**Transferring Eggs**

Transferring eggs from one pair to another, as we have discussed, can be an effective management tool for increasing productivity but it also requires timing in addition to an understanding of the factors affecting hatching.
Transference of eggs needs to be done at as earlier stage of development as possible but may be safely carried out from when the first signs of blood lines are visible up until the entire interior of the egg appears reddish pink. Beyond this, the chances for successful hatching progressively diminish. However, one should never give up hope and success can be achieved at all stages and even when the embryo is fully formed and is due to hatch within a day or two.
When transferring, one should use a candling torch to estimate the age of the egg to ensure that they are within a day or two of those they are being transferred with. Place the transfer in approximate rotation for its stage of development. If a clutch contains both fertile and infertile eggs leave the infertile eggs, removing them only after the chicks have hatched. If there is a particularly large nest of eggs (more than 6) containing only a few fertile ones, remove some of the infertile ones so that the hen can manage the eggs more easily. Remember, however, that the oldest eggs are placed at the outside of the circle and new eggs are more centrally located. Removing infertile eggs can cause older fertile eggs to fall towards the centre subjecting them to different incubation temperatures and rotation, which may cause them to addle.
One thing you should consider when transferring or handling eggs, is because of its construction, it allows moisture as well as gasses to pass in and out. This is a natural occurrence, which is important for healthy development and growth of the embryo. One problem, however, is that it also allows germs to penetrate the shell. The vast majority of addled Budgerigar eggs (66%) are due to infection. Of these, the major cause of infection is staphylococci and the strain of staphylococci is human! Use disposable plastic gloves or egg tongs when handling eggs or at least dip your hands into a disinfectant such as Iodine V.18 or Virkon S.
Another consideration is the temperatures of your fingers when handling eggs.
These should be warmer than the eggs themselves as the effects of cold hands cause the inner membrane of the egg to contract slightly, having a drawing in effect.
This sucking action, although very small, is sufficient to allow bacteria to be drawn through the porous shell.

**Soiled Eggs**
Invariably, eggs become soiled, either by the hen or by the excrement of previously hatched chicks. Many of these eggs contain viable developing embryos, which fail to hatch because the fancier does not act. Eggs which remain soiled or caked with excrement will either fail to hatch because the chick cannot break out, or the embryo will die before its hatching date, as a result of bacterial absorption by the egg. (The majority of non-staphylococci infected eggs were noticeably dirty in comparison to staphylococci infected eggs, which were clean.)
Eggs can be washed in warm water with no consequence to the embryo.
An egg may be placed into a cup of warm water and if it sinks to the bottom of the cup, it is either infertile and/or addled. If it floats, this indicates that there is an air space within the egg as well as a viable embryo. As the warm water begins to loosen the excrement, take a smooth cloth or sponge and gently wipe the rest away, dry and replace the egg in sequence, within the nest box. On occasion, if there are already a number of hatched chicks, foster all but the smallest one or two so that the chicks which hatch from the cleansed eggs will have a greater chance of being fed and cared for.
One should try not to foster the eggs at this point as they have developed beyond the safe threshold, however, it is good practice transfer chicks. Wait until several have hatched, then transfer the oldest leaving only one, the youngest, plus any unhatched eggs. Continue to do this until there is only one chick plus three unhatched eggs left.