

Vancouver Island Cage Bird Society

Building an Auction Bird Cage

All birds that are put in the auction are required to be housed in cages suitable to them. Many years ago, most of the birds that were auctioned arrived in show cages. After they were auctioned, they were transferred to shipping boxes for the new owners to take them home. All of the moving and shifting of cages created a lot of wear and tear on show cages, not to mention the added stress on the birds of being transferred from one cage to another.

Over the years we have seen a few innovative ideas where breeders have supplied their birds in small wooden boxes or in cardboard cages. The wooden cages can be a bit costly to construct, but the cardboard ones seem to have gained popularity over the years. The advantages of the cardboard cages are quite obvious. Once the birds are placed in them they don't need to be transferred again so they can enjoy somewhat reduced stress, show cages don't need to undergo all the wear and tear, and the cardboard cages are simply discarded once the birds are safely home.

Anyone who is purchasing a bird at the auction would like to see what they are buying before they begin bidding, in some cases this has been a challenge, because the cardboard cages that the birds are housed in have such a small opening in the front it is almost impossible to see the bird inside.

If you are putting birds in the auction, we do appreciate having them in cardboard cages for reasons outlined above. There are some simple things that you can do when constructing these cages that will give the birds more light, more room, are easier to construct, and potential bidders can easily see the birds that are inside.

First of all, remember that any cardboard cage should be AT LEAST the same size as a show cage for the bird you are putting in it, slightly bigger is even better. Birds that are put in cages that are too small, does not add to the value of a bird because the buyers cannot see the bird or feels that it is in a poorly cage. You also risk having the bird and cage turned away at the door if it is deemed to be in a cage that is too small or unsuitable. It should be remembered that all birds are required to be housed in suitable and humane cages, this is a prerequisite of the V.I.C.B.S. as well as the S.P.C.A.

What you will need to make these cages are cardboard boxes of suitable size for the birds you will be putting in them. Any cardboard box approximately 12" high, 12" wide and 8" deep should be used as a minimum requirement. Shoe boxes are not suitable.

You will also need some wire mesh. (half by half wire mesh in a 18 or 19 gauge is probably the easiest to work with. The boxes you get will probably all be of different sizes, so this wire mesh will suit most of them) You will need some twist-ties, something to make holes in the cardboard like a medium sized nail and a utility knife (to make the access door in the side).

Once you have the cardboard boxes that you need, the first thing to do is to cut away one side so that it looks something like a show cage, see figure #2. Once this is done, you may want to make the box a bit sturdier by using a couple of the twist-ties to secure the back flaps. (Or they could be hot or cold glued, or stapled together).

Next, you will want to make holes around the perimeter of the opening. These will be used to fasten the wire to the cardboard box. You will not have to make too many holes in this cardboard, if you are using a box for canaries, budgies or cockatiels for example three holes per side should be sufficient.

Vancouver Island Cage Bird Society

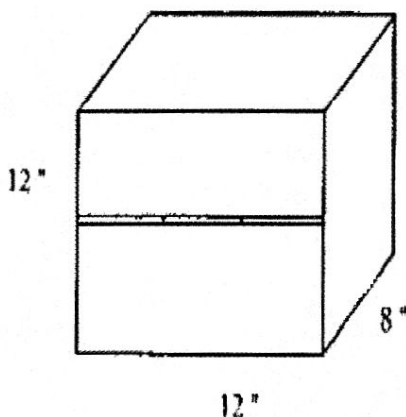
Next, you will want to make holes around the perimeter of the opening. These will be used to fasten the wire to the cardboard box. You will not have to make too many holes in this cardboard, if you are using a box for canaries, budgies or cockatiels for example three holes per side should be sufficient.

Now, you will need to cut the wire mesh so that it will fit over the front of the box that you have cut away. Cardboard is quite forgiving so fastening the wire with the twist-ties should be quite easy. In order to get access to the inside of the box, you will need to cut an access door in the side.

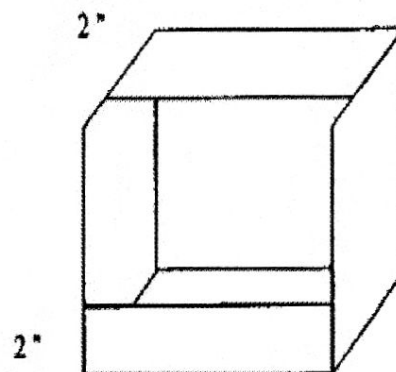
Once the wire mesh is secured, the access door in the side has been cut you will need to make a hole in the access door and in the box in order to run a twist tie through this to keep the bird in. Perches for the box can be done a couple of ways, if you have some doweling around it can be cut to length and stapled to the box front and back or you can use something like a tree branch, as long as what you use is suitable perching material for the bird. REMEMBER ... you will probably want to position the perches in the lower 1/4 or lower 1/3 of the box; if the perches are too high up it is difficult to view the birds.

Next you will need to attach a drinker to the cage, particularly if you are housing finches or canaries. One of the best ideas I have seen for this is to use double sided tape and one of the eggcups that form a Styrofoam egg-carton. (Twist-ties can also be used to fasten the drinker to the side)

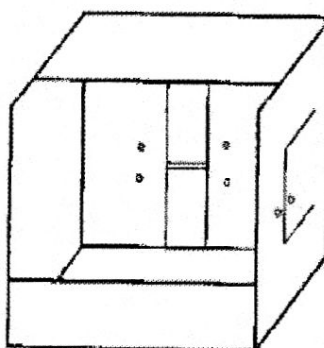
Once the cage is completed, all that needs to be done now is place the seed on the floor (it is best to fill the drinker after the bird is at the auction). Once the bird is inside the cage it can be fastened with a twist-tie to keep the door closed and you and your birds will be in great shape for the auction.



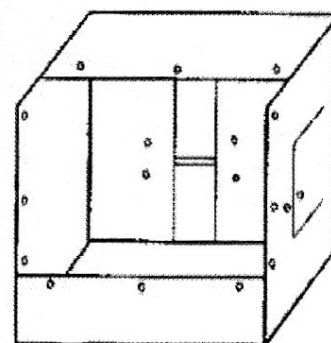
Start with a cardboard box about this size



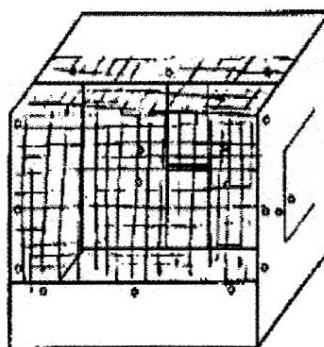
Cut away the front to look like this



Secure the back with twist-ties or glue
Cut the access door in the side and make holes



Make small holes around the perimeter to attach the wire mesh using twist-ties



Attach wire mesh and install perch and drinker

Items placed for sale in the Auction must have the description written on by the owner.

The Auction committee will only be responsible for consigning numbers.