

# Petware House

Your Neighborhood Pet Store

## Society Finch

*Lonchura domestica*

## CARE SHEET

Also known as the Bengalese finch, society finches have been popular with Hobbyists since their development in China in the 1700's. They are a good choice For a beginner or novice bird owner.



**Average Size** 3-4 inches in length.

**Life span** 8+ years with proper care.

**Feeding** If your bird is used to a seed diet, convert to pellets gradually; fresh pellets or seeds and fresh, clean, chlorine free water should always be available.

Give fresh fruits and vegetables daily; discard uneaten food before it spoils; finches appreciate quality and variety in their food.

**Housing** A rectangular flight cage, approximately 24" W x 14" D x 18" H, with metal bars spaced no greater than 3/8" apart, makes a good home for my finches; as with all animals, it is best to provide the largest habitat possible.

Perches should be at least 3" long and 1/2" in diameter; a variety of perch sizes and materials to exercise feet and help prevent arthritis is recommended. A metal grate over the droppings tray will keep the bird away from droppings; line the droppings tray with cage paper or appropriate substrate for easier cleaning. To avoid contamination, do not place food or water containers under perches.

**Maintenance** Provide filtered, chlorine-free, lukewarm water regularly for bathing and remove the water when done; as an alternative, mist the bird with water or a grooming spray. Nails should be trimmed by a qualified person to prevent injury to the bird.

Clean and disinfect the cage and perches regularly; replace substrate or cage liner weekly or more often if needed; replace food and water daily.

Replace perches, dishes and toys when worn or damaged. Always wash your hands after touching your bird and cage.

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**Temps** Birds acclimate well to average household temperatures; be cautious of extreme temperature change; cage should be placed off the floor in an area that is well-lit and away from drafts.

**Humidity** No special requirements

**Lighting** Well lit rooms.

#### **Water & Accessories**

Install a bird bath, food and water dishes and a variety of perches. Also include toys for your finch to play with. Don't forget about adding treats and grit as well.

#### **BASIC REPRODUCTIVE INFORMATION**

Each cage measures 18 inches across, 12 inches tall and 12 inches deep. There are 2 perches per cage, a feed dish, an egg shell and grit cup, and an egg food cup. A plastic water dispenser is added to the outside of the cage. The nest box measures 3 inches tall, 5 inches wide and five inches deep. It is also attached to the outside. The top of the box flips up so that I can easily inspect each box without removing it from the cage, and this also facilitates cleaning the nest box when needed. Most of the nests are home made out of plywood, some are commercial plastic nest which are a bit smaller. I try and sex my societies as best I can, but often a cage will contain 3 adults if I have any question on the sexes. They breed quite well in this way. I use a nesting material called Siscal, or Jute, it is a fine fibrous plant material, that I can easily shape to fit the entire floor and corners of the nest. I build the entire nest for my Society Finches and generally do not allow the birds to build, although I may add some nesting material to simulate them to explore the nests. I often put a sprinkling of 5% Sevin dust in the bottom of each new nest, to prevent insects or other pest from making their home in the box. Each nest is cleaned after each clutch fledges, and sometimes during the breeding cycle, if there are many young in the nest box and it appear overly soiled.

#### **NOTES AND COMMENTS**

Society finches do well in a large flock. They are frequent, pleasant chirping birds, but they do not like to be handled. They definitely need room in their cages to fly.

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