

Leopold is Scottish World Champion

Over in Portugal at the weekend Edinburgh resident, Leopold, won a gold medal at the 68th Ornithology World Championship in Portugal.

Leopold is a white Belgian Fancy and is sometimes known as a Belgian Bossu canary or a Belgian Hunchback.



Donald with Leopold PHOTO : Ian Jacobs

He is now big in the bird world however, and won against stiff competition from over 75 other birds in the category. He scored 94 out of 100.

His owner lawyer Donald Skinner-Reid has bred birds for a long time and only entered Leopold in the Portugal show at the last minute. He said he really did not think he had anything worth showing. After his victory he exclaimed :“I never thought in a month of Sundays that I’d be a gold medal winner!”



Donald with Leopold PHOTO : Ian Jacobs

Donald has raised birds for a long time and used to keep budgies from the surplus at Edinburgh Zoo. It was only in 2012 that he returned to raising rare breeds and now he has 53 canaries including Belgian Fancy, Scots Fancy and Spanish Giboso birds. This is the first time he has had one of his birds crowned World Champion.

He had not planned to send any birds at all but decided to take Leopold at the last minute. Donald said : "I never thought in a month of Sundays that I'd be a gold medal winner!"

Breeding season for canaries usually begins next month in March, as the birds need 14 hours of daylight. This is the most exciting time for Donald as he selects the birds which have the best genetic potential.

He concluded : "Leopold's father was a bronze medal winner at the World Show three years ago, so who knows, we might be able to do it again!"

Donald told us about this type of bird :

The Belgian Fancy is also known as the Bossu Canary or Belgian Hunchback. The breed fell into decline following the first World War. The length of this bird is 18 centimetres. The head is small and oval and is supported by a long, thin, trembling neck in the shape of 7. The shoulders are positioned above the head. The legs are long and the tail falling downwards.

The plumage is smooth and very attached to the body. The usual colour of this bird is yellow, although you can find canaries of different colours.



Donald with his gold medal. PHOTO : Ian Jacobs