

Year Rings & Identity Rings

Contributed by Administrator
Tuesday, 20 May 2008

Year Rings & Identity Rings....There are two types of rings which are generally used for Zebra Finches. These are closed metal rings and split plastic or celluloid rings. Both can be ordered through the Zebra Finch Society.

CLOSED RINGS:

Closed rings can only be fitted to birds when still in the nest, and should be fitted at 7-12 days old. The rings issued by the Society are colour coded for the specific year and enable the Zebra Finch Society to offer 'breeder' awards for open competition among its fully paid up members. Breeder awards can only be won by current year bred birds which have been bred by the actual exhibitor who enters the birds for competition. In order to prove they have been bred by the exhibitor these birds must be close rung with a current year Z.F.S, closed ring bearing the membership code number of the exhibitor. In addition to the code number, Z.F.S, Year Rings are also numbered consecutively, so that each individual bird can be precisely identified. A different colour of ring is used each year, on a nine year cycle, so that the year the ring was issued can be seen at a glance. Rings also bear the initials Z and S, between which is a number. The initials Z and S, prove the ring was issued by the Z.F.S, and the number is the last digit of the year in which the ring was issued, enabling the year to be precisely identified. therefore a red ring issued in 2003 will be marked Z3S, while a blue ring issued in 2004 will be marked Z4S.

In addition to being essential in order to compete for 'breeder' awards, closed rings are also very useful for the purpose of keeping precise and accurate breeding records of birds. This is essential if any sort of selective controlled breeding is going to be undertaken.

EXHIBITING RINGED BIRDS:

At Z,F,S, Patronage Shows only birds rung with current year Z,F,S, closed rings of the exhibitor may be entered as 'breeder' birds, It is also a rule of the Z,F,S, that birds wearing more than one closed ring will be disqualified from winning any Z,F,S. awards . However birds which are not rung, or which were rung with a ring from previous years may be exhibited as adults if so desired and may be awarded special prizes in the adult section. However no exhibit can compete for breeder and adult awards at the same show. Closed rings must not be defaced in any way as this may lead to disqualification.

SPLIT RINGS:

Split rings can be fitted to the bird at any age, and are purely used as a means of easy identification of birds especially by breeders. For example fanciers often ring all the young from each particular pair of birds with the same colour split rings. This enables the breeder to see at a glance which pair produced which youngsters without having to catch up individuals to check their ring numbers. Breeders who have birds which are adults, and have not been close rung, may find it an advantage to ring their stock with numbered split rings, so that each individual bird can be identified in breeding records. A special tool to enable split rings to be fitted to birds is usually supplied with each order of split rings.

FITTING CLOSED RINGS:

Young should generally be close rung between eight and ten days of age, depending on the rate of growth of individual chicks. Once the technique is mastered, it is a fairly routine task and can be accomplished quite easily and quickly. The three forward pointing toes are passed through the ring together, and the ring slid on to the ball of the foot. The ring can then be carefully pulled over the back claw, up the chicks leg to the knee joint. It only remains for the tip of the back claw to be gently eased free from the ring and the task is completed. If the ring comes over the four toes when pulled gently against them, the bird is too small to be rung and ringing should be attempted the following day.

RINGING YOUR CHICK:

1. Ring at about 8/10 days. Take chick in one hand with its back in you palm.
2. Take foot between finger and thumb and hold as near to the ankle as possible. Ease the three "forward" toes together, with the back toe resting back up alongside the leg itself.

Note: Some breeders use a little "Vaseline" on the three forward toes if necessary to help keep them together, and on

the ball of the foot to assist the closed ring to slide over it.

3. Pass the ring over the three forward toes and slide it right up over the ball of the foot rotating gently if necessary to ease it over the ankle .
5. Move ring up leg until the back toe is clear, or is able to be eased clear. Ringing of that chick is now complete.
6. Check the following day to make sure the ring is still in place..