

THE ROLE OF F10 PRODUCTS IN THE AVICULTURE HEALTH AND HYGIENE STRATEGY AT THE NEW INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR BIRDS OF PREY

JEMIMA PARRY-JONES MBE, Aviculturist

Introduction

Keeping large numbers of birds has always been a task with concerns about hygiene. Now with the changes in climate and new viruses moving around the world at scary speeds, it is an even more important part of caring for captive birds.

Having said that I feel very strongly that one can also over do things. Recently I was trying to work with someone who wanted outside enclosures to be hospital clean, or at least to aim for it. I actually feel this is very bad for the birds because I think what it does is remove their ability to deal with diseases that will without doubt come their way, whilst they are living outside.

I think there is a happy medium, where the birds live a fairly natural life and are able to cope with the normal run of the mill problems that affect many living things in their daily life, but are kept at a good level of cleanliness. I think there is an absolute parallel with what is happening to humans today. The more we try to keep children away from anything that might affect them and clean to the point of ridiculousness, the less we allow them to build up a natural immunity to life's infections and problems.

When we were children I can remember that we frequently used to get mosquito larvae out of the taps, and on one occasion a live tadpole! And yet I rarely get ill and even more rarely get stomach infections. It is a proven fact that children brought up with animals in the house are less likely to develop allergies. And to make a final point, my Grandmother always told us that we should eat a peck of dirt before we die. Looking up a peck is bloody difficult because a peck is, I think, a measurement of volume and therefore it depends on what you are measuring as to what it weighs. But I am told it is 9 litres or 56 lbs, but I have to say I am not sure about that, what I do know is that, it's a lot of dirt!!!

So with that in mind, keeping captive birds and their housing clean is really important, but for more than one reason is it best not to go over the top when birds are in enclosures. Incidentally one of the other reasons is to reduce the stress caused by constantly going in and out with untrained birds. I also believe that there is a huge amount we do not know about stress, and we have much to learn so wherever possible avoid causing it.

Traveling boxes

I have in the last four years moved the bulk of my collection, 189 birds, from the UK to the US, supposedly to merge with another group in South Carolina and start the definitive bird

of prey centre. Sadly it failed, and so I was forced to move the collection back from the US to the UK. Both of these moves were incredibly stressful for the birds (and me!).

We used F10 (F10SC Veterinary Disinfectant) for much of the travel arrangements. The transit boxes, were the same ones used for both trips, and indeed we keep enough boxes in each barn corridor to safely box the birds in emergencies. These boxes were cleaned and then sprayed with F10 prior to boxing up the birds, and we clean them before and after every use.



Travelling boxes



Unloading at the airport



Fogging

During the quarantine periods at both ends of the two trips to avoid some of the known problems arising from stress we used F10 (F10SC Veterinary Disinfectant) through electric atomisers/foggers twice daily to fog the quarantine quarters for periods of 35 minutes each time. The



Fogger used to spray aviaries

foggers are a great way to apply F10 to a large number of birds in an indoor space and they worked very well. During both periods we lost only one bird to Aspergillosis, and that was an owl from the far north and an imprint which are more highly susceptible than wild or parent reared birds.

Food containers

Probably the most important area to keep clean is where the birds pick up food and sometimes eat. Putting food, particularly in our case meat onto existing dirty surfaces is a recipe for disaster. With the exception of the large vultures, we put the food for all our birds onto a drawer that slides into the back of the aviary from the service corridor. The drawer has a plastic or similar type material base. We feed the diurnal birds in the morning and the owls in the evening. In the morning we open the owl feed drawers, pick up any left over's, wipe or scrape the drawer clean and then spray with F10 (F10SC Veterinary Disinfectant), close the drawer and leave to dry. We do the same thing in the evening for the diurnal birds. So every drawer is cleaned every day and sprayed with F10 every day. Once a week the enclosure is cleaned and so at that point the drawer is washed even more thoroughly and sprayed with F10. All the dilutions are 1:250. I have been doing this for 4 years now and I believe that it has had a noticeable decrease in the number of sick birds that we have had.

Food preparations

The surfaces where the food is thawed are cleaned and sprayed with F10 (F10SC Veterinary Disinfectant) daily. All the feed buckets are cleaned once they are emptied and then sprayed with F10 and left with dry. All surfaces, such as our particularly nice chopping board are sprayed at least twice a day and often more.

Falconry bags

We are advised by our vet to spray our gloves with F10 (F10SC Veterinary Disinfectant) after each bird, so as to prevent any potential spread of disease. Similarly, we spray with F10 our falconry bags once a day after emptying. The small plastic liners of the bags are cleaned and sprayed daily.

All of this may seem extreme, but with a sprayer handy at all times, it is the job of a moment and well worth the effort.

Treating a yeast infection

On the trip home, it became apparent that Mozart my very elderly Eurasian Eagle Owl had lost so much of his vision through cataracts that



Mozart fully recovered

he needed an operation to treat the worst of them to give him the chance of a reasonable life. After the very successful operation he had a few problems mainly due to his age he was 34 at the time. One of the problems was a yeast infection in the operated upon eye. There is no treatment for this in birds, and yeast infections are notoriously difficult to get rid of. So Neil Forbes, my consultant vet said we know F10 (F10SC Veterinary Disinfectant) will kill yeast, we know its pretty safe so at a 1:1000 dilution, put drops in Mozart's eye twice a day. I am very glad to say that it worked and Mozart is now 35 and doing very well.

Water baths

Water baths are another potential source of problems. We do not clean our hawk baths daily. It is done depending on the weather and the individual birds, once or twice a week, occasionally more if they need it.

The baths are removed from the enclosure, we have them at the front so they can be removed without entering the enclosure and causing stress. They are scrubbed clean, and then sprayed with F10 (F10SC Veterinary Disinfectant) and left for at least ten minutes before putting them back in and refilling them. If we are getting very sunny weather we will put a drop of F10 into the drinking water.

Bumble foot

A couple of birds in the US, and one during the long stay in the warehouse in Hereford developed mild bumble-foot, and several had the potential to develop it. In all cases we cleaned the feet, cleared any dead material and then spread on F10 Ointment (F10 Germicidal Barrier Ointment) bandaged well with pads and vet wrap and sticky fabric tape. We changed the bandages about every 10 days, and very soon the F10 had done the trick and cleared up the problems. It is important to watch that the bandages do not cause any sores themselves. And to change any problem perching immediately

Conclusion

F10 products used as we use them as daily requirements for all our health and hygiene procedures are easy to use, safe, and the results speak for themselves.

F10 PRODUCTS LTD

Unit 7, Windmill Road, Loughborough, LE11 1RA, UK
Freephone: 0800 014 8803 • Fax: 01509 265777
Email: orders@f10products.co.uk • info@f10products.co.uk
www.f10products.co.uk

Manufacturer of F10 Products:

Health and Hygiene (Pty) Ltd
P.O. Box 906, Florida Hills, 1716, South Africa
Tel: +27 11 474 1668 • Fax: +27 11 474 1670
www.healthandhygiene.co.za • www.f10products.co.za

