

# The American Cockatiel Society



April, May, June 2009

**AMERICAN COCKATIEL  
SOCIETY  
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

New \_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_ Referred

By \_\_\_\_\_

**DUES in USA, Canada, Mexico and  
Overseas\***

1 year Single (1 member)	\$20.00	__
1 year Dual (same address)	\$25.00	__
2 year Single	\$36.00	__
2 year Dual	\$46.00	__

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**Supporting membership** \_\_\_\_\_

**Add \$20.00** yearly to above membership rates.

(A Supporting membership receives a name badge and name listed in the ACS magazine for the current year.)

**Mail Completed Form To:**

American Cockatiel Society

Membership Secretary

c/o Tom Strauss

PO Box 980055

Houston, TX 77098-0055

**President's Message**

As I sit down to write this message to you I'm enjoying the arrival of spring here in South Texas. We set up our cockatiels a few weeks back and have eggs in many nest now so babies and hand feeding chores are soon to follow! I'm sure that many of you have set up your cockatiels as well or will be doing so shortly. Don't forget to order your leg bands and remember that it takes at least 2-3 weeks to process and manufacture your order! There is an order form in the magazine or you can order online at <http://www.acstiels.com/join.html>

Does ACS have your email address? We'd like to update our records to include your current email address so that we may contact you regarding news and ACS events. Your email address will not be given out to others and we won't be flooding you with emails. To update your email information, please send an email message to [membership@acstiels.com](mailto:membership@acstiels.com)

ACS now offers free breeder listings! Please contact Debbie Maneke to be included. You may email her at [communications@acstiels.com](mailto:communications@acstiels.com).

The 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual ACS Specialty Show was held on March 8<sup>th</sup> in Palm Bay, Florida. Debbie Ratliff was our ACS Panel Judge for the show. Our congratulations to Joan Redondo who won Best in Show and to Judy Shapiro who won Best Novice in Show! Others who placed on the top bench include Cathy Boldt, Sara McNamara, Erna McCormick, Diane Baxter and Kari Edwards. Be sure to check the magazine and web site for other shows this year...they can be lots of fun!

Take care and best wishes to all of you.

*Bert McCulay*

## Secretary's Minutes

Whereas ACS needs to update and redesign its' web site and the skill needed to complete this Endeavour are not available within our member volunteers: therefore:

Motion 01-2009: I, Debra Maneke VP of Communications, move that a budget of up to \$300.00 be approved to subcontract with outside parties to update and redesign our web site/

Approved – Voting yes: Debra Maneke, Erna McCormick, Judy McElveen, Jan Johnson, Linda Miller, Cindy Swiller, Tom Strauss.

Motion 02-2009: I, Debra Maneke move that we publish a breeders listing of members in good standing, with their permission, on the ACS website at no charge.

Approved – Voting yes: Debra Maneke, Erna McCormick, Judy McElveen, Jan Johnson, Linda Miller, Cindy Swiller, Tom Strauss

Motion 03-2009: I, Debra Maneke, move that we change from the NCR forms for judges' reports to a pdf format.

Approved – Voting yes: Debra Maneke, Erna McCormick, Judy McElveen, Jan Johnson, Linda Miller, Cindy Swiller, Tom Strauss.

Presidential Appointments for 2009, The board has approved the following appointments.

Parliamentarian	Debbie Maneke
Editor	Erna McCormick
Points Registrar	Chuck McCormick
Regional Director – Region 2	Diane Baxter
Regional Director – Region 4	Debbie Ratliff
Regional Director – Region 6	Cathy Boldt
Regional Director – Region 8	Jan Johnson
Regional Director –Region 10	Valorie Windholz

Thank you Debbie for stepping in and taking over as acting Secretary.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Linda Miller, Secretary*

## Board Of Directors

ACS Website [www.acstiels.com](http://www.acstiels.com)

**President/Chairman of the Board**, Bert McAulay, (713) 529-5577, PO Box 980055, Houston, TX 77098-0055, [bjmcaulay@aol.com](mailto:bjmcaulay@aol.com)

**VP, Exhibition**, Cindy Swiler, (316) 729-8986, 767 N Valleyview, Wichita KS 67212, [c83ctiel@hotmail.com](mailto:c83ctiel@hotmail.com)

**VP, Breeding Mgmt & Research**, Erna McCormick, (727) 267-9268, 11152 Blackwood Drive, New Port Richey, FL 34654-1906, [Erna@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:Erna@tampabay.rr.com)

**VP, Pet Cockatiel Info & Issues**, Judy McElveen, (706) 538-1095, 452 Hawk Nest, Greenville, GA 30222, [Judymcelveen@hughes.net](mailto:Judymcelveen@hughes.net)

**VP, Membership**, Tom Strauss, (713) 529-5577, PO Box 980055, Houston, TX 77098-0055, [tom.strauss@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tom.strauss@sbcglobal.net)

**VP, Communications**, Debra Maneke, (636) 887-3096, 310 Trenton Pass, Foristell, MO 63348, [acs25m@swbell.net](mailto:acs25m@swbell.net)

**Secretary**, Linda Miller, (727) 541-4724, 9527 60 Lane N, Pinellas, Park, FL 33782-3139

**Treasurer**, Jan Johnson, (254) 546-2252, 1319 Hwy 7, Eddy, TX 76524, [jansantq@verizon.net](mailto:jansantq@verizon.net)

**Parliamentarian**, Debra Maneke, (636) 887-3096, 310 Trenton Pass, Foristell, MO 63348, [acs25m@swbell.net](mailto:acs25m@swbell.net)

**Editor**, Erna McCormick, (727) 267-9268, 11152 Blackwood Drive, New Port Richey, FL 34654-1906, [Erna@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:Erna@tampabay.rr.com)

**Points Registrar**, Chuck McCormick, (727) 267-8649, 14203 Fallbrook Lane, Dale City, VA 22193

## Judges Panel

Mr. John Franchak, [johnfranchak@acstiels.com](mailto:johnfranchak@acstiels.com),  
(561) 793-0865, 13663 48 Ct. N. Royal Palm  
Beach, FL 33411

Ms. Linda Greeson, [lindagreeson@acstiels.com](mailto:lindagreeson@acstiels.com),  
(352) 787-8549, PO Box 609, Fruitland Park,  
FL 34731-0609

Mr. Dennis Holmer,  
[dennisholmer@acstiels.com](mailto:dennisholmer@acstiels.com), (920) 467-1284,  
6636 County V, Sheboygan Falls, WI 53085

Ms. Pam Holmer, [pamholmer@acstiels.com](mailto:pamholmer@acstiels.com),  
(920) 467-1284, 6636 County V, Sheboygan  
Falls, WI 53085

Mr. Bert McAulay, [bjmcaulay@acstiels.com](mailto:bjmcaulay@acstiels.com),  
(713) 529-5577, PO Box 980055, Houston, TX  
77098-0055

Mr. Gerald Oldberg,  
[geraldoldberg@acstiels.com](mailto:geraldoldberg@acstiels.com), (816) 524-3785,  
511 NE Orchard, Lee's Summit, MO 64063

Ms. Linda Oldberg, [lindaoldberg@acstiels.com](mailto:lindaoldberg@acstiels.com),  
(816) 524-3785, 511 NE Orchard, Lee's  
Summit, MO 64063

Ms. Debbie Ratliff, [dratliff.acs96r@comcast.net](mailto:dratliff.acs96r@comcast.net)  
(601) 259-6026, 209 Trailwood Dr., Clinton,  
MS 39056

Ms. Cindy Swiler, [cindyswiler@acstiels.com](mailto:cindyswiler@acstiels.com),  
(316) 729-8986, 767 N. Valley View, Wichita,  
KS 67212

Emeritus Judges:      Mr. Earl Courts  
                                 Mr. Ken O'Steen  
                                 Ms. Yvonne Weir

## Regional Directors and State Representatives

**Region 2:** ME, NH, MA, CT, RI, NY, VT, PA, W.VA,  
DE, MD, NJ.

**Director:** Diane Baxter, 1214 Sinsford Rd, Newark,  
DE 19713, (302)369-8487

**Region 4:** NC, SC, GA, AL, TN, KY, MS, VA

**Director:** Debbie Ratliff, 209 Trailwood Dr., Clinton,  
MS 39056 (601) 259-6026, [dratliff.acs96r@comcast.net](mailto:dratliff.acs96r@comcast.net)

### State Representatives

Judy McElveen, Woodstock, Georgia (706) 538-1095

[JudyMcElveen@hughes.net](mailto:JudyMcElveen@hughes.net) Dallas Townsend, 11380

Spencer Ridge Rd, Irvine, KY 40336 (606) 464-9424

**Region 6:** Florida & Puerto Rico

**Director:** Cathy Boldt, 2119 Avalon Rd, Sebring, FL  
33870-1508 (863) 385-3367, [regionalrep6@acstiels.com](mailto:regionalrep6@acstiels.com)

### State Representatives:

Joan Redondo, 6831 S. Waterway Dr., Miami, FL 33155  
(305) 663-1671

Rick Solis, Tampa, FL (305) 609-0563

**Region 8:** AR, LA, TX, OK, NM

**Director:** Jan Johnson, 1319 Hwy 7, Eddy, TX 76524  
(254) 546-2252, [regionalrep8@acstiels.com](mailto:regionalrep8@acstiels.com)

### State Representatives:

Bert McAulay, PO Box 980055, Houston, TX 77098-0055

[bjmcaulay@aol.com](mailto:bjmcaulay@aol.com)

**Region 9:** WI, IL, IN, OH, MI

**Director:** Open

### State Representatives:

Ron Filip, 17612 Driftwood Ln, Lockport, IL 60441 (815)  
485-6401

Mary Rue, 3809 Coachlight Common, Lansing, MI 48911  
(517) 394-1047

Pam Holmer, 6636 Cty. Rd. V, Sheboygan Falls, WI 53085  
(920) 467-1284

Leann Halvoresn, 70 Waterstone Dr., Franklin, OH 45005  
(937) 286-3279

**Region 10:** ND, SD, NE, KS, MO, MN, IA

**Director:** Valorie Windholz, 3711 Mascot, Wichita, KS  
67204 (316) 838-2816, [regionalrep10@acstiels.com](mailto:regionalrep10@acstiels.com)

### State Representatives:

Cindy Swiler, 767 N. Valleyview, Wichita, KS 67204,  
(316) 729-8986

Earl Courts, 1807 N. E. Colbern Road, Lee's Summit, MO  
64063 (816) 554-3922

Sue Ellen Pray, P.O. Box 68, Bennet NE 68317,  
(402) 782-2051 [praypond@juno.com](mailto:praypond@juno.com)

**Region 11:** WA, OR, ID, MT, AK, W. Canada

**Director:** Open

### State Representatives:

**Region 12:** CA, NV, CO, WY, AZ, HI, UT

**Director:** Open **State Representatives:** Open



## **BREEDERS' LIST**

Gene Evins, 5123 Kirk, Amarillo, TX  
79110

Scott Fleming, Lynwood, IL (708) 606-  
2100

Jan Johnson, Eddy, TX, (254) 546-2252

Bert McAulay, Houston, TX (713) 529-  
5577

Angela Ream, Springfield, OH 45502,  
(254) 546-2252

Rick Solis, Tampa, FL, (305) 609-0563

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## **Deadlines**

Deadlines for submitting classified, non-commercial,  
commercial advertisements and articles:

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
Jan, February, March	December 1
April, May, June	March 1
July, August, September	June 1
October, November, December	September 1

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## **SUPPORTING MEMBERS**

Bruce C. Leeper

Nancy A. Reed

## **From the Vice President of Communications desk,**

We have been very busy this year updating the website and addressing issues that members have brought to our attention, I'd like to ask you to visit [acstiels.com](http://acstiels.com) and email me any suggestions or comments as to how we may further improve the site. Our goal this year is to give our site a new face and make it even more member friendly.

Our editor, Erna, has been very busy working on the magazine, she would greatly appreciate your comments, articles and photos of your cockatiel.

We have also reduced our advertising rates and are now offering classified ads for members in good standing for free on a space available basis see <http://acstiels.com/advertise.html> for more information. The board has also just approved a motion to publish a breeders listing of members in good standing, with their permission, on the website at no charge. If you would like your information published, email me the information regarding your aviary. This listing can include just your name and email, or it can be more detailed with types of birds you raise and more detailed contact information. If you have a website and would like to participate in the link exchange I'd be happy to add your website to ours also, information on the link exchange program can be found on the website.

Our new page for members' pet photos is also in need of more photos, I'd love to add a photo of your bird! You can email me a photo attachment, jpg or gif format, at [acs25m@swbell.net](mailto:acs25m@swbell.net).

I'm also looking for referrals for possible advertisers for the magazine; if you know of a company that might be interested in advertising in our magazine please email me their contact information. Any advertising we can acquire will help fund the updating of the magazine and website.

Our goal for this year is to update our website, increase interest in our magazine and to continue to meet the needs of our membership, please don't hesitate to contact us to let us know what we need to do to meet your expectations.

*Regards, Debbie Mancke*

## Note from the Editor

This magazine belongs to all the members of the American Cockatiel Society. I need to know what kind of articles you would like to have published. I want to make this a magazine that every member looks forward to receiving each quarter.

To do this, I need to have your input. I do not know what you want to see. I need you to send in pictures and articles you would like to share with other members. If you cannot type, just write out an article and send it to me. I will do the typing. If your pictures are not in digital form, I will scan them and send the original pictures back.

If you have an idea for an article, send it to me, and I will try and find someone knowledgeable in that area to write on the subject. Together, we can make this a very enjoyable magazine.



## America's sweetheart: the gentle cockatiel

Debbie Maneke

ITS JUST-RIGHT SIZE and pleasant personality endears the cockatiel (*Nymphicus hollandicus*) to just about everyone who likes birds.

Cockatiels are among the most popular parrots ever. I discovered them after I gave one to my mom to keep her company after my father died. The bird loved to cuddle but she turned out to be a female and didn't whistle or talk. She wasn't what Mom had hoped for, so she came to live with us.

Our family had enjoyed raising canaries and thought it might be fun to raise cockatiels. So we bought a cock from a local breeder and introduced the two birds after the customary 45-day quarantine period.

As luck would have it, our cockatiel couple raised a very nice first clutch of babies, which we handfed and sold as pets with the exception of one lutino. I decided to keep this baby and try my hand at showing cockatiels. That was 17 years ago and I haven't looked back!

### Charmers from Down Under

Cockatiels are Australian parrots, smaller cousins of the cockatoo, with petite crests atop their heads.

Avicultural books first described cockatiels in 1792, but it wasn't until the nineteenth century that Europeans and Americans saw live birds. Until then, Australia was largely unsettled, home mainly to penal colonies.



Wild and many pet cockatiels are of the "normal" grey variety. Mature males have bright yellow heads with orange cheek patches.

Among the first Australia colonists were the English ornithologist and taxidermist John Gould and his family, who landed in Tasmania in 1838.



The first color mutation of the grey cockatiel was the pied, first introduced in the United States before 1951.

Dutch word *kakatielle*, derived in turn from the Portuguese *cacatillo*, for "little cockatoo."

By 1884, cockatiels were well established as breeding birds in European aviaries. In 1902, the English writer David Seth-Smith noted that "except for the budgerigar, the cockatiel was, by far, the commonest Australian parrot in English aviaries where scores were being reared annually."

### Branching out from grey

Today's cockatiel differs from its wild brethren in a couple of ways. While pet-stock cockatiels are about the same size as wild birds, measuring 9 or 10 inches long and weighing 70 to 80 grams, show birds measure 12 to 13 inches long and weigh from 115 to 175 grams.

Many different color mutations beyond the standard grey also are now available. The first mutation, the pied (or harlequins as some prefer), was officially recorded in the United States before 1951.

The Dutch and Belgians are credited with developing the deep canary shade of the lutino, but these weren't

officially recorded until 1958 in Florida. Opalines, also called pearls, appeared in West Germany in 1967. Cinnamons appeared the next year in Belgium, followed by the red-eyed, or fallow.

Following are color mutations now commonly found in the pet trade. In all cases except pied, albino, whiteface and whiteface-based mutations, males can be counted on to have the trademark bright yellow head with dark cheek patches.

- *Normal, or grey.* Uniform dark grey, except for white outer wing feathers, yellow head (in males) and orange cheek patch.
- *Pied.* About 75 percent yellow and 25 percent dark grey, with yellow pied markings over white pied markings and white tail and wing flights.
- *Lutino.* A rich, deep buttercup yellow throughout. Long tail feathers and primary flights may be a lighter shade of yellow.
- *Pearl.* Extensive deep buttercup-yellow pearl markings.
- *Cinnamon.* A light brown throughout.
- *Albino.* Pure white birds with red eyes. Primaries and flight feathers may be an off-shade of white.
- *Whiteface.* Same as a normal grey cockatiel, but males have pure-white masks.
- *Fallow.* Light cinnamon suffused with yellow. Eyes are red.
- *Silver.* Dull metallic-looking feathers; red eyes.
- *Yellowcheek.* Male birds have yellow faces with gold cheek patches.
- *Pastel.* Male birds have yellow faces with peach cheek patches.
- *Olive.* Feathers have a green wash and a light spangling pattern.
- *Single-factor dominant silver.* Feathers are a darker metallic silver, with orange check patches and black eyes, feet and beak (except in peds, which have flesh-colored feet and beaks. A skullcap of darker pigmentation is visible on the head.
- *Double-factor dominant silver.* Same as single-factor dominant silver, except feathers are a light metallic silver.

Some breeders combine these mutations to create more; for example, a lutino pearl, or a cinnamon pearl pied.

Depending on the rarity of the mutation and whether the bird is a pet-store or show cockatiel, prices for cockatiels vary widely, ranging from \$30 to well over \$1,000.

### **Good parents**

Cockatiels are easy to breed and for the most part are good parents. Occasionally pets may be so imprinted on their humans they won't identify another cockatiel as a mate, but this is the exception. More commonly, problems result from poor nutrition, disturbances near the nesting area, or breeding birds that are too young.



Albino cockatiels are completely white with red eyes.

Show pairs appreciate wooden nest boxes measuring 12 inches square with a 2½- to 3-inch opening. For smaller pets, a box 10 inches wide by 11 inches tall with a 2-inch opening is sufficient.

You can find acceptable nesting boxes at feed supply and pet stores. Or, you can build your own. (See the American Cockatiel Society's Web site for a how-to article.) To line the box, use one to two inches of pine shavings. This helps to cushion the eggs and keeps them from rolling about in the nest box. It also supports newly hatched chicks.

Most cockatiels lay between four and six eggs and begin sitting on the nest after the second egg. Chicks hatch after 18 to 21 days. If offered proper nutrition, cockatiels will easily feed and raise their babies without help from their human owners.

### **Avoid round cages**

Offer your cockatiel a square or rectangular cage (round ones will cause him to break or fray his long tail feathers) at least 18 inches square. Carefully check larger cages to make sure the bars are spaced less than one inch apart. Otherwise, your bird might try to put his head through them. The door should be large enough to allow you to bring your cockatiel out perched on your hand.

Give your cockatiel toys made for parrots larger than parakeets. Avoid toys with jingle bells, which can easily ensnare his beak. You may also want to avoid mirrors, which can cause aggressiveness in some birds.

I feed my cockatiels a diet of fortified seed supplemented by dark greens, including kale, spinach, broccoli and collard greens. Wheat bread, cornbread, whole kernel corn, legumes, cooked pasta and spray millet help complete a well-rounded diet. Like any other hookbill, cockatiels should never be offered grit, avocado, chocolate or caffeinated items. With good care, your cockatiel should live well into his twenties.

## Females don't mimic

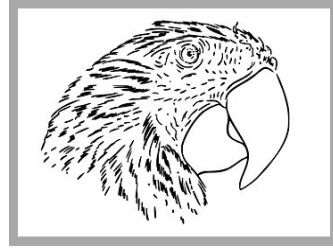
As a rule, female cockatiels don't "talk." Males can, but you should avoid teaching them to whistle first. They may find they prefer this easier trick. Cockatiels learn their first words and songs by hearing them repeated many times over the course of several weeks. After this, subsequent lessons are easier.

Cockatiels have a lot in common with another bird I've raised, the pionus, a South American parrot. They're about the same size, although pionuses are much stockier, weighing twice as much. Both love to be cuddled and played with and both can learn to mimic human speech.

But cockatiels got a head start as pets, and I think their slender bodies and especially sweet natures keep them on top as favorites. Like any other parrot, cockatiels can be spoiled and develop bad traits that frustrate their owners, including screaming and even feather picking. But if trained, these little parrots can quickly become a valuable member of any family.



# NORTHEAST BIRD GROUP



## SUMMER BIRD FAIR

Rhode Island/Massachusetts Border  
Saturday, June 27, 2009

*Featuring:*

### SHOW

SPBE Parrot Division – with judge Dr. Al Decoteau

### BIRD MART

Vendors from throughout the Northeast with birds & supplies

### SEMINAR SERIES

Talks on health, breeding, and other avicultural topics

### LIVE AUCTION

Bid on birds, cages, and more!



Location: Comfort Inn, 2 George Street, Pawtucket, RI

Event Manager & Vendor Contact: Donna Rosciti,  
(401) 647-5588, [DonnaRosciti@aol.com](mailto:DonnaRosciti@aol.com)

Show Manager: Tom Keegan, (781) 335-3927,  
[thomkeegan@aol.com](mailto:thomkeegan@aol.com)

See [www.northeastbirdgroup.com](http://www.northeastbirdgroup.com) for more information and updates

## Rodent Control in the Aviary

A rodent, according to Webster's Dictionary, is any of several mammals, as rats, mice, rabbits, squirrels, beavers, etc. characterized by constantly growing incisors adapted to gnawing or nibbling, especially a rat or mouse. I will direct our attention to the rat and mouse family in this article.

After mating the females gestate 21 to 23 days, producing litters of six to twelve. Females will mate again in a day or two after bearing the litter and produce four to nine litters a year. We are talking about forty to sixty offspring. This is where the expression "When you see one if there is not more, there will be in a few days" comes from.

They rely mostly on their sense of smell, taste, touch and hearing; apparently they have poor vision. They move around in the dark using long, sensitive whiskers and the guard hairs on their body to guide them. They usually start searching for food shortly after sunset ranging from not more than 150 feet from their nest. If you see them during the day, they are young, sick or due to a very large population. They are cautious, and if food is in an exposed area where it cannot be consumed quickly, they usually carry or drag it to a hiding place.

A lady recently complained that she had one mouse that kept eating all the pelleted poison she put out, but never killed him. A few days later while cleaning house she removed the cushions on her sofa and found all the pellets she had put out.

Their excellent sense of taste enables them to detect certain compounds, including rat poisons, at extremely low concentrations very quickly. Therefore, it is very important that you use baits that are more attractive to them than the other food available. When you are building your aviary keep these physical capabilities in mind. They can pass through any opening larger than 1/2 inch and mice even smaller. They can climb inside vertical pipes, jump vertically at least thirty six inches, dive and swim underwater for as long as thirty seconds, swim through the water seal or trap of toilets and swim as far as 1/2 mile in open water.

Anticoagulant rodenticides introduced in the 1940's revolutionized rodent baiting procedures. Before, it was best to prebait with unpoisoned food for a few days before introducing poison. This became unnecessary with anticoagulants as minute quantities of chemicals in baits were almost undetectable. Chemicals are available in these general forms: meal, pellet, place pack, wax blocks, liquid and tracking powder.

Tracking powders are unwittingly ingested when they groom. It is with other baits we have to con rodents into thinking they are getting something nutritious. Pelleted baits are very successful, however, they can be moved about as animals carry several pellets in their mouth to hoard and thus contaminate other areas. Wax blocks consist of meal baits enclosed in melted paraffin. These are often used outside since moisture does not seem to effect them. Some have holes so they can be tied to pipes or staked to the ground. Liquid baits in chicken waterers are excellent in dry environments or where water can be kept away from the rodents.

Non-toxic trapper glue boards capture rodents easily and effectively. They can be purchased at almost all feed or garden centers. They are odorless and contain no poison making them ideal for your aviary. Weather does not effect them and they can be used inside or out. Freezing or hot temperatures do not harm them. They can easily be secured by wire to any post or stationary object. The only objection I have to these is they can harm your bird with the glue if it gets out of the cage.

Trapped rodents can be disposed of by dropping the entire board with the animal into a bucket of soapy water.

Ultrasonic devices that are widely advertised, have no studies that indicate they are effective.

Bait placements are more important than baits. They should be placed at sites comfortable and accessible to rodents, next to walls in rodent runways, fence lines, rubbish piles, garbage containers, and wherever

there is evidence of rodent infestation. Bait station (boxes) can be bought that will make your baits less likely to be bothered by other animals and the weather.

If you do not remember anything else about this article. Please remember this: It is a violation of Federal law to use any of these products in a manner inconsistent with its labeling. Baits must be placed in locations inaccessible to children, exotic birds, pets, domestic animals or wildlife. Most of these chemicals do their work by reducing the clotting ability of the blood causing internal bleeding. Others mobilize calcium from the bones into the bloodstream producing death from heart failure. Some companies have on their labels that NO SECONDARY HAZARDS EXIST, however, if the label does not say that do not assume if a cat, for example, eats a dead rat that the cat is not in danger. If rodent droppings and urine are deposited in your bird feed or nesting boxes, it is always possible to cause death to your birds. However, rodents do carry many other diseases and insects and should be considered dangerous to your aviary.

If you have any doubts about rodent poison causing death to your birds, by all means carry a label from your poison to your vet. DO NOT EVER USE ANY RODENT BAIT WITHOUT A CLEAR AND DETAILED LABEL. Bulk poisons in brown paper bags are something of the past!!!

Written by Orville Lyons - owner and operator of Lyons Pest Control for over 50 years.



**32<sup>nd</sup> Annual American Cockatiel  
Society  
Specialty Show  
Exotic Bird Club of Florida, Palm Bay  
Florida  
March 8, 2009**  
Joan Redondo

The 32<sup>nd</sup> annual American Cockatiel Society Specialty show was held in Palm Bay, Florida on March 8, 2009. The host club was Exotic Bird Club of Florida. The results are listed in this issue of the ACS magazine.

We had exhibitors from near and far, with Diane Baxter traveling all the way from Delaware to Miami to travel up to the show in Palm Bay with me. What a wonderful time we had. I haven't laughed so much in a long time. They say that laughter is good for your health.

We had people in the audience on both Saturday and Sunday (Saturday we held an A.C.E. show at the Day's Inn in Palm Bay.) We love having new people, always welcome them and enjoy talking to them. This is always a highlight of the shows that we attend.

We the workers and exhibitors arrived early so that we could tag our birds, classify and place them to be ready when it was time to start the show. This is usually a hectic time and it is difficult to answer questions at this time. But it is important to start the show on time. This particular day we had three stewards which made it nice so that we could take turns watching the show (Erna, Joan and Sara). We had two secretaries (Cathy and Diane) also allowing for small breaks and Judy Shapiro hung our stickers and awards.

We were just about ready to start the show when our judge, Debbie Ratliff, passed by our show area. We told her we would be ready in about fifteen minutes as it is very important to have the show count exactly the same (between stewards and secretaries.) At last we were ready to start and the judge proceeded with the novice birds. See the picture of the winner in this issue, Judy Shapiro with a beautiful pearl hen bred and banded by the exhibitor.

We took a lunch break after the novice bench was chosen and had some of the club's wonderful homemade food. Yvonne, your sloppy joes were fantastic. There was some really good chili too. Thanks for feeding us so well.

Debbie proceeded judging on the advance bench. The stewards do not have a good idea of how their birds are doing as all they see is "black" or the backs of the cages. We knew that Cathy Boldt's pied was sitting in first place on the advanced bench. He is a very nice pied but inaccurately named as "Angel" is his name. At the Saturday show after biting two of the stewards (Sara and Joan) we renamed him something starting with a "D". You guess.

After the advance bench was set, the stewards brought up the first novice. On this day the novice bird was not able to move into the advance bench. Well next up are the champions. The 1st place champion was my bird. I started to get the butterflies in my stomach as the steward was moving the bird, one by one until it was sitting in first place. I couldn't bear to watch but couldn't turn away either. Then the last move and my bird was sitting in first place. I will tell you how I felt. I felt like a novice making best novice for the first time, I felt like a novice moving up into the advanced bench for the first time, and I felt like an advance winning for the first time. It is indescribable feeling. I was really thrilled as I had never won the ACS Specialty show. See the picture of the 1st champion, best in show, normal/ hen.

Debbie did a wonderful job of judging and also educating the crowd with lots of interesting information. The hosting club was very cordial and helpful and we appreciate them hosting the show. As I have said before, you don't know what you are missing if you haven't attended a show. I have never tired of this wonderful hobby in 20 years that I have been showing. Plan to attend the next show. Hope to see all of you there.



Photos this page by Barbara Ward

## Vitamin A and Carotenoid Nutrition of Cockatiels

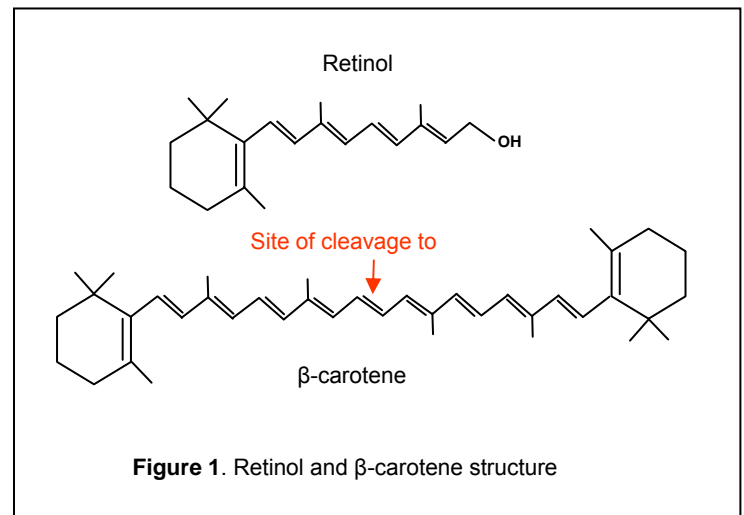
Elizabeth A. Koutsos, Ph.D.  
Mazuri Exotic Animal Nutrition/PMI Nutrition Intl,  
LLC  
[Liz.koutsos@mazuri.com](mailto:Liz.koutsos@mazuri.com)

Vitamin A is essential for normal vision, cellular differentiation, reproduction, and immune function. The nutrient requirements of birds for vitamin A are often extrapolated from the known requirements of commercial poultry species that are designed to maximize growth or egg production. Another important factor when considering the requirements of commercial poultry is that these species of birds are precocial and hatch with feathers, open eyes, and are ready to find food and water. In contrast, cockatiels and many other companion and exotic avian species are altricial and hatch without feathers, with eyes closed, and rely on parents for food, water and shelter. This means that the chicks are hatching at a very different developmental stage, which may have implications for the nutrient levels that they require at hatch. However, requirements for commercial poultry are often the only available resource to begin to establish nutrient recommendations for companion and exotic birds.

Vitamin A, like vitamins D, E and K, is fat-soluble, which means that it is stored in fat deposits and in the liver of an animal. Fat-soluble vitamins cannot be excreted in urine, and so are difficult to excrete from the body. As a result, toxicity of fat-soluble vitamins is of much greater concern than for water soluble vitamins. Vitamin A tends to be of greatest concern, because the level of appropriate intake (i.e., the level that prevents deficiency but doesn't cause toxicity), is very narrow. Also, vitamin A can be very unstable to heat, light and improper storage conditions. This may result in high levels of dietary fortification, in order to avoid degradation of vitamin A to a level that may cause deficiency. Dietary fortification is necessary for complete diets, as well as seed based diets. Seeds, in general, are deficient or devoid of vitamin A and if not supplemented, may result in vitamin A deficiency. Therefore, supplements for seed-based diets contain vitamin A, and often at levels that are quite high

(25,000 to 100,000 IU/kg). Commercial pelleted diets generally also contain vitamin A at levels ranging from ~ 5,000 to 30,000 IU/kg.

Dietary sources of vitamin A include the active form, retinol, which can be provided in purified retinol supplements (such as retinyl palmitate), or as a component of animal-based products in the diet. Precursors to Vitamin A, carotenoids, may also be provided in the diet from plant-based sources. For example, one molecule of  $\beta$ -carotene may be converted to two molecules of retinol (**Figure 1**). About 50 of the 600 known carotenoids can be converted to vitamin A. Carotenoids have other functions, including pigmentation of skin and feathers (generally red, yellow and orange colors), and immune functions.



The use of carotenoids as a source of vitamin A in a bird diet may be ideal for several reasons. First, if a bird eats plant-based diets in the wild, they may be better equipped to handle carotenoids in their diet as opposed to pre-formed vitamin A which comes from animal sources. Second, since the body regulates the conversion of carotenoids to vitamin A, the potential for toxicity is generally lower than with pre-formed vitamin A. However, it is important to keep in mind that some animals do not have the metabolic capacity to convert carotenoids to vitamin A. Therefore, research needs to be conducted to determine if an animal can convert carotenoids to vitamin A before making dietary changes. Important factors to consider are the animals'

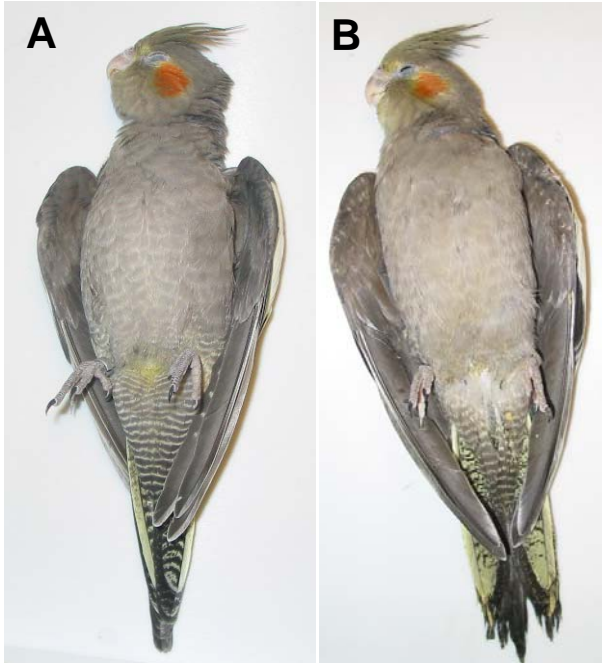
wild-type feeding strategy, the type of carotenoid being used, and the animals' ability to convert that carotenoid into vitamin A.

An examination of these factors in cockatiels reveals that these birds are able to utilize carotenoids as a source of vitamin A. The cockatiel is granivorous in the wild, primarily feeding on seeds, although consumption of insects and leaves has also been reported. Domesticated seeds are generally very low in vitamin A, and so supplementation of a seed-based diet is critical (for a variety of other nutrients in addition to vitamin A). In the wild, therefore, it is likely that cockatiels obtain vitamin A from other sources, including insects (retinol or carotenoid sources) or plant parts like leaves and fruits (carotenoid sources). Given their wild type diet, it is likely that 1) cockatiels have not evolved to metabolize large quantities of dietary retinol, and 2) cockatiels have the metabolic capacity to use carotenoids as a source of vitamin A.

The first hypothesis, that cockatiels have not evolved to metabolize large quantities of vitamin A, was examined in adult cockatiels (non-reproducing adult females, 2-3 years of age) that were fed a range of dietary vitamin A levels (0, 2,000, 10,000 or 100,000 IU of vitamin A/kg diet) for 9-23 months. Vitamin A was supplied in the form of retinol (retinyl palmitate), and the diet did not contain any other sources of vitamin A or carotenoids. This research resulted in several valuable findings. First, cockatiels suffer from overt vitamin A toxicity when dietary levels reach 100,000 IU vitamin A/kg diet. In fact, birds fed 100,000 IU vitamin A/kg diet had to be removed from the trial after about 9 months of feeding, due to poor feather quality, significantly elevated liver retinol levels, alterations in vocalization behavior, and some liver pathology. The alterations in vocalizations were very dramatic; birds fed 100,000 IU vitamin A/kg diet had higher frequency of vocalizations and more frequent (5 times more frequent) vocalizations compared to birds fed lower levels of vitamin A. Second, after ~ 23 months of feeding, birds fed 0 IU vitamin A/kg diet were still not showing clinical signs of vitamin A deficiency, although their immune system showed signs of vitamin A deficiency with reduced production of antibodies, and liver retinol levels were declining. Third,

although birds fed 10,000 IU vitamin A/kg diet did not have clinically significant signs of vitamin A toxicity, their liver retinol levels continued to rise, and they did have some subtle behavioral changes. Taken together, this research demonstrates that cockatiels are well-adapted to storing vitamin A in their livers, such that they are able to survive on vitamin A deficient diets for a very long period of time, assuming their previous vitamin A status was good. Vitamin A toxicity was reached more quickly, and even birds fed 10,000 IU vitamin A/kg diet seemed to be approaching signs of vitamin A toxicity after 23 months of feeding. The optimal level of retinol in the diet for adult, non-reproducing female cockatiels was ~ 2800 IU/kg.

To address the second hypothesis, that cockatiels have the metabolic capacity to use carotenoids as a source of vitamin A, growing cockatiel chicks (who will have the highest vitamin A requirements of any life stage) were hatched from eggs laid by breeding pairs fed a vitamin A deficient diet. These breeding pairs were fed just long enough (90 days) to create vitamin A deficiencies in the chicks, but still have normal fertility and hatchability. Once chicks hatched, parents were fed diets containing either 0 IU vitamin A/kg diet, 4000 IU/kg diet of vitamin A from retinol, or 2.4 mg  $\beta$ -carotene/kg diet. These diets were fed (by the parents) to the chicks until fledging. This trial showed that chicks fed 0 IU vitamin A had signs of vitamin A deficiency by 5 weeks post-hatch, including body weight loss and poor feathering, and their immune tissues were very poorly developed. In contrast, chicks fed either 4000 IU retinol/kg diet or 2.4 mg  $\beta$ -carotene/kg diet had similar body weights and normal feathering patterns (**Figure 2**). Finally, liver vitamin A levels were much higher for chicks fed 4000 IU vitamin A/kg diet, suggesting that the  $\beta$ -carotene diet would have reduced risks of vitamin A toxicity for long-term feeding. This research demonstrated that cockatiels can utilize  $\beta$ -carotene to meet vitamin A requirements based upon their successful growth and feathering, but also because the enzyme needed for conversion of  $\beta$ -carotene to vitamin A was expressed in the cockatiel intestine.



**Figure 2. 5 week old cockatiel chicks fed retinol (A; 4000 IU/kg diet) or  $\beta$ -carotene (B; 2.4 mg/kg diet) have normal growth and feathering. Data adapted from Koutsos and Klasing, 2005.**

In summary, the wild-type diet of cockatiels would suggest that these animals have not evolved with a diet containing large amounts of retinol. Research supports that these birds are very efficient at storing vitamin A in their livers for later use. This results in susceptibility to vitamin A toxicity if dietary levels are too high. At the same time, vitamin A deficiency is also possible, and immune dysfunction occurs before other clinical signs are noticeable. Therefore, it is critical that your bird receive adequate levels of vitamin A, and that diets and supplements are stored properly in order to maintain dietary vitamin A levels over time. One source of vitamin A that can reduce the threat of vitamin A toxicity is  $\beta$ -carotene, which was shown to be an effective source of vitamin A in the cockatiel. Further research with other companion bird species is needed to determine their ability to utilize  $\beta$ -carotene as a vitamin A source.

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## A Lesson Learned

Lisa Wade

Hello. I am happy to be a part of ACS and have a story I'd like to share.

Last summer I was at the weaning stage with a set of four babies. I noticed one had bonded more with me than the others and that was the one that flew out the open door one day. The local wild birds drove him away from the house and he landed in a tree about 200 feet away.

I ran back and got a tape recording of the other birds calling to each other and played it outside. He would answer back but couldn't come near the house because of the other birds but it kept him within 500 feet. He spent the night outside and of course it rained and was windy.

The next day I played the tape all day and got a response until about 5:00 p.m. when he answered and flew over the house and landed low on a nearby tree. I walked up to the tree calling and whistling to him and after about five minutes he came down and landed on my shoulder! I was so excited! I ran him in, fed him and promptly clipped his wings.

I sincerely believe that him bonding to me and the playing of the cassette tape is what kept him around and ultimately brought him inside.

Previously published in ACS magazine March/April 2001



## WELCOME TO OUR FLOCK

14769	Sonja Land	Mesquite, TX
14770	Darrell Cunningham	Miami, FL
14772	Gene Evins	Amarillo, TX
14773	Lynn A. Oroian	Pinellas Park, FL
14774	Agnes Priestley	Port Richey, FL
14775	Linda Garrett	Rome, NY
14776	Paul Demarco	Los Angeles, CA
14777	Charlotte Simmon	Saint Marys, GA
14778	Kathleen Hubbard	Colorado Sprints, CO
14779	Janet Blakely	Ft. Worth, TX
14780	Ellen K. Cook	Cicero, IN
14781	Jason Jeffery	Layton, UT
14782	Jeffery Godman	Layton, UT
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14785	Liz Aslinger	Marietta, GA
14786	Linda Trout	Boise, ID
14787	Rudolph Dunham	Houston, TX
14788	Frances Dunham	Houston, TX
14789	Gayle Howard	San Pablo, CA
14790	Becki Petracich	Goodland, KS
14792	Scott Fleming	Lynwood, IL
14794	Heather Langlois	Chewelah, WA



## Members' Ads

All wire breeding cages--\$3.00 each, buy all 14 for \$30.00

We have 14 cages left, measurements 23 1/2 x 12x 12 inches, 2 perches included. Shipping not included, pick up or meeting available. See our website for more information and photos.

<http://www.geocities.com/cockatielhouse/Birdsforsale.html> Debbie Maneke

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Contact: Cindy Swiler

(316) 729-8986

[c83ctiel@hotmail.com](mailto:c83ctiel@hotmail.com)

767 Valleyview

Wichita KS 67212

### ASSN. OF COCKATIEL EXHIBITORS

Contact: Joan Redondo

(305) 663-1671

[joanredondo@yahoo.com](mailto:joanredondo@yahoo.com)

6831 S Waterway Dr

Miami FL 33155

### EXOTIC BIRD CLUB OF FLORIDA

Contact: Sara McNamara

(321) 956-0005

[Sarafimtiels@yahoo.com](mailto:Sarafimtiels@yahoo.com)

956 Lance St.

Sebastian, FL 32958

### Greater Kansas City Avicultural Society

Contact: Anthony Day

(816) 554-3922

[Dayforthebirds@aol.com](mailto:Dayforthebirds@aol.com)

6917 Raytown Rd.

Raytown, MO 64133

### SunCoast Avian Society

Contact: Mari Howard

(727) 726-6864

[Sunshine203b@earthlink.net](mailto:Sunshine203b@earthlink.net)

3145 Allen Avenue

Safety Harbor, FL 34695



## Preparing for a Show

Erna McCormick

I try to attend every scheduled ACS cockatiel show, so I begin my preparations as soon as I find out about the show. You can find out about the shows, by visiting our web site, [www.acstiels.com](http://www.acstiels.com) or by checking the upcoming events in the magazine.

The first thing I consider is how I am going to get to the show. I personally prefer to drive, as flying has too many down sides. You have to worry about making all connecting flights, transportation when you reach the airport closest to your destination, and show boxes for the show. I had reservations to fly to a show last year, and at the last minute, the airline told me that I could only have one cockatiel in the cabin. Their web site clearly stated that I could have 2 birds. The airline refunded my non-refundable tickets. I did not want to put my birds in the belly of the plane. I was afraid that they would be lost or not make a connecting flight. Cockatiels are small, and I had the bad experience of a very large dog getting lost/misplaced on a non-stop flight. The dog was located hours later, and we were reunited the following day.

Once I have decided on how I will travel to the show, I look at the route I will be traveling. It is always nice to have a travel companion. Plane reservations have been made so that several exhibitors can meet at a large hub and continue the last leg of the flight together. If traveling by car, you can sometimes detour slightly from the most direct route and join up with a fellow exhibitor. Long trips are a lot of fun when traveling with a friend.

Once transportation has been arranged, hotel reservations are made. Many clubs negotiate with a hotel for a block of rooms at a reduced rate. The block of rooms is not normally large, so you have to get your reservations booked to get the reduced rate. I normally room with someone else. It cuts down on costs, and it makes the time away from home more enjoyable. Showing is more than just the sheer act of exhibiting your bird. Strong friendships are also made. You look

forward to seeing the people you are competing against throughout the show season. We talk on the phone and internet between shows, but it is a lot more fun when we get together.

Now it is time to make arrangements for my other animals. I ensure that I have someone lined up to take care of my dogs and birds that are not going. This is not as easy as you would expect. Kennels fill up and it is hard to find someone you trust to feed your birds. Always make a back up plan.

With hotel and transportation arrangement made, it is now time to start working out a budget. It is not free to go to the shows. I calculate the cost of the room (you know the rate, but add \$10 to \$15 a night for taxes) and add the cost of transportation and care of your other animals. If I am driving, I add about \$.25 to the average cost of gas. This gives me a fairly accurate transportation cost. With these two expenses known, I know how much money I need to have to make the trip. Remember, you will also have to eat and pay to enter your birds. It normally costs between \$2 and \$3 to enter each bird. You will also want to have some extra money available in case of an unexpected problem (car trouble, lost luggage, etc.) and any extra purchases you want to make during the show. I'm a raffle junkie, so I need money for raffle tickets. Once I estimate all these expenses, I add them all up and divide by the total amount of pay periods left before beginning on the trip. This lets me know how much I must save each pay period for my trip.

10 weeks prior to the show, I check the tails on all my birds. I pull all ratty tail feathers. It takes 8 to 10 weeks for the new feathers to be completely grown in. Tails are very important on the show bench. The length of the bird is very important. There are two extra long feathers in the middle of the tail. You need at least one of them completely grown in. You will lose some points if you are missing one for conditioning, but if both are missing, the bird is way too short. The judge cannot guess at the length of your bird. We are striving for a 17 inch bird; 3 inches for the crest, 7 inches for the body and another 7 inches for the tail. This bird has not been found yet, but we are still looking for him.

At least 30 days before the show, start misting your birds every day. This helps condition the bird. The

feathers will tighten up. If your bird appears wet after misting, you know he is out of condition. You want to be able to mist your birds and have the water just bead up on the bird, just like when you wax your car.

Two weeks prior to the show, I order extra seed for the bottom of my cages. I normally order plain parakeet seed for this purpose. Sometimes, the sunflower seeds in a cockatiel seed mix can leave dirty marks on a white or yellow tail. My birds like to play in their water and manage to get their tails wet. Parakeet seed is much lighter than some of the other seed types. Oats are very heavy. Remember, someone is going to be moving your show box around a lot at the show. Take pity on the steward, and don't overload your boxes with seed. Extra seed on the bottom does not make your bird look longer. It just makes the steward work harder. (Remember that one day soon, you will be learning to steward!)

The weekend before the show, I pull out my show boxes and begin washing and disinfecting phase of my preparation. I know from experience that I can do 3 to 4 boxes an hour. Spiders like to hide in the corners on the back side of the show boxes. A small foam brush works wonders for getting them out. After washing, I like to put the boxes outside in the sunshine to dry. Make sure you keep each box together during this process, as I know that my fronts are not interchangeable on my boxes. I also do a close look at my birds to try and decide which birds I plan to take with me. This is just an idea, as the birds can look totally different the following week. Tail feathers can be destroyed in no time flat. I have some birds that are experts in that field.

I let the boxes dry for at least 24 hours. I then cut a piece of thin white cardboard and place it on the bottom of the show box. It is much easier to throw the cardboard away then to get any droppings off the bottom of the cage later. I then place enough seed in each box to cover the bottom and add a piece of millet to each cage. Water cups are also placed in the cages to be filled at a later date. This task can be done in one evening or spread out over several days.

The weekend before leaving for a show, I also take my truck and have the oil changed and ask to have a general check-up done on my car. I feel it is worth the extra cost, even if I'm not due for an oil change. The mechanic may notice something that needs to be repaired to prevent a breakdown. I have broken down on the road once headed for a bird show. Luckily, I was at a gas station when it occurred. I ended up having to get a jump and headed for the auto parts store down the road. My battery terminal had cracked. Easily repaired and I was back on the road again.

I place the boxes along a wall out of the way for the rest of the week and begin packing for my trip. I still manage to forget something that I need. I have had to purchase toothpaste and other small items on my trips. It is not the cost of the small items that gets to me, it is the inconvenience of having to make a special trip to get it. There is normally not a store within walking distance, and I hate having to leave the hotel once I get there.

Depending upon what time I am departing for the trip, I begin catching my birds and placing them in the show boxes. Sometimes this is done the day of departure, or the day before. Leave more time for this than you expect it to take. If you rush, you can destroy a tail. I check each bird over for defects that can be corrected. I keep a soft toothbrush handy to remove pin feathers. I have a grand champion that sees my brush and bends her head so I can reach it. She loves the preening. Others use their fingers to remove pin feathers. Either way works, you just need to see what works best for you. Dirty tail feathers can be cleaned using warm water and a small amount of Dove dish soap. A bent or fanned tail can sometimes be corrected using warm water and running your fingers down the tail. If you do this, do not place the bird into the show box until the tail is dry. Otherwise, it will look worse than when you started. The bird will always turn around in the show box and get the tail curved again from rubbing against the side. Place the bird in a flight cage until the tail dries.

As I place each bird into a show box, I fill each water cup and write down each band number and a description of the bird. I mark each cage temporarily with a number so that I know which bird is in each

box. I know that others put the band number and description on a piece of masking tape and put that on the box until the show tag is on the box. I use the computer to list the information, print it out and take it to the show to fill out the paperwork. Use whatever method works best for you.

Once the birds are in the show boxes, it is time to take a little break and get your thoughts together. Try to remember what items you packed and what you still need to pack. If you are leaving the following morning, get a good nights rest.

About an hour before departure time, I start loading my vehicle. Don't rush; you don't want to mess up any of your birds. Be as gentle as possible. Know how you are going to load the boxes into the car. I have loaded my truck many times, and know the best way to place them. Experiment with empty boxes before hand if you have not loaded your vehicle before. Once loaded, head out and enjoy your trip.



## Show Notes, Part 3

### Finishing Year 2008

Miami FL, St. Petersburg FL, and Marietta GA

Joan Redondo

The ACS magazine editor informed me that if I did not hurry and finish the year 2008 that it would soon be 2010. I certainly don't want to displease the editor, Erna McCormick, as she is doing an excellent job and I really appreciate her. If you would like to express your appreciation please join in with some articles. Our members love all kinds of articles.

### Miami, Florida, May 3, 2008

As you all probably know I live in Miami and didn't travel far to this show. It was really nice to have a show in May and it was held in a junior church room in my former church. A church is a good place to hold a bird show as you will get some people from there coming to see the show and perhaps having an interest or buying some raffle tickets. We had a nice raffle at this show. The show was sponsored by F.A.C.E. and Rick Solis did a lot of the legwork on the raffle and setting up the show. I say this to note that this responsibility does need to be shared so that no one is overworked. Rick also put an ad in the Miami Herald and several new exhibitors came to the show which is always exciting. John Franchak was our judge and as always, a good one.



We had a good number of exhibitors and birds at this show and it was a good time to have it. I think some of the Florida birds were molting but we made the most of a good show. Erna McCormick won best in show with her banded bird. I was very glad for her as this was the first time she had won with her banded bird. It is always important to be happy for the person that wins and to encourage those who haven't yet won. Ok, not only did she win the show, but she also provided some wonderful food. All right, you wondered when I would get to that didn't you?

Erna made homemade meatballs and brought subrolls. We had a wonderful feast. She brought enough to feed our guests. I need to note that Erna served in the Army and that when she cooks, she cooks for a LOT of people. It was delicious. And I believe that if there was anything left, it was only a crumb or two.

After the show several of us went out to eat at Pollo Tropical. This is an inexpensive restaurant in Miami that serves grilled chicken with black beans and rice along with other things. It is a good buy with good food and a chance for some additional networking among friends. It was a good show in Miami.

### **St. Petersburg, Florida, August 2 and 3, 2008**

The St. Petersburg show has always been a wonderful one. The folks at SunCoast Avian Society really know how to put on a show. It is always special to me as it was my first out of town trip to a show 20 some years ago. I will never forget it.

The show is held in a beautiful show hall called the St. Petersburg Coliseum. It's a beautiful place with wood floors and beautiful lights in downtown St. Petersburg. Our judge for both the SunCoast show on Saturday and the F.A.C.E. show on Sunday was Bert McAulay from Texas. Bert always loves coming to Florida and we REALLY appreciate him judging these shows for us.



We had a good number of exhibitors and birds at this show. We got started on time and had to really keep moving as there were two shows that day, ACS in the morning and NCS in the afternoon. Yvonne Weir got a best in show with the best advanced bird and Erna also placed best in show with a grand champion that moved in. It was nice to see both of them up there.

Erna and I shared a room and Diane Baxter was in the adjoining room. The exhibitors chipped in and all brought something. Erna brought a baked ham and some rolls. We had all the trimmings to go with the ham and had a wonderful time together laughing and chatting. Later, we used the swimming pool which was really refreshing after a hot day.

The next day was the show sponsored by F.A.C.E. We got started early and moved right along with another fun show. Julie Allen won best advanced and best in show, and again Erna's grand champion also got a best in show. We were very happy for both of them. We had enough leftovers from the night before that we had another nice meal right there in the show hall. Diane Baxter from Delaware fixed everyone a nice plate per their orders. (Note: We want to keep her here in Florida. But I think her family would mind!)

SunCoast always has a nice, huge raffle table and our members always fully participate in it. After the show many stayed for the last raffle. This is always a really fun show. Consider joining us this year for a 2-day show, August 1 and 2. (See Upcoming shows for info.) Anyone with a cockatiel can show their bird. I surely look forward to traveling to St. Pete again.

### **Association of Cockatiel Exhibitors Show Marietta, GA – November 1, 2008 (on the road again)**

What a lovely time of year to travel to Marietta GA. There is always fall color somewhere along the way from Florida to Atlanta. This year was no exception as the color started in a subtle way in north Florida and got more colorful as we traveled north. Erna and I again teamed up to drive to Marietta. I drove to Brooksville and parked my car and met up with Erna there. We loaded my birds into Erna's truck and were back on the road again. We had some snacks with us to

hold us over. Hold us over until what you might ask? Well for two years I had my heart set on stopping again at the wonderful barbecue place that Sara McNamara and I discovered in Macon Georgia. It's called Pig in a Pit. Have you ever eaten there? Well if you haven't you don't know what you have missed!!!! They have wonderful home made barbecue sauce and side orders galore. The pulled pork is to die for. The story won't be complete unless I tell you how it was first discovered.

In 2006, Sara McNamara and I traveled north to Atlanta from south Florida. From the time we started we were looking for a good barbecue place. We didn't want a chain but something that was one of a kind. We especially wanted a one of a kind Georgia barbecue place. We were getting close to Macon and were just about ready to take any old thing when all of a sudden we saw a sign. All it had on it was a picture of a pig's face, and it said next exit. We exited at a very rural exit and didn't know which direction to go. Finally we found it in a little shopping center as we saw the "Pig in a Pit" and a long line of people out the door.



Naturally I had told Erna about this restaurant and she was just as interested as I was in dining there on the way to Marietta. I didn't want to leave it to chance so I looked it up on the internet and also called to confirm what exit number. Very important note, don't take the Macon bypass, stay on I-75 and take exit 172 – Bass Road. When we came to the exit I was really nervous because it didn't look familiar. It was all built up and no longer rural. We turned to the right and there was a McDonald's and I don't know what all else. But guess what, there on the right was the little shopping center and Pig in a Pit. It was late afternoon and we had the run of the place. We told them we came all the way from Florida for their barbecue. It is indescribably good. Their sauce is to die for. We both bought some to use at home and were thrilled to get it. After lunch, we again headed back to the road and on to Marietta. We arrived late afternoon, found our motel

and unloaded. We connected with the other exhibitors and sold tags etc. for the next morning. It was good to see our friends again.

The next morning we first had an NCS show and then the ACS show. We had a good time talking to other exhibitors and workers. Bert McAulay judged the ACS show. We had a nice lunch as the people in Georgia can really cook. They also know the meaning of "southern hospitality". Judy and Bill McElveen were our hosts and as always did a great job. Cheryl Phillips won the A.C.E. show and was really happy, to say the least. We were happy for her. She loved the best in show trophy that she received and also the back pack embroidered and donated by Erna McCormick. Erna does a really great job making personalized awards. I was really glad to finally meet the Cheryl and Ed Phillips in person as I had "talked" to them on the internet for a long time. Erna served as secretary and I stewarded at the show. We appreciated the help that we received from NCS exhibitors, also.



The next morning we headed back to Florida. We unloaded from Erna's truck into my car and I headed back on the road (in a heavy downpour) back to Miami.

This was the last show of the year that I attended. I hope that this series has piqued your interest into the excitement of traveling to a bird show. My hobby started in 1989. I have been doing this for 20 years. I have never, ever gotten tired of it. I hope everyone has as much fun as I have had.

## Coming Attractions

August 1 and 2 (Saturday and Sunday)

### **SunCoast Avian Society**

Saturday, August 1

ACS Judge: Pam Holmer

St. Petersburg Coliseum

535 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue N

St. Petersburg, FL 33701

Show Hotel: LaQuinta Inn, 4999 34 St. N, St.

Petersburg FL

727-527-8421 \$62.10 plus tax group # 75

Info: Linda Miller, email: [acs6518@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:acs6518@tampabay.rr.com),

tele 727 541-4724

### **Association of Cockatiel Exhibitors**

Sunday, August 2

ACS Judge: Linda Greeson

St. Petersburg Coliseum

535 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue North

St. Petersburg, FL 33701

Check in time: 7:00am-8:00am

Info: Joan Redondo, email: [joanredondo@yahoo.com](mailto:joanredondo@yahoo.com),

tele 305 663-1671 or

Erna McCormick, email: [erna@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:erna@tampabay.rr.com),

tele 727 267-9268

For more information see SunCoast Avian.com (map on site.)

## Aviary Considerations

Bert McAulay

I have been keeping and breeding cockatiels for over thirty-five years now. It would be fair to say that I've built over a dozen aviaries during these years and each time and with each project I've thought that "I've finally build the perfect aviary!" Many of my aviculturist friends have made this very same statement. The fact of the matter is that no perfect aviary exists and no single design is suitable for all people in all places

There are two key elements to be considered when planning your aviary. First and foremost you must address the needs of your cockatiels. Secondly you should be able to care for and enjoy your birds with relative ease. The better you are able to satisfy these two needs, the happier you and your cockatiels will be.

A cockatiel requires similar things as other animals if it is to live a healthy life. Cages must provide adequate space. Ventilation must be sufficient. Climatic conditions and lighting must be appropriate. A clean source of food and water must always be present. Your cockatiels need to be safe from predators. Vermin and pests must be controlled. While not inclusive, if you meet these needs you will probably have some pretty happy cockatiels.

### *Indoor Aviaries*

Indoor aviaries present the most challenges for the aviculturist. All environmental elements that are required to keep your cockatiels happy and healthy must be artificially maintained and routine maintenance and cleaning chores are more labor intensive. Indoor aviaries may be as small as a closet, but more typically are a dedicated room within the house, a basement or a garage.

One advantage of indoor aviaries is easy temperature control and protection from climatic extremes. Cockatiels can thrive in a broad range of temperatures. Sudden changes can cause problems. Most of us maintain our homes in the 60 to 80 degree range and this is well within temperature range for cockatiels. Garages and basements may not be so easily controlled;

however, cockatiels will do well with temperatures down into the 30's, if they are acclimated to it. These lower temperatures are not ideal for breeding. If you are breeding during the winter months, plan on keeping the temperature above 55 degrees. If you need supplemental heating, consider portable, electric oil filled units. They are safer to use than other types of portable heaters and they do not emit dangerous exhaust fumes. You will also need to consider cooling issues during the summer, particularly in garages. If you don't have air conditioning, you will need to open doors and windows and perhaps use exhaust fans to keep the air moving. In such a scenario, cockatiels should be able to withstand temperatures into the 90's.

Most indoor aviaries will require artificial lighting. I would recommend the use of full spectrum fluorescent lights. Make sure that sufficient fixtures are used so that your aviary is well lit. If you are using stacked cages, make sure that the lower cages get proper lighting as well. Broad aisles will help with this. Attach the lights to timers so that there is consistency in their daylight hours. You may use the small outlet timers or purchase a commercial type timer that is hard wired into the electrical circuitry. Both types are available at home improvement centers. Be sure to provide a night light. Cockatiels are prone to night fright and a night light will allow them to settle back onto their perches.

Ventilation is probably the greatest challenge when housing cockatiels indoors. This problem is exacerbated by the feather dust produced by cockatiels. If you walk into your aviary and begin sneezing, you probably have a ventilation problem. Exhaust fans along with open windows and doors can greatly improve air quality, especially during the summer months. Most homes built today are pretty well insulated and pretty air-tight. While this is great for energy efficiency, it can lead to a house full of stale air. You may want to consider one of the various air filtration systems that are available. Ionization type air purification systems are very effective. Also remember that your home HVAC system can suck up cockatiel dander and distribute it all over your house. If your aviary shares the same HVAC system as your aviary, consider using an electrostatic filter and be sure to clean it often.

Cleaning procedures are important with an indoor aviary. Cages should be designed so that they are easily removed for washing. We use a portable power washer for this task. It easily removes any built up and dried debris from the cage wire. If you don't have a power washer you may be able to take the cages to a self-service car wash. Cage trays need to be changed on a frequent basis. Dirty cages can lead to problems with vermin and can make both you and your cockatiels sick. You will need to vacuum and wash the walls and floors on a regular basis in order to minimize dander. I know of many cockatiel fanciers who may no longer keep birds because of feather dust allergies. Imagine what this does to your birds as they cannot leave their environment? Dust filled air in the aviary can lead to conjunctivitis and respiratory problems with your cockatiels.

Once you've selected the location for your indoor aviary, you need to consider the caging to be used. Baby birds and resting adults need as much flight space as possible in order to properly develop and maintain themselves. At a minimum, I would suggest a 2' x 2' x 3' cage for no more than 4-5 cockatiels. A 3' x 3' x 6' cage would be even better and could easily house a dozen cockatiels. Breeding birds should be kept one pair per cage. The smallest cages used should be at least 2' x 2' x 2' or 18" x 18" x 36". My preference would be a 2' x 2' x 3' cage. . Space available will ultimately dictate the size of cage that you use. Cages that are built in a rectangular or square shape will allow the best utilization of your space. I prefer cages built with welded wire as they are easy to assemble and do not require a supporting framework. 1/2" x 1" x 16 gauge welded wire is the most commonly used for cockatiel cages. Other suitable options include 1/2" x 2" x 14 gauge and 1/2" x 3" x 14 gauge welded wire. Avoid the use of 1" or larger chicken wire or mesh with bar spacing greater than 1" x 1" as cockatiels can get their heads stuck and hang themselves. Perches should be placed at both ends of the cage to allow for maximum flight space. Cages should also have trays that are easily removed for cleaning.

The aviary should provide a safe haven for your cockatiels; free from threat of predators and vermin. Predators in an indoor aviary are usually your dog or cat. Never assume that because everyone gets along fine when you're home they'll be fine when you're

away. Best practice would allow the aviary to be closed off when you're not around. Invariably mice will show up when a food source is present. Aviaries fit the bill. Invest in a live trap. These units should be placed near the walls, are always ready to go, require no baiting and are quite effective. If a problem develops, you may consider bait stations. These should be secured so that your cockatiels and other pets cannot reach the bait. We use bait that contains bromethalin (0.01%) as any poisoned rodents that in turn, are eaten by your cat or dog, will not poison your pet. Insects can also be a problem in the aviary. We use Camicide as a general pesticide in the aviary as it is very safe around birds. Spray it around cracks, crevices, cage legs, etc. Do not spray it into the cages where your birds will have direct contact.

As you design your aviary, don't forget your own needs as you will be with your birds every day and you want your time spent there to be enjoyable. These are just a few things you will want to consider:

- Maintain wide aisles between cages. Feeding and cleaning chores will be much easier if you have room to work. You may want to use a feeding cart that can roll down the aisles.
- Remember that nest boxes take up space. If they are hung on the front of the cage, they will use up a foot of your aisle space.
- Don't add more birds than your space will allow. Aviaries crowded with too many cages are difficult to maintain. Cages with too many birds can lead to feather picking and illness.
- Consider stands on wheels or suspend your cages from the ceiling. This will make it easier to keep the floors clean.
- Keep an open area for your feed and other aviary supplies. It is so much easier to care for your birds if the items you need are easily accessible.
- Paint the walls with gloss enamel that may be washed.
- Install a solid, non-porous floor. Carpeting is a very poor choice as it is very difficult to clean
- Use a standardized size of food and water container. If these are generic, feeding and cleaning will be much quicker.

There are endless ways you may set up an indoor aviary. No matter what size you build, these guidelines should help you come up with an environment that is pleasing to both you and your cockatiels.

In a future issue, I will discuss issues regarding outdoor aviaries.



### Closed Coded Metal Cockatiel Bands

*Be sure of the best, insist on A.C.S. Banded Cockatiels*  
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Bands are issued to members only. Allow 6 to 8 weeks for delivery.

Send me \_\_\_\_\_ (Qty) of (regular or large) Bands

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My band code number is \_\_\_\_\_ (reorders only).

Bands to start with number \_\_\_\_\_. The above must

be filled out completely. A band number is assigned to one member only. All orders received after October 15<sup>th</sup> will be filled with the next year band date. The band factory will not ship next year bands until December 26<sup>th</sup>.

Bands may be ordered with membership applications. Mail check or money order payable to:

**ACS Inc., c/o Tom Strauss**  
**PO Box 980055**  
**Houston, TX 77098-0055**

#### BAND ORDER ALERT


Be sure of the best, insist on ACS banded cockatiels.

Beginning in 2007 some states and many pet shops/purchasers are requiring that birds be banded with a closed traceable band. This caused a huge backlog of orders with our supplier. I would like to suggest that everyone place their orders by October 15, 2008 for the year 2009 bands. They will be delivered to you by December 31, 2008. Be sure to order the number you estimate that you will need (and perhaps extra). You may order bands for the current year until October 14<sup>th</sup>. As a backup, always keep unused bands from the previous year until your new bands arrive. If you have any question about your bands please email me at tom.strauss@sbcglobal.net or call me at (713) 529-5577.

## Would you like to become a Supporting member?

Send \$20.00 in addition to your membership dues for the year, to ACS, Tom Strauss  
PO Box 980055, Houston, TX 77098-0055.

A Supporting membership will receive a name badge and your name listed in the ACS magazine for the current year.



**Need to  
Contact Us?**

**You can reach us on line at:**  
**<http://www.acstiels.com/>**

**Make sure you mention your membership number or your name that your membership is listed under.**

*Don't forget to check your mailing label.  
Is your membership expiring? Renew NOW  
so you don't miss any of the ACS Fun!!*

**Association of Cockatiel Exhibitors  
Palm Bay, FL March 7, 2009  
ACS Panel Judge: John Franchak**

Overall Best in Show            Total exhibitors – 9    Total entries -- 50

<i>Placement</i>	<i>Color</i>	<i>Sex</i>	<i>Band</i>	<i>Exhibitor</i>
Best in Show	CPpd	C	ACS203B-02-06	Cathy Boldt
2 <sup>nd</sup>	P	H	ACS18S-708-07	Rick Solis
3 <sup>rd</sup>	N	C	ACS46R-601-06	Joan Redondo
4 <sup>th</sup>	C/	H	ACS46R-605-06	Joan Redondo
5 <sup>th</sup>	N	C	**ACS18S-02-99	Rick Solis
6 <sup>th</sup>	Pd	C	**ACS46R-002-00	Joan Redondo
7 <sup>th</sup>	Pd	C	ACS46R-574-05	Joan Redondo
8 <sup>th</sup>	N	C	NCS58L-105-05	Sara McNamara
9 <sup>th</sup>	P	C	ACS155L-011-06	Sara McNamara
10 <sup>th</sup>	P/	C	***ACS203B-004-02	Cathy Boldt
11 <sup>th</sup>	PPd	H	***ACS130P-111-02	Erna McCormick
12 <sup>th</sup>	CPd	H	NCS16P-135-02	Diane Baxter
13 <sup>th</sup>	N	C	***ACS46R-204-02	Joan Redondo
14 <sup>th</sup>	LP	H	*NCS75S-19-08	Judy Shapiro
15 <sup>th</sup>	P	H	*NCS75S-17-08	Judy Shapiro
16 <sup>th</sup>	N/	H	ACS46R-604-06	Joan Redondo
17 <sup>th</sup>	CPd	H	ACS46R-411-04	Joan Redondo

\*Novice                      \*\*Champion                      \*\*\*Grand Champion

Best Novice                      Total exhibitors – 2                      Total entries – 18

Best Novice	LP	H	NCS75S-19-08	Judy Shapiro
2 <sup>nd</sup>	P	H	NCS75S-17-08	Judy Shapiro
3 <sup>rd</sup>	N	C	NCS40P-34-06	Judy Shapiro
4 <sup>th</sup>	CP	C	NCS91J-566-05	Judy Shapiro
5 <sup>th</sup>	P	C	unbanded	Judy Shapiro
6 <sup>th</sup>	C	C	NCS16P-41-05	Judy Shapiro
7 <sup>th</sup>	S	C	unbanded	Judy Shapiro
8 <sup>th</sup>	P	H	NCS75S-21-08	Judy Shapiro
9 <sup>th</sup>	PPd	H	unbanded	Kari Edwards
10 <sup>th</sup>	P/	C	KAE-029-FL-08	Kari Edwards

**EXOTIC BIRD CLUB OF FLORIDA**  
**32<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL ACS SPECIALTY SHOW**  
**Palm Bay FL March 8, 2009**  
**ACS Panel Judge: Debbie Ratliff**

Overall Best in Show Total exhibitors – 9                      Total entries – 54

<i>Placement</i>	<i>Color</i>	<i>Sex</i>	<i>Band</i>	<i>Exhibitor</i>
Best in Show	N/	H	**ACS46R-604-06	Joan Redondo
2 <sup>nd</sup>	CPPd	C	ACS203B-02-06	Cathy Boldt
3 <sup>rd</sup>	N	C	***ACS46R-204-02	Joan Redondo
4 <sup>th</sup>	C/	H	ACS46R-605-06	Joan Redondo
5 <sup>th</sup>	Pd	C	ACS46R-574-05	Joan Redondo
6 <sup>th</sup>	N	C	ACS46R-602-06	Joan Redondo
7 <sup>th</sup>	Pd	C	**ACS46R-002-00	Joan Redondo
8 <sup>th</sup>	N	C	ACS155L-005-06	Sara McNamara
9 <sup>th</sup>	CPd	H	ACS46R-411-04	Joan Redondo
10 <sup>th</sup>	PPd	H	***ACS130P-111-02	Erna McCormick
11 <sup>th</sup>	P/	C	***ACS203B-004-02	Cathy Boldt
12 <sup>th</sup>	Pd	C	ACS204M-606-06	Erna McCormick
13 <sup>th</sup>	N	C	NCS3Y-15-05	Sara McNamara
14 <sup>th</sup>	P/	H	ACS203B-04-06	Cathy Boldt
15 <sup>th</sup>	P	H	NCS40A-704-07	Judy Shapiro
16 <sup>th</sup>	CPpd	H	ACS46R-408-04	Diane Baxter

\*Novice                      \*\*Champion                      \*\*\*Grand Champion

Best Novice                      Total exhibitors – 2                      Total entries – 15

Best Novice	LP	H	NCS75S-19-08	Judy Shapiro
2 <sup>nd</sup>	LP	H	NCS75S-17-08	Judy Shapiro
3 <sup>rd</sup>	C/	C	NCS91J-566-05	Judy Shapiro
4 <sup>th</sup>	C	C	NCS16P-41-05	Judy Shapiro
5 <sup>th</sup>	N	C	NCS40P-34-06	Judy Shapiro
6 <sup>th</sup>	P	C	unbanded	Judy Shapiro
7 <sup>th</sup>	P	H	NCS75S-21-08	Judy Shapiro
8 <sup>th</sup>	LP	H	NCS75S-23-08	Judy Shapiro
9 <sup>th</sup>	P/	C	KAE-FL-029-08	Kari Edwards
10 <sup>th</sup>	S	C	unbanded	Judy Shapiro