

How Important is it to be a Member of a Club?

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Many cage bird clubs in America are folding every year because of one or more reasons, some serious, others superficial. Politics or infighting or strong-arming by egotistical members is not the only reason. The quieter members are made to feel inferior, or are recruited by the stronger to support their ideas. Some new clubs don't last a year. Others after many years and under many principal leaders finally wear out. Overactivity that demands all members to participate in, rather than be a club to help, and to provide educational and social needs.

In recent years, there is seemingly a new escape. Super colorful magazines and the computer network are full of information about birds. Some wonderful folks on the net have given of themselves and their experiences for all to reap or download. However, much of every area's public that has birds may not have knowledge or the desire to access these benefits. And worse, many club newsletters also neglect the needs and recognition of the members. Some just don't make it. But clubs, whatever their status, have potential elements that will bring success to its members that magazines, websites, and aloofness alone can't provide at all or in a timely manner.

What can you gain from a club?

- The sharing of specific bird experiences with people you get to know and trust and who live nearby.
- Get the data on birds, equipment, and foods other users have experienced within the club, not necessarily from industries that are promoting products, or those who have a reason to have a website.

- Access sympathetic help in times of crisis, loss of birds, and also get quicky answers for bird care.
- Enjoy the fellowship of like-minded neighbors with birds, maybe finding someone to watch your birds during a hospital stay, a conference, or while on vacation.
- Gain timely information such as unwanted local regulations affecting bird ownership, products dangerous to birds, alerts on potential or sudden diseases, weather problems, and the like.
- You may learn what regional problems veterinarians are encountering in your area that may impact on club members' aviaries or pet birds.
- You can be part of a local, visible group that has the testimony of proper care of pet birds. Together there is power, and general acceptance by the public, as well as being a powerful recruiting entity to reach other bird owners. Most clubs haven't scratched the surface of local pet owner populations.
- Having a breeder you know well raising the birds you might want or need.
- Hearing speakers that educate, inspire, and share your interests. Bird owners knowing that they are not alone.
- Inspire members to have a fuller experience with birds by introducing other aspects of the avicultural world that they may wish participate in — showing, for example.

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