

Showcages are Important Wendy LaBanca, CAS

As exhibitors, we strive to breed the best cockatiel, according to the standard, as we can. We attend each show hoping we have the best cockatiel bred towards the standard. There are many guidelines we follow as we prepare to show our cockatiels. One of the seemingly overlooked parts of judging each exhibitor should not forget is the showcase. Staging is 5 points out of 100. While that may seem minor, the showcase is what helps show our cockatiel to it's best advantage.

The showcase is very important. A certain shade of blue was chosen as it shows off cockatiels and does not detract from them as other colors would. Showcase color fades with time and use. Periodically, an exhibitor must repaint, clean perches, replace/repair hardware or even 'retire' a showcase.

Here is what I do to keep my showcases in pristine condition. It doesn't take a lot of time and ultimately saves time in the long run. After shows, I dump my show cage seed (white millet - you do not want to use colored seed) and feed it to the outdoor birds (cost effective) and they love the constant supply and we never have to buy seed for them. I wipe down each perch and the total inside of the cage. I usually pop the fronts off so that there isn't prolonged stressed on the wood and this helps prevent showcases from seperating and makes it easier to wipe out the inside. I then use show cage covers that I have made to keep the inside clean or I'll store them in garbage bags. Before each show, I wipe them down again to make sure all dust is removed.

Annually, I sand perches, replace hardware as needed and repaint inside and out. It's like having all new show cages. It's easy to get the paint mixed for them. Formula:

COLORANT	02	32	64	128
B1 Black	1	1		
Y3 Deep Gold	1			
L1 Blue	4	1	1	
R3 Magenia	3	1		
G2 New Green	1	1		

The current formula is also listed on the NCS website, www.cockatiels.org or you can take a new one or freshly painted one, if you have one, to Home Depot or Lowe's or any hardware store that mixes paint and have them match it right from the showcase. Once they are painted, I then apply 2 coats of gloss to the outside only. Let them dry and air out and then I'm ready for the show year.

It's very easy to do and when looking at the bench, once the show is over, and seeing all those outstanding cockatiels, standing out proudly, in nice looking showcases is a beautiful sight to see. Makes for beautiful pictures too. It could come down to those 5 points for you birds. Take pride in your showcases and keep them up....it can save time and money in the future. Happy Showing!