

Magnolia Bird Farm
Since 1955



The Bird Farm News

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F.Y.I.

Magnolia Bird Farm is in the seed business. We have been mixing our own brand for over 25 years. We began mixing our own blends to ensure that you get fresh, clean seed mixes. Our equipment is specially made to clean even the finished product.

Our seed arrives in 45,000 pound truck-loads from around the United States and Canada. We mix, clean and bag the seed every day, and put it on the shelves immediately to sell to you. We color-code our bags so that we never sell old seed. If you keep our seed in storage long enough, it may get buggy or dusty. If it does, we will exchange it for a fresh batch.

Besides selling birds and supplies, we also raise birds off our premises, and know which blends to use in our mixes. We also use only quality seed because birds know a good seed from a poor-quality one. We are sincere in our efforts to offer you the finest seed at competitive prices.

We have California grey sunflower as well as black stripe from Colorado and Texas. Both are nutritious. California millet costs more, so the decision is yours as to the value. Our canary seed comes from Canada, our millets from Colorado, peanuts from New Mexico, safflower from Arizona and a lot of assorted seed from North Dakota.

We welcome suggestions that can improve our products and service.

Frank Miser, Sr.

Proper Perches are Important

A pet bird spends the majority of its life standing. Whether it is eating or dinking, playing or sleeping, a bird needs its feet to be on a solid foundation. Since most of the bird's activities are performed as it stands on a perch, you must carefully choose the perfect perch for his feet.

The ideal cage includes perches that offer the bird a variety of shapes, sizes and textures to keep its feet fit and exercised. Hopping from perch to perch can keep the bird's muscles toned, so perch choice requires some thought. The perch's material, size and placement depend on the size and nature of the bird-which may change as the bird matures.

TYPES OF PERCHES

The first consideration is material. The favored material is wood-either natural tree branches or wooden dowels. Some woods, however, are poisonous. The safe woods are eucalyptus, oak, elm, fir, willow, beech, pine and poplar, as long as the wood hasn't been sprayed with pesticides. For large parrots, harder woods such as manzanita and ribbon

wood are best.

PERCH SIZE

Size is an equally important consideration in perch choice.



The bird's toes should not completely encircle the perch, and its toenails should be in contact with the surface of the wood. If the front and back nails touch, then the perch is too small. If the bird has an unsteady grip, then the perch is too large. The bird should be offered at least two sizes of perches in its cage-one that is the ideal size and one that is a bit larger.

PERCH PLACEMENT

The perch location should allow the bird to move about freely and hop from one perch to another. When perched, the feathers should not touch the cage bars or any other objects in the cage. The bird should be able to reach its food and water dishes when it perches. Do not place a perch above food and water dishes so that bird droppings do not fall into them. Perches must also be securely fastened at each end of the cage bars.



Attracting Hummingbirds

Hummingbirds are naturally attracted to flowers for their high-energy food source, nectar, while the flowering plants benefit from hummingbirds' pollinating abilities. You can attract hummers by planting flowering plants that produce nectar and attract small insects, and by installing hummingbird feeders filled with sugar-water nectar that approximates the food values of natural flower nectar.

HUMMINGBIRD GARDENS

The larger your flower garden the more attractive it will be to hummers. It takes a lot of blossoms to keep one hummingbird satisfied, but even a flower box or a group of planters filled with the right kinds of flowering plants will attract hummingbirds.

The birds prefer deep-throated, nectar-rich blossoms. Because they find food by sight, they seem to prefer red and orange flowers, however, they will probe any flower that stands out from the background.

Plant a variety of perennials, which bloom year after year, and annuals that bloom for one season. In addition to producing nectar, flowering plants attract small insects and spiders that hummingbirds eat for protein.

Favorite hummingbird flowers include trumpet creepers, fuchsia, honeysuckle, bee balm, columbine, azaleas, geraniums, impatiens, petunias, and sages.

HUMMINGBIRD FEEDERS

To supplement natural foods, add a hummingbird feeder to your yard or patio, filled with sugar-water nectar, which approximates flower nectar. You can purchase nectar in our store, or

mix your own. The formula for mix-your-own is four parts water to one part sugar. Boil the sugar-water mixture for one to two minutes and let it cool before you pour it into your feeder. Store any extra in the refrigerator. Never use honey or artificial sweeteners in place of sugar. They have no food value for hummingbirds, and honey can cause a fungal infection on the hummer's tongue.

Change the sugar-water mixture in the feeder every two or three days. A fresh mixture is more attractive to the birds. Spoiled sugar water can ferment, and mold and bacteria will grow inside the feeder. Rinse and clean the feeder when you change nectar, and sterilize it when you see mold growing inside.

Place the hummingbird feeder where you can see it and where it sheltered from the wind. If you live in a warm climate, put it in a shaded area.

HUMMINGBIRD WATER FEATURES

Although hummers get most of their water from the food they consume, they will visit a source of clean water where they can drink and bathe. They seem to prefer shallow water that they can stand in while bathing. They will also drink and bathe at a mister that sprays a fine mist of water.

With a little effort, you can establish a backyard hummingbird habitat that will become important to the well-being of local and migrant hummingbirds. By attracting hummingbirds, we add a touch of beauty and special activity to our lives.



LISTEN TO THE TALKING BIRDS

Florida housewife, Susan Remson always laughed when the family's pet parrot, Oscar, would squawk out "hello" and "dinner time." Then one day the bird bit Susan's thumb. "You're a bad boy!" Susan shouted, at which Oscar leaned forward and clearly replied, "I a good boy." "I was stunned," Susan recalls. "It was like talking with a two year old child."

Today, animal lovers and scientists are tearing down the long-held idea that parrots, macaws and other talking birds lack the intelligence to understand what they're saying. Chris Davis, a pet-bird behaviorist in California, points out that birds in the wild communicate with each other. She adds, "We're seeing that parrots and other birds in captivity want to learn human language. They speak to us because they want our companionship and they are trying to interact."