

Care & Information Sheet

Society Finch

Lonchura domestica



Finches are among the most popular caged birds. Also known as the Bengalese finch, Society finches do well in large groups and make frequent, pleasant chirping sounds. They are easy to house and feed but do require a warm environment. The average size is 3 to 4 inches and with proper care and nutrition they can live 8 or more years. Bird owners should avoid non-stick cookware and appliances as they can release fumes hazardous to the bird's health.

Habitat

- A cage approximately 24" W x 14" D x 18" H, with metal bars spaced no greater than 3/8" apart will make a good home for up to 3 finches. It is best to provide the largest habitat possible, a flight cage is strongly recommended.
- Perches should be at least 3" long and 1/2" in diameter. A variety of perch sizes is recommended to exercise feet and help prevent arthritis.
- A metal grate over the tray will keep the bird away from droppings. Line the droppings tray with cage paper or appropriate substrate for easier cleaning. To avoid contamination, do not place food or water containers under perches.
- Birds acclimate well to the average household temperature. Avoid extreme temperature changes. The cage should be placed off the floor in an area that is well-lit and away from drafts.

Food & Water

- Specialized pelleted diets are highly recommended and should consist of 60–70% of the diet. Use fortified seeds in moderation as they are higher in fat and less nutritious than pellets. If your bird is use to a seed diet, convert to pellets gradually. Replace food daily.
- Provide fresh, dark leafy greens several times a week, plus apple & orange slices, and grated carrots & sweet potato.
- Do not feed birds fruit seeds, avocados, chocolate, caffeine or alcohol as these can cause serious medical conditions.
- Fruits & vegetables can be offered as a treat daily but should be discarded if not consumed within 24 hrs.
- Clean, fresh, filtered, chlorine-free water changed daily.

Maintenance

- Clean and disinfect the cage and perches regularly. Replace substrate or cage liner weekly or more often if needed.
- Replace perches, dishes, and toys when worn or damaged. Rotate new toys into the habitat regularly,
- Ensure that there are no cage parts or toys with lead, zinc or lead and lead-based paints or galvanized parts as these can cause serious medical issues if ingested by your bird.

Grooming and Hygiene

- Provide filtered, chlorine-free, lukewarm water regularly for bathing, and remove the water when done or as an alternative mist the bird with water or a grooming spray.
- Clipping flight feathers is not necessary, but when done correctly it can help prevent injury or escape.
- Nails should be trimmed by a qualified person to prevent injury to the bird.

Supplies

Cage & Cage Cover	Pellets & Fortified Seed	Treats & Grit	Millet Spray & Holder
Cage Paper or Substrate	Food & Water Dishes	Bird Bath	Nail Clippers & Styptic Gel
Variety or Perches	Vitamin supplements	Variety of Toys	Book About Finches

Health

Because all birds are potential carriers of diseases, always wash your hands before and after handling your bird and/or the habitat contents to help prevent the potential spread of disease.

You should consult with an avian veterinarian if you observe any of the following conditions.

- Pox Lesions in mouth - Scabs on eyes and face. Isolate the bird from other birds.
- Mites (Scaly Face and Leg Disease) - White deposits on eyes, beak, legs, and feet.
- Lice or Feather Mites - Restlessness, scratching, feather picking.
- Diarrhea - Fecal portion of stool is not formed – Multiple causes, from change in diet to internal parasites. Ensure correct diet and reduce fruit intake.

For information regarding finches and disease, contact the Center for Disease Control at <http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets>

NOTE: The information contained in this document is for general reference only. Please consult a veterinarian for medical advice and concerns.

Sources: Avian Medicine: Principles and Application by Ritchie, Harrison, and Harrison
The ASPCA Complete Guide to Pet Care by David L. Carroll
The Simple Guide to Bird Care and Training by Julie Rach