

Best Friends Animal Society

Parrot Garden



Adoption Resource Guide

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**SAVE
THEM
ALL**

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Parrot Garden Stance on Captive Parrots

Parrots are naturally wild animals

Parrots in captivity are considered wild animals, unlike domesticated cats and dogs. Behaviors commonly seen in captive parrots reflect those natural behaviors from the wild. Captive parrots are often deemed noisy, messy, and destructive, where these behaviors are critical to survival in the wild.

Parrots are prey species and humans are predators

It is important that we modify our actions and behaviors to become less threatening to parrots. Even something as simple as mirroring a bird's body language can help establish a trusting, non-threatening relationship. Parrots are hard wired to only be comfortable and feel safe when surrounded by their flock. In the wild, a single bird has a decreased chance of survival. Some birds choose to associate only with other birds, while others allow humans to serve as their flock members.

Parrots are highly intelligent and sensitive creatures

Due to their high levels of intelligence, parrots require a stimulating environment with many opportunities to shred, forage, climb, and play. For many parrots, they need to be situated in an area of the house where they can feel included in the activity of the household. It is important to outnumber the positive interactions, like treats, dance parties, or showers, then negative, like forcing a behavior or toweling).

Parrots have the right to choose their people and behavior

We do not support forcing parrots to comply. Unless something is medically necessary, we request the cooperation of a bird, not demand it. We do not feel that a parrot's only worth comes from how well their talk, step up, or relate to humans. Birds who do not enjoy human contact deserve the same love, care, and quality of life. Parrots have a right to choose their adopters and their future home.

Breeding

Due to the human-like lifespans of parrots, there is a rising crisis of too many birds and not enough homes. Bird mills, like puppy mills, produce clutches of hand-raised babies without guaranteed homes.

Right to Responsible Care

Medical

As a prey species, they are also inclined to hide any signs of illness. It is critical to have annual check-ups with an avian certified veterinarian.

Diet

Parrots should have a diet based on pellets, fresh grains, vegetables, and limited nuts and fruits. All seed diets can lead to future health issues, such as liver or kidney failure, due to high fat and low nutrient values.

A Loving Home

Our goal is to find the best fit between our parrots and adopters so they can live out their life in a loving, forever home.

How long do parrots really live?

A lifetime commitment

Parrots in captivity have shown to have extremely long lifespans when properly cared for.

These long lifespans are a main contributing factor to the number of parrots surrendered to rescues around the country.

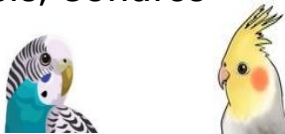
On average, parrots live in multiple homes in their lifetime.

Many parrots are waiting in rescues for forever homes. Advantages to adopting include prior training, matured personalities, and known traits.

When considering a pet parrot, it's important to consider the future and how a parrot might fit into it.

Any parrot adopted from Best Friends Parrot Garden can come back at any point in their life.

Parakeets, Cockatiels, Conures
15-20 years



Large Conures, Indian Ringnecks
20 - 30 years



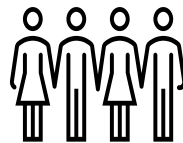
Amazons, African Greys
40 - 60 years



Cockatoos
45 - 65 years



Humans
73 years



Macaws
80 -100 years



Cage Setup Guide

Tips for creating appropriate and safe housing

A cage for a parrot serves as their home, safe space, and territory, so finding an appropriate cage for them is important. However, the options can be overwhelming and misleading, so here's some helpful tips to identify proper cages for your new parrot!

The ideal cage:

- Enclosed
- Bar spacing relative to the size of bird
- No Rust
- Stainless steel, ceramic powder coating, acrylic
- Space to climb
- Multiple, different textured perches
- Space for wings and tails

Suggested Brands: HQ, King's Avian Adventures, A&E, Prevue Hendryx

Many pet stores advertise small cage styles like this. This cage style functions more as a temporary carrier versus a permanent home. They are too small and malleable for a long-term solution.



Small Cage

24"x 22"x 61" Bar Spacing: 2/3"

Suitable for lovebirds, budgies, cockatiels, small conures.



Medium Cage

32"x 23"x 63" Bar Spacing: 2/3"

Suitable for large conures, Indian Ringnecks, small amazons, small African greys



Large Cage

36"x 28"x 65" Bar Spacing: 1"

Suitable for large amazons, large African greys, macaws, cockatoos



Perching

- Mix of soft and hard perches in various diameters to exercise foot position
- Natural wood, cotton rope, flat/ledge-like, swings, cement/sand
- Minimum of three perches
- Place perches near food and water bowls at an accessible height

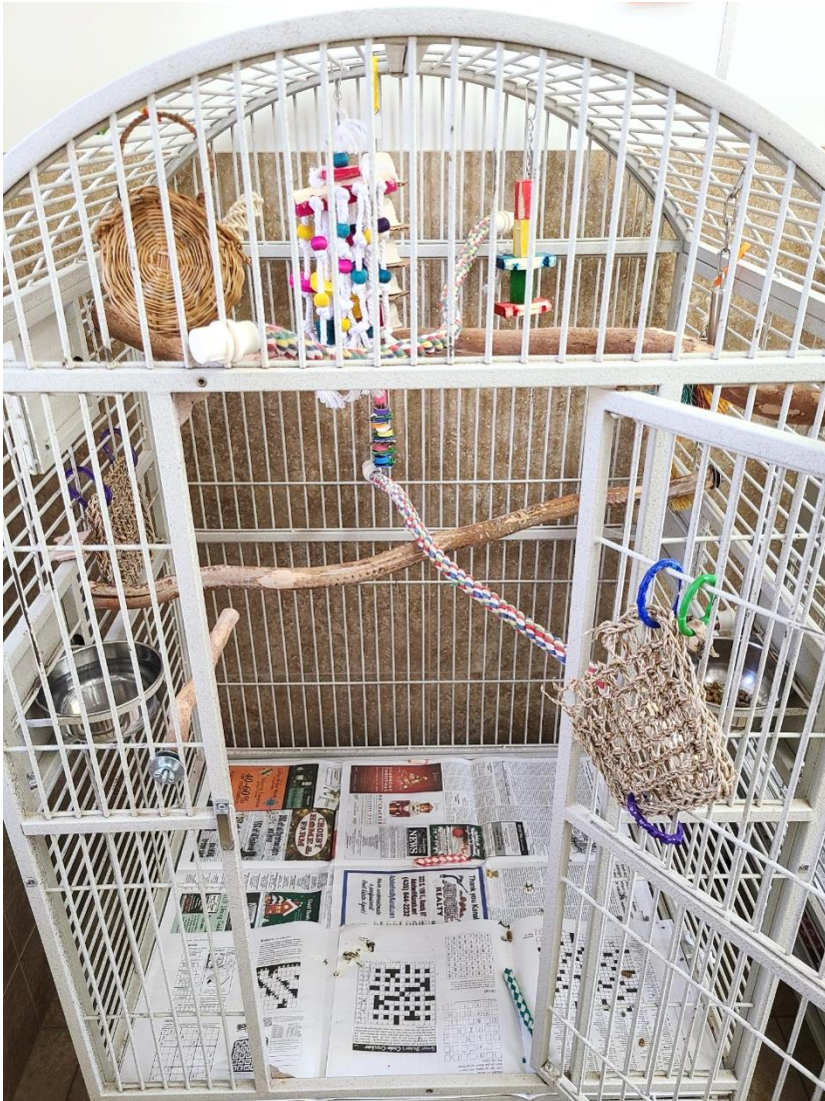


Location

- Avoid full sun or drafty area
- Natural light
- Either in populated areas or separated (depends on the bird's needs)
- Avoid near kitchen areas or close to doors
- Away from other animals, like dogs and cats

Other Cage Necessities

- Clean bowls for food and water
- Cage Liner (newspaper or paper towels)
- Toys (more info on pages 11-14)



Things to avoid

- Stimulating Breeding Behaviors:
 - Hidey hut
 - Dark corners
 - Excessive shredding material
 - More information on page 28
- Housing smaller species near larger species
- Too small of a cage for multiple birds

Diet Recommendations

How to provide a nutritional and healthy diet for your bird

Parrots should have a diet consisting of
70% high quality pellets & 30% fresh vegetables

Many foods marketed in pet stores for parrots are high in fat, sugar, and unnecessary ingredients.

Long term use of these unhealthy pellet mixes can contribute to poor health

Avoid any pellets containing peanuts, as these can be extremely dangerous for parrots

Healthy pellets mixes do not have added ingredients, such as nuts or colorings, and have a high nutritional content.

Example of a Healthy Pellet



Example of an Unhealthy Pellet



Parrots can have vegetables and whole grains every day!

Some examples include oats, corn, kale, peppers, dark leafy greens, squash, jalapenos, carrots, green beans, sweet potatoes, and quinoa flakes

Fruit and nuts should only be given as treats and in moderation due to high sugar and fat.

When training with food motivated birds, its best to use healthy rewards.

High value treats (such as nuts) are okay for foraging and training purposes if not in excess and the bird is in good health.

Parrot Garden uses the **chop** method to integrate veggies into our birds' diets

Check out how to make chop on pages 20-22

Small birds

Budgies, Cockatiels,
Small Conures

50% Mini Roudybush + 50%
Higgins Parakeet Seed

Mini Roudybush



50/50 Mini Roudybush
+ Parakeet Seed



Mini
Roudybush

Medium Birds

African Greys, Amazons,
Small Cockatoos,
Large Conures

Medium Roudybush
Harrisons (Adult Coarse)
Zupreem Naturals



Medium
Roudybush



Harrisons

Large Birds

Cockatoos
Macaws

Medium Roudybush
Harrisons (Adult Coarse)
Lafeber (Macaw/Cockatoo)
Zupreem Naturals



Zupreem Naturals



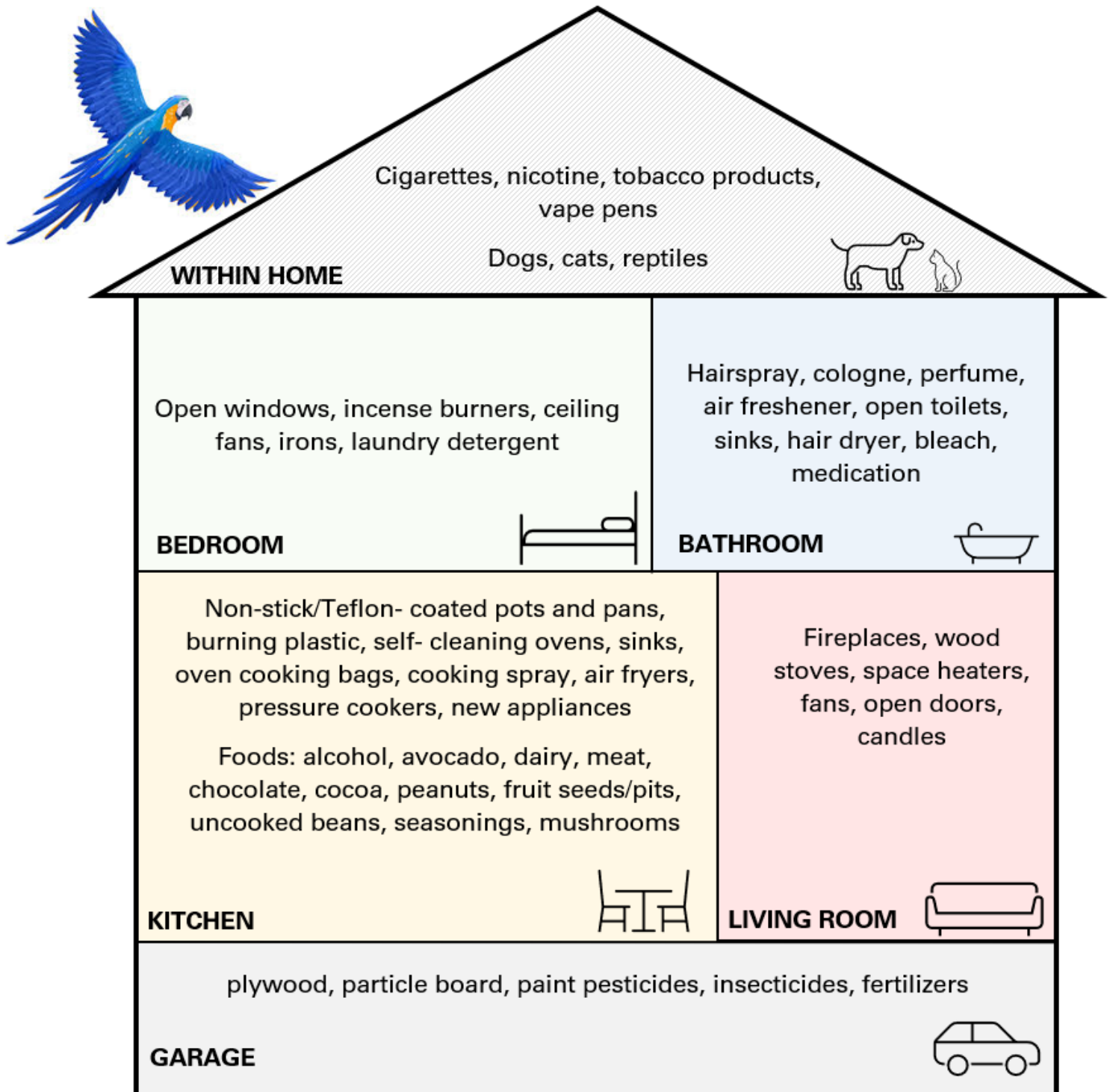
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Suggested links to
purchase in the
Additional Resource
Section

Page 39

Household Dangers

Common items that could affect the health of your parrot



Between sensitive respiratory systems, fragile bones, the ability to fly, and a ravenous curiosity, a home can be a dangerous place for a parrot.

Check out this graphic and see if any surprise you!

More Household Dangers Information on the next page and pages 23-26

Dangerous if they are ...

Ingested or Touched

Avocados
Chocolate/Cocoa
Uncooked Beans
Caffeine (coffee, non-herbal teas)
Garlic
Onions, Scallions, Shallot
Rhubarb
Fruit Pits
Peanuts
Mushrooms, Fungi
Dairy or Dairy Products
Alcohol
Fried Foods
Carbonated Drinks
Salted Nuts
Human Foods
Detergents (laundry, dish)
Wood or pieces
Metals: Zinc, Copper, Iron, Silver, Lead
Gun Powder or Residue
Nicotine (on hands or clothing)
Sunscreen
Essential Oils
Medications (OTC & Prescription)
Artist paint, pencils, or chalk
Crayons
Soil
Dog or cat saliva
Salmonella (reptiles)
Flea Products

Inhaled

Air Fresheners
Aerosols (Hairspray, Dry Shampoo)
Hair Dye
Nail Polish and remover (acetone)
Perfume
Heavily fragranced detergents, soaps, or fabric softener
Deodorants
Essential Oils
Potpourri, incense
Rubbing alcohol
Non-stick Clothing Irons
Mothballs
Candles
Super glue
Epoxy Glue
Furniture Polish
Drain Cleaner
Cleaning Products (Clorox, bleach, floor cleaner, wood cleaner, window cleaner)
Ammonia
Lighter fluid
Turpentine
Matches
Linoleum

Anywhere in the home

Teflon, PTFE, Air Fryers, Non-stick Cooking Sheets, Non-stick Pans
Oven Bags
Self-Cleaning Oven Setting
Burning plastic (overheated dishes, pot handles)
New appliances
Smoke (cigarettes, e cigarettes, tobacco, cannabis, firewood)
Paint
Propane or gas leaks
Carbon Monoxide
Anti-Freeze
Auto products
Chlorine
Pesticides/herbicides/insecticides/rodenticides/fertilizer
Garden sprays
Gasoline
Pressure Treated lumber (contains arsenic)

This is not an exhaustive list of dangers in the home.

Additional information can be found at www.plannedparrothood.com.

See page 23 for dangerous trees, plants, and flowers.

Call ASPCA Poison Control Hotline at 888-426-4435 for emergencies and seek medical attention from your vet immediately

The Essential Enrichment Guide



Need to Chew

Wood, paper, dixie cups, paper plates, cardboard, plastic toy pieces, paper bags



Need to Interact

Holding, dance parties, talking, appropriate petting, interactive toys

What is enrichment?

Parrots are still considered wild animals, so we need to find ways to substitute activities and mental stimulation that they would interact with in their natural habitat

Need to Preen

Showers or bath time
1-2 times per week
Over-preening can cause feather destruction

Need to Forage

In the wild, parrots spend 60% of their day looking for food.

Simple is okay!

Need to Use their Feet

Encourages exploration, motor reflexes, flexibility, and strength.

Need to Problem Solve

Puzzle toys, boxes, paper cups, piece of paper on their food dish

How to Integrate Enrichment at Home

Why is enrichment so important with parrots?

Parrots have an intelligence relative to a 3 to 5 year old humans!

In the wild, they must use their brains to forage for food, avoid predators, bond with their flock, reproduce, and raise their offspring. When living in captivity, we must provide different types of enrichment to keep their minds busy and healthy!

Without enrichment, parrots can develop health issues, boredom, plucking tendencies, and other negative behaviors.

An enriched life is a happy and healthy life!

Enrichment at Home Examples:

- Dance Parties
- Watching TV or listening to music
- Sitting by a window
- Showers
- Toys
- Playstands
- Food Puzzles
- Aviary Space
- Helping with chores (safe cleaners only)
- Time outside (in a bird-safe carrier or enclosed space)



Providing Safe Toys

Beak to Toy Ratio

A good rule of thumb is to keep the beak size relative to toy pieces to avoid choking or injury.

For example, giving a large bird a toy with many small pieces is not appropriate for a bird who likes to destroy wood and plastic toys.



Loops or Empty Chains

When using twine, try to tie knots as close to the toy piece as possible and avoid any open loops (pictured). This can prevent the bird from getting stuck or tangled.

Additionally, leave no more than ~8' of twine hanging.

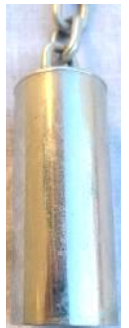
Empty chains also pose a potential threat of birds getting their feet or beak stuck. Avoid leaving any empty chains in cages or play areas.



Bells

Only use stainless steel bird safe bells. Most commercial bells break easy or have small gaps that a toe or beak can get stuck. The clapper is the most swallowed toy piece.

Never use bells made of copper, silver, zinc, or iron as they can cause metal toxicity.



Faulty C-Rings

If c-rings (the hook that many toys come with) is left open or unable to close, birds can catch beaks or feet, leading to injury. Replace c-rings as needed.



Bird Safe Toy Piece Ideas

- Paper Products
 - Plates/Cups
 - Newspaper
 - Lunch bags
 - Telephone Books
 - Packing Paper
 - Finger Traps
 - Coffee Filters
- Cardboard
 - No tape or sticker residue
- Whiffle Balls
- Recycled pieces from previous toys
- Natural fiber twine, like hemp
 - Untreated, no wax or coating
- Wood
 - Check out pages 24- 25 for a list of bird safe wood



Foraging Toy Examples

Tacos:

Take a paper plate and fold it in half like a taco. Fill it with a variety of stuffing. Punch holes around the edge and stitch it closed with twine. This can be hidden in the cage or hung somewhere challenging to get to.



Treat Balls

Use a paper cup or a piece of paper. Hide a treat, pellet, veggie, or a special toy in the middle and crumple the paper around to cover.

Can mix in paper balls without a treat



Use your imagination and create different toys to challenge your bird. Keep safety in mind when choosing your materials, and don't spend too much time on each toy because your bird will destroy it much faster than it takes to put together!

Medical Needs

What does medical care look like for a pet parrot?

Providing an Appropriate Veterinarian

Avian medicine is vastly different from cat, dog, or large animal medicine, so it is important to find a vet who can care for your parrot, preferably one with specialized training with birds.

The best-case scenario is to find a board- certified avian veterinarian. If there is not one nearby, try to find one who is experienced with birds.

Most veterinarians who regularly practice avian medicine, whether they are board certified or not, are members of the Association of Avian Veterinarians. There is a member directory on their website, www.aav.org, to find the closest one to you.

It is ideal to establish a baseline exam with your veterinarian and follow your vet's recommendations for wellness visits and diagnostic testing.

Basic Grooming Needs

Beak Trims

Parrots will naturally wear down their beaks, but some medical conditions, like liver disease, cause the beak to grow faster than it can naturally wear down. Not all parrots need beak trims, so ask your vet if this is necessary.

Nail Trims

Parrots require some length to their nails to grip perches, but their nails should not grow to points or start to curl

Wing Trims

If you choose to have your bird's wings trimmed, they do require regular maintenance. Remember, only the first five flight feathers should be trimmed: never all the wing feathers.

For more information on wing trimming, see the next page



Additional Medical Info

Pages 31-36

Identifying Illness in Parrots

Everybody Poops

Basic Bird First Aid

Feather Destruction &
Self- Mutilation

Sleep

- Aim for 8-10 hours per night
 - Provide a dark and quiet space.
 - Nightlight can help with night frights
 - Covering the cage
 - Can help block out light and communicate bedtime to the bird
 - Can use a light sheet or blanket
 - Start with covering only the back of the cage and gradually move forward over a few weeks.
-

Exercise

Parrots are extremely active in the wild, so exercise in captivity can help control weight and aid in good body health

Examples of good exercise include:

- Flight
 - Wing Flapping
 - Walking around on the floor
 - Climbing around the cage
-

Proper Diet

A healthy and balanced diet can aid in decreasing the likelihood of developing health issues.

For more information, check out the **diet** section on **pages 7-8** and how to incorporate more **veggies** on **pages 20-22**

Bathing & Humidity

Most parrot species originate from very humid environments with frequent rainfall. Their respiratory system, skin, and feathers are designed to live in very wet climates.

- Using a humidifier may help with increasing the humidity around your bird. Ideally, you can keep the humidity as high as possible without causing mold growth (<55% humidity)
- Several species of parrots, like cockatoos, create dust, which can be irritating for those in the home or other birds. Bathing can help reduce the amount of dust!
- 1-2 times per week is recommended, although some birds may require more frequent baths (especially if they are dusty!)

Different ways to bathe a bird:

- Using a spray bottle- spray on a mist setting above them and let the water drift down
- Taking them into a shower
- Providing a shallow dish with warm water

The easiest approach is to offer each bathing method one at a time and see if your bird chooses a particular method!

*Important Note: it is imperative that you do not force them to bathe in a way that scares or angers them. Since baths are a necessity, you do not want them to view bathing as scary or dangerous. This is also why it is not acceptable to use a spray bottle as punishment. *

Wing Trimming or Flighted Decision

Both trimming wings and fully flighted wings have benefits and dangers.

It is up to the adopters to decide what is best for their particular bird in their particular situation.

Both decisions are temporary and can be adapted to new situations.

A loving, respectful relationship is the most important thing. Everything else is subject to change!

Trimmed Wings

- Decreased chance of crashing into walls, windows, open toilets, or ceiling fans
- Some benefits to training to step up
- Encourages some birds to interact with different people
- Does not eliminate the chance of a bird flying away when outside. Properly clipped birds can be carried away with a strong wind. Flight Harnesses are an option to ensure safety while outside.
- Proper wing trims are only the first five flight feathers, not all wing feathers.
- Requires maintenance as feathers molt



Flighted

- Cardiovascular Exercise- weight management and muscle development
- Freedom to move from situations
- Increased opportunities for foraging
- Flying is a natural behavior and increases opportunities for foraging
- Difficult to clean droppings outside of cage
- Commitment to providing a safe environment:
 - closed doors and windows
 - ceiling fans off
 - covering fireplaces, woodstoves, and toilets
 - Avoid using hot surfaces
 - separate birds from other pets, such as cats, dogs, and larger birds
- Recall training



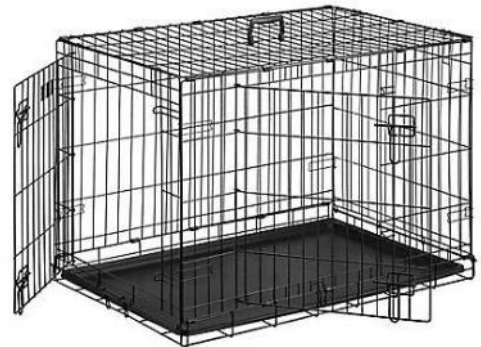
Preparing for Your Appointment

Before:

- Schedule an appointment with us
Call us at 435-274-2193 or email at parrots@bestfriends.org
- We ask that you send us a picture of your cage, so we match appropriate species to the size of your cage.
- Have this cage ready to welcome a bird home on the day of your appointment. See page 5-6 for more info on how to set up a cage
- We are in Kanab, Utah at Best Friends Animal Sanctuary.
- We require adopters to come to our sanctuary for the appointment.
- Plan to spend the day with us. Appointments start at 10 am.

What to Bring:

- 1) Have some ideas in mind of what you are looking for in a bird.
- 2) Completed Quiz (page 43) and any questions for your Adoption Specialist
- 3) An appropriate carrier with a food dish, a water dish, and a perch



The 3-3-3 Rule for Adopting Rescue Animals

The 3-3-3 Rule is a common theory in the rescue field to conceptualize the timeframe for many animals to settle into a new home. A sanctuary environment is vastly different than a home and their adopted family is new to them. Giving time and patience to a parrot post adoption is crucial to their potential success.

If you have any questions or concerns about your new parrot, please do not hesitate to reach out to us! We are here to help you and your new family member!

3 Days

To Calm Down

- Feeling overwhelmed and uncomfortable
- May be scared and seem unsure
- May stay towards the back of the cage, less dancing or talking, step up
- Decreased in eating and drinking
- Testing boundaries
- Plucking
- Wanting space

3 Weeks

To Settle In

- Feel more comfortable
- More interactive, dancing and talking
- Exploring their new environment
- Establishing a routine
- May display behavior issues

3 Months

To Become Part of the Family

- Feeling more comfortable
- Building trust and starting to bond
- Feeling more secure with the new family
- Routine becoming more solidified

Adapted from "The 3 Days, 3 Weeks, 3 Months Rule for Adopting a Rescue Dog" by RescueDogs101

www.rescuedogs101.com



Chop

An Easy Way to Add Veggies to a Parrot Diet

What is “chop”?

“Chop” at the Parrot Garden is the idea of combining a variety of healthy ingredients in a batch and freezing for future use.

Originally created by Patricia Sund, chop makes providing a fresh and nutritious diet more attainable. Instead of processing fresh vegetables every day, owners can defrost daily portions from a larger batch. Chop can be made to the individual birds’ interests, but it can also spark curiosity by mixing in new ingredients!

Advantages to using the “Chop” Method

- Can be unique to each bird
- Finely processed ingredients prevent birds from picking out their favorites alone. A piece of a pepper may also be stuck to a bean and covered in parsley flakes.
- Provides different avenues for different nutrients, such as vitamin A, protein, and antioxidants.
- Make several months’ worth in one day

Where to start:

Try experimenting with different ingredients from this list and see what your bird likes. Once you have found a few options, try creating your own batch!

It may take a few weeks for a bird to start eating chop. In nature, birds are wary of new foods until they know they are safe.

Cooked Ingredient Examples

Bean Soup Mix (throw away flavor packet)
Lundberg Wild Rice Mix
Split Peas
Lentils
Quinoa
Plain pasta
Spaghetti Squash

Dry Ingredient Examples

Bob’s Red Mill 5,7,8 or 10 grain
Instant Oatmeal
Quinoa Flakes
Chia Seed
Flax Seed

Baked Ingredient Examples

Sweet Potatoes*
Winter Squash*

Frozen Ingredient Examples

Corn
Mixed Vegetables

Fun Add- In Options

Prunes
Papaya
Blueberries
Unsweetened Coconut
Pecan, walnut, or almond pieces
Pomegranate Seeds
Lightly Cooked Cranberries

Produce Examples

Kale*
Mustard Greens*
Cabbage
Collard Greens*
Turnip Greens*
Romaine Lettuce*
Summer Squash
Spinach
Swiss Chard*
Boy Choy
Cilantro
Parsley*
Watercress
Wheat Grass

Sweet Mini- Peppers
Jalapenos
Yellow Squash
Red Peppers*
Gold Peppers

Zucchini
Cucumbers
Eggplant
Brussel Sprouts
Broccoli*
Celery
Asparagus*

Carrots*
Green Beans
Snap Peas

* = Excellent Source of Vitamin A

Dirty Dozen

Some vegetables absorb more chemicals than others. These are known as the Dirty Dozen, and you should avoid serving them, unless they are organically grown.

- Celery
- Peaches
- Strawberries
- Apples
- Blueberries (domestic)
- Nectarines
- Sweet Bell Peppers
- Spinach, Kale, Collard Greens
- Cherries
- Potatoes
- Grapes (imported)
- Lettuce

Dangerous Foods for Birds

Food toxicosis occurs in parrots due to their high digestion, but slow metabolism. Many of these foods are safe for humans but can cause serious injury, health issues, or death in parrots.

- Chocolate
- Dairy
- Caffeine
- Avocadoes
- Raw, dry bean mixes
- Alcohol
- Onions, garlic, scallions (in any form)
- Seeds or Pits of tree fruits
- Mushrooms
- Any foods high in fat
- Salt
- Peanuts

Clean 11

This list includes produce that is less likely to have pesticide or fertilizer residue and is safe for your parrot to eat.

Sweet Corn

Pineapples

Mango

Sweet Peas

Sweet Potatoes

Watermelon

Kiwi fruit

Asparagus

Cantaloupe

Cabbage

Eggplant



How to Make Your Own Batch of Chop

Step 1: Cook Beans, Grains, and Rice

Beans- add to boiling water, simmer for two hours or until you can easily split the bean.

Rice, lentils, and other grains- cook rice for the first 15 minutes, then add the rest. Cook for 30 minutes.

Drain and cool beans and grains well.

Step 2: Choose a container and combine the dry ingredients.

Make sure you have enough dry ingredients to soak up excess moisture that freezing causes.

Step 3: Process Produce

Use a food processor to chop produce into fine pieces. Avoid pureeing ingredients, but you do want the pieces to be small enough that the bird cannot specifically pick out certain types.

Use a towel to soak up excess moisture.

For some ingredients, like sweet potatoes or squash, should be likely cooked to release nutrients, but not cooked completely.

Step 4: Start Building Your Chop

Mixed cooled, processed, and drained produce with the dry ingredients. It is easiest to mix with each addition.

To make sure you aren't making the chop too wet, lightly squeeze some in your hand. If it sticks together, it's too damp. You can add more dry ingredients or pellets to help dry it out.

Step 5: Batch and Freeze!

Prepare to freeze in batches for one- or two-day serving size. Plan for at least one tablespoon at a time.

For single bird homes, you can freeze chop in ice cube trays and store in baggies. Each cube is a daily serving.

Avoid defrosting more than a couple days' worth as chop will spoil quickly.



For more information about chop, you can visit Patricia Sund's site:

www.parrotnation.com



Avoid these Plants, Trees, & Flowers

Below is a list of common dangerous trees, plants, and flowers. This list is not exhaustive.

If you think your bird has ingested some of these materials, call

ASPCA Poison Control immediately 888-426-4435

Aloe Vera	Eucalyptus	Marijuana	Rosary Peas
Apple (seeds)	Evergreen	Milkweed	Rosary Bean Plant
Apricot (pit, leaves, bark)	Eggplant leaves	Mistletoe	Rubber Plant
Avocado (fruit, pit, leaves)	Flax	Morning Glory	Rhubarb (leaves)
Amaryllis	Fiddle-leaf Fig	Mountain Mahogany	Rhododendron
Azalea	Grass	Mushroom	Sage
Baby's Breath	Geranium	Mustard	Shamrock
Balsam Pear	Ginkgo	Narcissus	Snap dragon
Bitter melon	Ground Cherry	Nettles	String of Pearls (beads)
Black Elderberry (not berry)	Hemlock	Nightshades	Snowdrop
Buckeye	Hibiscus	Nutmeg	Spider
Beans (uncooked)	Hogwort	Oak	Star of Bethlehem
Bird of Paradise	Honey Locust	Oleander	Sweet Pea
Blue Green Algae	Honeysuckle	Parsnip	Tobacco
Bracken Fern	Hyacinth	Peach (pits, bark, leaves)	Tomato Plant (green fruit, stem, leaves)
Calla Lily	Hydrangea	Pear (leaves, seeds, bark)	Tulip
Castor Bean (castor oil plant)	Iris	Periwinkle	Velvet Grass
Cherry (leaves, bark, seeds)	Ivy (boston, English, others)	Peony	Virginia Creeper
Chrysanthemum	Jasmine	Philodendron	White Cedar
Coffee Plant	Jimson Weed	Poinsettia	Wild Black Cherry
Cacao	Juniper	Poppies	Wisteria
Christmas Cactus	Lily (ex: tiger, easter, oriental)	Poison (Hemlock, Oak, Ivy, Sumac)	Yucca
Clostridium	Locust	Potato (shoots, sprouts, leaves)	Yews
Coffee Bean		Pothos	Yam Bean
Daffodil		Primrose	
Daisy			
Daphne			
Dieffenbachia			



Bird Safe Trees, Plants, & Flowers

Abella	Calendula	Easter Cactus	Irish Moss
Acacia	California Pitcher Plant	Echeveria	Ice Plant
African Violet	Calamint	Elderberry (only cooked ripe fruit)	Jade
Apple (fruit only)	Calendula	Elm	Japanese Aralia
Almond	Cissus Kangaroo Vine	Eugenia	Jewel Orchid
Aluminum Plant	Claw Cactus		
Apricot (fruit only)	Cocktail Orchid	Fairy Fountain	Kalanchoe
Aralias	Coleus	Feather Fern	Kenya Palm
Arbutus	Comfry	Fig Leaf Gourd	Lace Orchard
Areca	Corn Plant	Figleaf Palm	Larch
Ash	Cottonwood	Fish tail Fern	Lemon Balm
Aspen	Crabapple	Flame Violet	Lilac
Aspidistra	Creeping Charlie	Friendship Plant	
Baby's Tears	Dahlia	Garden Marigold	Magnolia
Bachelor Buttons	Dallas Fern	Gardenia	Manzanita
Bamboo	Dandelion	Garlic	Mexican Rosettes
Barberry	Date	German Violet	Monkey Plant
Beech	Dill	Gloxinia	Moss Fern
Blood Leaf Plant	Dogwood	Grape Ivy	Moses – in – Cradle
Boston Fern	Dracaena	Great Willow Herb	Mother- in – law – tongue
Bottle Palm	Dragon Tree	Green brier	Mother of Pearl
Bougainvillea			Mulberry Tree
Bromeliads		Hawthorn	
Burro's Trail		Hen & Chickens Fern	Nadina
		Hickory	Nasturtium
		Honeysuckle	Natal Plum
		Hoya	Nerve Plant



Odontoglossum ssp.

Old World Orchid

Orange Star

Painted Lady

Palms

Pansy Orchid

Parsley fern

Passionflower

Peacock Plant

Peperomia

Peppermint

Persian Violet

Petunia

Pheasant Plant

Pink Peral

Pittosporum

Platinum peperomia

Ponytail Palm

Poplar

Prayer Plant

Purple Passion

Purple Velvet

Pyracanthus

Queen's Spiderwort

Queencup

Queensland arrowroot

Rainbow Orchid

Raphiolepis

Red African Violet

Roosevelt Fern

Rose

Russian Olive

Saffron Spike Zebra

Sawbrier

Sensitive Plant

Scarlet Orchid

Schefflera

Silver Bell

Silver- Leaf Peperomia

Silver Table Fern

Spearmint

Spider Ivy

Spider Plant

Spruce

Squirrels Foot Fern

Star Jasmine

Striped Blushing

Sweetheart Hoya

Swedish Ivy

Sword Fern

Tailed Orchid

Teasel Gourd

Texas Sage

Thistle

Ti Plant

Tiger Orchid

Toad Spotted Cactus

Tulip Poplar

Umbrella Plant

Variegated Laurel

Variegated Wax Plant

Verona Fern

Vining Peperomia

Violet

Walking Anthericum

Wandering Jew

Watermelon Begonia

Wax Plant

White Clover

Willow

Winter Cattelya

Yellow- broadleaf

Zebra Plant

Zinnia spp.



For a more extensive list of bird safe plants, please visit:

"Plants That are Safe for Birds by L. Hess & R. Alexson, VCA Animal Hospitals



Cleaning Product Alternatives

Glass Cleaner

Plain club soda and a spray bottle is one of the best glass cleaners around. A solution of white vinegar and water. For a streak free shine, use newspaper instead of paper towels

Furniture Polish

In a 16 oz spray bottle, mix 2 tsp olive oil, 20 drops of lemon oil, ¼ cup of white vinegar, and enough water to fill the bottle. Shake to combine

Antiseptic Soap Spray

In a 16 oz spray bottle, fill the bottle almost full of water. Add 3 Tbsp of liquid soap, 20-30 drops of Tea Tree Oil, and shake to combine

Toilet Bowl Cleaner

Mix ½ cup liquid soap and 2 cups of baking soda. Use a fork to break up any lumps. Dilute with ¼ cup water and add 2 tbsp vinegar and ½ tsp of Tea Tree Oil. Mix and pour into a 22 oz spray bottle. Shake well before each use.

Drain Cleaner

Used to prevent clogs over clearing them.

Pour ½ cup baking soda down the drain. Add a cup or more of white vinegar. Cover the drain with a stopper or a plunger for a few minutes. Rinse well with hot water and repeat as needed

Carpet Cleaner

Put ¼ cup liquid soap in a blender with 1/3 cup of water. Blend until foamy. Pour on carpet spots and let sit for several minutes. Finish with a squirt of vinegar and blot up excess with towels.

Kitchen & Bath Cleaner

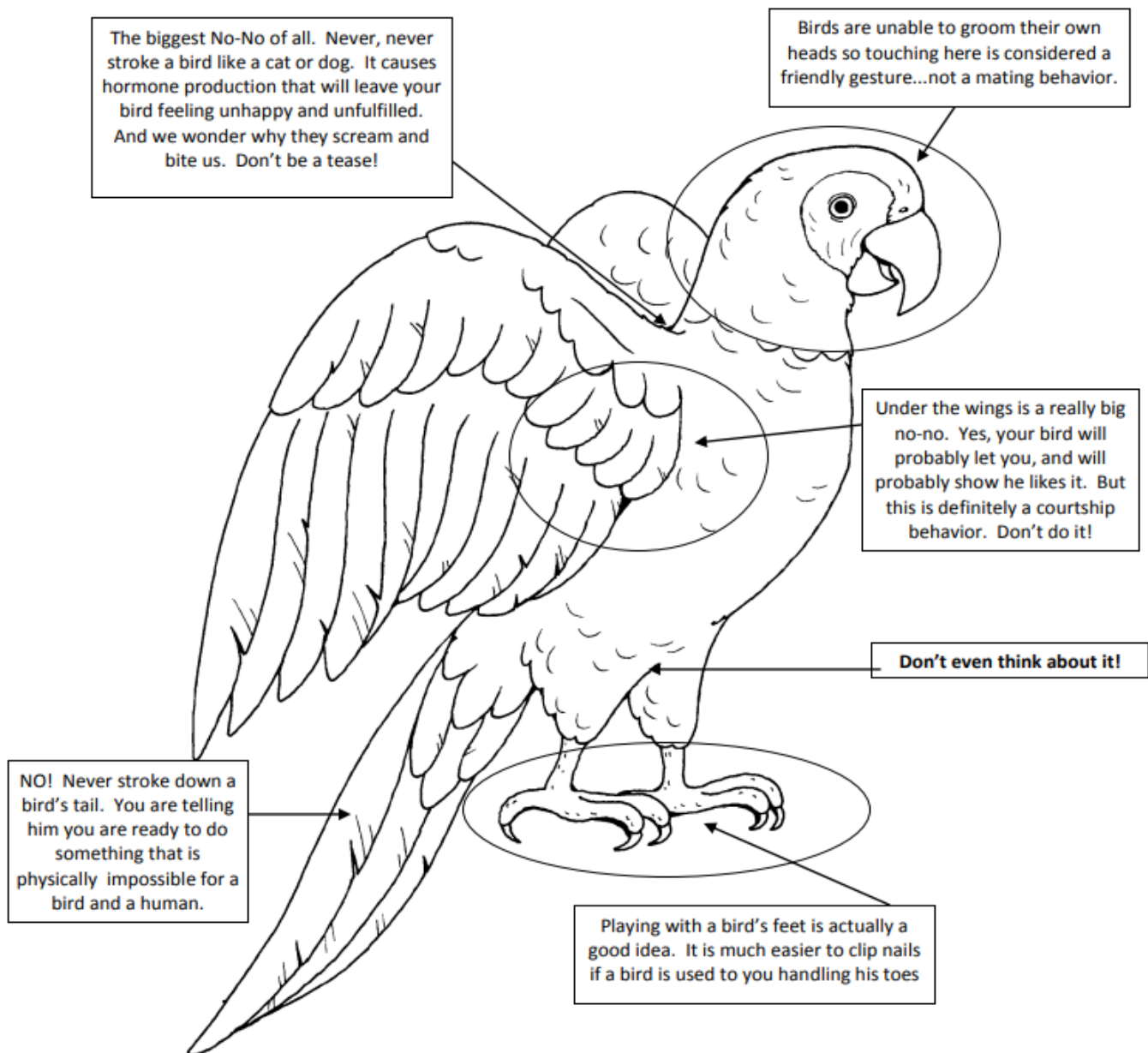
Mix 1 2/3 cups of baking soda with ½ cup of liquid soap. Dilute with ½ cup of water and add 2 tbsp of vinegar. Stir until the lumps are gone. If it is too thick, add a little water. Keep in a seal container and shake well before use

Appropriate Handling

Parrots have a unique anatomy, in which, they rely on cues to stimulate breeding hormone production. They have no external genitalia, so to signal another bird that they would like to breed, they touch each other in special places, such as down the tail or back, under the wings, and on the stomach.

The only safe place to touch your bird to maintain a companion boundary is on the head or feet.

By being mindful and handling your bird appropriately, you can avoid some common parrot/human issues, like mate bonding. If your bird sees you as their mate, they may scream excessively, show aggression to others in the household, or have frustrations that they cannot mate with you. A respectful companion relationship is the goal.



Avoiding Breeding Behaviors

Parrots are naturally hardwired to be sensitive to their environment and look for optimal breeding conditions. Unlike other common pet species, parrots cannot be spayed or neutered to eliminate the chance of reproduction and rely on cues from their environment to breed. If these cues are avoided, the likelihood of breeding behaviors drastically decreases.

Due to the large number of homeless parrots, we do not support breeding efforts.

Per the adoption contract, breeding is not allowed with parrots adopted from Best Friends Parrot Garden.

Potential Stimulus to Avoid

Dark Corners or Hidey Huts

Warm and soft food

Excessive Nesting Material (paper or cardboard)

Inappropriate Handling (more on page 27)

Irregular Light Cycles

Varied Temperatures

Complications That Can Arise with Stimulated Breeding Behaviors

Mate Bonding

Fixation on one caregiver in the home

Flying or Redirection

Decline in food intake

Feather Plucking or Self- Mutilation (more on page 36)

Cage Guarding and Aggression

Egg Bound (egg becomes stuck and can be life-threatening)

Introduction to Behavior Training

Positive Reinforcement is a healthy and enriching method to train animals different tasks. The idea is to reward the behaviors that you are looking to achieve. There is no punishment involved in positive reinforcement training; if there is an undesired behavior, it is not rewarded or encouraged.

Behavior training can be used to teach birds new tasks, like stepping up, or redirect negative behaviors, like turning screaming for attention into ringing a bell

Bridge Words

Use a bridge word to connect a behavior with a reward to show the bird that they did what you asked. A great bridge word is "yes".

Example training phrase:

1. *place hand at the base of their foot*
2. "Step up"
3. *Bird places foot on your hand*
4. "Yes"
5. *Give reward*

Bridge words should be concise and given immediately after a behavior with a reward.

Tips

- Use a reward that is unique to training and something that the bird is motivated to work for. This could be a favorite treat, toy, or appropriate interaction. The reward is going to be determined by the bird.
- Breakdown a behavior into several steps to make it easier to communicate what the expected behavior is to the bird.
- Training sessions should be kept consistent and no more than 5 minutes
 - Only use training language during a session and when a reward is ready to be given
- Some birds may pick up tasks quickly while others may take some time, so patience is key



Example Training Process

Training Goal: Step up onto hand

Current status: Comfortable and interested in interacting with people. Does not know how to step up

Verbal Cue: "Step Up"

Reward: Piece of sweet potato

Reward when the bird...

1. Comfortable with the hand next to their feet
2. Touches their foot to your hand
3. Puts their full foot onto your hand
4. Rests their foot on your hand for increasing amounts of time
5. Starts to shift their weight to your hand
6. Weight is completely shifted to the hand and other foot moves to your hand

Gradually increase distance between you with the bird and their original position to build confidence

This is only an introduction to positive reinforcement training.

If you are interested in learning more information or advanced concepts, check out the links to training and behaviorists in the Additional Resources on page 39

Introduction to Body Language

Understanding parrot body language can be a difficult skill to gain for bird owners, both new and experienced. While parrots are known for their loud vocalizations, their body language is one of their most important communication methods. It is one that is not fully understood by humans, however, we do know some indications of what birds may be telling us.

When discussing “excitement” regarding animal behavior, it can be used as a broader term to describe high emotions and arousal in animals and can describe negative and positive excitement. It is our job as parrot owners to learn the difference.

Eye Pinning

A parrot constricts and dilates their pupil rapidly. This behavior means the parrot is starting to become excited and is paying attention to their environment. It can be positive or negative.



Tail Flaring

The tail is splayed to show individual feathers. It is important to pay attention to what may stimulate this behavior and if the parrot is backing away or coming closer to the stimulant.



Fluffed Feathers

Parrots have the unique ability to move their feathers individually. When parrots experience fear or anger, they fluff their feathers to appear larger to the threat. They may also raise their head feathers if they are experiencing positive emotions with people and solicitate head scratches.



Each parrot is an individual and may communicate in their own way. When you are here for your parrot adoption, we will walk through different behaviors the animals are displaying and teach you how to read individual behaviors.

Links to body language demonstration videos found in Additional Resources page 39

Identifying Illness in Parrots

As a prey species, parrots are naturally inclined to hide any signs of illness or weakness. Therefore, it is imperative to pay close attention to any changes in appearance, behavior, and well-being with your parrot.

This information is only to be used as a guideline for indication of illness.

If you notice any medical changes in your parrot, contact your veterinarian for guidance.

General Behavior

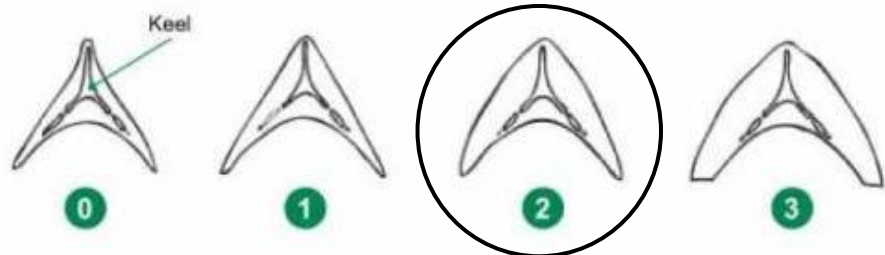
<u>Normal</u>	<u>Abnormal</u>
Alert	Non-reactive
Active	Sitting on the bottom of cage
Interacting with toys or people	Fluffed appearance
Upright	Increased aggression towards owners or cage mates
Balanced	Difficulty balancing
Equal- weight bearing on feet	Lack of appetite
Wings close to body & at equal height	Dropping more food than eating
Quickly recovers from stress	Decreased water intake

Weight

Normal
Maintain within appropriate weight for species

Abnormal
Loss exceeding 10% of normal weight

Over normal weight range



2 is the ideal body score for birds

The keel is "sharp" for underweight birds
Fat wraps around the keel in overweight birds

Eyes

Normal

Bright & Clear

Abnormal

Redness
Discharge
Cloudiness
Swelling



Ears

Normal

Clear
Normal Color

Abnormal

Redness
Discharge
Blockage



Breathing

Normal

Smooth & Easy
Breaths
Rates go back to
normal after stress
Clear nares

Abnormal

Tail bobbing with
breath
Open mouth
Blocked nares



Beak

Normal

Average shape and
length for species

Abnormal

Rapid Growth
Splitting
Uneven on the sides



Skin

Normal

Normal Color



Abnormal

Redness

Discharge

Swelling



Vent

Normal

Clear of debris



Abnormal

Discharge

Matting

Debris



Feathers

Normal

Smooth

Bright

Colorful



Abnormal

Tattering

Barbering

Abnormal Shape



Everybody Poops

Poop can be a great indicator for illness or underlying stress in a parrot. Remember, poop is individual to each bird, so what may be normal for your bird isn't for another.

These are common characteristics that we look out for signs of illness.

If you are noticing a change in your bird's poop, contact your veterinarian

Common Causes of Change in Poop

Stress
Diet
Hydration
Hormones
Certain Illnesses

Feces- solids

Urine- liquids



Signs to Look Out For

Dryness
Loose Construction
Color such as yellow, bright green, or black
Ratio of feces to urates
More or less than normal
Undigested food

Urates- thick white part



Basic Bird First Aid

Step 1: Don't Panic

Step 2: Observe the injury or illness and determine what needs to be addressed first.

Step 3: Keep the bird calm and warm

Step 4: Call your veterinarian for next steps

Bleeding Injuries

Apply pressure for at least 2 minutes

Apply cornstarch to help stop bleeding and promote clotting.

Skin Wounds

Gently wash area with warm water

Observe for signs of infection such as redness, swelling, or discharge

Avoid using any topical medications/ointment/creme unless directed by your vet



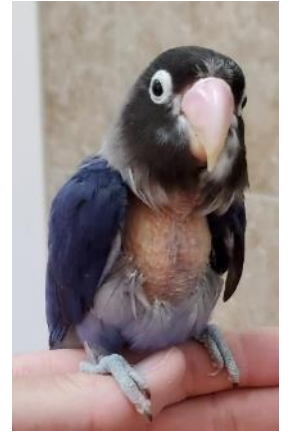
Feather Destruction & Self-Mutilation

Feather destruction is common in captive parrots.

It can manifest as barbering, where the bird chews on the barbs of the feather, or plucking, where the feather is pulled out from the body.

If a bird has this behavior for a long period of time or very intensely, the feathers can become permanently damaged. The feather follicles may stop producing feathers long term.

Some birds take the next step and do self-mutilation. This is where they are causing physical injury to themselves.



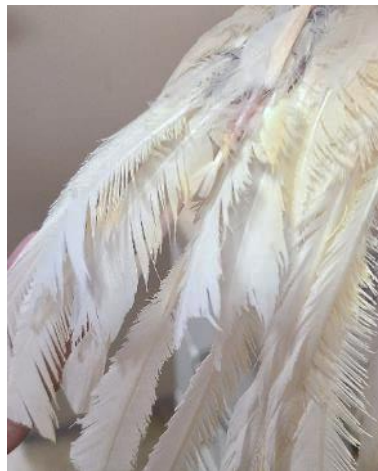
What do I do if my bird is plucking or mutilating?

If your bird has never plucked or mutilated before, a vet visit may be your first step to check if it is medically motivated.

If your bird has a history of this behavior, consider their current environment and any potential triggers. Is it breeding season (spring/fall)? Is there a major change in routine or the home? See if there is any way to resolve the trigger and monitor for further change in behavior.

Collars, sweaters, and vests can be an option for some birds, especially those that mutilate, but they are often unsuccessful. Many birds will find them distressing and uncomfortable.

Birds with a plucking history may never grow the feathers back and may have this behavior for life.



Why do parrots do this behavior?

Feather destruction behavior can be linked to stress or boredom. Examples include loss of a mate or owner, moving, new members of the home, lack of mental stimulation, or change in hormone levels.

An event or major change can trigger the feather destruction. There may be a resolution, but the bird learns to use this behavior as a coping mechanism for future stress or boredom.

Sometimes this behavior can be an indicator of illness and the bird is trying to self-soothe.

Rescuing a Loose Bird

A parrot can get loose from a variety of situations, such as an open window or door, an unlocked outside cage door, untrained free flight, improperly fitted flight harness, or a strong gust of wind when sitting outside. Below are some tips to bring a loose bird home.

Known Location

- Call to the bird
- Always keep eyes on them
- Estimate potential flight paths or landing locations
- Notify others that can help keep track
- Focus on a strategic plan to capture. Stay calm and avoid trying to frantically grab them or scare them down.
- Bring the bird's favorite person, bird, or food, familiar food bowls, and a cage (if possible) to the area. Avoid crowding the area with unfamiliar objects or people as these may discourage the bird from investigating.
- Try to position yourself at an easily accessible angle and distance. Allow for a short flight or climb.
- Use a familiar perch. Unfamiliar objects may scare them away.
- Try to call to the bird when they are showing body language that indicates they are ready to come to you or fly. This can be shaking wings, fixated gaze, or restlessness.
- Sometimes hiding from their line of sight can cause panic and push them to seek you out. If they are vocal and moving while you are hiding, return to sight.
- Birds will roost during the night, so sunset is the last opportunity of that day to get them back. If the sun has set, leave them to sleep, but note the location and return prior to sunrise.

Unknown Location

- Recruit others that can help and spread out
- Call to them, play their favorite song, and say their favorite phrases or sounds
- Play other bird vocalizations
- If there is a buddy bird, bring them along in their cage to the last known location. Set the cage on the ground and walk away. This may trigger the cage bird to scream, inciting the loose bird to respond.
- Limit the search area to ~1 mile. Most parrots will stay close unless caught by a wind gust.
- Look and listen for movement. They may be difficult to spot in vegetation.

No sightings in over 24 hours

- Alert people and organizations below to keep an eye out for your bird and provide contact information and any important knowledge, like medical needs. Do not release the band number.
 - Local Police
 - Animal Control
 - Pet Shops
 - Local Veterinarians
 - Animal Welfare groups, rescues, and zoos.
- Post on social media or a newspaper ad for a lost bird. Monitor for any found bird postings and respond to all postings. Some people may incorrectly identify species.
- Post flyers in the area that they were lost or last spotted with tips to identify and your contact information.

Adapted from "What to do When a Parrot Escapes" by Barbara Heidenrich

www.GoodBirdInc.com

Emergency Preparedness

It is always a good idea to have a plan in case of an emergency, especially when having an exotic pet in your care.

Below are some ideas to have prepared for an emergency

More information and example kits for different disaster and emergencies can be found at www.ready.gov/be-informed

General Packing List

Water (one gallon per person per day for several days)

Food (several day supply- non-perishable)

Battery operated or hand crank radio

Flashlight

First Aid kit

Extra batteries

Whistle

Dust mask

Moist towelettes, garbage bags, plastic ties (personal sanitation)

Wrench or pliers

Manual can opener

Local maps

Cell phone with chargers and backup battery

Parrot- Specific Packing List

Bird Appropriate Carrier ready to go

Collapsible cage (if possible)

Medications

Food- at least several day supply

Water

Bowls

Toys

Covers, blankets, or towels

Spray Bottle (to clean and keep cool)

Small amount of supplies to clean cage/carrier

(ex: cleaning solution, newspaper)

Copies of important paperwork and vet records



Additional Resources

Food and Diet

Roudybush.MyShopify.com/

Lafeber.com/

Zupreem.com/birds/

HarrisonsBirdFoods.com/

Nuts.com

TwinBeaksAviary.com/herbsalad.html (herb salad mix additive for chop)

Chewy.com

Amazon.com

Toys and Supplies

MySafeBirdStore.com

ParrotEnrichment.com

Caitec.com

MakeYourOwnBirdToys.com

DrsFosterSmith.com

ChoppersToys.com

More Information

MyToos.com (info and chat board for cockatoo owners)

AvianStudios.com (Dr. Scott Schols site for bird care)

AvianWeb.com (Medical Information, Training)

AvainWelfare.org (Avian Welfare Coalition, a leader in advocating for the protection of captive and wild parrots)

Trainers & Behaviorists

<https://birdtricksstore.com/>

<https://www.theanimalbehaviorcenter.com/>

<https://avian-behavior.org/>

<https://barbarasffat.com/parrots/>

If you are interested in finding a trainer closer to your area, we suggest only working with trainers that are IAATE certified.

Body Language Demonstration Videos

<https://birdtricksstore.com/blogs/birdtricks-blog/the-incredible-cockatoo>

https://birdtricksstore.com/blogs/parrot-care-blog/parrot-body-language-visuals?_pos=2&_sid=5cfaa0b3c&_ss=r

https://birdtricksstore.com/blogs/birdtricks-blog/universal-parrot-body-language?_pos=1&_sid=5cfaa0b3c&_ss=r

Pre- Adoption Quiz

Please complete and bring to your appointment at the Parrot Garden.

We will go over the correct answers at the start of your appointment.

- T / F Parrots have unique requirements and need specialized education for proper and safe care
- T / F Parrots are domesticated like cats and dogs and have easily adapted to life in homes.
- T / F Depending on the species, parrots can live over 50 years.
- T / F A proper diet for parrots includes fresh veggies and high quality and nutritious pellets.
- T / F Time and patience are necessary to allow parrots to settle into their new home after adoption
- T / F You can touch a parrot anywhere on their body without behavioral repercussions.

Common household dangers include:

- A. Essential oils, pesticides, cooking sheets, air fryers, and new appliances
- B. Non-stick pans, candles, open toilets and windows, perfume, other pets, and certain metals.
- C. Mothballs, rubbing alcohol, nicotine, propane, paint, self- cleaning ovens, and regular cleaning products
- D. All of the above

Which foods are appropriate for a parrot?

- A. Avocados, chocolate, uncooked beans, onions, scallions, rhubarb, and peanuts
- B. Sweet corn, sweet potatoes, eggplant, cabbage, asparagus, kale, zucchini, carrots
- C. Salted popcorn, dairy products, caffeine, lots of nuts

What is an important aspect of medical care for a parrot?

- A. Parrots require a veterinarian who is knowledgeable and experienced with birds
- B. Parrots only need to see a veterinarian when the bird is sick. Annual checkups are not needed.
- C. Avian medicine is widely known and studied, so anyone can provide medical care for a parrot.

What are three different examples of enrichment that can be integrated into the home?

What are three different signs of body language?

Describe positive reinforcement training and how you may use it to teach a parrot to step up.

What do you need to bring to your appointment?