

## WATER: By Fran Andersen, At Feather's End Aviary

### WATER

One thing that many of us do not spend much time thinking about is water. How pure or clean is the water we give our birds. Now while we could drive ourselves nuts trying to think of everything it is worthwhile to consider the quality of the water particularly if you are having a problem in your flock.

What is the conditions of your pipes? Are they plastic or copper? How long is the line? It is always a good idea to run your water for several minutes before using it to be sure that all water that has been standing in the pipes has been cleared. If you live in a town or city is your water fluoridated or chlorinated? Neither of these additives are safe for your pet.

Do you get water from a hose? Hoses can frequently be a source of pseudomonas infections. Other infections our birds can get from their water (not including their making their own primordial soup) include giardia and cryptosporidium.

So what type of water to offer? Well we all make the best choice available to us.

The following is a list of various type of water that are available.

1. selective filtration: This removes undesirable components but not minerals from the water.
2. reverse-osmosis: This type of water purifications system that forces water under pressure thru a series of filters to remove a number of impurities and minerals. Depending on the system it may or may not kill microbes.
3. tap water: Is only as good as the source it comes from. It may contain fluoride, dissolved minerals, bacteria, algae, protozoa, virus particles, or other harmful agents. It is best to have your tap water tested before giving it to your birds.
4. bottled water: This water may come from one of several sources that has been purified and then minerals are added afterwards. It is normally safe for birds. However the label should be read to be sure of the source of the bottling.
5. natural spring water: normally this is water that comes from an underground source that is filtered or treated to remove, bacteria, algae, protozoa and particulate matter. This is a safe choice for drinking water for your birds.
6. distilled: this is pure water: It is produced thru a steam processing and then recaptured and is free of dissolved minerals. This water is considered an acid (pH less than 7) and can be dangerous if given for any length of time as it will pull minerals from the body.
7. filters containing carbon: These remove chemicals such as lead, benzene, PCBs odors and more from the water. It does not remove bacteria.