

Planning your bird's future

Dave Allen

Have you thought about what might happen to your birds if you were not able to look after them on a regular basis. Consider the potential outcomes if the following came to pass:

- Your health is compromised for a length of time (eg, stroke, broken leg);
- Your housing arrangements have changed (eg, fire, separation from partner);
- Your employment situation has changed (eg, work location, redundancy);
- A natural disaster occurs in your area (eg, flood, earthquake);
- You need to move temporarily to look after a sick relative or friend.

Would you be prepared for such eventualities? What preparations could you make now to negate these impacts, and keep your birds in good caring hands.

In recent years, a number of these situations have actually occurred. One of the advantages of being a member of the Association is that members support each other in difficult times. Members should work with other members in their locations or regions to form a 'buddy' system where they can support each other. It may be advantageous to inform another member, or generally write down, the routines you undertake in looking after your finches.

Perhaps there are particular dietary requirements that need maintaining at particular times of the year. Which birds are related, and are there any breeding protocols that you follow? Who knows when your birds were last wormed? Making some notes, and keeping a bird book, is quite helpful. Perhaps a member's name and phone number could be written in your bird book, if you are unable to look after your birds, and your relatives or friends are not able to help as much as possible.

Having the support of an Association member can help where you are no longer able to look after your birds. Situations can be avoided where threatened finch species are either unnecessarily disturbed during nesting periods, or moult, or perhaps quickly on-sold without consideration for their threatened status in New Zealand. Each of these changes can affect the on-going survival of the affected birds, and the species in general.

If you do need to quickly address housing arrangements for finch species, please consider contacting an appropriate member that may be able to help out. Members of the committee (eg, National Exchange Steward) may also be able to offer suggestions for assistance in your local area.

If you wish to see the best for your finch species, consistent with the objectives of the Association, then take steps to plan for some of these eventualities. Other members will appreciate such efforts when the time comes...they have busy lives as well.