

Sexing Cockatiels

By Leon Richardson

In Most cases sexing a cockatiel is a guessing game, but the following is a few ways that may help you to pair up or sex cockatiels.

It is very hard to sex a young cockatiel but once they become mature (approx 6 months of age) it becomes a little easier. Most people believe the orange spot on the cheek of a cockatiel is darker in the cocks than in hens. Well this is right in 8 out of 10 cases but hens also have very dark patches. My darkest marked cheek patch is on one of my hens not a cock. So don't totally rely on the cheek patch for sexing.

In Mature normal grey cockatiel the cocks whole head will be very bright yellow and the hen will have a very dull yellow face or even no yellow at all.

A mature cock will slightly raise his wings from his body; this is to show his dominance. The cock also has a very distinctive whistle this is very hard to explain on paper but you will recognize if you hear it. It's very distinctive repetitive on and off whistle. Once you get to hear the cock bird whistle this is one of the easiest ways to sex your birds. (If you wish to get more of an idea give me a call and I'll give you an example of the whistle).

Not the most painless way to sex a bird but generally gives you a pretty good idea is the bite test, the hen will bite a lot harder and lock onto you as the cock is a bit more gentle, but a warning they both still hurt if they bite you so this method is not recommended. A hen also seems to hiss a lot more than a cock but some cocks tend to hiss as well so this is also not a great method.

The method I seem to have the most success with is once again to be used on a mature cockatiel and this is to feel the cockatiels pelvic bones. Hold your cockatiel with its back in the palm of your hand then place your finger between its legs where you will find the pelvic bones in a hen you will fit your small finger between these two bones in a cock these bones will be touching. Be gentle when doing this as not to damage or push the bones apart. The hens are further apart because when she lays, the eggs move between these bones. It pays to have your bird relaxed as the hen can tighten these bones and give a false reading. If you try this method on an already sexed pair of cockatiels you will soon pick up the difference and this method will become fairly easy for you on other birds.

Finally I would just like to state that none of these methods are 100% guarantee of sexing your cockatiels but one of these or more may help you in sexing your bird. These are some of my methods if you wish to chat to me on any of these methods or any other cockatiel questions then give me a call or send me an email.