



Association Provence Ornithologie

Association Loi 1901 du Grand Avignon

Élever l'Oiseau : une Passion, une Nécessité.

THE SUDAN GOLDEN SPARROW

By Laurent MILLET

It is a small bird, smaller than the common sparrow, but as nice as it. Like him, it is very noisy and stirring up: that squawk, that squabble, but I've never seen keen brawls.

At home, the nests are built especially in the inside part of the aviary-shelter... It seems that he prefers a certain half-light, for its safety. It builds a "strong" nest made of wood brushwood of the size of a pencil and long about 20 centimeters, green stems of rush intermingled (the curved rush), as well as small flexible branches of pine, in fact, a compact, large mass like a nest of squirrel, plated with the ceiling. As bases they choose a crossing perch close to the ceiling, the top of the nesting box of a Gouldian finch, a doves' nest, the fork of a small branch which I fixed to be used as perch... All their is good! Where they decided to build, they build: in two days, five days, it does not matter, but the nest will be built.



As for me, the breeder, if I wish to know if eggs were laid: live exploration! If, in nature, the nest is built in the same way, a grass snake or a snake must have the greatest difficulties to enter inside. I am unable to say with precision where the entry of the nest is, then, I introduce a finger, then two, with difficulty, through this wood rampart... I finally get in the nest: there is nothing! I explore a little more, a such speleologist, and I find at the bottom of this nest, a hole which emerges in another nest at the bottom of which there are three or four eggs of dark greenish color, dotted lines of black. Imagine a bowl with a hole at the bottom which emerges in another bowl where the eggs are hidden in pieces of cotton, sheets, moss, dry sweet herbs, feathers... Who would imagine as much softness around eggs, whereas the nest, outside, is also solid, hard...

I thus decided to explore not more the nests and not do anything until the chicks' birth. When the parents start to feed them, that is seen: flourworms, maggots, tineas of hive, crickets, grasshoppers, egg's softfood, etc... are absorbed in great quantity by the parents. The golden Sparrow, like his/her cousin of the backyard, is an omnivorous. Feeding is noticed, believe me! Chirpings, squabbles, beats of wings: the small ones, tirelessly are nourished abundantly and grow bigger very quickly. I ring the small ones to 4 or 5 days (sometimes 3 only!), in 2,7 mm. To 11 or 12 days, very feathered, awkwardly, they fly away. They are still nourished by the parents long enough. Do not ask me how long still, the youngs remaining definitively with their parents in aviary, I cannot control.



All that I write is lived... but of lived at home. Each breeder must make his own experiment, which is true at home, can not be it on your premise. In any case, it is really necessary to put unwillingness not to have reproduction with the golden sparrows. I am invaded by it! On 3 or 4 small all with the nest, will not know the first flight inevitably. There remains sometimes only one or two, however there can be of them 4 or 5 at the exit of nest. But the golden sparrows, like the diamond doves, the China quails, reproduce without stop, at such point that with the autumn, I destroy all the nests outlines. Judge rather: in 2000, a friend of the Sarthe offered to me, in August, males and females. From September 15 until October 24: 12 youngs... a hole in the netting of my aviary and some are flee!

In 2001, of June 8 until July: 15 youngs. Then, I destroyed the eggs.

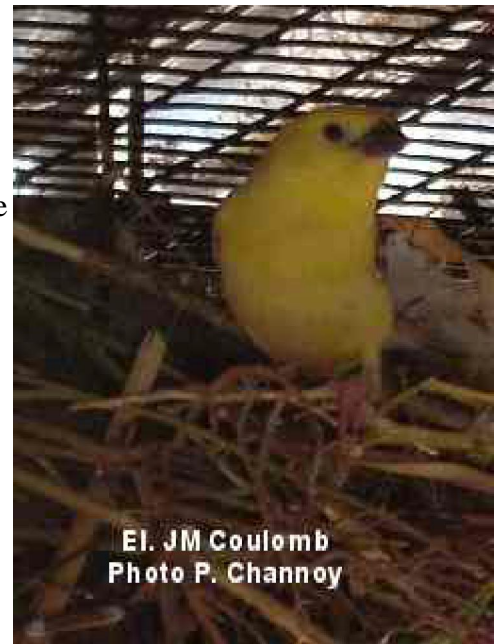
The golden sparrow is very pretty especially as from the third year when its color of a bright yellow reaches all its splendour. I will not extend on his description, several articles are already in review [*NDR: Oiseaux exotiques*], and you can see the photos. What interests the breeders, is not the general

informations, but the breeding's reports.

It is a bird which is absolutely not malicious and which can cohabit very well with other small birds: contrary to cut-throat finch and another zebra finch, it does not destroy the nests of the others to build his own. The only problem, in my opinion: they are robbers! malignant and intelligent!

An anecdote: I failed to lose my last brood 2001 of Peking robins (forgive me, I continue to call them like that, the renaming not changing anything with the bird!) at the time when there were 5 chicks with the nest each time the parents approached the nest an insect in the bill, the golden Sparrows, hided in the faggot of branches where the nest of the Peking robins was, tore off the insect of the beak of the feeder parents or sometimes even recovered it in the beak of the chicks.

I thus attended funny scenes : the Peking robin not wanting to release its prey, the golden Sparrow found itself hung with the other end of the insect, suspended in the gap, wings leafing... none not wanting to yield. Ultimately, it is the Peking robin which was to abdicate. The brood thus failed to die hunger. But at the end of nine days, the young Peking robins left the nest and scattered through the aviary. That facilitated largely the feeding of the young Peking robins, but the fifth young one, borned later died of hunger in the nest... by fault of the golden Sparrows!



Nevertheless, it would be although each breeder really loving the birds raises some, because the importations are reduced like skin of sorrow and the wholesalers benefit from it a little! Perhaps the golden Sparrow, just like the Peking robin now, will disappear a day from the market of the importations.

Here is my history. If breeders have opinions to give, that they are not obstructed... provided that is constructive!



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