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BOOKS and HOBBIES

Roy Dolans' Finch Family Cheerful Lot

By MILDRED ANN SMITH

Mocking birds, linnets and wild canaries still are singing up around the 700 block of San Juan and Pacheco avenues near DeLaveaga park.

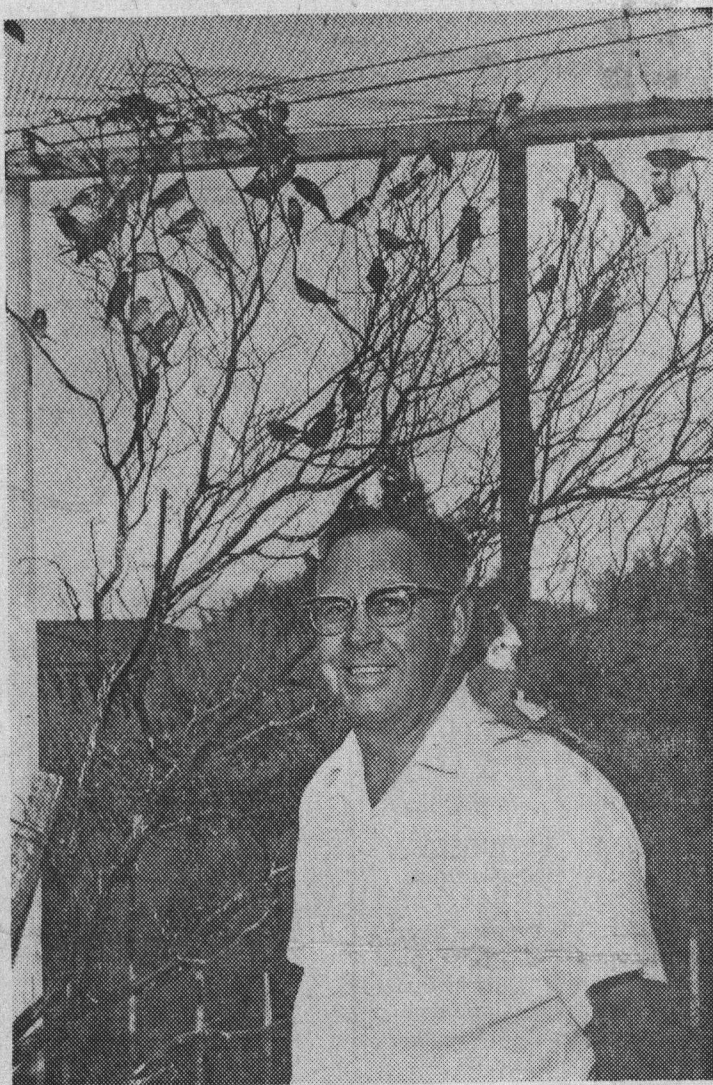
But they have a little competition now.

Nearly 100 exotic-looking bits of fluff with just as exotic-sounding names are warbling too. The birds, all imports from foreign countries and all members of the finch family, are the hobby of Santa Cruz newcomers, Roy and Alice Dolan of 725 San Juan avenue.

There are Cordon Bleus, Orange-Breasted Waxbills, Red-Eared Waxbills and African Fire Finches from Africa; Strawberry, Lady Gouldian, Lavender, Star, Painted, Green-Singing and Gray-Singing finches from Australia; Pintail Wydahs, Orange Bishop Weavers, Nuns and a Combassio from India; Pekin Nightingales and Society finches from China; a pair of Cuban Melodious and a Japanese Tumbler.

Dolan says that laws prohibit caging any bird which flies through the United States so that of necessity hobbyists must obtain their birds from foreign countries. Prices range from \$7 to \$25 a pair.

The Dolans, who before their



BIRDS OF A FEATHER—Finches that is (even though their plumage runs the gamut of the color spectrum)—fill the tree branch above Hobbyist Roy Dolan in his aviary at 725 San Juan avenue. Wolf-whistling cockateel sits on his shoulder.

retirement owned apartment rentals in Modesto, have built a combination aviary and greenhouse in their backyard. Orchid fanciers too, they have their orchids screened off from the aviary proper to house both hobbies under one roof.

Dolan figures that it costs a mere \$2 a month to feed his flock which eats seeds, lettuce, all kinds of fruit and meal worms. The latter he produces in unlimited quantities, also in the aviary-greenhouse.

A toboggan upset at Long Barn back in 1940 and a resultant broken back were directly responsible for his interest in birds, Dolan says.

"I was flat on my back for three months and had to have something to keep me occu-

pied. We started out with canaries but the last few years switched to finches."

He estimates that 75 per cent of the birds in captivity are finches and explains that this is because they are small, have beautiful plumage and song and can adapt themselves to conditions and confinement.

Dolan has been showing birds since 1948 and has shelves full of trophies he has won. He and his wife belong to the Central California Cage Bird club and already are getting several finches ready for its annual show at the Stockton civic auditorium in November. They will entertain club members here the third Sunday in October.

Besides their finches the Dolans have three Japanese quail, a cockateel and a mynah bird. The cockateel sits on Dolan's shoulder and gives the wolf whistle and the mynah bird talks to him. His favorite phrases are "Hello Roy," "How are you?" and "Can you talk?"

The mynah listened to the interview with his head cocked to one side and at its completion called a throaty, "Good-bye."



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