HOW TO KEEP YOUR BIRDS FROM BEING STOLEN

by Ray Brode

It seems that every bird meeting I attend I hear of someone losing their birds to thievery. This need not occur if the proper precautions are taken. With all the new problems we aviculturists are having with the various laws and regulations we do not need added worries. This thievery is something we can control. With the experience I have had in the security and alarm business, I will tell you what you can do to safeguard your birds.

Most important is to be very careful who you invite over, or let in, to see your birds. Eight out of ten times when birds are stolen, it was by someone who knew the set up. If they did not do the stealing, it was someone else they informed about the layout.

Most bird robberies occur during the day and if you plan to leave home it is wise to notify the neighbors you know will be at home, such as housewives, retired, or elderly people. They are the most observant.

Put locks on aviary doors. If possible use heavier gauge wire screening on the outer areas of the aviaries. Many people I know have aviaries enclosed in a fenced-in area as an added precaution, with only one or two entrances. A dog is a good deterrent, especially one that will bark when a stranger appears and is not too eager to make friends with anyone.

The most worthy and effective precaution, without a doubt, is a good burglar alarm. In most cases it may cost you the price of what one of your birds is worth. One thing a burglar will not cope with is to be detected. When a loud bell or horn, or flashing light goes off, he will immediately disappear. Security technology has advanced to such a high degree that almost any situation can be handled.

At the time of this writing I can honestly tell you that of forty four aviaries and seventeen pet stores that have alarm systems installed, NOT ONE has lost so much as one bird to a break-in.

Before the installation of a burglar alarm, some of the stores were burglarized as many as three times, some twice, some of them were never robbed and wanted to make sure they never would be, especially as their bird collections increased in size and value. Every now and then I see ads in the paper or bird magazines where people offer a reward for the return of their stolen birds. Chances are nil of their ever seeing those birds again. In many cases where the thief or thieves were apprehended, they have not gone to jail, but were put on probation. I doubt seriously if that stops their thievery. I also find in many cases when the stolen birds are reported to the authorities, the theft is not taken very seriously.

I have been asked to come up with some recommendations to help people prevent having birds stolen. I hope this article helps. In the future I will write and describe how the break-ins actually occur, such as the areas, the times of day, the means of entry, damage to aviary and all other information involved.

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