

## **Finch or Canary**

Finches and canaries are attractive birds that make fascinating and rewarding pets. They can be kept singly or in groups. The following information is appropriate for all members of the finch and canary family.

### **General**

Although most pet owners are content to observe their birds, with patience and

perseverance it is possible to finger tame them. Finches and canaries can be messy eaters and it is wise to place their cage in an area that can be easily cleaned up.

### **Housing**

Finches or canaries need the largest cage you can afford; since they are not usually finger-tamed and spend most of their time in their cage, they need plenty of room. Cage width and depth are more important than height. Make sure the cage is zinc-safe and lead-free, with appropriate bar size and spacing. Natural hardwood branches make the best perches; sandpaper perches should never be used. Choose a variety of non-toxic wood or acrylic toys to keep your bird busy, and rotate them to avoid boredom.

### **Diet**

These birds should be fed a variety of foods, including vitamin-fortified seed mix, dark green, leafy vegetables, yams, carrots, hard boiled eggs, and some fruit. Grit, gravel, and oyster shells should never be given. Fresh, clean water should be available at all times. Vitamin supplements are not needed with this diet.

### **Cleaning**

Tray liners should be replaced every day and the cage bottom, fittings and dishes regularly washed with hot water and soap. Once a month, disinfect the cage with diluted bleach; be sure to rinse thoroughly. Line the tray with black and white newspaper or paper towels. It is unsafe to use pine/cedar shavings, corn cob or walnut bedding.

### **Fertility**

Egg-laying is very common in finches and canaries and can start any time after five months of age. Excessive egg-laying is a potential health risk, consult a qualified AVIAN vet.

### **Health**

Finches and canaries should have a complete exam by a qualified AVIAN vet at least once a year or ASAP if any bleeding, injuries, or other signs are noted. It can be hard to tell when a bird is ill, and by the time you notice a problem, the sickness is usually well-advanced. Delaying a visit with an AVIAN vet or using over-the-counter or human medicines, which mask the signs of illness, is likely to cost your bird's life.

### **Warning**

Finches and canaries have very sensitive respiratory systems and should not be exposed to cigarette smoke; aerosols, harsh cleaning products, or other toxic fumes.

### **More Info**

Mickaboo Cockatiel Rescue: [www.mickaboo.org](http://www.mickaboo.org)

Finch World: [www.finchworld.com](http://www.finchworld.com)