

# Newsletter from The Birdcare Company

4 February 2004

This newsletter is produced in two sections. The first is for Europeans and the second section is for Americans and people from all non-European countries. Please select here for a quick link to your section.

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## Newsletter for European customers

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### Yet more delighted customers

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*Jürgen and Torben Hoeveler keep over 500 zebra finches as part of their collection of both foreign and European birds. Since starting with Birdcare Company supplements the brothers have seen both fertility rates and rearing rates improve considerably. Diarrhoea, which used to be common, is now very rare and their young birds are stronger and grow faster meaning they can be rung earlier. They use Daily Essentials3, ProBoost SuperMax, Potent Brew and Calcivet as part of their regular routine. They firmly believe that Potent Brew gives their birds that added incentive to breed. Aviclens is used in soaked seed and drinking water. They have been delighted with the performance of Feather-Up during the moult and they use Spark on any stressed birds and all show birds to build their energy reserves.*



*"I happily tell every breeder I meet about the wonderful effect of Birdcare Company products and even give them your literature whenever I can." said Torben when the brothers proudly showed off their awards at the DKB Meisterschaft in Münster in January 2004.*

Birdcare Company supplements would almost certainly do the same for your birds. But you have to try them to find out and for best results you need to use them properly, which is why we have developed our personalised supplements plans. Visit our web site [www.BirdcareCo.com](http://www.BirdcareCo.com) and click on "free feeding plans". If you have an Excel spreadsheet on your computer you can fill out the form yourself. If you don't the page tells you the information we need to set up the plan for you. *Our advice is free!*

## Very busy in Europe

The winter period is very busy for The Birdcare Company. Sally and I seem to spend more time out of the UK than in it. This winter, during December and January alone, we have been to National shows in Germany (twice), France, Holland and the UK. The culmination was the World Show in Switzerland.

Despite the huge effort of driving around Europe with our display stand and stock (and the added burden of Swiss customs!) we find these events very useful. We meet lots of new bird keepers and can frequently help them with their problems. The key issues of inadequate supplementation leading to poor health or poor breeding is largely the same the world over. Our ability to maximise nutrient absorption and support the digestive and immune systems works for breeders world-wide.

With the high level of mobility around Europe (snow permitting) we meet many customers from smaller countries. As a result we now have retailers in Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Austria, Switzerland and Portugal not to mention our oldest export market, Malta.

At this year's World show we were delighted to hear that the members of one Belgian club (from the small town of Lommel) were the proud winners of twelve gold medals. All of them are customers of The Birdcare Company and they were so grateful for our contribution to their success that they brought a bottle of wine along to our stand for us to celebrate!



Swiss Champion Michel Veya won three gold, and two bronze medals for intensive yellow, white, red mosaic and topaz red mosaic colour canaries at the 2004 World Show in Lausanne.  
In his top team ALL four birds scored 93 points.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those who help to make it possible for us to attend so many events. Ludo and Nicole (our Benelux distributors) help us in Holland and Switzerland. Stephen Smith (despite his name, one of our top bird keeping customers in Germany) helps at both German shows. Michel and Danielle (French retailers of ours) help in France and Switzerland. The combination of language and technical skills these people bring to our efforts are incredibly valuable.

And we must not forget the incredible support of our team back in England. Charlotte, Ann, Marcus, Pino and Dave have coped brilliantly during this period. Not only have they been short handed as Sally and I have been travelling but we have also had a major promotion in the UK and coped with a large increase in USA orders simultaneously. Despite this, and the intervention of the Christmas and New Year holidays, they have maintained our excellent service levels. Thank you all!

## **Plucking parrots**

Undoubtedly feather plucking, picking and chewing are amongst the most distressing of pet bird problems. Because these problems can have many different causes there is a lot of conflicting advice about the solutions. Our experience is that many cases have nutritional problems at their root and calcium deficiency is the most common cause. However the solution is often more than just providing more calcium.

We have a three product approach that is designed to correct calcium imbalances, provide the nutrients required for effective feather production and to settle the digestive system.

### *Why is calcium important?*

Calcium deficiency is the single most common nutritional problem in cage and aviary birds yet it is often not recognised by veterinarians. Calcium is involved in nerve and muscle function so behavioural problems often are the first signs. Aggression, biting, fear, nervousness and self-mutilation are common symptoms. Correcting calcium deficiency requires a highly bio-available source of calcium. In Europe we provide this in Calcivet. This product contains no artificial colourings that otherwise risk causing even more behavioural problems.

Calcium deficient birds will have depleted their bone reserves of calcium. Any calcium entering the blood supply will be quickly soaked up by the bones. So giving Calcivet may show a quick response which may then deteriorate again afterwards. This is why we recommend using this product five days a week for the first month and then reducing to twice a week. Calcivet is a liquid that can be added to fresh foods, bread, biscuits etc. Anything the bird will eat that doesn't have the husk removed. If your bird is a very fussy feeder it can be added to drinking water but you will use much more. For a bird the size of an African Grey or Amazon the bird should consume 0.5 mls (15 drops) each day it is given. In the water in should be added at the rate of 3 mls (90 drops) per 150 mls (1/4 pint) of water. Check the quantities you need to use and contact our advice service if you are not sure (<mailto:advice@BirdcareCo.com>).

### *How do we help the feathers to re-grow?*

Very persistent pluckers may have damaged the feather follicles preventing re-growth. Feather chewers will not re-grow feathers until the old ones have fallen out. To encourage the bird to moult, shorten its day length (put it to bed earlier). Supplement its diet with Daily Essentials3 and Calcivet. Give two pinches of Daily Essentials3 every day for a bird the size of an African Grey. This is the normal dose for a healthy bird too. This comprehensive product (39 nutrient and herbal ingredients), when used with Calcivet, provides all the key nutrients for feather production.

### *Why use Potent Brew?*

In theory Daily Essentials3 and Calcivet provide all the requirements to sort out nutritional plucking. However alone they may fail. This is often because the plucking bird is inevitably stressed. It may be plucking because it is stressed or stressed because it is plucking. Either way it is stressed! Stress causes imbalances in the digestive tract which further stress the bird. This is a vicious circle that must be broken. Potent Brew is the most powerful probiotic we know. It corrects the gut biochemistry and maximises digestive function. This de-stresses the bird and often is just that extra something that tips the balance with plucking birds. So our anti-plucking system is Daily Essentials3, Calcivet and Potent Brew. Potent Brew can normally be discontinued after a month or so.

If plucking persists visit a competent avian veterinarian for extensive blood tests to try and identify any disease issues. Feel free to contact us to discuss the results and please take little notice of blood calcium levels. There are different ways to measure blood calcium that can give very misleading results!

We hope you have enjoyed this newsletter. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions. <mailto:advice@BirdcareCo.com>.

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### **New distribution arrangements in the USA**

Recently the ownership of our sole USA importer, Birds2Grow, has changed and we have decided to take this opportunity to change our distribution arrangements in this important market.

We will be focussing our support on a number of very knowledgeable resellers who we are confident will be able to offer you both excellent service and advice. As we will not be supplying Birds2Grow we expect they will cease to be a reseller of our products when their current inventories are exhausted. You will find the up-to-date reseller list on our web site: <http://www.BirdcareCo.com/usa>.

We have contacted every US retailer of Birdcare Company products that we are aware of by e-mail or snail mail. Obviously snail mail will take a while to arrive so it may be that your preferred retailer is not on our current web site listing because they are not yet aware of the changes that are occurring. Our apologies for this but events have forced us to act quickly. Please ask your preferred retailer to contact us if they are unsure of their supply position.

Our web listing will be updated regularly and we expect to see it grow over the next few weeks. As soon as we can we will be publishing more detail about each retailer so you can select one whose expertise is most in line with your needs. And remember we are happy to provide advice directly to you by e-mail, <mailto:advice@BirdcareCo.com> or using [www.BirdvetOnline.com](http://www.BirdvetOnline.com). Our advice is always free regardless of who is supplying you with our products.

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