



Canary Care!

Canaries (*Serinus canaria domestica*) can make wonderful pets. They are generally inquisitive, social birds that are relatively easy to keep and often can be heard making a range of lovely whistling noises.

They are a domesticated form of the wild canary, a small songbird in the finch family originating from the Macaronesian Islands. Canaries were first bred in captivity in the 17th century. There are a many colour variants available with yellow being the most common colour available. Male canaries tend to be more vocal than females, and love to sing. Canaries only grow to a small size with adult body weight's being approximately 20 grams.

They can be housed individually or in groups. If introducing a new canary to the group, it is important to slowly introduce them to avoid fighting and dominance issues. Even with a very slow introduction it is important to remember that some canaries simply won't get along and may need to be kept separately.

Diet

It is advised to provide a diet not too high in protein as this can lead to kidney disease in some cases. It is also best to avoid diets too high in commercially produced bird seed as they are often high in fat and low in many of the major vitamins that canaries require. Feeding a high seed diet can increase the risk of obesity and other more serious problems such as lipoma (lump) formation and cardiovascular disease.



Every canary is different so for your own tailored diet plan please get in contact with us. Our general recommendations for your canaries diet are as follows:

- 30-50% premium commercial pelleted diet suitable for canaries.
- 20-35% vegetables (recommended vegetables include: capsicum, broccoli, chili, corn, carrot, zucchini, squash, spinach, pumpkin, sweet potato, beans and peas), sprouted seed and native vegetation. Fresh native grass varieties that produce small seeds on their stems are great for foraging and are highly encouraged.
- 5-10% fruits (i.e. melons, strawberries, banana, blue berries, grapes, peaches, pear, apple)
- 10-50% quality commercial seed mix
- 1-5% snacks for training and as treats (unsalted nuts (i.e. macadamia, cashew and walnut), pasta, eggs and brown rice.





Housing

We advise a good quality powder coated or stainless steel cage of an appropriate size. Some painted cages can contain lead elements which can be toxic to your bird so please take care when selecting your cage. Cages that have been galvanized with a zinc coating can also cause problems so please select carefully.

Stainless steel or ceramic bowls are generally recommended as these materials are not porous making cleaning easier and more effective. Plastic bowls can become porous after a while and can cause problems if bacteria build up in these areas.

Perches of various sizes are important for exercise of the toes and feet health. They also help to promote the natural wear of their toe nails. Natural perches from native trees are ideal as they generally vary in size anyway.



If you are feeding a balanced diet, then cuttlefish and other supplements are not needed.

Common diseases

Canaries are prone to a range of conditions including:

- Respiratory infections including air-sac mite
- Traumatic injuries
- Sinusitis
- Nutritional diseases including obesity
- Lipoma (a benign fatty lump) formation
- Gastrointestinal diseases ie diarrhea
- Feather cysts
- Reproductive problems including egg binding

Regular check-ups every 6-12 months are important, as birds are very good at hiding any illnesses that they have. These check-ups allow problems to be detected early before they worsen.

