



NATIONAL FINCH & SOFTBILL SOCIETY

Volume 34, No. 1
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THE JOURNAL OF THE NATIONAL FINCH AND SOFTBILL SOCIETY



KEEPING BIRDS YEAR-ROUND IN OUTSIDE AVIARIES

CALCIUM GLUCONATE AS A SUPPLEMENT

GETTING A CHAMPION BIRD

**IMPORTANT NFSS
ELECTION
DETAILS**

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NFSS MISSION STATEMENT

The National Finch and Softbill Society is dedicated to promoting the enjoyment of keeping and breeding Finches and Softbills to all interested parties, enhancing our knowledge of the proper care of these birds, encouraging breeding programs, and working with other organizations for the preservation of aviculture in this country.

Journal of the National Finch and Softbill Society
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Submitting Materials for Publication. All materials should be submitted to the editor, at editor@nfss.org. NFSS reserves the right to edit and/or reject all written, photographic, and advertising materials submitted. With the exception of advertising, deadlines are the 15th day of December, March, June, and September for the following issue.

Editorial Policy. NFSS affiliated clubs have permission to reprint all articles and photos with the following exceptions: articles and photos with either a © (**copyright symbol**) or "**All Rights Reserved**" require the copyright owner's permission. All "**Reprinted by Permission of**" articles require written permission from the originating source.

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Journal and NFSS Dues. New memberships and late renewals (expired memberships) received by the 15th day of any month immediately preceding an NFSS Journal issue will receive four consecutive issues, beginning with the issue for the quarter immediately after they joined. For dues received after these cutoff dates, the first issue will be one issue later. Cutoff dates to receive the next published issues are as follows: the 15th day of December, March, June and September. If a member's dues remain unpaid beyond the twelve month membership period, said membership shall cease. Should a member's membership cease and be renewed at a later date, the membership shall begin at that payment date. To retain the membership number and related data, said membership must be renewed within (60) sixty days of expiration.

Members Only Password — BirdCage
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Rebecca Mikel

Important Elections for NFSS

The most important order of business the society will undertake this year is our General Election. During the year you will be seeing various pieces of information relating to this election. In this issue – you'll see the summary Job Descriptions for all positions – both elected and appointed. The only difference between those two is that “elected” positions carry a “vote” – but both, more importantly, carry a “voice”. The next term will begin in January of 2018 and run until the end of December 2019. Please thoughtfully consider your interest in taking on a position on the NFSS Board. Any questions you have about a specific position can be answered by any board member. For those of you who do not have an interest in serving on the board – may I take this opportunity to encourage you to place your vote for those who DO run? Our hope is to be able to provide electronic ballots this year (the hard copy will continue to be available in the Journal) – which we hope will improve voter participation.

A constant concern these days for this society – as well as many other hobby groups – is how to increase membership, attendance at events, and support of the hobby in general. New individual members, as well as the development of new, local clubs who affiliate with NFSS, breathes new life into the NFSS and into aviculture. Do you have friends who keep birds but who aren't members of NFSS? Are there groups of you who are fellow-bird keepers who could form a local club? That club – through the strength of its' members could host a local show, bring in a speaker to present a short session on an avian related topic, volunteer to help support another group hosting a show?

“Strength in Numbers” applies to us folks! This is especially true as we closely watch animal legislation unfold, sponsored by those groups who would gladly take away our right to keep and work with birds. Roland Cristo, NFSS Legislative Liaison, has his finger on the pulse as it relates to these things. We've also added the efforts of another volunteer – Brent Gattis – who has a strong professional background advocating against this type of legislation in Washington, D.C. Watch for articles related to legislative activity in future issues of the journal.

Happy Birding!

Rebecca Mikel, President

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NFSS Journal Advertising Rates

Premium Ad Positions:

Position/Size	Per Issue	Per Year
Cover Positions—Full (Inside Front, Inside Back, Back):	\$90.00	\$450.00
Centerfold—Full (2 center pages)	\$210.00	\$1,137.00

Run of Press Ads:

Full Page:	\$72.50	\$359.50
Half Page:	\$50.00	\$249.50
Quarter Page:	\$27.50	\$160.50

Deadlines for Submitting Ads

All ads must be received two months prior to publication

Issue	Due Date	Issue	Due Date
First Quarter	November 1 st	Third Quarter	May 1 st
Second Quarter	February 1 st	Fourth Quarter	August 1 st

For more information, contact the Advertising Manager — advertising@nfss.org

 NFSS Membership Number

(This must be included or the ballot will not be counted)

Dual members will each have one (1) vote and are allowed to copy this ballot
 Ballots must be post-marked **NO LATER THAN MAY 30, 2017**

Mail Ballots to:

Rebecca Mikel
 13779 US 12 E
 Union, MI 49130

Vote for 4th Vice-President – Judge’s Panel/Standards

Laura Tinker

Write in Candidate _____



Submit an Article – We'll Help

Do you have a finch-related skill that's the best of anyone you know? Have a special way of breeding, sexing, housing, or feeding your birds? Have you ever wanted to be a published writer? The NFSS Journal is always open to quality, informative articles that help other owners/breeders. ***You don't even have to write it yourself!*** The article will have your name on it as the author, we will ghost-write the article for you. Submit your article idea by sending us the following information so we can get started.

- Topic.
- Main point.
- How you learned or acquired the information you shared in the main point.
- A second or third related point, be as specific as you can.
- How you got started in birds.
- More information you want us to know.
- Photos – Send the largest file size, unedited original. Photos can be taken by you or those you have permission to use. Please tell us who took your photos.
- If you quoted from any sources, please list them.
- Short biography. Tell us about yourself. Just a few short sentences.

Submit to: **editor@nfss.org**



Membership Application

Please print clearly

Application date ___/___/___

Check # _____

Primary Member First & Last Name _____

Primary Member's Email Address _____

Mailing address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Country _____

Area Code _____ Phone _____ (in case we have questions)

New Membership Renewal, list your NFSS# _____ Dual NFSS # _____

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Aviary Name _____

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1 ⇒	<input type="checkbox"/> 30.00	<input type="checkbox"/> 35.00	<input type="checkbox"/> 42.00	<input type="checkbox"/> 10.00
3 ⇒	<input type="checkbox"/> 85.00	<input type="checkbox"/> 99.00		
5 ⇒	<input type="checkbox"/> 140.00	<input type="checkbox"/> 165.00		
Lifetime ⇒	<input type="checkbox"/> 600.00	<input type="checkbox"/> 1100.00		

Mail with check or money order [U.S. Funds] payable to NFSS

Mail to: Sara Roberts, NFSS Treasurer - 720 Live Oak Lane - Pinole, Ca. 94564 - USA

To retain your membership number and related data, your membership must be renewed within 60 days of expiration.



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NFSS Board of Directors Meeting

First Quarter 2017 Meeting

- **RESIGNED:** Vince Moase, 4th VP; Kelsey Weyland, Advertising
- **APPOINTED:** Laura Tinker, 4th VP; Tanya Logan, Advertising
- New Software in place for Census; Paula Hansen and Charles Moorcraft thanked for their time and energy on this project. Mutations removed, but can be added for those wishing to include them. We are using “Formsite” which allows users to establish an account and also exports to Excel.
- Updates to Website continue.
- 2017 Bands from Netherlands received; EZ kits and reload rings being shipped as well as band cutters.
- Spring Red Siskin exchange coming up. Promotional Brochure from Sam Davis in progress.
- 2017 is a General Election year. Those interested in serving on the BOD are to contact any Board member. See “Positions Descriptions” in Jan-Mar (this issue of the Journal. (see pg. 8)
- NFSS Show Classifications updated to include classes for varieties of Parrot Finches. Submitted to National Bird Show Board and will be in place for the 2017 National Event.
- “The Charlie Anchor Best Zebra” award has been discontinued in favor of “The Charlie Anchor Best Zebra Award” which continues to commemorate Charlie Anchor and which also reaches a broader audience.
- New submission deadlines for the Journal established in line with the new “quarterly” schedule for the Journal – as follows:

Issue	Submission Deadline
– Jan-Mar (First Quarter) Issue	December 15
– April-June (Second Quarter) Issue	March 15
– Jul-Sept (Third Quarter) Issue	June 15
– Oct-Dec (Fourth Quarter) Issue	September 15

MEMBERSHIP

Single 284
Dual 36 (72)
Junior 7
Foreign 17

TOTAL: 379

TREASURY

Checking Account: \$ 7,877.00

Savings Account: \$26,443.00

- Eric Peake Print auctioned for \$350; details to follow regarding "Best Journal Article Contest"
- Sally Porter will conduct 2nd Audit of 2014 financial records; Cheryl Burns will conduct 1st audit of 2015 records

The Finchery

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NFSS General Election Guidelines

NFSS Bylaws specify an election will be held every two years to elect the officers of the Society. All elected and appointed offices are open to current members. Serving on the NFSS Board of Directors is an honor, a responsibility, and a commitment of time in addition to the responsibilities of your office.

Board meetings are held four times yearly. Three are held online and the 4th quarter Board meeting will be conducted prior to the annual membership meeting held at the NCBS (it may be necessary to conclude the 4th quarter meeting online). Internet accessibility on a daily basis is necessary.

Elected officers should vote during the official meetings. Board members present annual budgets for consideration and are required to submit a detailed account of their expenditures and income to the treasurer on a monthly basis. In addition, officers must submit quarterly reports to the Board of Directors.

Knowledge of the NFSS Bylaws is essential and a basic understanding of Roberts Rules of Order is helpful. The board member's duty is to lead the organization in its mission and to keep it financially and legally viable. It is important that each candidate understand the responsibilities of the office.

Every person who intends to become a candidate for any office will be required to submit a bio/resumé to the chairman of the nominating committee stating their background and experience.

Time required: Four quarterly Board meetings are conducted, each lasting approximately a month, require a minimum of one hour daily to monitor and respond to posts. Time is also required to perform the duties of the office.

PRESIDENT

Preside over all meetings; attend to the day-to-day operations of the Society; be available to members of the Board, and also monitor NFSS Forums.

1st VICE PRESIDENT

(Regional Vice Presidents, Education) Work closely with the President. First in succession to fill the position of President in absentia or if the President is unable to fill his/her term; will coordinate activities and be responsible for Regional Vice Presidents, and approve checks made payable to the President.

2nd VICE PRESIDENT (Publications)

Second in succession to fill the position of President. Responsible for all NFSS publications; supervises NFSS WebMaster and Journal Editor. Available to the Editor and Advertising Manager for guidance in securing articles and ads; assists in obtaining competitive printing prices.

NFSS General Election Guidelines

3rd VICE PRESIDENT (FSS and Census)

Oversee day-to-day operations of the National Finch/Softbill Save (FSS) program; work closely with FSS Committee, Group Managers, and Species Captains to develop species profiles; collect data, maintain records; coordinate activities of NFSS Captive Breeding Program; compile and publish a yearly census.

4th VICE PRESIDENT

(Judges Panel/Standards/Research)

Must be be NFSS Panel Judge, serves as Judges Panel Director, chairs the Research and Standards Committee, and in charge of Species Classifications. Maintains records/points earned by members and birds from NFSS shows. Represents the NFSS as liaison with the National Cage Bird Show Board.

REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENTS

Responsible for encouraging membership and club affiliation in the Society within the region he/she resides. Responsible to the First Vice President and serves as part of the Education Committee. Encouraged to attend the Regional Show in their region, and hold at least one membership meeting annually within their region. They should always be a visible NFSS representative.

TREASURER

Must have business experience and accounting skills. Deposits/transfers funds electronically into and from various accounts will maintain up-to-date records, request budgets from all departments, and prepare annual budget for NFSS. Also receives/deposits/documents weekly payments to the proper account and provides the President with a weekly report. Requests approval for expenditures prior to payment. Prepare and submit to the Board at the 4th Quarter Board meeting a budget to be approved by the Board. Responsible for establishing and maintaining NFSS financial accounts and filing tax returns. An audit of the prior years financial records shall be performed by 2 BOD members not to include the current Treasurer each year and at any time the Treasurer is relieved of responsibilities.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Must have good verbal and written communication skills, experience with using word-processing software and the internet. Takes minutes during all Board meetings, compile the minutes, and submit to the Board for approval. Maintains an archive of all minutes and the Society's official documents, and assist other Board members with correspondence as necessary.

NFSS General Election Guidelines

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR

Responsible for receipt of and processing of new/renewal memberships. Maintains current membership rolls, making them available to Department Managers. Documents checks and sends to treasurer, sends membership materials to new/renewal members, Must be familiar with Excel and able to monitor his/her computer on a daily basis.

BAND SECRETARY

Responsible for ordering and issuing NFSS bands, verifying membership status for purchases. Submits monthly itemized expense/income report to the Treasurer. Requires computer knowledge , Excel, converting files to PDF, internet, and basic accounting skills. Negotiates purchases with band suppliers, working with foreign currency and verifying incoming merchandise.

AFFILIATE/AWARDS DIRECTOR

Responsible for club affiliations, selection of clubs hosting Regional Shows, and processing award orders. Submits monthly financial report along with any funds received to the Treasurer. Sends re-affiliation packets to clubs and when returned, enters all necessary information into a database. Forwards information to appropriate Department Managers. Information must be sent to the Membership Director for inclusion in the membership database. Also processes awards orders and maintains award inventory adequate for show season.

APPOINTED NFSS OFFICERS

The following officers are appointed via recommendation by the NFSS President and a majority vote of the BOD.

NFSS JOURNAL EDITOR

Basic grammar, spelling, computer, Excel, and publishing programs necessary, as well as knowledge of file types and how to utilize or convert them for use in the Journal. Handles all activities related to production of the bi-monthly NFSS Journal, including procuring articles and photographs, maintain communication with all NFSS Board members, ensure accuracy of NFSS information and forms in each issue, creates/edits each NFSS Journal issue, delivers to printer in timely manner, and approves payment Also supervises Advertising/Promotions Manager. Responsible to 2nd Vice President and President.

NFSS General Election Guidelines

ADVERTISING AND PROMOTIONS MANAGER

Solicits ads for the Journal and coordinate with the Editor and Website Manager for placement of ads in the Journal and on the Website. Maintains electronic files with up-to-date records; handles all invoicing and record-keeping for all advertisers. Cooperates with Regional Vice Presidents in promotion of Regional Shows. Responsible to NFSS Editor and Second Vice President.

NFSS WEBSITE MANAGER

Must be completely knowledgeable with all operating systems, software, hardware, and any other programs required to create, set up, maintain and update (as needed) the NFSS Website. Reports to the 2nd Vice President.

MODERATOR: NFSS FINCH/SOFTBILL FORUM

Acts as moderator of the NFSS Listserv, determines eligibility and approves subscribers in conjunction with the Membership Director. Writes and distributes list rules and enforces a civil forum through thoughtful correspondence. Responsible to President.

LEGISLATIVE LIAISON

Responsible for interrelationships between NFSS and other national and local avicultural organizations, investigates and reports to NFSS Board & membership current or proposed legislation affecting bird owners/breeders. Reports to President.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF AVICULTURE

(AFA) REPRESENTATIVE

Responsible for keeping the NFSS membership informed as to activities of the AFA. Reports to President



Calcium Gluconate as a Supplement

Susan Stieve

Healthy birds require calcium, and depending on their diet a supplement may be beneficial both before and during the breeding season to prevent egg binding. The use of calcium supplements is also effective in the repair of broken bones, and is known to prevent seizures and toe-tapping in some hookbill species.

Calcium gluconate 23% is readily available for purchase in the veterinary section at farm supply stores such as Tractor Supply and Farm and Fleet; a 1-pint injectable bottle costs about \$10. Calcium gluconate is primarily sold as a treatment for milk fever in cattle, but it can also be used as a cost-effective calcium supplement for your birds.



The recommended calcium gluconate 23% dosage for birds is 3 ml calcium gluconate added to 4 ounces drinking water, mixing it fresh daily. If you have a large flock like I do it is easy to mix larger batches. Calcium gluconate 23% can safely be used on birds for weeks at a time.

Calcium gluconate is sold as a sterile, preservative-free solution; therefore, it is recommended to use a syringe and needle to draw out the liquid from the bottle rather than removing the rubber stop and pouring liquid out. This will prevent contamination. A 3 ml syringe with an attached needle can usually be purchased at stores where calcium gluconate is sold. These syringes can be used many times if they are kept clean. If the rubber top is removed to dispense the solution and calcium gluconate becomes contaminated the liquid can turn cloudy within a week and lose potency. If cloudiness is observed the solution should be discarded.

Calcium levels in birds can also be increased by ensuring the bird is on a healthy diet. Seed diets tend to be low in calcium, while commercial pelleted diets provide more calcium. Additionally, full spectrum lighting or supplementation with Vitamin D, which is necessary for calcium absorption, are especially helpful in increasing calcium levels in birds.



Susan Stieve is a nationally-known bird show exhibitor of finches and hookbills and has won many achievement awards. She is on the board of directors for avicultural societies including the National Finch and Softbill Society, American Federation of Aviculture, North American Parrot Society, and the National Cockatiel Society.

Two brands of calcium gluconate 23% solution sold at Tractor Supply are AgriLabs and Durvet. The bottle in the photo has had the metal outer cap removed to show the rubber stopper through which a syringe is inserted.

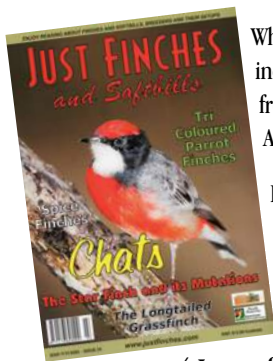


References:

<http://avianmedicine.net/content/uploads/2013/03/18.pdf>



JUST FINCHES *and Softbills* MAGAZINE



While focusing primarily on Australasia, this magazine incorporates what's happening with finches and Softbills from many overseas locations as well, including, South Africa, America, Europe and the U.K.

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Getting a Champion Bird – It Takes a Village

Cheryl Burns



In 2009 I showed my finches at the National for the first time and had two birds place on the top bench. At that time, I didn't really understand the NFSS awards for Champion birds, Champion Exhibitor and the Exhibitor of Excellence. The excitement of competing at the National Show inspired me to set goals to earn the different NFSS awards for the exhibitor and individual birds.

The Exhibitor awards were my first goal since they are an accumulation of the points all your birds earn in official NFSS shows. I earned the Champion Exhibitor award every year since 2009 and the Exhibitor of Excellence in 2013.

After placing 5th and earning the Best Unflighted at the 2009 National with my American Self Chocolate Society that I named Brother, I kept showing him at every show every year. He would place on top bench from time to time and slowly earned more points. I also was showing this bird's sibling (Sister) and in 2012 the two of them won Best in Show as a pair at the Texas Bird Breeders and Fanciers show. Brother and Sister were chosen as the best birds in the show over the best parrot, canary, budgie and cockatiel -- which is quite an achievement for two little brown birds.

By 2015 I wasn't sure Brother was going to be up to another year of shows even though he was close to champion in points. When the season started he looked pretty good, so off to the shows he went. Brother placed 3rd in the first show in San Antonio and then first at the show in Fort Worth, which earned him enough points to become a champion. I had achieved a goal in showing that I was not sure I would ever reach!

As everyone knows, your birds have to be in great condition, your competitors' birds in not as good of condition, and the judge has to agree with your opinion of the exhibition bird in order to place on top bench. From personal experience,



I have found that the judges often have a different opinion of my birds than I do, and opinions of the birds vary from judge to judge and show to show. In most cases, it is just plain hard to repeatedly win with the same bird and for that bird to live long enough to earn the champion points.

I also learned that that it takes all of the exhibitors in your region to help you get the points to win the awards. And as you benefit from this situation, so do they as their birds get points and earn awards. The exhibitors in our region each brought as many finches as they had cages for and encouraged other exhibitors to do the same. We invited new people to show their birds as well, with many of us lending out show cages and helping the new exhibitors get their birds entered into the show properly. I can honestly say that I usually take many birds that are examples of poor condition and cage training just to help the numbers at our shows.



NFSS Judge Clarence Culwell and Ken/Hiram Rampersaud (an apprentice judge at the time) present the top bench at the 2015 Fort Worth Bird Show where Brother earned the final points needed for Champion by placing first in the NFSS Finch Division.

Looking back at the years that my bird was earning his points to become a champion, I fondly remember exhibitors teasing each other and helping each other as we traveled the regional show circuit. It was a lot of work but the Finch division usually had the largest or one of the largest number of entries at each show. I remember many times that the finch exhibitors would round up the final two or three birds needed to put the show entries at the next level for points.



Laurie Erwin puts the ribbons on the top bench at the 2014 Alamo Exhibition Bird Club Show in 2015.

I've made a lot of friends that I look forward to seeing at each event, including Laurie Erwin who also had a champion bird in 2015 – one that earned all of the points as an Unflighted bird in one year. We enjoy competing with each other and helping each other.

So, I really cannot say that my bird earned champion status on his own or even with my skill as an aviculturist and exhibitor. This award belongs to all of the exhibitors in Region 4 who made the effort to prepare show cages, catch birds and travel to multiple shows each season. If they had not done so, my efforts would not have meant a thing. Thank you to my fellow exhibitors and friends who make this hobby the fun that it is.

Cheryl Burns has owned and shown society finches since 2005. She is currently serving as Region 4 Vice President for NFSS.



Brother peaks out from behind his ribbons at the 2009 National Cage Bird Show in Tulsa.



Laurie Erwin receives an exhibitor award at the 2016 National Bird Show from Sally Huntington.



Cheryl Burns receives a Champion Bird award from Sally Huntington at the 2016 National Bird Show.

Sister (left) and Brother (right) after winning Best in Show as a pair at the Texas Bird Breeders Show in 2012.



Ring Collector

Organize and store your avian leg bands

Keep your NFSS Finch leg bands stored in order and securely. How often have you spilled out your leg bands, losing track of the order or watching them roll on to the floor? Keep your sizes organized and in numerical order. Easily select the next band needed with one hand while you have a chick in the other.

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Weather, or Not?

Kateri J. Davis



Snow in flights can make problems. Here a Pekin Robin and a Spurwing Plover deal with a light dusting.

When keeping birds year-round in outside aviaries, weather generally leads to lots of worry, especially in the winter. As a long-time breeder of various types of softbills housed in outdoor aviaries all year long, I am often asked for the minimum temperature that a certain softbill species can take. Most aviculturists would love it if someone could answer this question definitively, because it would make wintering birds outside much less stressful, both for us and our beloved avians.

Unfortunately the answers are not that clear cut. While it may be a starting point, being told a minimum temperature doesn't really tell you whether or not that is a safe temperature for your birds. We know that climates that are too hot or too cold can stress birds more and that most birds can

handle temperatures in the 40 or 50 degree Fahrenheit range, but what about lower? No one answer fits all.

Weather is unpredictable and can change rapidly. Although watching the weather report certainly helps, an aviculturist needs to be flexible, observant and well prepared. The majority of birds in aviculture can withstand a range of temperatures. In the wild they deal with changes in temperature, both within a 24-hour period as well as seasonally. Birds that are kept at constant temperatures throughout their lives are typically not as hardy versus birds that are allowed to experience variations. So weather changes can be beneficial.

Despite over 25 years of housing birds outside, I still worry about my flock every winter. Mistakes can be devastating and severe weather can lead to frostbite, loss of toes or limbs and even death.

How do we ensure that our outside birds survive the winter as comfortably as possible?

Here are some points to consider when housing birds in extreme temperatures.



Acclimation

Any bird that is to spend the winter outside needs to be carefully acclimated. This requires considerable time, usually weeks, during the fall season so it can gradually adapt to the colder weather as it naturally occurs.

If I receive a bird in the colder winter months, it will not go outside until spring — even if coming from an outdoor flight. This is because I do not really know the weather variables to which it is accustomed. For example, the winters in Sacramento, CA are quite different than in Eugene, OR.

Exposure to Elements

Generally, aviary birds need protection from heavy rains, winds, snow and severe heat. Aviaries can be designed with roofs over all or part of the structure, as well as one or more solid wall. Large plants and trees give protection too.

Be careful with snow in the flights. Make sure there are lots of dry perches available. The deeper the snow the more potential problems. Birds can panic and get trapped in snow drifts. Always provide a dry, snow-free ground area in which the birds can roam. Ground birds are more at risk of frostbite than other perching species.

Supplemental Heat

Having some form of supplemental heat like heat lamps, heated perches, or heated areas can certainly help birds deal with the cold – if they use it. Birds can be “bird brains” when it comes to this. They often need to be encouraged to take advantage of the heat by placing perches higher in roofed and heated areas. Food and water can be provided in the heated areas.

In flights with multiple birds, make sure there is enough room in the heated areas for all. Birds still protect their personal space and are territorial when cold, so the dominant bird may be the only one warm.

Duration

The length of time the temperatures are low matters. Typically it is colder at night and warmer during the day. Birds can take low temperatures for short periods of time, but if the condition persists longer than a few hours, it becomes tougher on the bird. For instance, if the temperature dips into the upper 20s degree Fahrenheit for a few hours at night and the bird does well, that doesn't mean the bird can take multiple days of constant upper 20s.

Wind Chill

Protection from wind is the key. Wind plus cold is devastating. Birds can take lower temperatures without wind than with it.

Humidity

Birds fare better with lower temperatures when the humidity is low. Raise the humidity, and they need more warmth. Some aviculturists wrap heavy plastic around their aviaries to hold in heat and protect them from the elements. Be careful, as this often raises the humidity and hinders ventilation. This in turn can promote mold growth increase, especially for species like fruit-eating softbills which have such copious and wet feces.

Sunlight

Several bird species can handle low temperatures if it is sunny during the day for a few hours. Does the aviary get sun exposure? The ability to sun themselves and heat up naturally helps combat the cold.

Age & Health

Old, young sub-adult, and sick birds can be more stressed by cold. Birds with any feather loss or condition issues are at more risk in colder conditions. For example, mature Lapwings are quite hardy but can be delicate for lower temperatures for their first year.

Stress

Stressed birds do not do as well in the cold. Birds can be stressed by netting, housing, diet changes, or crowded conditions, which can place them in danger. Cold birds will naturally be less active and often fluff more as they conserve energy. Take measures to avoid stressing birds that are dealing with cold temperatures by refraining from undue activities around them.

Make sure that the birds have fresh, unfrozen water and food at all times. Don't let bowls go empty or become solidly frozen. Birds can't drink ice and quickly get dehydrated in the cold. Fresh fruits and vegetables will freeze also.

Check the birds several times during the day and leave a night light on so they can eat whenever needed. Birds will need to eat more during cold weather to keep their energy up.

Supplemental Food

With my variety of species, I do not really change the diet on purpose for the winter. All birds get their regular non-breeding diet. There is less variety of seasonal fruits available for my frugivores, and more of the pelleted diets are eaten.

Just make sure to offer lots of food and keep it thawed. Some species may need supplemental foods in winter.

Species Type

Each species handles temperatures differently. Know your species' anatomy, physiology, climate, and habitat to which they are native. Some birds such as Tockus hornbills have thin feathering and do not handle cold climates well. Long-legged birds can be more prone to frostbite issues. Birds which are native to mountainous areas usually can take low temperatures better than those from lower elevations.

Consider how you are housing the birds. Offering nest boxes or logs to birds that will sleep in them helps keep them comfortable and warmer during those cold nights.

Birds that cluster together at night do better in the cold when kept in pairs or groups. For example, Mousebirds hang belly to belly in groups at night, which helps kept them warm. A single Mousebird would not do as well at the same temperatures.

Some suggested temperature-tough (around freezing) species in my experience:

Diamond Doves
Zebra Doves
Parakeets

Pekin Robins
Bulbuls
White Back Mousebirds

White Cheek Turacos
Red Crest Finches
SocietyFinches



In freezing temperatures, keeping water available to the birds is imperative. Here a Pekin Robin comes to drink after ice is broken.



White Back Mousebirds sunning themselves on a cold, 20°F morning

Pulling Inside

When in doubt, in severe weather emergencies, it is usually safer to pull the birds into heated indoor enclosures. Only heat the indoor enclosures to the minimally accepted temperature; otherwise the birds will be in shock and stressed once released back into their regular winter flights. Do not pamper them with increasing temperatures to 80s degree Fahrenheit, it would de-acclimate them. Try to make the decision to pull them in before the severe cold hits. Netting also stresses birds, which can be dangerous at low temperatures.

Hopefully, this will help you make some decisions about housing birds during the winter. It can be the most nerve-wracking time of the year, but above all remember spring will come!

Kateri Davis is the owner of Davis Lund Aviaries. She is the author of *Turacos in Aviculture* and *Mousebirds in Aviculture*.



Red Crest Turacos in a flight with an indoor area they can use at will.

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CALIFORNIA

West Coast Zebra and Society Finch - NFSS Speciality Club

Meetings: None

Website: www.efinch.com/show

Finch Society of San Diego County

Meetings: 4th Sunday of each month

Location: Poway Elks Lodge, 13219 Poway Road, Poway, CA

Website: www.finchsocietyofsandiego.com

Email: sdfinchsociety@gmail.com

Central California Cage Bird Club

Meetings: 3rd Sunday of month

Location: Stanislaus Ag Center, 3800 Cornucopia Way, Modesto, CA

Website: www.mycccbc.org

Club Email: terryr@mycccbc.org

CONNECTICUT

Lory League, Triangle Bird Club, LPS & NFSS

Meetings: None

Website: <http://www.LoryLeague.org>

Contact: (206) 501-7428

Email: blconnection@hotmail.com

East Coast Finch Society

Club Contact: JOSE URRUTIA

Location: 70 Porter Brook Ave. East Hartford, Ct. 06118

Email: jm_jariel@yahoo.com

Phone 631-875-1544

Event 1

Finch show - September 16 2017

Location: Confort Inn, 333 Roberts St East Hartford, CT 06108

Show Manager Daniel Maldonado

Phone: (860) 796-8191

Email: danny_mk@yahoo.com

Judges Armando Lee (NFSS)

Divisions NFSS - Finch and Softbill

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FLORIDA

First Coast Finch and Softbill Society

Meetings: 1st Saturday every 3 months
Location: 860 Fruit Cove Road , Saint Johns, FL 32259
Contact: Lauren Ogburn and Van To
Phone: 904-923-7431
Email: sunbay@comcast.net
Website/Social Media/Facebook

Suncoast Canary & Finch Club

Meetings: 1st Wed. Of month, 1419 Collingswood Blvd, Port Charlotte, FL 33948
Website: www.suncoastcanaryandfinchclub.com
Email: vetagator@yahoo.com

Florida Canary Fanciers, Inc.

Meetings: 3 rd Sunday Every Other Month 2:00pm
Website: www.floridacanaryfanciers.com
Email: RudiTour@aol.com

Treasure Coast Exotic Bird Club

Meetings: 4th Sunday of Month
Location: Port Salerno Civic Center, 4710 Anchor Ave., Port Salerno FL
Email: jim.dwyer@netzero.net

ILLINOIS

Illini Bird Fanciers Inc.

Meetings: First Sunday of the month; Noon to 4pm.
Location: Harvard Park Baptist Church, 2401 S. 9th, Springfield, IL
Website: www.illinibirdfanciers.com
Email: contact@illiniBirdFanciers.com

National Bird Show

Location: Pheasant Run Resort, 4051 E. Main St, St Charles, IL 60174
800-474-3272 – mention "National Bird Show"
Schedule of Events : <http://nfss.org/ncbs>

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Massachusetts

Massachusetts Cage Bird Association

Address: PO Box 595, South Easton, MA 02375
Email: goshawk3@aol.com
Meeting Dates: no regularly scheduled meetings
Website: masscagebird.org
Contact Officer: Denise Cabral President
Phone: 508-479-2789

MICHIGAN

Society of Canary and Finch Breeders of Michigan

Meetings: 3rd weekend of the month at members homes, Livonia, MI
Website: www.scfbmichigan.com
Email: mtarsitano@gmail.com

MISSOURI

Gateway Parrot Club

Meetings: 3rd Sunday of the month,
Location: Varieties Bird Store, 60 Meramec Valley Plaza Valley Park, Mo. 63088
Website: www.gatewayparrotclub.org
Club Contact: Georgia Fletcher
Email: president@gatewayparrot.org

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Birds of A Feather Avicultural Society

Meetings: 2nd Monday of each month
Location: Villa Crest Retirement Center
Email: Prismsdad@aol.com
Website: www.BOAF.com

NEW YORK

New York Finch & Type Canary Club

Meetings: 2nd Sunday of most months (Except July & August)
Location: Averill Blvd. Park, Elmont (Long Island), NY 11001
Phone: 718-967-6899
Email: barstand@verizon.net

Great Buffalo Bird Fair

Facebook: Great Buffalo Bird Fair
Email: GreatBuffaloBirdFair@gmail.com

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OREGON

Columbia Canary Club

Meetings: 1st Sunday of each month, 2:00 p.m - 4:00 p.m.,

Website: www.columbiacanaryclub.org

Facebook: Columbia Canary Club

Location: Milwaukie Granger Hall, 12015 S.E. 22nd Avenue, Milwaukie, OR

Contact: Kristine Rigdon

Email: Kristine@pcez.com

Event 1

Canary and Finch Mart – Feb 12th, 2017 -10am – 3pm

Location: Milwaukie Grange, 12016 SE 22nd Avenue, Milwaukie, Oregon

Contact: 503-569-6119/ 503-234-5512

TEXAS

Alamo Exhibition Bird Club

Meetings: 4th Sunday of Every month

Location: St John Methodist Church, 2202 Bandera Rd, San Antonio, TX 78228

Website: aebc.org/wp | Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/127537545516

Club Contact: Ben Garza – 210-275-3369

Fort Worth Bird Club

Website: <http://fortworthbirdclub.com>

Club Email: fwbc@fortworthbirdclub.com

Club Contact: Cheryl Burns

Email: cheryl@newworldranch.com

Phone: 817-455-2016

Meetings: Visit FB:

www.fortworthbirdclub.com

<https://www.facebook.com/Fort-Worth-Bird-Club-262935933816613>

Event 1

The Bird Mart – www.thebirdmart.com – May 6, 2017

Venue: Cleburne Conference Center - 1501 W. Henderson Cleburne, Texas 76033

Show Manager: Sally Porter

Event 2

64th Annual Fort Worth Bird Club Show – May 6, 2017

Venue: Cleburne Conference Center, Address: 1501 W. Henderson

Cleburne, Texas 76033

Show Manager Sally Porter

Mart Only - No show

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TEXAS

Texas Bird Breeders and Fanciers Association

Website: texasbirdbreeders.org

Club Contact Email: Cheryl@newworlddranch.com

Canary and Finch Society

Meetings: 2nd Sunday of Every month, Sheraton Hotel, Houston, TX

Website: <http://canaryfinchsociety.tripod.com/>

Club Contact Email: wingsong.hj41@gmail.com

WASHINGTON

Lori League, Triangle Bird Club, LPS & NFSS – Specialty Club

Website: <https://www.loryleague.org>

Email: julie@loryleague.org

Phone: (206) 501-7428

Cascade Canary Breeders Association

Meetings: 4th Sunday of the Month

Woodinville, Washington

Website: <https://sites.google.com/site/cascadecanary/annual-show>

Email: dwhite3511@msn.com

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affiliations@NFSS.org

CANADA

Durham Avicultural Society

Meetings: 2nd Tuesday, Sept to June, 7:30pm
Ajox Rotary Pavilion, 177 Lake Driveway West, Ajox ON
Website: www.birddobdos.blogspot.ca
Club Contact Email: karen.smith@sunnybrook.ca

Essex-Kent Cage Bird Society

Website: www.essexkentcbs.com/
Contact: Julianne Mion
Phone: 519-948-6398
Email: julianne@mnsi.net
Contact: David or Sue Sylvester
Phone: 519-727-3766
Email: d.sylvestr@gmail.com

PUERTO RICO

Asociacion de Criadores de Finches Inc.

Meetings: Wednesdays 7 to 9pm, Lus Catalina Mall Food Court, Caguas P.R.
Website: Asociacion Criadores de Finches (Facebook)
Email: finchrurico@hotmail.com

Puerto Rico Zebra Finch Club

Meeting Dates and Location: Arecibo
Contact Officer: Gene Perez
Email: genecuba1@yahoo.com
Phone: 787-385-2972
Club Website/Social Media: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/przfc/>

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