

HOW TO KEEP BIRDS HEALTHY IN WINTER

By Arina Frink of the Middlesex County Avicultural 4-H Club of Massachusetts

Housing

1. The birds need a place to live that is dry and protected from snow or wind.
2. There should be wide roosts for the birds that their feet will not freeze to.
3. You should also have nests inside the birds' home.
4. They need dry litter inside their house; pine shavings are better than hay or straw.

Equipment

1. You should have a heat lamp to keep the birds warm in the winter.
2. Something to keep the water from freezing. I would suggest a heater under the water to keep it from freezing.
3. A water bucket is useful because hoses freeze in the wintertime.

Food & water

You should use high quality food. Add to your birds' food things like chopped peanuts, cracked corn and safflower seed. Birds need things like this because the birds need more energy during the winter and high fat food gives them a lot of energy. Add some calcium like cracked oyster shells. You have to make sure that they have plenty of unfrozen water every day because the air is dry and the heater makes water evaporate faster.

Medication

1. It is important to use lice powder because the birds are stressed in winter weather.
2. Use wormer in their food or water to protect against worms.
3. Keep antibiotics around for respiratory diseases because they can catch colds in the winter.

Editors note: The best way to keep your birds from catching a cold in the winter is to keep your birds dry and well ventilated.