

The Best of the NFSS Bird Forum: Heating

Below you will find a collection of comments, advice, and tips previously posted on the NFSS Forum. We hope you find the opinions of value. They represent the views of various members, participants in aviculture. If you would like to learn more about the wonderful and interesting world of finches... [become an NFSS Member](#) and join our Forum or, if you find this article of use and would like to make a contribution to our society, [donations are welcome](#).

I have found that some birds like it warmer. I use a clip lamp with a ceramic heater bulb inside. In spite of the heat, some birds associate the light with the heat, so they will go to the light (sounds like a ghost movie), and not the heat source. In those situations I put the heat near the spot where they tend to sit (near the light).

I believe if a bird is old, not quite well, breeding/laying, stressed, they recover or respond positively to heat.

I use a device used in South Africa. There they use a clay pot that covers an incandescent bulb. The wire goes thru the hole in the bottom and is then plugged in. This is put close to the ground over a clay saucer. The bulb heats up the clay pot and saucer. A sick or cold bird will get close to it to keep warm. Feed oily seeds for her to build up her system?

I can tell you that finches properly acclimated can easily handle temperatures below 55°F. It would be healthier for all your finches if you provided a lamp for heat for an individual bird and not jack the temperature in the aviary. Most of my finches are kept outside 24/7 in aviaries except for a few breeder cages in my unheated garage. This morning the temperature was 35°F! I just got in from checking for dead finches. No dead or stress finches, but I could hear hungry chicks begging in the nest. I have kept Zebras, Societies, Gouldians, Stars, Javas, Spice finch, and Canaries outside. The key to keeping finches in colder temperatures is proper acclimation, protection from wind & rain, and lights to shorten the long cold winter nights when finches need to eat (calories needed) for maintaining body temperature. Forget "heaters" for outside aviaries, increasing daylight hours is more efficient.

This is why I have an incandescent bulb with a wide metal reflector hanging in the cage. One perch runs under the light just low enough that the finches can fit under the light and, a perch set right above the light for the rising heat. After bathing the perches are loaded. But, every so often I find a finch or two sitting under the light at night fluffed up. As my birds get older they do tend to spend

more time under the light. But I am not ruling out some kind of background disease either, something chronic that flares up when the birds are stressed.
