

© 2008 By Kieran Fitzgerald member from Limerick FAN OF THE COCKATIEL

Hi, Firstly I would like to say how impressed I was with the first magazine issue, congratulations and great work done by all involved. I am a great fan of cockatiel, lutino cockatiel especially. I suppose it is because they remind me of embarrassed baby sulphur crested cockatoos. I previously had a hen lutino cockatiel called Freda, she was hand reared and over time became very affectionate and even learnt a few whistles for me. I had this bird for nearly 5 years until one sad day. At the time I was moving house and my parents kindly offered to mind Freda for me (to be honest they were secretly delighted as they both loved this bird). Freda was never in her cage much and loved sitting on your shoulder while you worked at the P.C or even watching T.V. As she spent so much time on our shoulders you would easily forget she was there. One day my father was working on his P.C with Freda on his shoulder and remembered something he had to do outside. He was only a couple of steps outside when he realised the bird was still on his shoulder. The bird got startled for some reason and took flight. She circled the house a few times as my father was calling her to coax her down but to no avail. My parents kept on eye on her flying and tried to follow her in the car but she disappeared. I got a call from my distraught parents explaining what happened. When I called out we placed her cage in on open area outside hoping she might fly back hungry and see her cage, unfortunately not. We called to the neighbours, printed posters, called the ISPCA, called the Gardai and the local radio station and unfortunately no joy. From this mishap we learnt a lesson the hard way and I hope people take my advice on this when I say it is extremely important to clip your pet birds' wings. I would hate for anyone to have the same experience we had. I would strongly recommend everyone who has a tame bird which they let out of its cage or aviary frequently to clip its wings. Clipping birds' wings does not hurt the bird in anyway when done correctly. I have done this for a few of my friends to there budgies to African greys. If you would like to clip your birds' wings there is plenty of information on the internet on the subject and clearly explains how to do it. If you are nervous you will hurt your bird your local pet shop or vet will gladly do it for you and show you how to do it. Since this I wanted to get another bird and was thinking of getting an African grey or a Senegal parrot. They way things worked out I stumbled across another hand reared lutino cockatiel and could not leave her behind. She is now very happy in my new house whistling tunes for me and has her wings clipped.