



Aviary Bitters?

This article is going to the birds!

A friend of mine was starting to feel somewhat down in the dumps during the recent Covid 19 pandemic as he was forced to work from home. He couldn't go out with his friends for drinks or dinner after work and he was starting to become depressed. He thought it would be a great idea to get a pet, but the apartment complex management wouldn't allow dogs or cats, and so he settled on a talking parakeet.

All was well until he got the parakeet home and the bird started to curse up a storm. There was a constant tirade of terrible, filthy language for days and my friend tried everything to shut the bird up, but nothing worked. Finally, my friend threatened the bird, saying that if he didn't shut up, he was going to put him in the freezer for ten minutes every time he heard a swear word come out of his tiny beak. Sure enough, the bird let loose with a lengthy oration of the worst cursing you ever heard and my friend, in anger and frustration, grabbed the bird, shoved him in his freezer and slammed the door. He heard the cursing continue from within the freezer for at least a few more minutes, but then, total silence.

Thinking he had done the bird in, my friend opened the freezer only to see the bird stuttering and shivering. The bird quietly walked out and looked at his owner and said, "I am extremely sorry for my obscene language. I am completely embarrassed and I have seen the error of my ways, I will never curse again. Now, may I ask what that turkey in there did?"

You might be asking yourself right about now, what in the world does this have to do with collecting bitters bottles. After all, this is supposed to be the bitters column. Well, there is a connection, and I think you may even agree that this article will showcase a true bitters rarity.

The bottle for examination today is none other than what is described by Ring/Ham as:

B 100 L . . . Bird Bitters

Phila. Bird Food Co. 400 N. 3rd Street

4 3/4 X 1 1/2 X 3/4

Rectangular, Clear, ABM

Ring/Ham, in their description, next cite the text found on the label. While it is mostly true to the actual label, there are some deviations. The label found on the actual bottle reads:

PHILA. BIRD FOOD CO'S

BIRD BITTERS

ALCOHOL 26 %

20 MINIMS ETHER

(Derivative of Alcohol)

In each Fluidounce.

**A specific for the restoration of song.
An excellent remedy for nearly all the
diseases of Cage Birds.**

**Plain common sense description of the
symptoms of diseases of cage birds and**



Bird Bitters original box

BIRD MANNA

One side of the
two-sided wrapper
advertising Bird Manna.



A positive necessity to all Seed-eating Cage Birds

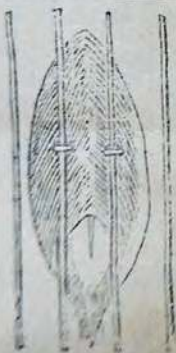
Sold by Druggists
or will be sent by
mail on receipt of
15 cents.

ASK FOR FREE BIRD BOOK

This preparation has been known for the last century among the Canary Breeders of the Harz Mountains, in Germany, and is used by them as a specific for restoring the song, and as a remedy for nearly all the diseases of canaries.

It keeps Cage Birds in constant song, improves the plumage and prevents disease. It should be kept within their reach all the time, and is especially beneficial during the moulting and breeding seasons.

It is put up in little metal caps, which fasten to the wires of the cage. One cake will last a bird several months.



PATENT CUTTLE BONE AND HOLDER



Every owner of a bird knows what a troublesome thing a Cuttle Bone is to keep between the wires of a cage, and that the Holders generally sold at Bird stores are very unsatisfactory arrangements.

The combined Cuttle Bone and Holder shown in the engraving is the simplest and the same time the neatest and best method of attaching a cuttle bone to a cage. It is sold by all first class druggists, for 10 cents, for a large selected bone and holder, or will be sent by mail on receipt of 12 cents in stamps.

THE PHILADELPHIA BIRD FOOD CO.
400 N. 3rd St., Philadelphia, Pa



BITTERS bottles

By Robert Strickhart

the treatment necessary for each, are wrapped around each bottle.

Fifteen drops of bird Bitters put daily in the drinking water will carry birds through the moulting season without loss of song.

PRICE, 25 CENTS

32-page Bird Book mailed

free by the

PHILA. BIRD FOOD CO.

400 N. 3rd St.

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

x 3/4 FLUID OZ.

The example I have recently obtained is fully labeled, has an intact advertisement/wrapper paper, and original box with very cool graphics which I hope my pictures do justice to. On top of all that, the bottle still contains the remnants of what I assume to be the original product. Looks like there will be a hot time in the cage for Budgie tonight!

The bottle was purchased from Dave Beeler, aka Digger Dave, with whom I have happily dealt with over the years. Dave seems to always come up with the coolest things, the unusual, and when I asked him about this find, he replied:

“Hi, Bob, yes, things have sure gone to the birds haven’t they?

Thanks for buying my BIRD BITTERS bottle. I bought it at Shupps Grove bottle show in Pennsylvania. I just thought it was too cool to let pass. I didn’t really make much money on it, but just like to pass along interesting things when I find them.

Your buddy and fellow collector,

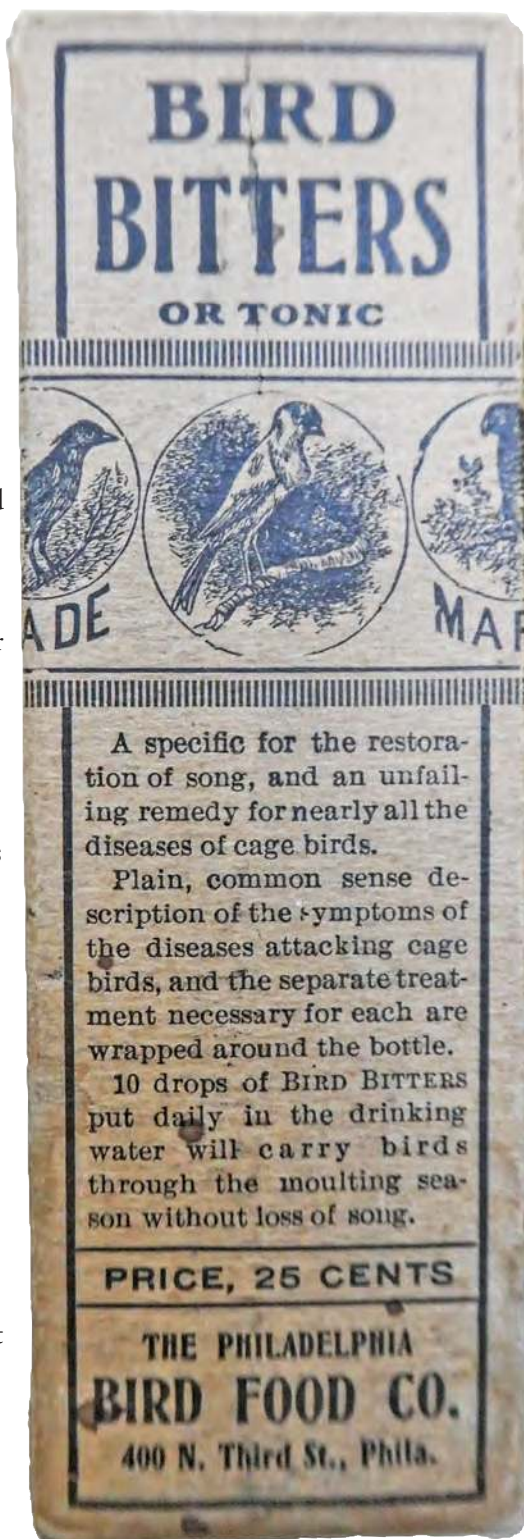
Digger Dave Beeler”

I know you’ve heard me say this before, but it’s worth repeating. Dave is another example of the “bottle family” that I often speak about. It’s not about the money, it’s about the enjoyment of collecting and fellow collectors. Thanks to Dave, I have found another cool bitters bottle and now I can share it with you all. Thank you, Dave, you are truly appreciated.

The label’s claims have the same flavor as the claims made by bitters manufacturers for humans. However, I think you’ll agree it’s sort of funny, if not downright hilarious, that 15 drops a day of this compound (which is 26 percent alcohol) is guaranteed to keep the bird singing its head off while his feathers are falling off. I get this vision of the old-time cartoons where after some explosion or other disaster, Foghorn Leghorn, that rooster with a southern twang, is singing an opera solo sort of buck naked with all his feathers lying in a pile all around his feet, but, with a bottle of good old Bird Bitters sticking out of his back pocket.

The bottle can be traced back to the 1890s, as it showed up in an 1894 drug catalog with a notation identifying exportation to the Canadian province of Quebec in 1897. The graphics on the box are like the type you would expect of that era and, I think you’ll agree, are quite pleasing. The back of the box repeats the information found on the bottle’s label with the exception that 10 (not 15) drops should be administered to carry the bird through moulting. Perhaps they rethought their dosage after a few birds ended up in B.A. (Birds Anonymous).

The wrapper is two-sided, one side advertising Bird Manna, the company’s bird seed which will keep your canary or caged bird in constant song, improve their plumage and prevent disease. The



The back of the Bird Bitters box.

Diseases of Cage Birds.

Nearly all the diseases to which cage birds are subject, originate, in the first place, either from the birds being hung in a draught or the use of inferior seed or prepared food. An unlimited allowance of all kinds of delicacies, such as pastry, sugar, etc., is another cause of many diseases. Heavy seed alone or mixed with other seed will bring on many diseases. If fed in canaries for any length of time.

Too much stress cannot be laid upon the careful selection of seed and prepared food, and we advise all who have birds to use nothing but that put up by **THE PHILADELPHIA BIRD FOOD CO.**, which is absolutely the best and purest on the market, and can be procured at any drug store.

The treatment given below for the relief of different diseases is that suitable for a canary or bird of similar size. Larger doses are required for larger birds, and a diminished quantity for smaller birds.

It is advisable in connection with **BIRD BITTERS** to put a cake of **BIRD MANNA** (see other side) in the cage, so that the bird can peck at it. It will be found highly beneficial, and if kept constantly within reach of your pet, it will prevent disease and restore the bird.

On the day on which the medicine is administered, do not give the bird a bath.

Catarrh or Cold.—**SYMPTOMS:** ruffling of feathers, nostrils stopped up, tongue hardened by inflammation, beak often open and yellow at base. This is caused by hanging the cage in a draught of air, or in a very hot room, or one that is hot during the day and cold at night. To effect a cure, remove the cage to a place where none of the above causes exist; feed in addition to the regular seed, a paste of hard-boiled egg and bread dust, and well seasoned with the Philadelphia Bird Food Co's Moulting Pepper; put 10 drops of the P. B. F. Co's Bird Bitters in the drinking water every other day.

Chronic Sneezing is caused by feeding on dusty seed or exposure to draught. Open the nostrils with a very fine feather dipped in salt water, give clean seed and put 10 drops of the Philadelphia Bird Food Co's Bird Bitters in the drinking water every other day.

Asthma or Hard Breathing.—**SYMPTOMS:** Short breath, opening of beak as if to gasp for air, and when frightened keeping it open for a long time, and puffing out the feathers until almost round. The principal cause for this disease is a neglected cold, or the use of dusty, musty or rancid seed. For this disease, so common among cage birds, the Philadelphia Bird Food Co's Bird Bitters is the only unfailing remedy. To effect a cure keep the bird warm and feed solely on our Mixed Seed, and every other day give a paste made of Bird Bitters poured on a bit of stale bread, and highly seasoned with our Moulting Pepper. The day on which the paste is not given put 10 drops of the Philadelphia Bird Food Co's Bird Bitters in the drinking water. The paste must be made fresh every time it is given.

Diarrhoea is usually caused by eating too much green food or bad seed. Feed nothing but Selected Sicily Canary Seed, and stir some powdered chalk among the seed. Give a few drops of the Philadelphia Bird Food Co's Bird Bitters in the drinking water daily as a tonic.

Costiveness is made known by constant and unsuccessful efforts of the bird to relieve itself. Give plenty of green food, such as chickweed, water-cress, lettuce, etc. Put a drop or two of castor oil in the drinking water, and the bird in dipping its bill, must swallow some of the oil. Put a few drops of our Bird Bitters in the drinking water daily as a tonic.

Fits and Epilepsy.—Plunge the bird in ice water which will usually restore consciousness. Feed soaked, best quality rape seed and unsoaked millet seed only. A few drops of our Bird Bitters in the drinking water every other day will effectually relieve the trouble.

Loss of Appetite.—Give a few grains of hemp seed and some maw seed, or Bird Manna, and a few drops of our Bird Bitters for a few days in the drinking water.

Loss of Song.—If the bird is otherwise healthy, keep a cake of Bird Manna within easy reach, and put a few drops of the Bird Bitters in the drinking water every third day. If he has ceased singing from any of the causes mentioned above, treat as directed for the disease to which his symptoms correspond.

Loss of Voice.—This is usually caused by a bird singing too much, or by a cold. Put a few drops of the Philadelphia Bird Food Co's Bird Bitters in the drinking water every other day, and he will soon commence warbling.

Shedding Feathers out of Season.—Remove the cage to a warm room, free from all draughts, and give a few drops of the Bird Bitters in the drinking water every other day.

Swollen and Sore Limbs should be bathed with diluted tincture of arnica, and a few drops of our Bird Bitters put daily in the drinking water.

Scaly Legs can be cured by rubbing repeatedly with Mexican Salve, and administering a few drops of the Bird Bitters daily in the drinking water.

Sore and Swollen Feet are usually caused by filthy cage and perches, or else the latter are too small in diameter. Remove the cause, bathe with diluted arnica, and give a few drops of the Bird Bitters in the drinking water.

Bare Places on the Head can be cured by rubbing with a very minute quantity of Mexican Salve, and giving daily a few drops of the Philadelphia Bird Food Co's Bird Bitters to tone up the system.

Red Mites are easily gotten rid of by using the Mite Exterminator, made by The Philadelphia Bird Food Co. The powder is also used as a preventive by enclosing a teaspoonful in a cage to keep and suspending it from the top of the cage. Fumigate by burning a teaspoonful of the Mite Exterminator in the cage, wrapping a cloth around it to keep the fumes from escaping.

THE PHILADELPHIA BIRD FOOD CO.

400 NORTH THIRD STREET,

PHILADELPHIA, PA.