



ORNITHO

info



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Combating the red mite efficiently

(*Dermanyssus gallinae*) ————— Dr. K. Jacobs



Adult red mite (*Dermanyssus gallinae*)

The red mite is a persistent problem, which will confront almost every bird fancier once.

The red mite is a parasite that lives off a wide range of wild and domesticated birds (primarily cage birds, pigeons and poultry). They do not live on the animals but only go onto their host to suck blood. They find potential hosts (sources of heat) with heat sensors. They can identify specific scents of bird or poultry with their olfactory organ.

The adult red mite is a relative large mite (0.75-1 mm) that can be seen easily with the naked eye. The colour usually varies from grey/white to black. They usually leave their shelter (dark nooks and crannies) to hunt for a blood feed during the night. The mite stays on the bird for 30 to 60 minutes and then returns to its shelter. Once satiated with blood it is light to darker red. The red mite is then able to reproduce and lays about seven eggs. The eggs develop into larvae and then into a nymph. The mite reaches adulthood at 7 days. Due to their short reproductive cycle a red mite population may double every 6 days. In the absence of blood the red mite can survive 8 to 9 months.

Red mites make animals restless and may cause their plumage to suffer. The birds sometimes leave the nest resulting in inconstant sitting and mortality in the egg. Cases of severe infestation result in anaemia and the birds become listless. Young birds (especially nesting chicks) may die, adult birds lose weight quickly. In addition the red mite is often seen as a carrier of all kinds of diseases (e.g. Salmonella, E. coli, etc.).

Bird fanciers often do not notice the emerging presence of red mites. Their eyes are only opened once their accommodation is overrun with mites and numerous victims have already fallen. Regular checks for the presence of red mites (and



Prestige

OROPHARMA

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other ectoparasites) are essentially to allow fast intervention. This check must be thorough. Rub your finger under perches and the edges of nests and then check whether any red pigment stays on your finger. Placing double-sided adhesive tape as an indicator on the outside of cages and nesting areas is an excellent aid: if red mite is present a few will quickly be caught on the sticky tape.

Combating red mite is not easy. Not only because the mites' shelters are hard to reach. Birdcages must always be cleaned thoroughly before being repopulated. However the majority of bird breeders do not have enough space to leave some parts of their bird accommodation empty for long periods of time and to thoroughly disinfect them. Primarily because the bird mite is most strongly present in hot periods (summer), which is also the time in which the majority of (young) birds are present and all the space has to be used optimally.

In recent years pesticides have become increasingly more prohibited as they have proved harmful to man and/or animal. In addition the bird mite has been shown to have developed an increased resistance to the various existing agents. A method or agent must be found for combating bird mites that only kills the mites and is safe for other life forms (men, birds, mammals) without resulting in resistance.

Mite-Killer (Oropharma) is based on silicates. These silicates are 3-9 µm in size and have a high absorbent capacity for oils and fats. The mite crawls over the silicate particles and these end up between its joints resulting

in decreased movement. The product damages the outer layer of skin and the hard wax layer of the mites, which results in desiccation and death. The spray has been developed to permeate deep into the shelters of the red mites. It is a physical method to combat the ectoparasites without any risk of the development of resistance and entirely safe to the bird.

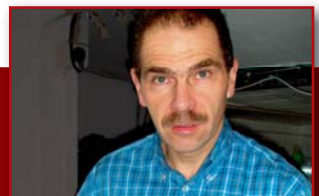


Mite-Killer is easy to use. After cleaning the accommodation thoroughly the Mite Killer is sprayed in all corners, cracks and crannies where red and other mites, lice, etc. may be present (on perches, nesting boxes, the bottom of nesting shells, etc.). The product is left behind as a thin white layer. It will remain effective as long as this is not covered with dust or any other dirt. The birds can also immediately be put back in the cages.



Marcel Mertens, Tongeren (B)

In the spotlight



Martin Dekkers, Rotem (B)

Breeder of:

Australian parakeets, Amazons and cockatoos

Budgerigars

His favourites:

- Prestige Premium Australian Parrot Loro Parque Mix
- Prestige Premium Amazone Parrot Loro Parque Mix
- Orlux Gold Patée Big Parakeet & Parrot
- Orlux Tropical Patée Premium
- Nutribird A19 H.E.

- Prestige Premium Budgies Super Breeder & Pro Feather
- Prestige Budgies Jo Mannes Euro Champ
- Orlux Eggfood dry Parakeets

Blattner seed mixes in new packaging

Dr. P. Ghysels



Matthias Blattner

The German **Matthias Blattner** has been breeding all kinds of siskins and finches for over 40 years. He uses these years of experience as a manufacturer of birdseed mixtures. He was able to expand his knowledge through contacts with prominent national and international breeders. This allowed him to compose special blends that enjoy great renown throughout Europe.

Each mixture has many different components, selected per type of bird and with a balanced composition in relation to their nutritional value and digestibility. By using special types of seeds, blends are created that allow the birds to find their natural food.

In the **'Siskin 1A'** mixture these are primarily smaller types of seeds, like larch seed, birch seed,

chicory seed and fine grass seed. The **'Goldfinch'** mixture naturally includes a generous portion of thistle seed. The **'Bullfinch 1'** blend is already a lot coarser in composition including pine seed, cucumber seed, German teasle seed and safflower. For the composition of the **'Grosbeak III'** mixture larger elements are primarily used, like coarse Aleppo pine seed, German teasle seed, spinach seed, Sudanese grass seed (the largest type) and dried ash berries.

All the mixtures can be used as a main food or may be supplemented to choice with other seed blends. In this way one can also compose a very good mixture for related types of birds.

The **'Original Blattner'** mixtures have been a highly appreciated speciality within the Versele-Laga range for 10 years. In the last few months the small packs (4 kg) have been given a new look. A paper bag was chosen with a transparent window so that the seeds can still 'breathe' and the composition and quality of the blends can be viewed from outside. The small packs of Prestige European Finches Breeding without Rapeseed 5 kg, Prestige Siskins Extra 3.5kg and Prestige Wild seeds 3.5kg were adapted in the same way.



Hooded siskin



Stress on the liver during the moult

Dr. K. Jacobs

A bird has high energy and protein requirements during the moult. Numerous enzymatic and biochemical reactions are needed to transform the nutrients

absorbed into suitable building blocks for the organism. Many of these metabolic processes take place in the liver, the chemical factory in the body. This can result in severe stress on the liver and liver problems are consequently also common in cage and aviary birds.

If some nutrients are not available in the diet or if the metabolism cannot fill the need in time, this may result, amongst other things, in poor quality of the plumage. In addition some bird species are given colorants, which mean an additional stress on the liver. Smooth processing of these colorants

in the liver is essential for the right colouring and good health of the bird.

Young birds with a liver that is not fully grown have to endure particularly hard times during the moult and it is certainly important to administer a moult and liver supporting supplement. **Avi-Chol** (Oropharma) provides the essential elements for a smooth moult and in support of the highly stressed liver. The active ingredients of Avi-Chol are methionine, choline, biotin, vitamin B12 and sorbitol.

- **Methionine** is a sulphurous amino acid that is important for a lot of metabolic processes. Amongst others it helps to prevent the fatty degeneration of the liver. Methionine is also the main component in keratin, the material used to produce feathers. Cysteine is made from methionine with the help of vitamin B12. Cysteine is the second most important building block of keratin. A deficiency of methionine during the moult results in poor plumage.
- The vitamin **choline** plays a role in processing fats in the liver and in transporting fatty acids from the liver. Sufficient choline is consequently essential to prevent the fatty degeneration of the liver.
- **Biotin**, a B-vitamin, plays an important role in the metabolism of fat and carbohydrates. Furthermore

biotin is important for the growth and repair of skin and plumage.

- **Vitamin B12** is extremely important in a bird's body. It helps to convert essential amino acids into suitable building blocks for a perfect production of the body's own proteins (e.g. keratin).
- **Sorbitol** reduces the body fat and limits the fatty degeneration of the liver.

Maximum support of the metabolism is achieved by giving Avi-Chol regularly during the liver stressing periods (e.g. the moult, when administering colorants, after giving medication, etc.). Avi-Chol can be added both to the egg food or dissolved in the drinking water. The bird's metabolism will run more efficiently as a result and the waste materials present will be removed more easily. As a result the bird will develop and retain a healthy and glossy plumage.



New CANARY CONDITIONER

The traditional English way of feeding birds (both canaries and budgerigars) is often based on the use of Conditioners. These are special, very rich seed blends that are added to the ration in relation to the seasons. Generally a very modest mixture is then given as a basic feed but as the breeding season comes closer an increased quantity of Conditioner is added. In the breeding season the Conditioner may be 25-30% of the seed ration.

The Canary Conditioner is also highly suited as a more varied substitute of the pure rapeseed that is supplemented to singing canaries.

Canary Conditioner	Budgie Conditioner		
Rapeseed	50%	Panicum yellow	27%
Linseed	20%	Peeled oats	27%
Wild seeds	8%	Japanese millet	17%
Red millet	5%	Yellow millet	10%
Hempseed	5%	Red millet	8%
Japanese millet	5%	Rapeseed	5%
Niger seed	5%	Niger seed	3%
Sesame seed	2%	Linseed	2%
		Canary seed	1%