

Mixed Species Aviaries are enclosures in which more than one species of bird lives. There are many benefits to this type of arrangement but also some drawbacks. Careful planning needs to be done to ensure a successful and happy mixture of birds. Peaceful coexistence is the ultimate goal.

Benefits include:

- a.) birds can interact with other species as they would do naturally in the wild.
- b.) bird species can be mixed so that all areas of the flight is used, some on the ground, some flying in open spaces, some flitting in bushes, etc.
- c.) a wild variety of colors, sizes and shapes please the human eye.
- d.) usually able to have more numbers of birds in a flight.
- e.) more than one species can be bred in the same enclosure with careful planning.

Drawbacks include:

- a.) careful research needs to be done on each species involved before putting them together so as to have a good idea as to how the species will interact. For example, hornbills will eat smaller birds. (And remember individual birds and each situation is different, what may work for one bird fancier may not work for you, so be flexible in your plans and ready to revise.)
- b.) more attention needs to be given to the dynamics of the inhabitants.
- c.) breeding may be hampered and often only the biggest species in the enclosure are successful. For example, turacos' normal movements often destroy smaller birds' nests by accident.
- d.) usually flights need to be larger. The larger the flight, the more success you will have.

Things to Think About:

- a.) will the different species eat or harass each other?
- b.) where do the different species spend most of their time and where do they sleep? Will there be conflicts?
- c.) how do the different species' behaviors change when in breeding condition? Will there be conflicts?
- d.) will there be predation of chicks with this species mixture?
- e.) Ground birds: is there room for them to walk around normally or will they be getting feces dropped on them constantly? They have less area to use than the other birds, so is there enough territory if you plan to mix more than one species that uses the ground? Where will they sleep? (Remember many birds use the ground in the day but roost in the trees at night. Will that cause conflicts?)