

Timor Zebra Finch

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Who doesn't know a Zebra finch (*Taeniopygia guttata*, formerly *Poephila guttata*) the most common and familiar estrildid finch of Central Australia and ranges over most of the continent. It also can be found natively in Indonesia and East Timor.

The Timor Zebra finch (*Taeniopygia guttata guttata*) is the nominate form on Timor island, the domesticated form is the *Taeniopygia guttata castanotis*. The Timor Zebra finch distinct in many ways from his Australian family. The difference is so great that they could be considered another species. They are more than a smaller version of the Australian Zebra Finch.

The Timor Zebra finch males have a smaller breast bar and the throat stripes are not as visible compared to the Australian Zebra finches. The so characteristic zebra stripes are completely missing or only slightly present. It is also a very small bird and smaller than the Australian type. The voice of the Timor is much higher and rapid than the Australian Zebra.

The female Timor Zebra finch is nearly indistinguishable from the Australian Zebra finch. The only distinction is the voice. Another distinction between the Timor and the Australian Zebra finch is the flat skull and a fairly sharp beak.



Australian Zebra finch
Male left, Female right



Timor Zebra finch
Female left, Male right

As food is the traditional exotics mixture the basis supplemented with spray millet, various grass and weed seeds . What strikes me is that the Timor eagerly seize the opportunity of pinkies and buffalo worms a diet that does not exist in its natural habitat. They eagerly take egg food, I don't feed greens and soaked seed. Grit is always available. The Timor Zebra finch is as eager to breed as the Australian Zebra finch. They can be bred in cages or in a flight but they are in nature colony breeders so they need the sound of other Timor Zebra finches. Best results are in a flight. The average clutch will consist of 5-6 eggs and incubation is about 12 days. The Young will stay in the nest for 18 days before fledging. They have the same color as the Australian Zebra finches. After approximately 21 days they are independent. There are no known mutations. Don't introduce mutations of the Australian Zebra finch to the Timor Zebra finch to obtain all known mutations of the Australians into the Timor. Don't put them together with Australian Zebra finches because at that time you will have hybrids. **Keep them clean.**

