

Avoiding budgie heat distress.

An interview with Ray Slade.

By [Ann Jones](#) - ABC - (Mornings Presenter)

The way that Ray Slade designed his aviary means that his budgies stay four or five degrees cooler. Ray is a member of Colac club. Prior to moving to Victoria Ray lived in South Australia where this interview took place.

Ray Slade is a bird enthusiast who takes the heat very seriously.

You would too if you had show budgies that have been in the National Championships and are worth a pretty penny.

Recently, Ray got the opportunity to build his dream bird aviary designed with temperature in mind.

The first thing you notice when approaching the aviary is that half of the front is closed in and the top half is a box that protrudes out into the backyard by about a foot. We call this a loft.

Within that box are eucalyptus branches intertwined to create a nice little environment for the budgies to sit when the main event happens.



And in this case, the main event is the sprinkler system.

By rigging up some sprays across the top of the mesh box, Ray Slade turns the whole front of the aviary into an evaporative cooler.

Within seconds of the sprays coming on, the budgies are out and into it, preening and chattering happily.

It's about four or five degrees cooler inside the aviary than out.

The construction itself features walls of cool room panel which insulate against the heat and the cold, and whirly birds on the roof for airflow.

While this set up is very special and he does have about 270 birds in it, Ray says that the same concepts can be used to make sure your pets stay cool during hot weather.



"Fresh water is very important," he says, "water stays cool by evaporation, so if you use open dishes it will stay cool longer."

The same goes for all pets, because your pet will actually jump in to the water to cool off if they need to.



Just like Ray has, make sure your pet has shade and cool airflow too.

"Just leave them alone, don't disturb them on a hot day [because] if you start flying them around and stressing them out, they will die very quickly."