



## FROM MATT'S PERCH

By Matthew Russel

On my way home from the Seed Pick-up the other Saturday morning I dropped in to see my favorite bird dealer, and to my amazement when I asked him: "have you seen any Madagascar Weavers lately" he said, "yes" and pointed out a single male sitting in one of his display cages on the back wall. He told me it was the only one he'd seen in a long time, and that it came from a backyard breeder. It was in with some other odds and ends of finches. It came at a princely sum, equal to what I'd paid for my first pair; and that was only three years ago.

After the sale was closed, we got chatting about trends in aviculture. All the usual concerns were discussed, like lack of young people coming through, the availability of birds etc. Then he said some thing that had me really thinking: "A large part of my costumers are people who just keep a few birds, and are not really breeders".

When I got my first pair of Madagascar Weavers they were easily sourced. In fact, you could have called them fairly common. Recently it has taken me almost a year to find just a single male, and I only found that by dumb luck. So what's happened to all the people breeding them three years ago? I think a number of them changed over to less common species like the Grenadier Weaver, which is now much more common than three years ago, and some may have just given up all together. To tell the truth, I really don't know. However, one thing I do know is that they are hard to find, which would indicate that less people are breeding them.

There seems to be a real need for people to take the next step and begin breeding and not just be bird collectors.

Please let me know your thoughts on this matter.  
You can e-mail me at: [tara\\_matt@hotmail.com](mailto:tara_matt@hotmail.com).

Cheers,

*Matt*



Madagascar Fody\*  
*Foudia madagascariensis*  
♂Photo: Doug Janson

\*The correct common name is Madagascar Fody, but Madagascar Weaver is more commonly used in Australia.