

Bloedel Bird of the Month - The Gloster Canary

The birds attracting the most questions in recent months have unusual head feathers hanging over their eyes. They resemble flying Old English Sheepdogs, or, with their round 'haircut,' lost members of an early Beatles tribute band. As with Old English Sheepdogs, these birds did not appear in the wild, but are a result of selective breeding.

Mrs Rogerson was a lady who believed that "all things that were small were beautiful."¹ She liked Crest Canaries, but not their long untidy feathers, so around 1920 she decided to try to breed a canary half the size of the Crest, hoping that the miniature breed would be more attractive.

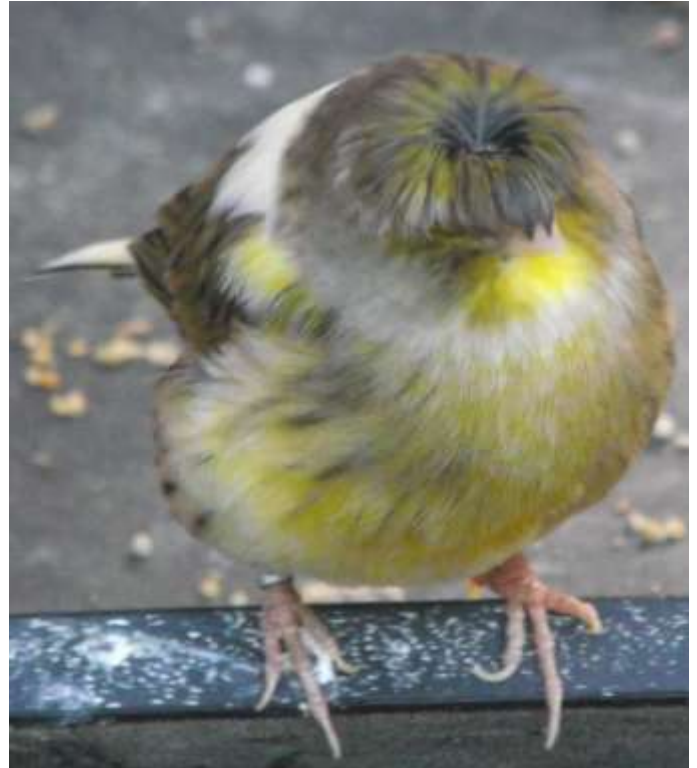
While Mrs Rogerson crossed Crested Roller Canaries with Border Canaries, John McLay, a canary breeder in Scotland, crossed small Crested Canaries with small Border Canaries. Encouraged by A.W. Smith, a prominent canary fancier, the two breeders exchanged birds.

At the Crystal Palace Exhibition in 1925, A.W. Smith, acting as a judge, declared that Mrs. Rogerson's birds should be recognised as a new, unique, and distinct breed.² He suggested the name 'Gloster,' because Mrs Rogerson lived in Cheltenham in Gloucestershire.³ He went on to encourage development of the Gloster, and establish the first breed standards.

The breeding crosses produced two distinct types of Gloster Canary and A.W. Smith named them both. The ones with a 'circular crest' of feathers he called 'Corona,' meaning 'crowned.' Possibly inspired by Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, he called the plainheaded ones, without a crown, 'Consort.'

Consorts and Coronas may be either male or female. Both show a range of colours including green, yellow, cinnamon and grey.⁴ When breeding Gloster canaries, best results are obtained by mating a Corona with a Consort.

Gloster Corona (Crowned) Canary



Gloster Consort Canary



¹ <http://www.petngarden.com/birds/birds8.php>

² <http://animal-world.com/encyclo/birds/canaries/GlosterCanary.php>

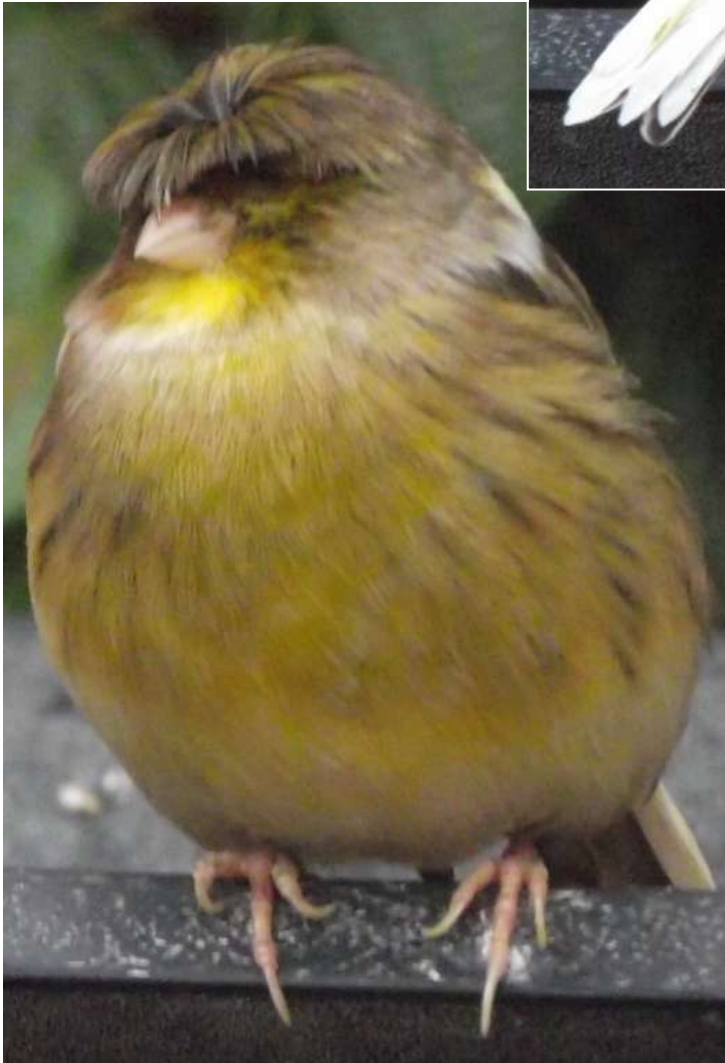
³ http://glostereng.tripod.com/algemene_gloster_informatie.htm

⁴ <https://www.beautyofbirds.com/glostercanaries.html>

Gloster Corona Canaries at Bloedel Conservatory



Gloster Corona Canaries at Bloedel Conservatory



Gloster Consort Canaries at Bloedel Conservatory

