

# INFORMATION

More leaflets are available online at [www.allinone.co.uk](http://www.allinone.co.uk)

## Short Guide to Keeping **FINCHES**

Generally finches are birds that feed primarily on seed. They are not noisy birds and some even have an attractive song. They are quite inexpensive to buy and maintain, which makes them an ideal choice for young and old alike. In spite of their small size, they may live for well over a decade in domestic surroundings.

### FEEDING:-

As well as specially formulated finch foods which are readily available, try feeding sweet apple or grated carrot. Green foods can be a useful food supplement i.e. chickweed, spinach or beet, adding vitamins and minerals to their diet and should be supplied regularly. Wash all greens thoroughly. Use iodine blocks regularly. Because seed forms the basis of their diet, finches rely on grit to assist in the breakdown of the relatively hard seed kernels in their gizzards.

Cuttlefish bone is a valuable source of minerals, especially calcium. It also prevents the birds beaks from becoming overgrown. Make sure there is always a clean fresh supply of water available to your bird. Only sealed drinkers are recommended, since the water will remain much cleaner than in open pots. Use a bottle brush to clean containers twice a week.

### CLEANLINESS:-

Sand sheets are best used and should be replaced approx. twice a week. Sheets should be scraped of droppings daily. Perches should not be positioned over food/water bowls. The ideal perch size is approx. 1.25cm dia round.

The addition of fresh twigs as perches will help prevent pressure sores on the feet of the birds.

The cage as a whole should be disinfected thoroughly and fairly regularly (once a week) to avoid mites etc.



### SEXING:-

Some finches are easy to sex, using differences in the plumage of cock and hen as a guide, but a significant number of species show no such variations. Listed below are just a few birds which are easy to sex.

**Zebra Finch** - Hens lack the zebra-like pattern on the cocks throat and the chestnut flank markings.

**Pure White Zebra** - Although they lack the zebra-like pattern on the throat, the cocks can still be recognised by their darker red beaks.

**Gouldian Finch** - Hens tend to be lighter in overall colouration. When cocks are in breeding condition, their beaks turn reddish at the tip, whereas those of the hens become darker overall.

**The Bengalese Finch** has no reliable visual distinction.

For sexing other species of finch, consult a good text book or enquire within the pet centre.

All livestock at All-In-One Garden Centre have a 7 day guarantee. A valid receipt is required.