

## Canaries Fact Sheet

### General Info:

- Average Lifespan is 9-15 years
- Canaries are very active and cheerful birds
- They are more bird oriented than people oriented
- They are quite timid birds so shouldn't be housed with hook beaked, more aggressive birds
- They don't like very cold temperatures and instead prefer the average household temperatures
- Very social birds
- Can be very territorial
- Known for their singing – males are louder, more vocal whistlers
- Canaries like to sleep for longer than humans
- A female canary is called a hen and a male is called a cock bird
- They love to have baths and with access to water, most will bathe daily especially in summer
- Love to fly so prefer cages that have length to get enough exercise

### Sexing:

It is very difficult to tell the gender of a canary. The most certain way to sex a female canary is of course if she lays an egg. Most males are distinctive due to their singing. If you have a singing canary, you can be 99% sure it's a male. Females can sing, but it is generally weak and broken. Remember, during the winter males will sing less or not at all.

Appearance wise there can be very subtle differences between males and females. Generally, the males will have brighter colouration, be slightly larger, more boisterous and sit taller when on the perch. Females eyes tend to sit higher on their head lining up above the beak and males' eyes will be in line with the beak.

During most of the year you cannot sex a canary based on its genital area as both sexes look the same until breeding season. Hold the bird gently and blow on the feathers around the vent area. If you look closely, the vent of a male will appear elongated and prominent. Females will be rounder and flatter. Unfortunately, though sexing is never a guarantee.

### Breeding:

Birds should be at least 12 months old before you breed them. It is best to have your male & female birds in cages next to each other or in a cage with a divider before you breed them.

Ideal timing for your canaries to breed largely depends on the weather. This means that breeding seasons vary from state to state. Generally, in Albany area they tend to breed from September – January.

Canaries breed in open topped nests opposed to boxes; they should be lined with felt type material and you can provide them with material to build/line a nest.

Females usually lay 2-6 eggs, laying one a day or every other day. While breeding you should make sure there is extra food available and cuttlefish/shell grit for extra calcium. Canaries are born blind and without feathers so are completely dependant on their parents while they are in the nest. At around 16 days old they will leave the nest and start learning to care for themselves.