



The **AVIAN** Caregiver

Number 11

Summer Mist

Walgreens sells a device called "MISTER HB" for misting birds when the temperatures are above 85°F. It holds about 10 oz of water and can be pumped up to produce pressure inside the vessel; a hose delivers a very fine mist. My birds thoroughly enjoy being misted and it is obvious that they prefer this over "squirt-type" bottles.

Traci Tomte, Aurora, CO

Care for Baby Wild Birds

Although well intentioned individuals are often confronted with baby birds that have fallen from a nest or are otherwise not being cared for by the parents, there are two appropriate actions: 1) take the bird immediately to a licensed wildlife rehabilitation center where it can be identified and fed the proper diet; or 2) do nothing. Sometimes parent birds recognize a deficiency in their own offspring that causes them to abandon a youngster, so it really is best for humans to "let nature take its course."

Making a Difference in Avian Health

CANARIES ARE TIDY, nondestructive and easy to care for, but they do not like to be handled. They are appreciated most for their pleasant, melodious song.

Canaries are not social birds. One bird kept as a single pet will be content. Even a male and a female may fight, except during the nesting season; thus, most breeders house sexes separately.

Once a year, at the end of the breeding season, canaries replace all their plumage. During this time the diet should be supplemented with high protein foods. Some examples of these foods are: commercial "egg food," mashed hard-cooked egg, finely chopped

chicken, or insects (either fresh or commercially available powdered insects usually marketed for finches). For caged pets, Harrison's High Potency Fine Grind® works well during the molt.

Appearance alone does not indicate if your canary is a male or a female; however, behavior during the breeding season makes a clear distinction. Males are particularly vocal at

this time, and the vent area in the male becomes enlarged and prominent.

Canaries spend a great deal of their time eating and flying from perch to perch. Food and fresh water must be available at all times, and multiple, small diameter branches are important accessories in the encl-



About Your Canary

sure. Canaries are normally not allowed freedom in the home, and they are not amused by chewable toys.

The most common diseases in canaries are feather cysts, baldness, other feather abnormalities, obesity, fatty tumors, mites (air sac, trachea, tassel-foot, scaly face), egg binding, cataracts and leg fractures. HBD's Fine Grind formulas have been successfully used to prevent or treat these malnutrition-related conditions. Visiting your avian veterinarian for routine health checks will help prevent many diseases and support you in having a long, satisfying relationship with your canary.

Vital Statistics

Body length 4-7 in
Body weight 12-30 g
Age of sexual maturity . . 5 mo
Average life span 5-15 yr



AVIAN MEDICINE: PRINCIPLES AND APPLICATION

Edited by
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Initially priced at \$175, the book is now available through HBD for \$99 plus \$9 (U.S. s&h). Call 800-346-0269, email to BirdFoods@aol.com or order online at: www.harrisonsbirdfoods.com.



Bird owners are invited to submit questions regarding the use of Harrison's Bird Foods. Go to the web site www.harrisonsbirdfoods.com and click on "Ask the Bird Guy." An archive of previous questions and answers may be viewed at "Bird Guy Responses."

When to Use High Potency Formulas

Question: I have two young green-winged macaws that were hand-raised with your Juvenile hand-feeding formula. Now I'm feeding High Potency Coarse®. On the packaging, I read that you could feed that to green-winged macaws all year round. Can I give them Power Treats® as a snack?

Espen Skjegstad

Answer: Green-wings have a higher fat requirement and do fine year round on High Potency. Some small amounts of Power Treats® are OK as treats. Sounds like you're doing excellent the way you are. Follow the bag instructions and all should work out.

Question: Should I feed my Amazon High Potency Coarse® forever? I have read that the African Greys should be left on this diet permanently, and that several other birds should only be on it the first year, then one month out of each year.

Chris Williams

Answer: Most Amazons do well on the Adult Lifetime Coarse® formula. You could offer them the High Potency formula when they are ill, molting or if they are breeding birds. African Greys appear to have higher requirements for some nutrients and can be fed High Potency formula year round.

Camping with Our Macaws

Question: We would like to take our birds camping at an altitude of approximately 7400 feet. It can get relatively

cool during the night. We have a propane heater, but have been told to use an alternative heating source and we do not have electricity. What temperatures can a bird withstand without causing harm? Would heated rocks in a pan below their cages be a good alternative?

Traci Tomte

Answer: Birds are slightly more sensitive to carbon monoxide than people, so you would want to monitor for safe levels with a detector. There are various battery-operated heating appliances at camping stores. Birds can easily handle temperatures down to 40°F if they are not in the wind. Rocks worked in the olden days, so why not?

Ms. Tomte's Response:

Just wanted to give you an update with regard to camping (really roughing it) with two macaws in tow..We did heat up rocks (approximately 10"L x 6"W x 2"D) with our Coleman stove outside of the camper. With two rocks about that size heated, I had to sleep outside of the sleeping bag with a mere blanket. And the two munchkins (my macaws) were snug as two bugs in a rug.



Packaging Tips for Best Results

You know how chips always seem to stay fresher if they are left in their original packaging with the top rolled down to keep out the air? It's the same with Harrison's Bird Foods.

To increase the storage time, HBD products should be stored only in the new, oxygen-impermeable bags with the zip top closures. The food should not be taken out of the package, nor put in plastic containers, nor refrigerated or frozen. The new packaging was created to extend the freshness while maintaining HBD's commitment to avoiding preservatives.

HBD recommends that opened packages be used within 4-6 weeks for best results.

