, and should not droop nor entirely cover the flanking. They should blend into the back smoothly with the wing tips meeting at the root of the tail. Crossed wings, overlapping one another, or drooping wings are faulted.

Tail: 10 points.

The line of the tail shall continue the line of the back and must not droop or be carried high. The tail may rise slightly from the back line in the displaying bird. The tail will be proportional to the body.

CONDITION (20 POINTS)

Eyes should be bright and clear. There should be an overall sheen to the Zebra's feathering, and the feather condition should be immaculate, with no soiled, frayed or missing feathers. There should be no pin-feathers. All toes and nails should be present, and the beak, legs, and nails must also be immaculate, with no scaling or overgrowth.

COLOR AND MARKINGS (30 POINTS)

STANDARD ZEBRA FINCH MARKINGS (BOTH COLOR AND MELANIN)

Exceptions are noted in the Standards and Descriptions, which follow.

Cock:

Eyes black or near black. The beak should be coral red. Lores are white, bordered by a thin dark line from the base of the bill to nostril and a heavier line dropping below the eye (the tear marking), creating a clear and distinct 'teardrop' effect. A distinct cheek patch of color covers the cheeks and ear-coverts. The throat and upper chest area (to the breast bar) should be thinly and evenly striped. The breast bar should be clear, distinct and even, and not less than 1/8" wide. The side flanking should be prominent and should extend from the wing's greater coverts to the upper tail coverts and contain numerous small round clearly defined white spots. The center of the lower rump is white. The tail should be horizontally barred with white. The feet and legs should be pale coral red.

Hen:

As for the cock, minus the cheek patches, throat stripes and breast bar. The lores and flanking will show the same color as the hen's throat. The beak should be a paler shade of red.

ZEBRA FINCH COLOR STANDARDS FOR STANDARD VARIETIES

The following Zebra Finch color varieties have color Standards, presented here:

Normal Gray	Fawn	Penguin
Lightback Normal Gray	Lightback Fawn	
Dominant Silver	Dominant Cream	
Chestnut Flanked White	White	
Chestnut-Flanked Continental	Pied	

Descriptions of less commonly exhibited and newer varieties are offered for informational purposes in the subsequent section.

Normal Gray Cock:

The head, neck, back, and wings dark gray, even throughout. The throat should be pale gray. The cheek patch should be rich dark orange. The tear marking, throat and upper chest striping, breast bar and tail bars should be jet black. The flanking should be rich reddish brown with white spots. The underparts should be white, but may have some fawn shading near the vent and thighs. **Show Faults:** uneven or patchy color, "bleeding" of the cheek patches into the ground color.

Normal Gray Hen:

The head, neck, back, wings, tear marking and tail bars as for the cock. The throat and breast should be mid-gray. No cheek patches, throat stripes, breast bar or flanking. Underpants should be buff. **Show Faults:** uneven or patchy color; showing cock markings.

Fawn Cock:

The head, neck, back, and wings a deep fawn color, even throughout. The throat should be pale grayish brown. The cheek patch should be a rich dark orange. The tear marking, throat and upper chest striping, breast bar and tail bars should be blackish brown. The flanking should be rich reddish brown with white spots. The underpants should be white, but may have some fawn shading near the vent and thighs. **Show Faults:** uneven or patchy color; "bleeding" of the cheek patches into the ground color.

Fawn Hen:

The head, neck, back, wings, tear marking and tail bars as for the cock. The throat and breast should be buff. No cheek patches, throat stripes, breast bar, or flanking. Underpants should be buff. **Show faults:** uneven or patchy color; showing cock markings.

Light back Normal Gray Cock:

The head, neck, back, and wings light gray, even throughout. The throat should be light silvery gray. The cheek patch should be pale orange. The tear marking, throat and upper chest striping, breast bar and tail bars should be black. The flanking should be pale or reddish brown with white spots. The underpants should be white with no shading. **Show Faults:** uneven or patchy color; "bleeding" of cheek patches into the ground color.

Light back Normal Gray Hen:

The head, neck, back, wings, tear marking and tail bars as for the cock. The throat and breast should be light silvery gray. No cheek patches, throat stripes, breast bar, or flanking. Underpants should be white. **Show Faults:** uneven or patchy color; showing cock markings.

Light back Fawn Cock:

The head, neck, back, and wings pale fawn, even throughout. The throat should be off-white. The cheek patch should be pale orange. The tear marking, throat and upper chest striping, breast bar and tail bars should be blackish brown. The flanking should be pale reddish brown with white spots. The underparts should be white with no shading. **Show Faults:** uneven or patchy color; "bleeding" of cheek patches into the ground color.

Lightback Fawn Hen:

The head, neck, back, wings, tear marking and tail bars as for the cock. The throat and breast should be off-white. No cheek patches, throat stripes, breast bar, or flanking. Underparts should be white. **Show Faults:** uneven or patchy color; showing cock markings.

Dominant Silver Cock:

There are various shades of Dominant Silver. The head, neck, back, and wings should be from light bluish gray to pale silvery gray. There may be some patchiness to the color. The throat should be from pale silvery gray to off-white. The cheek patch should be from pale orange to cream. The tear marking, throat and upper chest striping, breast bar and tail bars should be a matching shade of gray. The flanking should be pale reddish orange with white spots. The underparts should be white, but may have some silver shading near the vent and thighs. **Show Faults:** excessively uneven or patchy color, including fawn shading in the ground color; characteristic cock markings showing no dilution, or indistinct.

Dominant Silver Hen:

The head, neck, back, wings, tear marking and tail bars as for the cock. The throat and breast should be from pale silvery gray to off-white. No cheek patches, throat stripes, breast bar, or flanking. Underparts should be buff. **Show Faults:** excessively uneven or patchy color, including fawn shading in the ground color; showing cock markings.

Dominant Cream Cock:

There are various shades of cream. The head, neck, back, and wings should be from deep cream to pale cream. The throat should be from pale cream to off-white. The cheek patch should be from pale orange to cream. The tear marking, throat and upper chest striping, breast bar and tail bars should be a matching shade of fawn. The flanking should be pale reddish orange with white spots. The underparts should be white, but may have some cream shading near the vents and thighs. **Show Faults:** excessively uneven or patchy color; characteristic cock markings showing no dilution, or indistinct.

Dominant Cream Hen:

The head, neck, back, wings, tear marking and tail bars as for the cock. The throat and breast should be from pale cream to off-white. No cheek patches, throat stripes, breast bar, or flanking. Underparts should be pale cream. **Show Faults:** excessively uneven or patchy color, showing cock markings.

Chestnut Flanked White Cock:

The head, neck, back, wings, throat and underparts are as white as possible. The cheek patch should be as dark orange as possible. The tear marking, throat and upper chest striping, breast bar and tail bars should be as near black as possible. The flanking should be rich reddish brown with white spots. **Show Faults:** characteristic cock markings pale; "bleeding" of cheek patches into the ground color.

Chestnut Flanked White Hen:

As near white as possible, with no cheek patches, throat stripes, breast bar, or flanking. Remaining tear marking and tail bars as near black as possible. A small amount of gray wash or very light flecking on the head is acceptable. **Show Faults:** showing cock markings.

Chestnut Flanked Continental Cock:

The head, neck, back, wings, throat, and under parts are cream. The cheek patch is orange-brown and as deep color as possible. The tear markings, throat and upper chest striping, breast bar, and tail bars should be black. The flanking should be a rich orange brown, dark as possible with regular round white dots. **Show Faults:** pale cock markings, "bleeding" of cheek patches, sooty markings on the head.

Chestnut Flanked Continental Hen:

Cream in color with no cheek patches, throat stripes, breast bars, or flanking. Remaining tear markings and tail bars black. **Show Faults:** sooty head or presence of male markings.

White Cock and Hen:

Color to be pure white all over. As with other varieties, hen's beak to be a paler shade of red. **Show Faults:** Any colored feathering, including flecking in the shoulder and back area.

Pied Cock and Hen:

The body should be approximately 50% white and 50% color with markings as symmetrical as possible. Cock to retain all characteristic cock markings, but all markings should be broken with white. Hen should show tear markings and tail bars, but broken with white. **Show Faults:** An excessive percentage of white feathering or colored feathering (from the 50/50 mix); cocks showing complete loss of characteristic cock markings; hens showing cock markings.

Note: Pies can be exhibited in all recognized colors, except white.

Penguin Cock:

Head, neck, back, and wings light silvery gray with flights, secondaries and coverts edged with a paler shade of gray, giving a laced appearance. Older birds may display more lacing than younger birds. The throat and underparts are to be white without a trace of barring. The cheek patch should be rich dark orange. Tear marking absent. The flanking should be reddish brown with white spots. The tail should match the back color, barred with white. **Show Faults:** Any trace of breast barring or tear markings.

Penguin Hen:

Head, neck, back, and wings as for the cock The throat, breast, flanking and underparts should be absent. **Show Faults:** any trace of cock markings or tear markings.

Note: Penguins can be exhibited in other recognized colors.

ZEBRA FINCH COLOR DESCRIPTIONS FOR NON-STANDARD VARIETIES

The following Zebra Finch color mutations are less commonly exhibited and/or newer varieties:

Lightback Silver

Recessive Silver

Created

Black Breasted

Isabel

Florida Fancy

Black Cheeked

Fawn Cheeked

Black

Lightback Cream

Recessive Cream

Yellow Beaked

Orange Breasted

Phaeo

Agate

Gray Cheeked

Black Faced

Saddleback

Lightback Silver Cock:

The head, neck, back, and wings are pale silvery gray. There may be some patchiness to the color. The throat is off-white. The cheek patch is near white. The tear marking, throat and upper chest striping, breast bar and tail bars are charcoal gray. The flanking is pale orange with white spots. The underparts are white.

Lightback Silver Hen:

The head, neck, back, wings, tear marking and tail bars as for the cock. The throat and breast are off- white. No cheek patches, throat stripes, breast bars or flanking. Underparts are white.

Lightback Cream Cock:

The head, neck, back, and wings are pale cream. There may be some patchiness to the color. The throat is off-white. The cheek patch is near white. The tear marking, throat and upper chest striping, breast bar and tail bars are pale chocolate. The flanking is pale orange with white spots. The underparts are white.

Lightback Cream Hen:

The head, neck, back, wings, tear marking and tail bars as for the cock. The throat and breast are off- white. No cheek patches, throat stripes, breast bars or flanking. Underparts are white.

Recessive Silver Cock:

The head, neck, back, and wings are bluish gray. The throat is silvery gray. The cheek patch is orange. The tear marking, throat and upper chest striping, breast bar and tail bars are a matching shade of gray. The flanking is reddish brown with white spots. The underparts are white.

Recessive Silver Hen:

The head, neck, back, wings, tear marking and tail bars as for the cock. The throat and breast are bluish gray. No cheek patches, throat stripes, breast bars or flanking. Underparts are from pale buff to pale gray.

Recessive Cream Cock:

The head, neck, back, and wings are pale fawn. The throat is cream. The cheek patch is orange. The tear marking, throat and upper chest striping, breast bar and tail bars are a matching shade of pale fawn. The flanking is reddish brown with white spots. The underparts are white, but may have some fawn shading near the vent and thighs.

Recessive Cream Hen:

The head, neck, back, wings, tear marking and tail bars as for the cock. The throat and breast are cream. No cheek patches, throat stripes, breast bars or flanking. Underparts are cream.

Crested Cock and Hen:

Crested can be exhibited in all recognized colors, and are the same as any other color variety except they have a crest. We should strive for a crest that has a full circular appearance, finishing level with top of eye.

Yellow Beaked Cock and Hen:

Yellow Beaks can be exhibited in all recognized colors, and are the same as any other color variety except the beak should be as near yellow as possible, not orange. The legs and feet are a very pale coral red.

Black Breasted Normal Gray Cock:

The head, neck, back, and wings are as in Normal Gray, but with feathers outlined with reddish brown. The cheek patch has no definite outline and "bleeds" onto the neck and head. It has no tear marking, but retains the black edging along the beak. It displays a lighter throat under the beak mottled with black feathering. The Black Breasted's breast bar tends to be blacker and broader than the normal breast bar. The side flanks are poorly defined and are marked with white ticks or slashes of white rather than spots. The underparts are white, with some fawn shading at the vent. The upper tail feathers are normal colored but outlined in white, creating a vertically barred effect.

Black Breasted Hen:

The head, neck, back, wings, tear marking, beak edging and tail barring as for the cock. It may show traces of a breast bar.

Note: The Black Breasted can be exhibited in all recognized colors, although the reddish brown outlining on the head, back, and wing feathers will be less evident on some mutations, such as the Black Breasted Chestnut Flanked White.

Orange Breasted Normal Gray Cock:

Color and markings are as in Normal Gray, except that most black markings are replaced or at least partially masked by orange. Tear markings are masked by orange. The throat striping and breast bar, while mostly orange with this mutation, may show some black coloration. The breast bar will have a less precise size and shape than in the Normal Gray. Orange is mixed in with the black and white tail bars.

Orange Breasted Hen:

Color and markings as for a Normal Gray hen, except that the Orange Breasted hen has no visible black tear marking, no evidence of chest barring, and must have visible orange on tail barring.

Note: The Orange Breasted can be exhibited in all recognized colors. In all, orange replaces most of the black on the tear marking, throat and upper chest striping, breast bar and tail bars.

Isabel Cock:

The head, neck, back, and wings from cream to off-white, with pale orange lacing to the feathers. The throat and upper chest from buff to off-white. The cheek patch is a rich dark orange. The tear marking, throat and upper chest striping, and breast bar are absent. The flanking is rich reddish brown with white spots. The underparts are white, with some pale orange shading near the vent and thighs. Tail bars from fawn to very-pale fawn.

Isabel Hen:

The head, neck, back, wings, and tail bars as for the cock. Tear marking absent. The throat and breast, extending through the underparts should be very pale buff. No cheek patches, throat stripes, breast bar or flanking.

Phaeo Cock:

A combination of the Isabel x Black Breasted mutations, showing the effects of both. The head, neck, back, and wings are diluted to off-white. The orange lacing to the feathers is more evident. There is no chest barring. The cheek patch has no definite outline and "bleeds" onto the neck and head. The side flanks change to orange and are poorly defined and are marked with white ticks or slashes of white rather than spots. The underparts are white, with some cream shading at the vent. The upper tail feathers are cream colored but outlined in white, creating a vertically barred effect.

Phaeo Hen:

Hens are very similar to Isabel hens, with orange lacing to the generally off-white head, neck, back, and wings. Phaeo hens also lack the tear marking. Phaeo hens can be distinguished from Isabel hens by the tail: the Phaeo's tail has orange colored vertical striping; the Isabel shows light fawn horizontal bars.

Note: The Phaeo is often combined with other mutations. When combined with the Orange Breasted, orange throat and upper chest striping and an orange breast bar appears, making a brightly colored bird.

Florida Fancy Cock:

A white bird (with some faint gray lacing of feathers on back and wings) with rich orange cheek patch and rich reddish brown flanking with white spots. No tear marking, throat and upper chest striping or breast bar, and only faint light gray tail bars. Appears to be a combination of Penguin and Chestnut Flanked White.

Florida Fancy Hen:

As for the cock, with no cheek patch or flanking.

Agate Cock:

The normal Agate could be described as a bird with the head color and markings of a Normal Gray, but the body and wing color of a light fawn. The Agate also appears in other mutations, such as the Fawn and Lightback.

Agate Hen:

The hens are the same color minus the cock markings.

Black Cheeked Cock:

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The cheek patch is black. Other color and markings are normal, but with complete absence of reddish brown in the flankings, which is replaced by- black

Black Cheeked Hen:

As in normal hen, but will have cock type black cheek patch. The hen's cheek patch color is patchier than the cock's.

Gray Cheeked Cock:

The Gray Cheeked has dark eyes, red beak, orange legs and feet, with the head, neck, and wings being white. The throat and upper chest are light gray with darker gray lines running across the throat from the chest bar up to the beak. The cheek patch color is gray. The tear markings and chest bar are a darker gray. Underparts are warm cream. Flank markings are orange with even white spots. The tail feathers have no barring.

Gray Cheeked Hen:

As in the Gray Cheeked Cock, but will not have chest barring or flank markings. Flanks will be dark cream and the throat will be silver gray. Cock type cheek patch color.

Fawn Cheeked Cock:

The Fawn Cheeked has dark eyes, red beak, orange legs and feet, with the head, neck, and wings being white. The throat and upper chest are light fawn with darker fawn lines running across the throat from the chest bar up to the beak. The cheek patch color is fawn. The tear markings and chest bar are a darker fawn. Underparts are warm cream. Flank markings are orange with even white spots. The tail feathers have no barring.

Fawn Cheeked Hen:

As in the Fawn Cheeked Cock, but will not have chest barring or flank markings. Flanks will be dark cream. Cock type cheek patch color.

Black Faced Cock:

As for Normal cock, except that the lores (the normally white feathers between the beak and cheek patch) are black, and the underparts, normally white, are molded dark brownish black. The flanking can be from the normal rich reddish brown to dark reddish brown, with the normal white spots.

Black Faced Hen:

As for Normal hen, except that the lores are gray, and the underparts are gray.

Black Zebra Cock:

The nearest thing to a solid black Zebra is produced when the Black Faced, Black Breasted and the Black Cheeked are combined. The cock will have a completely black head and will be black from beak to vent (or black near the beak changing to dark brownish black on the underparts), with only a trace of white ticks or slashes in the flanking.

Black Zebra Hen:

Hens are darker than normal with visual cock markings.

Saddleback Cock and Hen:

A nearly all-white pld with a triangle of the normal ground color across the back, as well as some ground color on the rump.

DEPORTMENT AND PRESENTATION (10 POINTS)

Deportment: 5 points.

The angle of the Zebra Finch is between 40 and 45 degrees; its stance should not appear too upright nor too low over the perch. It should display a bright personality, yet be calm on the perch; it should be active, yet confident. The ideal Zebra will easily and often times display in the show cage.

Presentation: 5 points.

A National Finch and Softbill Society standard show cage, size ff2 is recommended. Perches suitable to the size of a Zebra's feet need to be used. Perches should run from the cage front to the rear and be positioned far enough from the sides so as not to injure the tail when the bird moves from perch to perch. Position perches to give the judge a full lateral view of the bird. The waterer should be placed to give the judge an unobstructed view of the bird.

Zebra Silhouette

