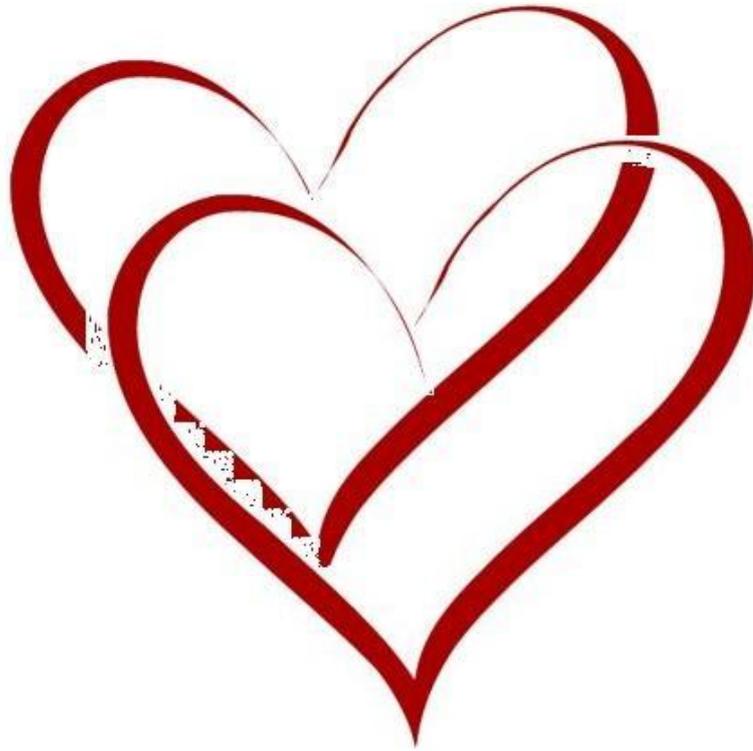


Welcome to Birdline UK LTD Parrot Rescue



**We have put this welcome pack
together to help you with advice on
caring for a bird**

These are guidelines for Birdline UK LTD members only.
If you have any questions, please contact your Area Coordinator.



**In loving memory of Doddie Kent 7/4/1945 – 28/9/2017
Your life was a blessing, your memory a treasure.
You are loved beyond words and missed beyond measure.**

This pack was produced by Doddie Kent and Melinda Laws on behalf of Birdline UK LTD.

The information provided in this pack is designed to provide helpful information in the care and wellbeing of psittacines. This information is not meant to be used, nor should it be used to treat any medical condition. For diagnosis and/or treatment of any medical problem, ALWAYS consult an Avian Veterinarian. Birdline UK Parrot Rescue accepts no responsibility or liability for any damages or consequences from any treatment or actions to any animal/person following the guidance within this manual. References are provided for information only and do not constitute endorsement of any websites etc.

Disclaimer:

The information contained within this guidance is true and complete to the best of our knowledge. All recommendations are made without guarantee on behalf of Birdline UK Parrot Rescue.



BIRDLINE PARROT RESCUE

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BIRDLINE PARROT RESCUE

1: WELCOME TO BIRDLINE UK PARROT RESCUE

1.1: About Birdline

We have a network of volunteer helpers, Safe houses, Area Coordinators, Managers and Directors, all of whom work from their own homes, without payment, thus permitting the organisation to offer a loving secure home to a wide variety of birds. Birds are therefore never without a safe home.

Rescued birds are collected by an Area Coordinator who then decides where to place the bird, until a suitable long term home can be found. Ill-treated birds, and those with behavioural problems are referred to our specialist carers who rehabilitate the bird at their home and work with it until it is retrained or is well enough to be re-homed. Since 1992 Birdline has helped over 3,000 birds to find new homes.

1.2: The Parrot

Although it seems to be stating the obvious, a parrot is unlike any other pet you may have had or still have. Parrots are by nature gregarious and love company and attention. Their demands in this respect can, at times, be overwhelming. Keepers of parrots must be prepared to spend considerable amounts of time in play with their parrots each day, if it is to remain a healthy and well-adjusted friend. The rewards associated with a good relationship (the bond) with your parrot can be enormous, but it doesn't happen on its own, you must work for it with your bird. Young birds are easier to bond with than older ones as they will imprint you as the parent, whereas older birds will already have a "parent" somewhere. It isn't impossible though to form the bond with an older bird; it just takes time and patience.



They are not stupid, and can blush (very noticeable in Macaws), remember things that happened previously and talk to us in our own language. There is a wide range of opinions regarding the intelligence of parrots; the view that prevails within Birdline is that they can be equated to an intelligent 3-year-old child. This intelligence level also includes tantrums, the destructiveness, the playfulness and general behaviour of that child. With a few exceptions, they are generally quite long lived (up to 90+ years have been recorded).

Parrots are omnivorous; this means that in the main they eat both plant and animal sources of food. There are some exceptions to this rule (nectar eating parrots). However, not all parrots will thrive on exactly the same diet. This is due to the fact that there is such a wide variety of species living in a very diverse range of habitats, that the basic foodstuffs each lives on will differ equally widely. Female parrots, without exception, do require more calcium than males, especially when they are laying eggs.



1.3: Hints and Tips to enhance the comfort and health of your bird

This section provides some hints and tips regarding parrot care. The remainder of the document covers these issues (and more) in further detail.

Social Needs & Amusement

The remarkable intelligence of parrots requires that they have a varied and stimulating environment. Parrots that have been severely neglected have been known to literally "go insane," rocking in the cage, mutilating themselves horribly, or falling into a deep depression. If you do not think you will have time for your bird - do not get a bird. If you find you can't give the bird the proper attention, contact your ACO for assistance. This is a living, breathing, thinking, feeling creature.

Parrots need interaction. They are flock creatures by nature. They should be in a communal area of the home so they feel they are part of the family. Also, the more time you can give them outside of their cage, the better adjusted they will be. Not everyone has the luxury of keeping their bird with them all day. In that case, make sure the bird comes out of the cage as soon as you get home. Get up a little earlier in the morning so the bird can have some time with you. Do not relegate your bird to a back bedroom where he gets to see you for a few minutes in the morning and maybe an hour before you go to bed. The bird will develop behavioural issues such as screaming and destructive behaviour due to boredom and frustration. Imagine being locked in a cage in a room all by yourself for 22 hours a day. It doesn't sound very appealing, does it? When you are away from home, it's always a nice idea to leave a radio or TV on for your bird. Paper, magazines and catalogues (no staples) are a wonderful addition to your bird's cage, most love to chew them.

Environment

- Do not let your bird be near or 'play' with cats, dogs, reptiles, larger aggressive birds, or children too young to understand how to handle them.
- Never leave a bird unattended out of its cage, even for a moment.
- Ensure the Bird is in a safe space and can't fly out windows/ doors.
- Birds need lots of sleep – 10 hours at least. Provide this quiet time each evening – covering the cage can provide darkness and warmth.
- Do not use PTFE-coated non-stick cookware (sold under such trade names as Teflon, Silverstone, etc.), irons or ironing boards around birds. The fumes they emit when heated (which we can't detect) are toxic to birds.
- Birds have very extensive respiratory systems. Do not allow any smoking in the same room as the bird, and avoid using aerosols such as hair spray, hair dye, deodorant, perfume, cleaning products, etc. near your bird.



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Travel Cage

- Ensure that the carrier is adequate for the bird's size, i.e. bar spacing and strength.
- Make sure doors, food bowl hatches and the bottom are secure – use cable ties if necessary.
- Carriers must have a perch, and a minimum of two bowls providing seed/food and water.
- Always travel your bird with seed and water, even on short journeys, as there could be an unforeseen incident that could hold you up for hours.
- When travelling a bird on longer journeys, a bowl of fruit & veg should be added.
- Regular stops must be taken to ensure the bird can eat, as not all birds are happy to eat whilst travelling.
- Unless your companion bird is very, very nervous, it is unnecessary to cover the carrier
- It is best to cover the carrier when transporting aviary birds.



Cage and other equipment

- Cages should be large enough that the bird can spread their wings entirely and fly from perch to perch.
- Do not use sandpaper perches because they can irritate the feet.
- Use perches of various sizes. The bird's opposing toes should not touch when grasped on a perch. Put the most comfortable perch up high for the night time roost.
- Do not use sawdust, sand or other medium on the cage floor where you can't see the droppings.
- Newspaper is safe to use, paper towels or computer paper or similar also work well and should be changed daily.
- Provide a wide variety of safe toys and rotate them regularly as they get bored easily. Remove and throw away toys that have become soiled or dangerous (in particular ropes that have become frayed can lead to strangulation or entanglements). Always watch a bird with a new toy. Make sure there are no small pieces to ingest, or parts to get entangled in.
- Lighting: It is thought that UV lighting can be of benefit to birds. It can help birds that pluck, or are unwell, and healthy birds enjoy bathing in it. Ordinary household lighting does not replace sunlight, but there are lights that can provide UV and UVA light, which are good for colours, feather condition, and wellbeing of birds. One of the most popular companies that provide UV lights is Arcadia: their lights provide a minimum of 2.4% UV and 12% UVA light.



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Diet

- Provide a varied diet to ensure that your feathered friend has a range of foods and doesn't get bored with their meals. The bulk should consist of seeds or pellets with fruit and vegetables offered daily. Place fresh food in a separate dish and discard daily.
- What is healthy for you is generally okay for your bird, with some exceptions. You can share your meals if you avoid salt, sugar and excess spices. No avocado, chocolate, onion, mushroom, alcohol or caffeine. Store pellets in the fridge, and seed in a cool dry place.
- Be careful with foods warmed in the microwave as heating is uneven and often leaves 'hot spots' in the food that can cause burns in a bird's mouth, oesophagus and crop.
- Grit is not necessary for most parrots.
- Change water frequently – at least daily.

Feather Condition

- Birds preen constantly. This is normal behaviour and does not indicate mites. Do NOT use a mite disk or insecticides near your bird.
- Your bird should be bathed at least twice a week with plain water (no shampoo) and you can add Aloe Vera Juice or Gel if you wish. The water should be tested for temperature first, whether sprayed, or put in a shallow bowl for a splash around. The bird should be completely dry before nightfall.

Wing Clipping

- Birdline believes that a bird has a right to flight.
- We only consider clipping if the bird is a hazard to itself when fully flighted i.e. if a bird has always previously been clipped and can't control its flying and landing and may damage itself by hitting walls etc.
- This is not a decision that should be made lightly and is only made when the welfare of the bird is at risk.
- Only ADULT birds will be considered for clipping - any bird under a year old should not be clipped as it needs to develop the chest muscles and skills necessary to fly.
- Birds may only be clipped with the permission of Birdline.co.uk. If you believe your bird should be clipped talk to your area manager.
- Birds may only be clipped by a person approved by Birdline, as clipping the wrong feathers or clipping too much can permanently damage the bird.
- Remember clipping does not stop a bird flying – never take a bird with clipped wings outside unless in a harness or carrier.



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1.4: Understanding natural behaviour

Most parrots cannot be considered domesticated pets. With the exception of budgerigars and cockatiels, most species are only a few generations removed from their wild ancestors. Some birds sold as pets today may have had wild-caught parents. What does this mean? It means that instincts rule and if bird owners keep this in mind when training their pets, they will have a healthier relationship with their bird and there will be far fewer painful nips.

There are some pretty universal signs when a bird is saying, "Back off". Your relationship will be the most healthy when it involves trust and reciprocal "respect". So watch your parrot, learn his body language and respect it – for instance if your parrot puffs himself up and his eyes start to flash, don't reach in saying, "Oh it's sooo cute!". Back off, remove your hands from the bird's personal space, and calm him down using a soothing voice.

Books on parrot behaviour may help you, but the best way to learn the signs is to watch your bird and make a note of specific reactions, and think about how to interpret them and handle them better. For example, "When I approach him quickly from behind he spins around. This means I've startled him and an instinctive response has kicked in. I should talk to him first so he knows I'm there."

One special thing to look for is when your bird seems to be in a trance-like state. This is a natural protective behaviour. In the wild parrots "take turns" standing watch for the flock for any danger. They are in a hyper-alert state at that time, blocking out all extraneous (i.e. non-dangerous) stimuli. A sudden movement or threatening approach during that "trance" can make them lunge instinctively.

One of the most important things to remember when your bird bites is that it is instinctive, and is normally because you have done something to scare or startle him. Remember, biting is one of the few ways parrots can show emotion. In the wild, parrots will bite their partner to make them fly away from perceived danger (your parrot could just be trying to protect you). When your parrot bites you, it's natural to feel upset, frightened, or even angry – parrots can sense these emotions, so if possible, return the bird to the cage, walk away, calm yourself down, and tend to the wound if necessary. Return to your bird a while later and softly reassure him that everything is ok.

Sexual Maturity

The foundation you build with a young bird will make all the difference in how you can handle him when he reaches maturity. Parrots reach sexual maturity at around four years of age, and just like human's their personality may change. You may have to rebuild your relationship on different terms.

We have to learn to pay close attention to their behaviour and learn to recognize when they are over-excited (it is often called "overload" in Amazons) and can't quite control themselves. It is in this context that unexpected bites often occur. Sometimes the signs of overload are subtle, sometimes they're done in



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an outright "flash" dance. While you can usually calm the bird down from this "stance," you shouldn't just reach in fast with your hand if he begins to show these signals.

Mainly **people** are the cause of the overstimulation. Humans often play with parrots which they loved as young birds, but by age four the bird may become very aggressive if you play the same game. It is very important to accept your bird as an individual and not try to force behaviours just because you enjoy them. We have found that once owners try to understand their bird's moods rather than trying to **change** their moods, the relationship blossoms again.

Behaviour problems in wing clipped birds

If your bird is clipped when you get him you must keep in mind how this may affect his natural instincts. Birds have two methods of protection "fight or flight". If one of those options is removed then birds will resort to lunging and biting much more readily. In almost all cases, you will get warning signals. The trick is to learn how to recognize them before the beak comes down on your finger (or worse, a lip or an ear).

Keep in mind that in the wild birds can fly high in the trees to avoid danger. A bird with clipped wings obviously cannot do this. Some will fly in a panic to the floor, thrashing about. This can be a very frightening and unsettling experience for both the bird and the owner. When trying to calm or retrieve a bird that has flown to the floor it is best to get down low to where the bird is and not "swoop" down on it the way a predator might in the wild. Talk in a calm voice and ease the bird's panic. Make sure other people in the room are aware the bird is on the floor, so it doesn't get trodden on.



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2: NUTRITION & DIET

A varied diet largely made up of live foods will give you the healthiest bird. By live foods we mean vegetables, fruits, and whole grains. Dead foods are foods that don't spoil quickly (i.e. packaged seeds, pellets & nuts). That might seem like a simplistic description, but it is actually quite accurate. A healthy, correct diet can add DECADES to your birds' lives. Yes. Decades.

2.1: Cleanliness

Food bowls, water, cages, and the surrounding environment need to be kept clean. One of the leading causes of bacterial infections in parrots is soiled water. Many birds like to make "bird soup" by dropping food in their water bowl. Sometimes changing the location of the bowl will remedy this, but some birds will carry dehydrated carrots all the way across the cage to the water bowl. Water bottles do not solve the problem of unclean water. Food gets trapped in the tube the first time the bird drinks from it. Frankly, they are actually harder to clean properly. The best way to have fresh water is to have a ton of extra clean bowls. You can dump the old bowl out and put the new one in when you're in a hurry and don't have time to thoroughly clean the water bowl. The hotter the weather the higher the risk that bird soup will turn into a dangerous bacterial cocktail.

2.2: Food Preparation

Use the same precautions you use for your human family members. Salmonella, Escherichia coli, Listeria, and other food-borne pathogens can and do affect parrots.

2.3: List of Suitable Foods

Vegetables: Carrots (cooked slightly for better assimilation of beta carotene), string beans, corn, squash, peas, broccoli, courgettes, snow peas (Mange Tout), sunflower sprouts, pea shoots, sprouted seeds and beans (excellent for protein) are all favourites. If your bird is reluctant to try these things, try sprouting their seed mix. It will be familiar to them and seeds are much healthier when sprouting (lower in fat, higher in amino acids for instance). Please note: all beans must be cooked.

Grains: You can sprout many grains at home. Millet and quinoa are two nice grains to sprout. Also, cooked brown rice and cooked quinoa are relished by many parrots. Quinoa is a South American grain so parrots from this region probably ate it in the wild. Any food you can duplicate from their natural environment is an excellent choice.



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Fruits: High in sugar, don't substitute Fruit for Veg. Vegetables always should make up the largest portion of the diet. Fruits do not really need to make up a significant part of the diet. Grapes are relished by most parrots.

Seeds: Get a good, fresh seed mix. If you aren't sure it's good and fresh, try sprouting it. If the seeds don't sprout in a few days, the seeds are dead. They have no nutritional value. Give a daily supply of seeds, but never so much that the birds ignore their veggies. Allow free access to seeds because they don't spoil and can be left in the cage all day. If you are buying a seed mix, choose one with low sunflower seeds, and clean (not dusty), with NO MONKEY NUTS.

Pellets: There are many pellets on the market. Not all birds will eat them. If you decide to try to change the diet from seed to pellets, it should be done gradually. You can add a few pellets or Nutriberries to the fruit/veg every day.

People Food: Pasta, whole wheat breads, bits of very well cooked chicken, and various other "people foods" are fine as long as they are not the majority of the diet. Don't feed the bird food from your mouth and don't bite off a piece for them. There's too much bacteria in your mouth and you can make your bird sick. Make sure chicken is very well cooked and don't leave any food like this in the cage for more than an hour.

Junk Food: Many parrots cannot excrete large amounts of salt efficiently, so the potato chips and french fries are not a good idea. Same thing for table foods you've added salt too (hey, it's not good for you either). A tiny crumb from a muffins, cookie, or other fatty baked goods once in a blue moon might be okay, but don't get your parrot addicted to these treats. You want to encourage them to eat the best foods and not hold out for garbage foods. Sugar in general is not good for parrots as it can cause hyperactivity.

Chocolate, cocoa, coffee, and tea: contain theobromine, which can cause over excitability, cardiopathy, and death. Absolutely positively do NOT give your bird wine, beer, or other alcoholic beverages. Their livers cannot handle it. It is not funny to see a bird drunk and anyone who thinks it is should find their birds a more appropriate home.

AVOCADO, MUSHROOMS, AND ONIONS ARE POISONOUS TO PARROTS.



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2.4: Feeding Leaflet

As well as the normal seed/pellet diet, a parrot needs variety in its daily food. These are some of the things you can feed to your parrot on a daily basis, preferably as its first meal of the day. The food should be replaced daily, and the dish thoroughly washed. It is also an excellent idea to vary things so that the bird doesn't get bored with the same assortment. Please ensure all fruit is washed and pips/seeds are removed as some are toxic to birds.

FORBIDDEN FOODS: AVOCADO, CHOCOLATE, MUSHROOMS, ONIONS, NUTMEG, MONKEY NUTS, ALCOHOL AND CAFFEINE

PLEASE NOTE: This is a guideline only. Check anything not on this list before feeding to birds.			
Fruit		Vegetables	
Apples	Watermelon/other	Carrots	Spinach Green Beans
Pears	melons	Celery (cut finely to remove string)	(cooked)
Oranges	Pomegranates	Winter Radish	Beetroot
Bananas	Mangoes	Corn on the Cob	Parsnip (cooked)
Plums	Strawberries	Endive	Peas in the pod
Apricots	Raspberries	Cress	Peppers and Chillies
Grapes	Blueberries		Sweet Potato (cooked)
Pulses	Soaked Seeds (sprouted)		NUTS
Pulses should be soaked for 24 hrs before feeding	Soak 24 hrs, rinse & spread on a saucer covered with a damp cloth for 24 hrs		Cashew
Soya	Clipped Oats		Walnuts
Black-eyed Peas	Pumpkin Seeds		Brazil
Maize	Mung Beans		Hazelnuts
Peas	Green Lentils		Pistachios
Pearl Barley	Wheat		Macadamia
Field Beans	Sunflower		Pine nuts
	Chick Peas		NOT MONKEY NUTS
Dried Fruit	Meat/Fish (cooked)		Extras
Sultanas / Raisins	Tuna		Wholemeal bread
Coconut	Cuttlefish		Kelp
Bananas	Chicken/Rabbit		Honey



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2.5: Vitamins and Minerals

Most birds in their natural environment would only eat seed in quantity during the late summer and early autumn time when it is naturally available. The rest of the time their diet is made of plant matter, fruits, berries, insects and even occasional carrion. Sometimes chalk will be taken for its calcium content as can limestone and snail shells.

What can you do to increase your bird's intake of key nutrients? Let's have a look at the vitamins and minerals your bird needs.

Calcium is needed for the maintenance of bones, muscle and nerve function, the production of eggs during the breeding season and essential for the correct development of chicks. Now here's a thing – to be absorbed properly, calcium needs a little help from a vitamin called D3 (cholecalciferol).

Vitamin D3 is normally made within the body from ultraviolet light which is absorbed by the feathers, but if you have a pet bird, putting the cage outside all day is risky for security reasons. So no direct UV light = reduced calcium absorption. Most, if not all, vitamin supplements will have D3 in them. ALL AFRICAN GREYS SHOULD HAVE CALCIUM TWICE A WEEK. We recommend Zolcal-D as a calcium supplement.

UVAB Light Another idea which is now becoming popular is to place the special UV light tubes above your birds. They can be switched on for a few hours each day. They need to be changed annually as they do wear out. It is thought these lights help with absorption of Calcium and Vitamin D3.

Vitamin C. Birds don't need vitamin C supplementation in their diet, because they manufacture their own. You don't need to worry any more if your parrot doesn't like oranges. However, if your bird is sick, your avian vet may recommend vitamin C supplementation.

B Vitamins are also required for growth, particularly when young, when there are huge stresses on the avian body. Not enough can lead to nervous disorders such as feather plucking in African Greys, fits, seizures and reduced appetite.

Vitamin A is stored within the liver. Vitamin A deficiency is difficult to spot until it is quite often too late when the store is depleted. This can lead to lowered breeding results, eye and gut infections, and eye troubles. Vitamin A is especially low in seed only diets.

Vitamin K. Most birds at one time or another will injure themselves. Be it a bang on the side of the cage or something more serious. In these cases Vitamin K is the guy to help. Normally produced within the body by intestinal bacteria, it can also be ingested via food. Vitamin K helps your injured bird by clotting the blood, preventing haemorrhaging and speeding up the time it takes for a wound to heal.



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NB. Vitamins often need minerals to help them work. Vitamin E for example may boost your bird's libido, but unless you have Selenium to help out, much of the Vitamin E will be wasted.

NB: It is possible for birds to get too many vitamins and supplements should only be considered after consultation with your avian vet. It is dangerous to overdose a bird on any vitamin or mineral, so always follow the instructions on the pack.

Foods that Provide Vitamins and Minerals:

Fruits	Vegetables	Nuts
Apricots (vit A) Bananas (vit B-6) Citrus (vit C) Elderberries (vit C) (Berries only) Figs (calcium) Kiwifruit (vit C) Papaya (vit C & A) Peaches (vit A) Peppers (vit C & A) Rose Hips (vit C) Tomatoes (vit A) Watermelon (vit C)	Asparagus (vit B1) Beans/Peas (vit B1, Folic Acid) Beetroot (Iron) Broccoli (vit C,K, calcium) good detox Brussel Sprouts (vit C) Cabbage (vit C) Carrots (vit A) Kale (vit A,C,K) Parsley (vit A,C) Spinach (vit C, K) Swiss Chard (high Iron, calcium, potassium, sodium) Turnip leaves (vit C,K, calcium) Watercress (vit C, calcium)	Almond (vit B2, E, calcium, selenium) Brazil (vit B1, E, calcium, selenium) Cashews (cooked) (Protein) Hazelnuts (vit B1,B6, E, selenium) Pecan (vit B1, B5, Protein, selenium) Pine nuts (vit B1, Protein)



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2.6: Peanuts and sunflower seeds

Many pet shops recommend monkey nuts as part of a parrot diet. However, we can't stress enough how inadvisable that is. Peanuts are not tree nuts. They grow underground in the dirt and are susceptible to a ground based fungi called *Aspergillus flavus*. These fungi can produce a toxin called Aflatoxin, which is a potent liver toxin. It can cause illness and death in humans and animals, and birds are extremely susceptible to its toxic effects.

This fungi can develop not only whilst nuts are in the ground, but after harvest to if the drying process is delayed and the moisture level is allowed to exceed what is required for mould growth. If you have a warm temperature, insects or rodents hanging around, as many farms do, this just exacerbates the situation.

For a safer way to go with your flock, simply replace peanuts with other nuts such as almonds or cashews and replace that occasional peanut butter bribe with almond butter instead. There are so many good things in the world that are safe for them to eat. Simply avoiding the questionable items is probably the best way to go in keeping your birds healthy and well-fed.

Sunflower Seeds

Too many sunflower seeds can eventually kill your parrot!! It is widely believed that feeding birds a diet consisting of only sunflower seeds is healthy – This isn't true. Although sunflower seeds are a good option for a treat, a bird shouldn't have too many. Unfortunately this belief has been rooted over many years, and to this day the pet food industry still offers this as a suitable diet. If one looks at the natural diet of a bird, it doesn't consist exclusively of dry seeds.

Feeding a bird on sunflower seeds is not good for its health.

- Not only are they very high in fat, they lack the necessary nutrients, vitamins and amino acids that a bird requires for optimum health.
- There is also a possibility of fungal infections with dry seed should the necessary precautions not be taken, and this could negatively affect the bird's health.
- Birds on a dry sunflower seed diet are more likely to pluck their feathers due to the psychological influence of high fat content in sunflower seeds, and the lack of nutrients in this type of diet.
- The high fat content can also lead to Lipomas and fatty liver syndrome. Lipomas, are a fatty tumour, and are most common in Amazons and Galah Cockatoos, but can affect any species of bird. With fatty liver syndrome, the functioning of the liver is affected and this leads to dry skin and makes the bird more susceptible to other diseases.



BIRDLINE PARROT RESCUE

3: HEALTH

3.1: Know your bird

The information below is there to help identify potential problems with your bird. Often with birds, time is of the essence – do not hesitate to take your bird(s) to the vet if you suspect that the bird is ill. If you have had your bird for a while, you will know them better than anybody. Any change in behaviour or appearance can indicate a health problem.

Weakness, laboured breathing, bleeding, trauma, collapse, seizures, or other nervous system signs are especially serious, and should be considered emergencies, and need immediate attention.

3.2: Signs of Illness

There can be many other signs not mentioned here that would indicate an unhealthy bird. However, to the novice aviculturist, the signs given in this list are the most common. It is always wise, having acquired a bird, to have it 'Health Checked' by an Avian vet, particularly if you intend to add it to existing birds in your home.

- **Is the vent (anus) clean?** *There should be no staining or faecal matter s around the vent.*
- **Does the bird have all his toes/toenails? Are the legs bent or bowed?** *This could be a sign of vitamin deficiencies.*
- **Is the bird perching well?** *When resting, a healthy bird would perch on one foot only.*
- **Are the eyes bright and clear?** *Any redness, swelling or discharge is a sign of illness.*
- **Is the bird active and alert?** *A bird that is fluffed up and lethargic can be unwell.*
- **Is the mouth and beak clean and free from injury?** *There should be no lesions, wetness or white spots inside the mouth. The beak should be free of deformities, i.e. overgrown or misaligned. Also, a bird with a very shiny beak is lacking in Calcium, or could be suffering from liver disease, trauma or even Psittacine Beak & Feather Disease.*
- **Are the nares (nostrils) clear and without discharge?** *Is there any sign of wheezing, sneezing, difficulty in breathing, noisy breathing, frequent panting and tail bobbing up and down? This can mean respiratory problems, or an infection such as Aspergillosis.*
- **Do the wings look smooth and even?** *If they have not been clipped, they should lay smoothly and evenly on the sides of the body.*
- **Is the body firm and fully developed?** *Feel the keel bone (breast) in the front. Does it feel sharp? If so, the bird may be underweight.*
- **Does the bird have all his feathers?** *Does he look plucked, and are there any bare areas on the body? If so, this may be an indication of poor diet or a stressful environment.*
- **Are the feathers fluffed in appearance?** *A fluffed up bird is trying to keep warm, and can indicate that they are unwell when combined with symptoms such as being unable to perch.*



BIRDLINE PARROT RESCUE

Signs of illness in birds as characterized by changes in general appearance or stance

- Huddled
- Sitting low on the perch
- Sitting on the bottom of the cage
- Hanging onto the side of the cage with his beak instead of sitting on a perch
- Head tucked under wing and standing on two feet
- Consistently ruffled feathers
- Weakness
- Losing balance, teetering or falling off the perch
- Lumps or swelling on any part of the body
- Picking at feathers or body
- Trembling
- Not preening
- Harassed by other birds
- Eyes dull, sunken or abnormal colour
- Walking in circles
- Unusual smell to bird droppings
- Drooped or elevated wing(s)

Changes in behaviour and general attitude that may be signs of disease in birds

- Inactivity
- Decreased or changes in vocalizations or singing
- Drooping wings
- Collapse
- Seizures
- Increased sleeping or eyes closed
- Poor response to stimuli
- Changes in personality, e.g.: more submissive, more aggressive
- Displaying juvenile behaviour, e.g.: begging for food.

Injuries

- Burns
- Bite wounds
- Injury from flying into a window or other object
- Bleeding



BIRDLINE PARROT RESCUE

Changes in legs or feet associated with disease

- Lameness, or favouring a leg
- Flakiness, crusting, or discolouration of feet
- Abnormal nail growth
- Shifting feet
- Swollen feet or joints

Signs of illness in birds associated with changes in breathing

- Difficulty breathing
- Breathing with an open beak
- Tail bobbing when taking a breath
- Sneezing
- Discharge or crusts around the nares (nostrils)
- Wheezing or clicking sounds
- Exercise intolerance (heavy breathing after exercise, or inability to exercise)
- Change in sound of voice

Signs of disease in birds characterized by changes in appearance of the head

- Discharge around the eyes and/or nares
- Squinting or half-closed eyes
- Overgrown or flaky beak
- Shiny black beak in a cockatoo (symptom of **Psittacine Beak & Feather Disease**)
- Loss of symmetry (one area seems swollen or smaller compared to other side)
- Redness or loss of feathers around the eye
- Discolouration of the beak
- Flicking or twitching of the head
- Head leaning or twisted

Changes in feathers suggestive of illness

- Ruffled or fluffed feathers
- Lost, misshapen or broken feathers
- Decreased preening
- Wet, stained, or matted feathers on head, vent or other area
- Dull feathers
- Long or excessive moult, bald spots
- Pulling or picking at feathers
- Abnormal colour or barring



BIRDLINE PARROT RESCUE

Changes in eating/drinking/digestion indicating disease

- Increased or decreased appetite
- Increased or decreased drinking
- Vomiting or regurgitation
- Straining to defecate or pass an egg
- Diarrhoea
- Swelling in the crop area
- Weight loss (use a scale) and/or prominent keel (breast bone)
- Discharge from mouth
- Inability to pick up food or manipulate it
- Protrusion from the vent

Changes in colour, volume, consistency and number of droppings

- Changes in colour of the **urates** (the normally white portion of the droppings) **urine** (the normally clear portion) or **faeces** (normal varies with species)
- Change in consistency: watery (increased urine) loose faeces (diarrhoea) hard faeces (constipation) indicating illness
- Bloody droppings
- Undigested food in faeces (undigested seed would appear like grains of rice)
- Decrease in number or size of droppings
- Increase in urates

3.3 Serious injuries, illness, deformities in birds

If you are Safe Housing a bird that becomes ill, or is injured and you can't treat it yourself, or you collect a bird which has an injury, illness, or deformity, **PLEASE IMMEDIATELY contact your Area Coordinator.**

You will normally be asked to take the bird to a Birdline recommended Avian Vet. Please check carefully that any vet who is treating the bird has a ZooMed qualification (not all vets within a practice will have the same qualifications so make sure the bird is seen by the correct professional. Please stay with the bird, and ask as many questions as possible. **DO NOT allow the vet to inject the bird with anything UNLESS you have agreed it with your ACO beforehand.**

Some vets will inject birds with medicines that are not suitable for them. Most Antibiotics are fine, however medicines such as Amitriptyline, Antihistamine, Steroids, Anti-Inflammatories, Anti-Mite are not always safe. If the vet wants to inject birds with any of these, please get in touch with Birdline first. If you find yourself in any doubt of the Zoomed approved vet, please contact Birdline with your concerns.



BIRDLINE PARROT RESCUE

If a bird needs a procedure, you must inform your ACO or Manager **before** anything is done. If it's an emergency, and Birdline cannot be contacted, please contact us as soon as possible. Vets should be aware they must contact Birdline prior to any emergency treatment. Some vets will want to do blood tests, scope tests, etc. etc. PLEASE do not let the bird have any tests unless you are satisfied that they are needed. For this reason you should ONLY use ZooMed Qualified Avian Vets recommended by Birdline.

Please be aware that birds have been known to have heart attacks and die from the stress of being examined, injected and having procedures such as beak and nail trims. No treatment should take place without serious consideration and approval from your ACO or Area Manager.

DO NOT BATHE THE BIRD; a sick/distressed bird needs warmth, darkness and quiet. If you suspect your bird has had a head injury do not use heat pads (or similar) as the heat can exacerbate head swelling.

Always discuss any treatment, especially ongoing, with your Manager.

3.4: When travelling a sick/injured bird

Place bird in the carrier, cover with dark towel (unless cockatoo, when cover should be plain white).

3.5: Plucked birds

Most plucking in birds is psychological, or due to a vitamin deficiency. If you collect a plucked bird, please discuss it with your Manager before taking it to the vet. If a vet visit is called for, please DO NOT allow them to treat with mite medication **UNLESS** they can prove that mites are present, it should not be used 'as a precaution'.



BIRDLINE PARROT RESCUE

3.6: Basic first aid kit for your bird

Always have a basic first aid kit to hand. It should contain a few simple things that will be useful should your bird become sick or injured. These are the essential items that should be available in case of an emergency:

1. A substance to stop bleeding (corn flour or cayenne pepper will do)
2. A bird-safe disinfectant (Avisafe, or F10SC*)
3. Cotton pads (not cotton wool) for cleaning wounds etc.
4. Tweezers and sharp scissors with rounded ends.
5. Savlon Cream (the ONLY safe human medication) or Aloe Vera Gel, to put on sore spots/wounds or Medical Grade Manuka Honey.
6. A soft, dark, plain towel for restraining an injured bird. If cockatoo, a white towel.
7. Probiotics/white cell support/electrolytes, i.e. Avi-Calm
8. Heat source (heat lamp to help with shock)
9. Pen light
10. Bandage material and micropore tape
11. Nail Clippers
12. Eye dropper/syringe (no needle) which **must** be sterile
13. Telephone numbers: vet/taxi/Birdline Helpline
14. Nebuliser (use a dilution of F10SC)*

* If using a nebuliser, dilute the F10SC (clear coloured, NOT GREEN) 1ml F10SC – 250ml sterile (or boiled, cooled) water. Put bird in carrier, or cover the cage, point the nebuliser's hose through the bars or just outside, allow machine to operate for as long as necessary, i.e. until breathing stabilises. *The clear-coloured F10 is also excellent for disinfecting cages etc.* **NOTE:** This is a measure to stabilise the bird. A vet **must** be contacted in an emergency.



BIRDLINE PARROT RESCUE

3.7: Nature's Aid for Birds

- **Alfalfa Powder** helps assimilate protein, calcium and other nutrients. Contains chlorophyll. Richest land source of trace minerals. Very rich source of Beta Carotene, Vitamin K and D. High in Calcium and contains Phosphorus, Iron, Potassium and eight essential enzymes. It is also high in fructo-oligosaccharides which fertilize healthy bacteria in the gut and neutralise bad bacteria overgrowth such as Candida.
- **Parsley** is used as a preventive herb. High in Vitamin B and Potassium. Rich in Iron, Chlorophyll and Vitamins A and C. Contains sodium, copper, thiamin and riboflavin, silicon, sulphur, calcium and cobalt.
- **Flaxseed** supplies the body with essential fatty acids. Not only are flaxseeds richer in these fatty acids than fish oil, but they also taste much better. Flaxseed also promotes strong nails, bones and healthy skin.
- **Bee Pollen** contains 35% Protein, 55% Carbohydrate, 2% Fatty Acids, 3% Minerals and Vitamins, high in B-Complex Vitamins A, C, D and E. Also contains Lecithin, Beta Carotene and Selenium. It is rich in vitamins and contains almost all known minerals, trace elements, enzymes and amino acids. It contains the essence of every plant from which bees collect pollen in combination with digestive enzymes from the bees. This combination of elements makes bee pollen an excellent source of antioxidants. Bee pollen is rapidly absorbed into the blood stream and stimulates immunological responses.
- **Chickweed** contains Vitamins A, C and some B, Flavonoids, Calcium, Phosphorus, Potassium and Zinc. It is used for skin problems, to treat blood disorders, gout and arthritis.
- **Dandelion Leaf** benefits liver function. Contains nutritive salts, protein, and is a rich source of Vitamin A. Also high in Vitamins B, C and E. Rich in Potassium, Calcium and Sodium. Contains some Phosphorus and Iron as well as Nickel, Cobalt, Tin and Copper.
- **Red Clover Blossoms and Leaf** contains Vitamins A, C, B-Complex, Calcium, Chromium, Iron and Magnesium, Red Clover has also been used effectively as a blood purifier and antibiotic.
- **Red Raspberry Leaf** contains Vitamins A, C, D, E and B. It is very high in available Calcium.
- **Rose Hips** are abundant in Vitamin C and helps combat stress.
- **Milk Thistle Seeds** support the liver's ability to maintain normal liver function. Milk Thistle works due to its ability to inhibit the factors responsible for liver damage, coupled with the fact it stimulates production of new liver cells to replace old damaged ones. Milk Thistle is also an antioxidant that is more potent than Vitamins C and E.
- **Barley Grass** is rich in Beta Carotene, B Vitamins and Vitamin C, the minerals Potassium, Calcium, Iron, Phosphorus, Magnesium, Chlorophyll, 8 essential amino acids and enzymes, including antioxidant and superoxide dismutase. In total, it contains 92 minerals and 22 vitamins.
- **Dill Weed** is high in Calcium and soothing to digestion.
- **Dulse** is rich in Protein. It contains 22% more than chickpeas, almonds or whole sesame seeds. Very high in Vitamins B6 and B12. Relatively low in sodium and high in Potassium. Rich in trace minerals.
- **Ginger Powder** is an absolute favourite taste of parrots. It's an excellent herb for the respiratory system as well as an effective cleansing agent for the digestive system. It contains Protein, Vitamins A, C and B Complex, Calcium, Phosphorus, Iron, Sodium, Potassium and Magnesium.



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- **Wheat Grass** contains too many nutrients to mention them all. It is especially high in Fibre, Protein, Chlorophyll, Beta-Carotene, Vitamin B Complex, C, E and K, most minerals and contains 18 Amino Acids. High in Fructo-Oligosaccharides.
- **Astragalus Powder** is an immunomodulator. It contains Glycosides, Polysaccharides, Choline, Betaine, Rumatekenin, and Beta-Sitosterol. It activates the immune system, thus enhancing the body's natural ability to fight disease and protecting the body against a number of toxins.
- **Chilli Flakes** are a digestive aid. These flakes act as an anti-inflammatory agent and aid in controlling pain.
- **Cinnamon** is also a favourite taste of parrots. It is a digestive aid and recent studies have shown it may help to eliminate E. Coli in food.
- **Turmeric Root** has five times more antioxidant power than Vitamin E. Contains curcumin and many other phytochemicals. Makes foods more digestible and possesses anti-fungal and antibacterial properties and protects the liver by detoxification and scavenging free radicals. It also breaks down fats.

NB: The benefits of Garlic or not, are still hotly debated among the parrot community and avian vets and therefore caution is advised.

BIRDLINE U.K.LTD.



BIRDLINE PARROT RESCUE

3.8: Poopology

The appearance of your parrot's droppings is one way in which their health can be identified. Therefore it is important to have a clear understanding of what a normal dropping looks like and what changes to droppings may indicate. The information below is taken from an article by Cher Angelo, originally published in parrochronicles.com and reproduced here with permission.

Poops should be solid and coiled like a snake, segmented or in pieces. The urine portion of the stool should be clear and watery. Urates should be an opaque white-beige crystalline material. Sometimes the urine and urates are mixed, creating a cloudy-looking material, but usually they are separate.

Not all changes in droppings indicate a health problem. For instance, different types of food can change the color of your bird's poop. Birds that favor pellets of a certain color may release feces that have taken on the same tinge. (The feces of birds who eat ordinary pellets are usually rust colored.) Strawberries may introduce a slight reddish color and blueberries, cherries and cranberries can turn fecal matter black.

Watery foods can make your bird's droppings appear looser than usual. Sometimes droppings may even be all liquid. However, as long as any fecal matter remains solid, watery droppings are not diarrhea. They are perfectly normal instances of polyuria, an increase in urine. In fact, long-time bird owners who feed a healthy varied diet including not only pellets but moist foods such as fresh vegetables, fruits, beans, pastas and cooked grains know that extra-wet droppings are the norm - they mean the bird is well-hydrated. You can expect to see an increase in urine also if your bird receives a scare or experiences stress, such as during a veterinary exam.

Birds on a seed-only diet pass dry and sticky or pasty-looking greenish-black feces, a reflection of malnourishment that eventually can lead to disease. Some species of parrots simply have odd-looking poop. For example, some healthy cockatiels have feces tinged a light green.

Poops can naturally vary in amount, too. Most birds hold their poop overnight until the next morning, when they release a larger-than-average dropping that may smell a bit, too. The exception to this rule are small birds with higher metabolisms such as cockatiels, who poop throughout the night and will have a pile of droppings beneath their sleeping perch the next morning.



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Laying females have different bowel habits, too. They drink more water than usual and spend more time in the nest box, where they will hold their droppings. When they leave the box, they expel large, smelly droppings. Baby birds still on weaning formulas have large droppings, too, with urine composing a large portion.

So as you can see, there are lots of reasons for changes in droppings that you don't have to be concerned about. Now let's discuss some changes that could mean health problems, starting with the feces, which is the dark, solid part of a dropping.

Changes in feces

One possibly serious change is diarrhea, which appears as loosely formed feces that are not coiled or solid but watery. Some folks think that the extra-wet droppings that come after a bird eats greens or watery fruits is diarrhea, but it's not. Remember, an increase in urine because of diet or nerves is normal. With diarrhea, the feces themselves are watery.

Diarrhea is rare in birds and usually indicates a problem in the digestive tract. Sometimes it's caused by introducing new foods too quickly. Other times the bird has eaten spoiled food, a foreign object, or a toxin such as lead. Antibiotics also can cause diarrhea. So can a bacterial or fungal intestinal infection, parasites such as giardia or roundworm, hernias, eggbinding, or disease. A bird with diarrhea often will have a "pasty vent," with fecal matter sticking to its behind.

If you think your bird may have diarrhea, or if you're just not sure, contact your veterinarian right away. Birds with diarrhea can become dehydrated and die within a very short period of time. Even in the absence of diarrhea, you should always be on the lookout for worms such as roundworm or hookworm in your bird's droppings.

Color changes

If your bird's red, gray or black feces can't be explained by a diet change, consult your avian veterinarian because these discolorations can mean something serious. Blood found throughout the stool usually means the bird is bleeding from the lower intestinal tract. It can be a symptom of intestinal infections, poisoning, warts, tumors, ingestion of foreign objects such as parts of toys, parasites, problems with egg laying or even eating cuttlebone or mineral blocks.





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Two years ago, I noticed that my pied cockatiel, Merlin, had bloody stools every time she nibbled a piece of cuttlebone that had been placed in her cage by a previous owner. As soon as I removed it the bleeding stopped. Fresh black feces are a symptom of bleeding in the upper digestive tract.

If you suspect your bird is bleeding internally, never wait to see if it gets better. If you wait until the bird shows signs of weakness, it may be too late to save it.

Here are some other feces abnormalities you should speak with your vet about:

- **Dark greenish-black coloration.** This could be a symptom of liver disease.
- **Undigested food.** If you notice any bits of seed or pellets, be worried. These symptoms could mean parasites, an intestinal infection, proventricular dilation, or a disease of the pancreas or other internal organs.
- **Tarlike consistency.** If you notice that your bird is defecating blackish, tar-like feces, it could mean he's stopped eating. In small birds such as lovebirds or cockatiels, the feces may turn dark and pasty within 24 hours. It may take 48 hours or longer for larger birds such as African greys and Amazons to have these dark, dense droppings.
- **Change in volume.** If you notice an increase in the amount of feces in each dropping, it could mean your bird is not digesting its food properly or is having a problem laying. Very small, compact, and dark droppings could mean your bird is not eating enough due to an appetite loss from illness or an internal obstruction.

Changes in urine

The clear, watery urine part of a bird's dropping can change very rapidly according to diet, stress, excitement - or disease.

- **Increase.** If a normal change in diet or emotion can't explain a dramatic or prolonged increase in urine, it could be an early symptom of a metabolic disease such as kidney disease. Poisoning, infections and drug reactions can also cause polyuria.
- **Decrease.** A dramatic decrease in the urine part of a dropping can indicate dehydration, which can rapidly lead to death.



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- **Pasty appearance.** Birds on malnourishing all-seed diets often have urine that dries into a white paste. Many people who feed seed diets often mistake this for a normal dropping.
- **Color changes.** Changes in the color of urine, normally clear, are pretty obvious and usually a sign of serious disease. The most common change is a yellowy or greenish tinge due to liver disease. Reddish-brown urine may indicate metal poisoning.

Changes in urates

A dropping's urates - the opaque white-to-beige portion - change much like the urine does when there's a health problem. A change in color to yellowish or yellow-green could indicate liver disease. Red or reddish-brown urates also can be a symptom of liver disease or lead poisoning. Some veterinarians believe yellowish green urates may also be a symptom of anorexia. If your bird's droppings seem to consist of more urates than usual, it may mean he is dehydrated.

Bubbly not good

Finally, you should watch for a couple of bathroom habits that could mean big trouble. For one, droppings that contain any bubbles or foam probably indicate an infection such as clostridium.

Another symptom of an underlying problem is straining. If you ever catch your bird having problems eliminating, get him to a veterinarian pronto. Straining could stem from a physical blockage caused by a growth or wart or another serious condition such as egg-binding.

Tests at the vet's

A lot of people ask me what kinds of fecal tests they should expect their vet to perform to determine general health. There are several tests your vet might use, depending on the bird's age and whether it seems sick or healthy. Vets tend to perform more tests on new birds than on older pets because there are more unknowns.

Before taking fecal samples for testing, your vet will ask you what recent stools have looked like and look at the droppings in your bird's carrier. This cursory visual exam will reveal general intestinal and liver health.

For a complete checkup, the vet will need to run what is commonly known as a gram stain on a fresh stool sample, usually one taken from the bird's cloaca using a swab.

Gram stains, which involve smearing a glass slide with feces and staining it to see bacteria under a microscope, can be used to check for bacterial and yeast infections that can make your bird sick. If the vet finds a problem, he or she will run an additional culture test on a separate plate to grow and identify the bacteria.



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Once identified, the bacteria is transferred to another plate upon which tiny labeled discs using various anti-bacterial agents are placed. In about 72 hours, the vet will know which anti-bacterial agents will do the best job of killing the bacteria and can prescribe an antibiotic for your bird.

With vets now able to pinpoint the best antibiotics for infections in birds, just as they do for dogs and cats, there's no reason left for owners to rely on the shotgun approach of trying various pet-store antibiotics.

The vet can also have your bird's fecal sample screened for parasites, which would show up under microscopic examination. Finally, your vet can use droppings to screen for fungal infections, which can be difficult to eradicate unless caught early.

On the poop deck

Monitoring your bird's bathroom habits might not be the way you pictured spending your time as an owner, but it goes with the territory of responsible caretaking. After all, preventative medicine works for birds, too.

So put these tips into practice, and soon you'll be on your way to picking up your Poopology 101 diploma!

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About the author

Cher Angelo has worked as an avian health consultant and lecturer for 10 years. She writes for the African Ark, a quarterly magazine published by the African Parrot Society, and advises on multiple avian mailing lists. She has an associate's degree in medical laboratory science and diagnosing and a BS in health science and also writes and lectures on chronic immunological and neurological diseases. She shares her Chelsea, Mass., home with Camelot, a 10-year-old Senegal; Gwenavere, a male Timneh African grey; and Merlin, a female pearl cockatiel.

BIRDLINE



BIRDLINE PARROT RESCUE

3.9: Psittacine Beak and Feather Disease (PBFD)

Psittacine Beak and Feather Disease (PBFD)

Description

Psittacine Beak and Feather Disease - The virus causing this disease is a member of the *Circoviridae*. The molecular structure of the genome of the virus is roughly a 2,000 base, circular, single stranded DNA. PBFD virus has a strong resemblance to Porcine Circovirus as well as to a number of plant viruses such as the Banana Bunchy virus.

The disease is thought to be specific for psittacines and all psittacine species should be considered susceptible. Parrots known to be particularly affected by PBFD include, but are not limited to, Cockatoos, Macaws, African Grey Parrots, Ringneck parakeets, Eclectus Parrots, Lovebirds.



Causes fatal infections, primarily in young birds. Older birds may overcome the disease with few lasting affects. Some believe that these surviving birds become carriers able to shed the disease at a later date.

Others believe that a percentage of birds are able to eradicate the disease from their system leaving them with a natural immunity that can be passed on to their offspring.

The virus that causes PBFD can also affect the liver, brain, and immune system causing diminished resistance to infections. Consequently premature death usually occurs from these secondary bacterial, fungal, parasitic, or viral infections.

Transmission

Transmission of the virus from one individual to another is primarily through direct contact, inhalation or ingestion of aerosols, crop-feeding, infected fecal material, and feather dust. The virus can also be transmitted via contaminated surfaces such as bird carriers, feeding formula, utensils, food dishes, clothing, and nesting materials. The viral particles, if not destroyed can remain viable in the environment for months, long after the infected bird is gone.



Symptoms

Symptoms include irreversible loss of feathers, shedding of developing feathers, development of abnormal feathers, new pinched feathers, and loss of powder down. Other possible symptoms include overgrown or abnormal beak, symmetrical lesions on the beak and occasionally nails. Immunosuppression, rapid weight loss, and depression are also possible in later stages of the disease.

Secondary viral, fungal, bacterial or parasitic infections often occurs as a result of diminished immunity caused by a PBFD viral infection. Additional symptoms not mentioned above including elevated white cell counts are generally due to secondary infections and may not be directly related to PBFD virus infections.



BIRDLINE PARROT RESCUE

Prevention

Strict isolation of all diseased birds to halt the the spread of the disease. DNA testing of all birds of susceptible species to rule out latent infection. DNA testing of aviary equipment and environment to test for possible contamination.

Treatment

No known treatment. Experimental vaccines are being developed.

Diagnosis

Skin biopsy, surgical biopsy of feather and shaft, or PCR testing of blood, swab, and feather samples.

PBFD should be considered in any bird suffering from abnormal feather loss or development. A biopsy of the abnormal feathers including the calimus (shaft) of the feather can be examined for signs of virus. However, since the PBFD virus does not affect all feathers simultaneously this method of evaluating a sample may have a high degree of error. Additionally, birds with PBFD can have normal feathers and the PCR test is the most effective method available for detecting the virus in birds before feather lesions develop.

Some birds infected with the virus, test positive, but never show clinical signs. Other birds which test positive may develop an immune response sufficient enough to fight off the infection and test negative after 30-90 days. Therefore, it is recommended to re-test all PBFD positive birds 60-90 days after the initial testing was completed. If the second sample remains positive, the bird should be considered permanently infected and can be expected to show clinical symptoms of the disease.

Testing

To test an individual bird a whole blood sample is recommended in conjunction with a cloacal swab or feathers (especially abnormal or suspicious-looking feathers) when possible. If the sample tests positive the bird should be placed in quarantine and re-tested after 4-6 weeks. If the bird tests negative the second time a third test after 4-6 weeks is recommended.

Post-mortem samples include liver, spleen, kidney, feather samples in a sterile container; postmortem swabs may also be submitted.

Environmental testing using swabs of aviaries, countertops, fans, air-filters, nest-boxes, etc. is extremely effective in determining the presence of PBFD DNA in the environment.

Many thanks to [Avian Biotech](#) for their permission to present this article.



BIRDLINE PARROT RESCUE

3.10: Psittacosis

Psittacosis Disease

Psittacosis, also known as ornithosis or chlamydiosis, is a common disease of many bird species. It is well recognised in parrot species, but is also common in pigeons, for instance. It is considered important not only because of its effects on birds, but in particular because it is a zoonosis: it is a disease which can be transmitted to humans.

The organism responsible for psittacosis is *Chlamydia psittaci* (recently renamed *Chlamydophila psittaci*). The disease is contracted by inhalation of contaminated dust from feathers or dried droppings. Infected birds may carry the organism for long periods without any outward signs. In periods of stress, such as travel, rehoming or in overcrowded accommodation, infected birds will shed the organism at higher levels. These situations are classic for transmission of the infection, and accordingly all new birds should be closely monitored for signs of infection. Ideally new birds should be tested for *Chlamydia* before being allowed to mix with resident populations.

The signs of psittacosis are varied, and almost any symptoms might be attributable to the disease. Classically it causes respiratory signs or diarrhoea. A bright green diarrhoea is a common sign, but psittacosis is not the only cause of such a sign. Other birds may just be vaguely unwell, lethargic, losing weight, have conjunctivitis or may seem to die suddenly. Remember that such signs are common symptoms of many diseases in birds. Young birds are more susceptible to a really acute infection while older birds will tend to have a more chronic form of the disease.

The clinical signs, circumstances of the illness and X-rays (the liver and spleen may be enlarged) will often lead an avian vet to suspect psittacosis. Confirming a diagnosis can only be done by laboratory testing. Unfortunately, the infection can be a difficult one to reliably detect on testing. Several different tests are available and may be performed on blood samples or faeces samples. Probably the most accurate is one called a PCR (polymerase chain reaction) test which multiplies DNA from the organism. The problem is that this test can take several days to provide a result, and so the vet may choose to perform a more rapid test in the veterinary practice or at the lab as well.

Sick birds are likely to be shedding generous quantities of the organism, and so a lab test on such a bird is likely to detect the disease if present. The problem comes when new birds are being screened, or tests are being performed on healthy birds as part of a general health examination. Even if these birds are carriers, they may not be shedding *Chlamydia*, and so a negative test can only be a guide. Current advice when testing healthy birds is to pool faeces from three days to send to lab to increase the chances of detecting the organism.



BIRDLINE PARROT RESCUE

It is possible to treat psittacosis. The treatment is long (6 weeks of antibiotics) and all in contact birds, whether healthy or sick, should be treated. It is important to ensure that any drugs administered are being given effectively. It is also vital to maintain strict hygiene to prevent spread of the disease to other birds or to people. Before ceasing treatment and removing affected birds from isolation, at least one further test for Chlamydia should be performed. As well as isolating infected birds, owners should be careful to minimise contact with droppings. Use of gloves and face masks is strongly recommended. Droppings and soiled cage debris should be disposed of by incineration. Pregnant women, children, elderly or sick people, persons on immunosuppressive drugs or infected with HIV should all avoid contact with affected birds.

In people psittacosis usually presents as a persistent and sometimes severe 'flu' like disease. Bird owners who develop persistent respiratory disease or influenza symptoms, fevers, severe headaches or weakness should discuss the possibility of psittacosis with their doctors. Once identified, the disease can be easily treated in people, but if not diagnosed it can progress to a severe illness. Fortunately the incidence of transmission to people is quite low considering how common a disease this is.

In order to reduce the chances of your birds developing psittacosis, the following recommendations should be followed.

- When buying new birds, take them to a veterinary surgeon for a physical examination and Chlamydia screening tests as soon as possible.
- Isolate new birds for six weeks before introducing them to your existing stock. Be sure to dispose of faeces and cage debris in such a way that your other birds are not exposed.
- When buying birds, use a breeder or supplier who regularly screens their stock for Chlamydia.
- Maintain good hygiene and disinfection in your aviaries, and reduce stress on your birds as far as possible.
- Many vets would advise a yearly screening test for Chlamydia.

Credit: C. N. Gorman, BVSc, MRCVS, AAV

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BIRDLINE PARROT RESCUE

3.11: Liver

In order to prevent fatty liver disease, remember that your bird does best on a low fat diet with all the vitamin, minerals, and amino acids needed to support life. All birds benefit from daily exercise and this is important to keeping your bird's liver healthy. Any food or drink containing theobromine is forbidden. Chocolate, cocoa, coffee, and tea contain theobromine, which can cause over excitability, cardiopathy, and death.

Absolutely positively do NOT give your bird ANY alcoholic beverages. Their livers cannot handle it. It is not funny to see a bird drunk and anyone who thinks it is should find their birds a more appropriate home.

Nutritional support is essential for the treatment of fatty liver disease. First and foremost there must be a change in diet away from high fat, high energy foods. It is important to change the diet to one that is much lower in fat. Ideally an organic formulated diet that has lower fat and lower protein should be started as soon as the diagnosis of fatty liver disease is made. Effort should be made to increase the bird's daily exercise. Every effort should be made to work with your avian vet to reverse the effects of fatty liver disease. In many cases there are secondary infections along with the liver disease and medications used should not be toxic to the liver.

Methionine is an essential amino acid. It belongs to the group of lipotropics along with choline. This amino acid like choline helps to eliminate fatty substances and helps to prevent excessive fat from being accumulated in the liver. "Methionine interacts with other components of the body's chemistry to detoxify harmful chemicals (such as ammonia) in the liver, the bladder and the kidneys. It is also a natural chelating agent that eliminates heavy metals from circulation. Finally, it acts as a lipotropic agent that prevents the liver from storing excess fat and reduces cholesterol by stimulating the production of lecithin." It promotes the breakdown of fat and affects the level of glutathione which plays a critical role in keeping out toxins. The liver as a filter is the detoxifier of the body and these compounds help to keep toxins out of the cells. Good sources of methionine are eggs, fish, and meat. Methionine is not available from plant sources.

There are some alternative treatments that can be used along with those that your avian veterinarian prescribes. There has been increasing success with the use of two herbals, **milk thistle** and **dandelion**. These are available in most good health food stores in liquid form. It is always best to buy the non-alcoholic variety when treating your birds. Aloe Detox is another that has been used successfully in the presence of liver disease. This preparation already contains milk thistle and dandelion as well as Echinacea which is an immune stimulant. There have been reports of improved liver function when using these. However everything should be discussed with your avian veterinarian before using any of them.



BIRDLINE PARROT RESCUE

4: HOUSEHOLD HAZARDS

It should be obvious to most parrot owners that there are hazards everywhere within our homes: from the basics such as leaving windows and doors open, to the chemicals we keep in our kitchen cupboards. From the moment we bring these birds into our lives, we have an obligation to protect them from such hazards and have a responsibility to safeguard them from any contact directly or indirectly with chemicals, toxins and other dangers.

4.1 Smoking and Vaping

Information from Birdtricks & Birdchannel.com

Smoking nicotine based cigarettes, herbal cigarettes and vaping can all have health implications for your birds. We all know that cigarettes are bad for you and cause health problems in humans. It is therefore common sense that they are bad for our feathered companions too. If a bird chews a cigarette like a shredder toy, nicotine poisoning can occur. Even just the filter end of a smoked cigarette contains 25% of the nicotine of the original cigarette. Signs of nicotine poisoning include twitching, increased excitement, panting, salivation, vomiting, increased heart rate, collapse, coma and cardiac arrest.

Second hand or passive smoking is also dangerous – this is the smoke that comes from a cigarette from either the burning or the filter end. The National Cancer Institute has this to say:

Second-hand smoke contains over 4000 chemicals, including 69 components that are known to cause cancer. Breathing second-hand smoke means breathing in formaldehyde, ammonia, cyanide, arsenic, carbon monoxide, methane and thousands of other chemicals. The concentration of these carcinogenic chemicals is actually higher in second-hand smoke than in the fumes directly inhaled by smokers. Second-hand smoke is classified as a class-A carcinogen, the same classification given to asbestos.

The jury is still out as to whether the chemicals used in vaping are bad for human health. But it is fair to say that it's better to be safe than sorry when it comes to vaping around your bird, as their respiratory systems are far more complex and sensitive than human lungs.

The Parrot's Respiratory System

Birds have lungs, which aren't lobed like ours. They also have air sacs which extend into their bones which are hollow. This makes them lightweight and enables flight. Birds have no diaphragm. Air is drawn in *and* expelled by the contraction of muscles. Because of this, respiratory infections can also extend to the abdominal cavity and the bones. Birds breathe slower than in mammals of a similar size. It actually



takes *two breaths* to complete a single respiration cycle. The second breath pushes the first through to the end of the cycle.

A bird's respiratory system is more efficient than ours in transferring oxygen. This means the toxins inhaled are delivered equally effectively. This is why a parrot will succumb to the same level of toxic fumes that would be easily tolerated by a mammal.

Feather plucking/picking can be caused by smoking

However, it is not just direct ingestion or passive inhalation of cigarettes that is bad for our birds. Handling a bird after smoking can lead to the transfer of nicotine and other chemicals from your hands to the bird's feathers, which they will later go on to preen – and ingestion of chemicals can occur simply via that contact. Cigarette smoke also rises into the air because it's heated. As it gets colder, gravity brings it back down. It lands on the bird, perches, cage bars, toys AND FOOD.

We have seen on innumerable occasions that when a heavy smoker's parrot is bathed, the water rinsing off is often a brownish-yellow colour. The feathers will smell of cigarettes, and this may well last until the feathers have moulted. Some parrots will pick out the feathers that smell, a habit that they may not be able to lose even after removed from a smoker's environment.

4.2: Window and Door Control

Being a responsible bird owner means changing your home environment to make it safe for your bird. Consider whether your bird could accidentally escape and how you might mitigate for this?

- Check what windows are open before you let the bird out the cage – close any the bird might get access to.
- If you have windows you have open regularly consider getting fly screens to cover them – they come in multiple varieties and basic ones can be bought online from Amazon and similar stores.
- Ditto with doors - try and ensure the birds are kept in a room with a door on, so it can be shut when you open front or back doors.
- if you have kitchen or patio doors that are often open – consider getting a fly screen for them.
- Don't forget a bird is on your head or shoulder and walk outside.
- Never trust a bird with clipped wings outside... they can fly higher and further than you might expect.
- Also be very careful when you walk out a room and close a door behind you – check your bird isn't trying to follow you. Accidentally shutting your bird in the door, can cause serious head and bone trauma.



4.3: Mirrors and Windows

Birds can suffer traumatic injuries if they hit a hard surface whilst flying – especially if they are frightened and panicking. You obviously can't remove every hard surface in your home. But do consider whether there is anything you can do about reflective or transparent surfaces such as mirrors or glass. For instance –

- You can buy stickers to put on surfaces.
- You could also consider using venetian blinds or net curtains at windows.
- Stick on (sucker perches) are also a good idea as these project out from the surface and give the birds a safe place to land.

4.4: Ceiling Fans

We have seen horrendous accidents caused by ceiling fans. Make sure your bird is NEVER in the same room as a ceiling fan when it is turned on. Our preference would be to remove ceiling fans, to make sure accidents can't happen.

4.5: Electrical cables

However many toys you buy for your birds – they do like to find their own entertainment and like small children – they often make a beeline for the “toys” they are not allowed to touch – such as electric cables. Cables can be fun to chew, but the metal wires inside them can cause harm to your bird. Of course they are also expensive to replace too. Make sure cables are kept as tidied away as possible. Where they have to be accessible, consider buying cable protectors.

4.6: Kitchen Appliances and equipment

The kitchen is a source of many dangers for our birds from hot hobs, and ovens to hot irons. It is sensible to keep your bird out of the kitchen when cooking and to be aware of the following hazards:

- Burns from touching or landing on hot equipment
- Fumes from cooking
- Splatter from boiling water or oil
- Fumes from self cleaning ovens
- Fumes from Teflon coated equipment
- Knives and other sorts of blades can be a danger – especially if you have a bird who enjoys exploring dark spaces like drawers
- Even washing machines and fridges can become a hazard when you have a bird who likes to explore



- Dishcloths may contain germs, bacteria or chemicals such as those found in washing up liquid or bleach – so never let your bird play with them

4.7: Common inhalants

Birds have very sensitive airways and fumes that we don't even notice – have been known to kill birds.

The following items are hazardous so keep in mind that they should not be used in the same space as your bird, and its best not to have them in your home at all, if possible. If you are undertaking DIY or a home renovation project – consider if and when you should send your birds to board elsewhere, whilst the work is undertaken.

- Scented Candles,
- Room Sprays
- Deodorants (use a roll on instead of aerosol)
- Perfume
- Hairspray
- Paint / Varnish / Dust and Chemicals such as sealants and solvents used in Renovation or DIY

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4.8: Toxins and Poisons

Most chemicals within the household environment are poisonous, both to humans and wildlife. We cannot stress how important it is to keep all chemicals away from birds at all times. **It's up to you as a responsible parrot owner to make sure your bird doesn't come into contact with any chemicals in the household.**

COMMON HOUSEHOLD POISONS DANGEROUS FOR BIRDS		
A cetone Air Freshener Aerosol Disinfectant Alcoholic Beverages Ammonia Antifreeze Ant Syrup & Paste Arsenic Asbestos Auto Products e.g. Oil etc. B athroom Cleaners Bleach Boric Acid C amphophenique Candles Carbon Monoxide Carbon Tetrachloride Carpet Cleaners & Deodorisers Charcoal Fluid Charcoal Lighter Chlorine Cigarette/Pipe Smoke Clinitest Tablets Copper/Brass Polish Corn/Wart Removers Cleaners (ALL) Crayons D eodorants Detergents Diazinon Disinfectant – Aerosols & Liquids	Drain Cleaners Drugs – Prescription/Over the Counter/ illegal E poxy Glue F abric Softeners Febreze Felt Tip Markers Floor Polish & Wax Formaldehyde Furniture Polish G arden Sprays Gasoline Glade Plug-Ins Gun Cleaner H air Dye Herbicides I odine K itchen Cleaners Kerosene L ighter Fluid Lye (Caustic soda) M atches Model Cement Model Glue Mothballs Muriatic Acid (Hydrochloric Acid)	N ail Polish & Remover Non-Stick Cookware O ven Cleaners, inc Self Cleaning Ovens P aint Paint Thinners/Remover Perfumes Perm Solution Pesticides Photographic Solutions Pine-Sol R ubbing Alcohol S having Lotion/Aftershave Shellac Shoe Polish Silver Polish Snail/Slug Bait Spot Removers Spray Starch Strychnine Sulphuric Acid Super Glue Suntan Lotion & Oils T urpentine W ax Window Cleaners Wood Preservatives Weed Killer



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4.9: Teflon or PTFA / PFOA

One of the most common killers in the kitchen is PTFE / PFOA coated cookware & utensils, e.g. frying pans, saucepans, irons. In fact, anything that is heated up and has a Teflon coating.

PTFE and PFOA are synthetic polymers used as a non-stick surface in cookware. The brand names Teflon and Silverstone are the best known, but PTFE/PFOA coated products are also manufactured under other trade names. The main problem with PTFE/PFOA is when heated up to a very high temperature it starts to give off toxic fumes undetectable by humans. Birds, however, are very sensitive to PTFE/PFOA poisoning, and can die within a few minutes of being in contact with these odourless, colourless fumes.

Teflon Toxicity (Ptfe Toxicosis)

The overheating of PTFE has been found to cause lung problems, not only in birds, but also in rats and humans. In people, the disease has flu-like symptoms and is known as 'polymer fume fever'. It is rarely fatal, although it can cause serious illness, especially in people with underlying respiratory disease.

However Birds are susceptible to a respiratory condition called 'Teflon Toxicity' or 'PTFE poisoning/toxicosis'. The signs of PTFE toxicosis are non-specific, and could be seen in a variety of respiratory and other diseases. Birds are usually found dead in the cage, or gasping for air, and eventually dying. Mild exposures may result in difficulty breathing, wheezing, incoordination, weakness, depression, anxious behaviour, or seizures.

The diagnosis of PTFE poisoning is usually made through physical examination, a history of using an item with a non-stick surface that was possibly overheated, and, if the bird has died, a post-mortem examination. The toxic particles released by overheated PTFE mainly affect the lungs. On post-mortem examination, the lungs are often dark red in colour, with haemorrhages and congestion may also appear in the trachea and bronchi.

Why are birds more sensitive to PTFE toxicosis?

The respiratory tract of birds is extremely sensitive to toxins in the air because of its unique anatomy. It is extremely efficient in exchanging gasses in order to provide very high levels of oxygen to the muscles for flight. While delivering oxygen so efficiently, it can also deliver toxic gasses. In addition, the small size and high metabolic rate of birds increases their susceptibility to airborne toxins. Birds, often canaries, have historically been utilised as sentinels for toxic gasses in coal mines because of this increased sensitivity



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Teflon in the Home

Please don't expose your bird to the risks of Teflon; it would be a good idea to make your household Teflon-free. Use stainless steel, or ceramic, instead of the so-convenient Teflon coated non-stick pans we find so useful within the kitchen. Also remember that there are lots more electrical items within the home that contain Teflon than we think.

The following items have been known to contain PTFE/PFOA:

Kitchen Items	Household Items
Cooking Utensils	Heat Lamps
Burners on stove tops	Portable Heaters
Pizza Pans	Hairdryers
Waffle Makers	Hair Straighteners / tongs / curlers
Sandwich Toasters	Hot Water Bottles
Slow Cookers	Ironing Board Covers
Coffee Makers	Irons
Non-Stick Oven Liners	Stain repellent (including carpets and upholstery)
Self cleaning Ovens	
Bread Makers	
Non Stick Rolling Pins	
Woks	
Deep Fryers	
Air Fryers	
Griddles	
Never-Stick Stainless Steel cook wear	



BIRDLINE PARROT RESCUE

4.10: Non-Toxic (Safe) Plants for Birds

If a plant is not on this list please seek advice from an Avian Vet before using it or growing it in the vicinity of your parrot. It is better to be safe than sorry.

Foliage Plants		Tree Branches
<p>Acaria Aloe African Violet</p> <p>Baby's Tear Bamboo Begonia Bougainvillea</p> <p>Camellia Chickweed Christmas Cactus Cissus (Kangaroo Vine) Coffee Coleus Corn Plant Crabapple</p> <p>Dandelion Donkey</p> <p>Tall Fern (Asparagus, Bird's Nest, Boston, Maidenhair) Figs (Creeping, Rubber, Fiddle Leaf, Weeping)</p> <p>Gardenia Grape Ivy</p> <p>Hen and Chickens</p> <p>Jade Plant</p> <p>Kalanchoe</p>	<p>Magnolia Marigolds Money Plant Mother-in-Law's-Tongue</p> <p>Nasturtium Natal Plum Norfolk Island Pine</p> <p>Palms (Areca, Date, Fan, Lady, Parlous, Howeia, Kentia, Phoenix, Sago) Peperomia Petunia Pittosporium Pothos Prayer Plant Purple Passion (Velvet Needle)</p> <p>Rose - Rosa</p> <p>Sensitive Plant Spider Plant Spiraea Swedish Ivy</p> <p>Thistle</p> <p>Wandering Jew White Clover</p> <p>Yucca</p> <p>Zebra Plant</p>	<p>Branches must be disinfected, rinsed very well and completely dry before being introduced to a bird's cage or play gym.</p> <p>Almond Any Citrus Apple Apricot</p> <p>Beech Birch</p> <p>Dogwood</p> <p>Elm</p> <p>Guava</p> <p>Magnolia</p> <p>Nectarine Nut (except chestnut & oak)</p> <p>Papaya Peach Plum</p> <p>Thurlow</p> <p>Vine Maple</p> <p>Willows</p>



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4.11: Plants that are Toxic for Birds

This is not a complete listing of all toxic plants. If you are unsure about a plant not on the list, please consult an avian vet, or do not use at all.

<p>Acorn Amanita Andromeda Arium Autumn Crocus or Meadow Saffron Australian Umbrella tree Azalea</p> <p>Baneberry - Actaea Beans (Castor, Horse, Fava, Broad, Glory, Scarlet, (Raw) Runner, Navy, Pregatory) Birds of Paradise Bishop's Weed Black Laurel Black Locust Bleeding Heart/Dutchmans Breeches Bloodroot Blue Bonnet Blue Green Algae Boxwood Bracken Fern Buckthorn Bulbs flowers (Amaryllis, Iris, Daffodil, Narcissus, Hyacinth) Burdock Buttercup</p> <p>Cascao Camel Bush Caladium Cannabis Cana Lily</p>	<p>Cardinal Flower Chalice (Trumpet Vine) Cherry Tree China Berry Tree Christmas Candle Clematis (Virginia Bower) Cocklebur Coffee (Senna) Coffee Bean (Rattle Bush, Rattle Box, Coffee Weed) Common Sage Coral Plant Coriander - Cilantro Corncockle Cotton Bush (Milkweed) Coyotillo Cowslip Crown of Thorns Cutleaf Philodendron</p> <p>Daphne berries Datura Stramonium – Brugmansia, Angel's Trumpet Death Camus Delphinium Devil Ivy Dieffenbachia</p> <p>Elderberry (Plant, not the berry) Elephant Ear (Taro) Ergot Eucalyptus (Dried, Dyed or treated in floral arrangements) Euonymus (spindle tree)</p>	<p>False Hellebore Felt Plant Fire Thorn Four O'clock Foxglove</p> <p>Glottidium Golden Chain Grass (Johnson, Sorghum, Sudan, Broom Corn) Ground Cherry</p> <p>Heaths (Kalma, Leucotho, Peries, Rhododendron, Mountain Laurel) Heliotrope Hemlock (Poison, Water) Henbane Holly Honeysuckle Horse Chestnut Horse Tail Hydrangea</p> <p>Ivy (English & Other)</p> <p>Jack in the Pulpit Jasmine Jimson Weed Juniper</p> <p>Kentucky Coffee Tree</p> <p>Lady Slipper Laniana – Red Sage Lantana</p>
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<p>Larkspur Leucothoe Lilly of the Valley Locoweed (Milk Vetch) Lords & Ladies Lupin</p> <p>Malaga Marijuana Mayapple Mexican Poppy Milk Bush Mistletoe Mock Orange Monkshood Morning Glory Monstera Deliciosa</p> <p>Naked Lady Narcissus Nettles Nightshade (Deadly, Black, Garden, Woody, Bittersweet, Eggplant, Jerusalem, Cherry) Nutmeg</p>	<p>Oak Oleander</p> <p>Peony Periwinkle Peyote Philodendrons (Split Leaf, Swiss Cheese) Pigweed Poinciana Poison Ivy Poison Oak (Western & Eastern) Poke Weed Poppy Potato Shoots (Tubers & Berries) Privet Pyracantha</p> <p>Rain Tree Ranunculus (Buttercup) Rape Rattlebox Red Maple Rhubarb</p>	<p>Sand Box Tree Skunk Cabbage Sorrel (Dock) Snow Drop Spurge (Pencil Tree, Candelabra, Snow On the Mountain, Crown of Thorn) Sweet Pea</p> <p>Tansy Root Tobacco Tomato leaves</p> <p>Vetch (Hairy, Common) Virginia Creeper</p> <p>Wattle White Cedar Witch Hazel Wisteria</p> <p>Yew Yellow Jasmine</p>
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4.12: Safe Wood

Please check that any wood you are considering is free of chemicals and pesticides, and **thoroughly** cleaned, disinfected and dried before use.

<p>Acaria (Silk Tree) Apple Ailanthus – Tree of Heaven Alder – White Alder Almond Aralia – Fatsia Japonica Ash – Fraxinus Aspen – Populus</p> <p>Bamboo Barberry – Berberis Birch Beech – Fagus Bois D’Arc – Horse Apple Tree Bottle Brush Butterfly Bush</p> <p>Citrus – Lime, Kumquat, Grapefruit, Orange, Lemon Cork – NOT Cork Oak Cottonwood – Populus Crabapple – Malus Crape Myrtle (not the same as Myrtle)</p> <p>Date Dogwood – Cornus Douglas Fir – Pseudotsuga Dracaena</p> <p>Elm – Ulmus Escallonia Euralyptus</p>	<p>Fig Fir – Genus Abies</p> <p>Ginkgo Grape Vines Grape Palm Guava</p> <p>Hackberry Hawthorn – Crataegus Hibiscus Hickory</p> <p>Ironwood – toxic leaves</p> <p>Larch - Larix Lilac – Syringa</p> <p>Madrone/Madrone – Arbutus Magnolia Maple – Acer Manzanita – Arctostaphylos Mesquite – remove sharp parts Mimosa Mock Orange – Philadelphus Mountain Ash – Sorbus Mulberry – Morus</p> <p>Nandina – Heavenly Bamboo Norfolk Island Pine – Araucaria</p>	<p>Nut Trees – except chestnut</p> <p>Orange Oregon Grape – Mahonia</p> <p>Palm Papaya Pecan Pine – Pinus Photinia Poplar – Populus Pussy Willow – Salix</p> <p>Raphiolepis – Indian Hawthorn Ribbonwood Russian Olive</p> <p>Sassafras Silk Tree Spruce – Picea Staghorn Sumac (Rhus, not Toxicodendron)</p> <p>Strawberry Tree – Arbutus Sweet Gum – Liquidambar Sycamore</p> <p>Thurlow Tree Fern</p> <p>Viburnum Vine Maple – Acer</p> <p>Weeping Willow – Salix Wiegela</p>
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4.13: Toxic Wood

If you are considering wood that is not on this list, please check with an Avian Vet before using it for your bird. Better to be safe than sorry.

<p>Alder – Red Alder Apricot (fruit ok, not leaves/wood) Arrowhead Vine Australian Flame Tree Avocado Azalea (related to Rhododendron)</p> <p>Black Locust (Robinia) Box Elder Boxwood – Boxus Buckthorn – Cascara, Alder Buckthorn</p> <p>Cacao Camel Bush – Trichodesma Canary Bird Bush – Crotalaria Cedar – Thuja, Chamaecyparis, Cupressus Cherry (fruit ok, pits/wood/leaves not) China Berry Tree – Melia, Texas Umbrella Tree Chinese Magnolia Chinese Popcorn – Tallow Chinese Snake Tree – Lacquer Plant sap is dangerous, too</p> <p>Elderberry Euphorbia</p> <p>Firethorn – Pyracantha Flame Tree – Brachychiton, Sterulia</p>	<p>Golden Chain Tree – Laburnam</p> <p>Hemlock – Tsuga Holly – Ilex Honey Locust – Gleditsia Horse Chestnut – Aesculus Huckleberry – leaves</p> <p>Jasmine</p> <p>Kentucky Coffee Tree</p> <p>Laurel – Prunus</p> <p>Mango (fruit ok, leaves/wood not) Mexican Breadfruit Mock Orange Mountain Laurel – Kalmia Latifolia Myrtle – broad leaf evergreen, is not the same as Crape Myrtle</p> <p>Nectarine (fruit ok, wood/leaves/pit not) Nutmeg</p> <p>Oak – Quercus all parts, tannins Oleander</p> <p>Peach (fruit ok, wood/leaves/pit not) Pear (fruit ok, wood/leaves/pit not)</p>	<p>Pencil Tree Pitch Pine Plum (fruit ok, wood/leaves/pit not) Prairie Oak Privet</p> <p>Rain Tree Red Maple Redwood – Sequoiadendron, Metasequoia, Sequoia Rhododendron</p> <p>Sand Box Tree – sap poisons fish Solanum – Jerusalem Cherry or Pepino Sophora – inc. Japanese Pagoda Tree, & Mescal Sumac Umbrella Tree</p> <p>Walnut Weeping Fig – Ficus Benjamina. Ficus Elastica is safe White Cedar – China</p> <p>Yew</p>
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BIRDLINE PARROT RESCUE

5: BEHAVIOUR AND ENRICHMENT

5.1: Gentle Dominance

Gentle dominance means you assert that you are the head of the flock without frightening, intimidating, or physically harming the bird. You cannot be in charge of your "flock" (even one bird constitutes a flock in their minds) if the flock doesn't trust you.

Aggressive training methods are simply lazy training methods. Screaming at your bird creates more dominance issues. A gentle voice of support and encouragement will turn around an aggressive bird almost instantaneously! Try it! Even if you are furious that you've been bitten, try speaking in a gentle tone, calming the bird. You'll be pleasantly surprised. If you feel you have to win at being the nastiest in the flock, you're in for a very long (and endless) battle.

Stepping Up and Down

The primary way to maintain the "highest branch" in your flock is to use the "Step up" command. You should use the "step up" command every single time you pick up your bird and some version of the down command when you set the bird down. This might sound too simple to be true, but believe it, it is highly effective. Consistency is important. Don't only say "Up" when the bird has done something wrong and you want to move him.

A basic rule-of-thumb is to not allow refusals to the "step up" command. If you have a hormonal bird, sometimes this might seem difficult. Putting a towel under your sleeve can help. If the bird is frightened of hands/arms, try using a cushion or perch to step up onto instead. Assess the bird first; don't use anything the bird is frightened of.

Dropping your bird to the floor as a training method is highly ineffective. It merely teaches the bird that you are an unreliable perch. The bird might be shocked into temporary submission, but this does nothing to promote a long-term relationship.

Control the Environment

One other major rule-of-thumb is this: when you open your bird's cage for it to come out, have the bird step up on command and remove him from the cage yourself. Don't let him just crawl out on his own. This further establishes your place in the pecking order. A parrot that's allowed to come and go out of its cage at will, or fly around the house, is not going to make good decisions for itself and be well behaved. Parrots



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defend the territory they occupy. Parrots need structure, and feel most comfortable with people that feel comfortable around them in a defined territory.

Physical Positions

Height is a position of dominance. A parrot that is allowed to hang out on top of a cage, play-stand, or your shoulder, may exhibit more aggressive behaviour. It is impossible to have eye contact with a parrot when it's on your shoulder. The ideal level for a parrot is your chest level, or lower. Too low (on the floor) and a parrot will feel vulnerable and insecure.

It is a good idea to have a separate play area rather than one on top of the cage, especially if the cage is too high for you to reach straight across it to pick your bird up. Having a separate play area where you can place the bird also helps avoid territorial aggression associated with the cage. There should be food and water available on the play area.

Teach your bird that fingers are not toys. Don't play with your bird with your hands in that way, especially with young parrots that are exploring and learning with their beaks. Present a toy or something to chew on instead of your finger

5.2: What is normal behaviour?

Parrots are naturally gregarious and social, so some vocalization is to be expected. Parrots like to communicate with the flock (you) in the mornings and evenings, and when they greet you. In the wild, a parrot is constantly calling to the flock when it is not resting. It is natural for a parrot to be noisy. However, it should not be screaming incessantly. Any parrot is capable of biting, especially if provoked, afraid or over-excited.

Signs your bird is overexcited

Some parrots experience an excitement overload phase, which is not the time to handle the bird. Frequently it will displace this excitement into a bite. Hormone surges can also make a parrot aggressive, especially if it is mating season. Learn to read your parrot's body language and recognize when your bird is not receptive to being handled. The following are all signs that your parrot should not be handled. Wait until signs subside before making any attempt to handle.

- Pinning eyes
- Flared tail
- Posturing
- Tightening of the feathers
- Raised Crest



- Excited or dramatic vocalizations

5.3: Why do parrots scream or bite?

Usually a behavioural problem doesn't lie with the bird, but with the owner. The best way to change our birds' behaviour is to change our behaviour and expectations of the bird, the 'wild' creature we share our lives with.

Fear

Parrots are prey animals, and safety is important to them. Most parrots bite out of fear. Excessive environmental stimuli can lead to nervousness and aggression. Make sure your parrot's visual area is clear of 'perceived' threats.

Punishment

A parrot doesn't understand punishment. Thumping the beak to make a parrot stop biting is a sign of aggression and will only make it worse. So will spraying a parrot with water, or shouting at it to shut up when screaming. All you're doing with these 'punishments' is reinforcing the bad behaviour. Parrots love drama and attention. They usually scream to get attention. By giving them any attention, like spraying them or yelling back, you have actually given them a drama reward, which is what they wanted, and you have taught your parrots to scream even more. Once this bad habit is entrenched, it is very hard to break.

Boredom

Some parrots will scream out of boredom. In the wild, a parrot is very active: flying, foraging for food, interacting with the flock. What is a day in the life of your bird like? Is there plenty to do? Make sure your bird gets plenty of exercise. A large, horizontally built cage is best, but if your space is limited, provides ladders, swings and toys to help your bird keep busy. Take your bird out every day and give it 'flapping' exercises.

Diet

Diet also has an effect on behaviour. It has been published that birds on mostly seed diets are louder and more aggressive. Dietary change may not solve the problem, but it is part of the solution. Remember - diet is what a parrot actually eats, not what it is offered.

5.4: Stopping my Parrot screaming or biting

Any parrot is capable of biting, especially if provoked, afraid or over-excited. Correcting a biting or screaming problem is a step by step approach.

1. First, the owner needs to establish a position of flock leader. Establishing controls with our companion parrots is always a first step to resolving behaviour problems. Owners must have sufficient 'rank' in the parrot's eye before the bird will respond to training. Teach "step-ups" to the point where the step-up command is automatic.



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2. Ensure your bird gets enough sleep. Our companion parrots need at least ten hours of undisturbed sleep every night and can get cranky when they don't get enough. This can be an underlying cause of biting or screaming. If the parrot is housed in the centre of activity, try transferring the bird to a sleep cage at night. This is a smaller, spartanly-equipped cage, set up in a room that is unoccupied at night with no audio or visual stimulation.
3. Observe your bird's body language. Do not handle your bird when he is showing visual signs of overexcitement.
4. Handle your parrot when you are calm. A parrot knows if you are afraid of it. Flock creatures behave in a manner similar to other members of the flock. The emotional tempo of human flock members will have a direct impact on avian behaviour.
5. When a parrot is screaming and you know nothing is wrong (it has food, water, not caught in a toy etc.) it is best to just ignore the bird. Or you can try responding by using a soft contact whistle, and ignoring (thus replacing) the loud raucous calling. When praised for positive behaviours, the bird will learn to concentrate its attention on them, while rejecting undesirable activities that gain little or no response from the owner. Praise is one of the most important tools for altering behaviour. Try praising your bird when it is sitting quietly.
6. Keep a journal recording the time of day the screaming or biting is occurring, what is happening at the time, your response, and so forth. Notice patterns of behaviour and change the way things are done to avoid these - you should notice gradual improvement over time.

In conclusion, our feathered companions are fully armed with all the same instincts that their wild counterparts possess. They are in unnatural environments, which encourage unnatural behaviours. Behaviour changes take time, especially if the behaviour has been habituated over a long time. All members of the household need to participate in a behavioural modification program. If the owners can't define clear and appropriate boundaries for the parrot, how can the bird be expected to know what is acceptable?



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5.5: Light

Most keepers of parrots assume that the light coming through the windows will be enough for their feathered friends, especially if augmented by the normal incandescent (light bulb) or fluorescent tube room lighting. However, Parrots thrive on a balanced amount of light, both in terms of its wavelength, duration and timing.

In the wild the majority of birds wake up at dawn and go to bed at dusk. This provides the bird with approximately 12 hours of sleep a day. Maintaining a similar balance with your companion bird will provide the best environment for your bird's health – both physical and mental.

However without a dedicated UVAB light, it is impossible to achieve the correct wavelengths of light required inside the house. There are quite a few 'natural' light sources available on the market. The better ones tending to be fluorescent tube based, although there are some incandescent varieties available. Manufacturers have spent considerable resources and money developing these 'natural' lights so that the light they provide forms an even spread across the spectrum. Birdline recommends Arcadia bulbs/lamps, which are specifically designed for birds, as opposed to those that claim to be beneficial to both birds and reptiles.

You can't beat natural sunlight however, so putting your bird outside safely i.e. in a carrier/cage in the warm weather is advised under supervision. Please always make sure the bird has access to shade, especially if it has been showered/wet. This is so that if the bird gets too warm it can seek shelter.



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6: WHAT TO DO IF YOUR BIRD ESCAPES

This is a list of useful information we have compiled to help you if you lose your parrot.

6.1: As your bird is flying away

- Call to your bird loudly, as he is flying – it may help him find his way back to you. Try to use noises/sounds/words that he knows.
- As he is flying, don't take your eyes off him. Note the last place you saw him, the level of his flight, how tired he looked. He may have landed in that area. (Radio or phone contact for a group of people searching can be very helpful in this situation. Grab your mobile phone!
- Check for strong winds which may have pushed your bird in one direction, and note this down too.

6.2: Searching around your local area

- Contact a group of local people to help if possible, spread out and circle the area you last saw him.
- Ask everyone you see/can think of to spread the word. Dog walkers, people who deliver catalogues, neighbours who walk to work, children who walk to school, paper delivery people, postmen/women.
- Talk to aviary owners in the area, the sound of their birds may appeal to yours, and they may pay a visit.
- If you are in the country, talk/call local farms and ask them to keep an eye out.
- If you can't see him, call to him. He may call back. Say words he knows or mimics. Most parrots are located by their screams!
- Listen at dawn, when birds are most vocal – until it's light enough to search for food.
- If you have another bird he likes, put that bird in a travel cage and bring it to the area he was last seen. Walk away from the bird in the travel cage. It might encourage it to scream/call.
- This may inspire the lost bird to scream/call back. Keep talking to a minimum so you can listen for the scream.
- Look carefully in a limited area (within 1 mile) in the early stages of your search. Parrots usually don't go far unless blown by the wind, chased by a bird of prey, or extremely frightened.
- Keep in mind your parrot may see you before you see him. When this happens, parrots are sometimes very quiet. This may be because the parrot is more comfortable now that you are present.
- Despite some parrots bright colours, they can be very difficult to see in trees. Look for movement buried in the trees as opposed to your whole bird perched prominently on a branch.



6.3: If you have located the bird, but he's out of reach

- Once you locate your bird, **try to relax**. It is better to let the bird sit where he is (if he's inaccessible) while you work out a strategy. Do not frantically try to grab the bird, or scare him down. If the bird has just landed, he will probably not fly again for a while.
- Try to calmly call your bird down from where he is, offering bribes of his favourite treats, i.e. garlic bread, chips, something that smells strongly, even if not recommended treats. It's more important at this point to retrieve your bird safely.
- Bring things to him that are familiar, like toys, his cage, his bird friends, his favourite person.
- **Avoid having a crowd of people around the bird's favourite person**. A scared bird may not want to fly into a crowd of strangers. Give the bird's favourite person lots of room.
- Do not put unfamiliar objects up to your bird to have him step onto. More than likely this will only scare him to fly farther away. If you have a familiar item like a perch out of his cage, you may have a chance that he will step onto it.
- Keep in mind things like ladders, people climbing trees, cherry pickers, etc. may also scare your bird.
- Go extremely slowly if you resort to using these items. **Stop any action immediately if your bird looks like he wants to fly away**.
- Try moving from your bird's sight on occasion (but keep him in yours). This will create a level of anxiety in him which may cause him to try to come to you once you reappear. Usually birds will scream and/or start moving around a lot when they are ready to make an effort to return to you. If you notice this activity, come out from hiding. If you hear your bird screaming while you are hiding, he may be ready to fly, or is already in the air. Come out of hiding right away. Most parrots scream when they are flying in this type of situation.

6.4: If your bird is still out at sunset

- Parrots will usually fly again shortly before the sun starts to set.
- As the sun starts to set, he will start to fluff his feathers and get ready to roost for the night. **At this point, it is best to just allow him to go to sleep**.
- Keep an eye on him until the sun has set completely. Remember his exact location.
- Before the sun rises the next day, return to that location. Your bird should still be there, unless he was frightened in the night (other birds can cause this).
- Usually by dawn your bird will be ready to fly again, or make an attempt to get to you. Repeat the advice described in the section 'If you have located your bird but he is out of reach'.



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6.5: Who to inform

- Put LOST posts on as many different parrot forums you can think of including the many Lost and Found Bird / Parrot / Animal groups on Facebook and local community Facebook groups. You can also register with the Missing Pets Bureau.

What to Say and what not to Say

In your adverts include

- **A PICTURE** if possible, as not everyone will know what type of parrot they are looking for.
- **A BRIEF DESCRIPTION** of what your bird looks like when flying (colour, length of tail).
- **THE BIRD'S NAME** so people can call for the bird.
- Give a **CURRENT PHONE NUMBER**, one with an answer phone would be best.
- **DON'T PUT ANY IDENTIFYING DETAILS LIKE WORDS/SOUNDS, UNUSUAL MARKINGS AND RING NUMBERS, as people could then ring any 'FOUND' adverts and claim the bird for themselves.**

Register the bird as missing in as many places as possible including

- www.ParrotAlert.com
- www.theparrotsocietyuk.org/lost-parrots.php John Hayward keeps a Lost/Found Register.
- www.rspca.org.uk
- www.rspb.org.uk local bird-watchers may help look out.
- www.petsbureau.co.uk
- www.animalsearchuk.co.uk

6.6: Posters!

Lost bird registers such as Parrot Alert and Animal Search UK will generate a poster you can download. If you prefer to make ones yourself make sure you include the information suggested in the above section.

Some suggestions of where to post your Posters

- Give to neighbours (also ask the neighbourhood watch if you have one).
- Put them in community buildings, on notice boards (ask permission first).
- Where people queue. Bus stops, train station, chip shops, etc.
- Ask permission to put one on school notice boards.
- ALL local vets (not just avian). Internet search will bring these details up.



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- Dog grooming parlours, sounds daft but they walk their dogs a lot and may catch sight of your bird whilst walking.
- Put Posters up at the nearest park or area with trees.
- Give one to the milkman/woman, the postman/woman, paper boy.
- Put one up in supermarkets, petrol stations and local shops.
- Lamp posts in the area your bird was last seen.
- Police Station.
- Ring your local papers/radio stations to see if they will put the word out, too.
- Now with the internet you can also put 'free' adverts on lots of places such as Facebook marketplace, <http://www.preloved.co.uk> and <http://www.admartfreeads.co.uk>

GO BACK TO ALL THE PEOPLE ON THIS LIST ON A WEEKLY BASIS TO REMIND THEM YOU ARE STILL LOOKING.

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7: SAFEHOUSE GUIDELINES

Safe Houses are the backbone of Birdline. Without them, we can't rescue parrots at all. You don't have to be super-experienced, you just need to be willing to learn, and listen to advice. Birdline has been rescuing parrots for many years, and we have a wealth of experience we are happy to share. If you are a 'newbie', you will have lots of help, and lots of people to answer questions.

As a Safe House, you take a bird into your care on a temporary basis. The bird has usually just been donated, and is therefore disorientated, sad, and frightened. For the first few days it needs special attention and care until it settles down. You will sometimes have some information provided by the owner, but often this information is not comprehensive enough, nor accurate. This means you will be working 'blind' with most of the birds. **Do NOT rename a Safe House bird – he's lost everything, don't make it worse.**

Some birds are 'found' and no background information at all is available. In these situations you have to take time to get to know the bird and its needs, remember for the first few days especially, if it is a found bird, it will be very frightened. Keep such birds isolated for at least 30 days, to prevent any possible illness spreading.

You may be asked to take in a 'Special Needs' bird. These birds need extra care, and you may need to provide medicines and vet visits may be necessary. If this is the case, Birdline will pay for the cost of these, provided that all expenses are cleared with your ACO first. Any queries about the treatment of Special Needs birds should be directed to Melinda Laws.

If you feel a bird has become too much to cope with, then call your ACO or Area Manager. As a Safe House you are at liberty to say 'no' to taking a bird you feel you can't cope with. We are all volunteers, no one is **made** to take on a bird.

If a bird at any time in your care, is sick or injured, and needs to see a vet, it is important that you contact your ACO **immediately**. If you cannot contact your ACO, then call your Area Manager. Failing that, contact the Director of your area, or the Helpline. **If the matter is urgent**, and you have tried and been unable to contact anyone, take the bird to a Birdline-approved AVIAN vet.

You should treat the bird as if it was your own, but you should try not to get too attached to it. We know this can be difficult, but the bird may have to move on. For every bird you keep in your home, that's one less bird you can help.



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You should not allow birds in your care to bond with each other, especially if one of the birds is your own bird. We understand that this is difficult but you should endeavour to allow socialisation but not bonding. It is against Birdline policy to split a bonded pair.

Rehoming your Safehouse Bird

Once you are confident that the bird can be rehomed, you should fill in an Evaluation Form online, and send it to your ACO, along with a picture or two of the bird outside the cage, so that the bird can be placed on the Rehoming List. Please note your Evaluation should be detailed and accurate.

Once the Rehoming Director has approved a Foster to take place, your ACO will contact you to arrange the logistics of moving the bird. The responsibility of the bird is that of the ACO, and any decisions to be made concerning the bird must be agreed with the ACO before any action is taken. You **must not** contact the new home directly to arrange a hand over. NEVER hand over a bird without prior notice from your ACO or Manager. If you have any doubt about any representative that is collecting a bird from you, call the Helpline.

ALWAYS use paperwork. Sometimes a bird needs to be relayed to another part of the country, or a different Safe House. Print two copies of the Bird Receipt, both to be filled in and signed by you, and by the person receiving the bird. Make sure that the bird's ring number/microchip details are included on the Bird Receipt. This is for your own protection – it leaves a paper trail that can be checked, so Birdline knows exactly where each bird is, and with whom.

Fostering your Safe house Bird

It is difficult not to 'fall in love' with the birds in your care, and many of our Safe Houses apply to Foster their birds. We have no objection to this, but please remember that we desperately need Safe Houses and cannot operate without them. The more birds you Foster, the less space you will have to take in Safe House birds, and sadly there is always another one around the corner who needs your help. Please consider if you still have space to be a Safe House.

Fostering can only be authorised by the Rehoming Director



7.1: Items a Safe house needs to provide

Whilst the bird is in your care you will be responsible for making sure it has everything it needs.

- You should give it the attention that it needs, be it training, socialisation or special medical care.
- Some birds come with cages, some without, so you will need to have access to a spare cage, perches and toys. If you do not, tell your ACO.
- A suitable carrier for the species of bird you are approved to care for.
- You should keep a basic First Aid Kit in your home, and you should be able to deal with a small injury – see Section 3.5
- F10SC disinfectant (clear - **not green**)

Dietary Requirements

- Fresh water at least once daily.
- Fresh fruit / veg – please refer to our dietary advice.
- Zolcal – D Calcium supplement – especially for African Greys.
- A multi-vitamin powder such as Avi-Mix Daily Essentials or similar.
- Harrisons/Zupreem/Optibird/Animalzone/Kaytee/Hagen/Pretty Bird pellets*
- A good quality seed mix such as Johnson & Jeff Low Sunflower, Bartholomews Avian Specific (AS20), Tidymix (10% off for Birdline Members) (sales@tidymixdiets.com), Parrot Premium Plus (Witte Molen) available from Rob Harvey.com**
- If you wish to use a different feed, please check with your local ACO or Area Manager first.

* Birds on a pellet diet shouldn't need vitamin supplements, but fruit/veg/sprouts/grains/pulses should be offered to provide variety and interest. No bird should be starved to 'encourage' it to eat pellets, any major change in diet should be done very gradually.

Many birds have a preference for seed-based diets; in this case it should be a low sunflower seed mix, with **NO MONKEY NUTS at all. A variety of fruit/veg/grains/pulses should be given daily, and a calcium supplement and vitamin supplements too. Please see the Vitamin & Mineral sheet for more information. Powdered vitamins can be added to the water, but it's better to mix them with soft fruit, or seeds that have been tossed in a few drops of walnut oil or similar to make the seeds tacky, then the powder will adhere to the seeds.



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7.2: Common abbreviations we use

Positions / Documents:

ACO	Area Coordinator	LCA	Lifelong Care Agreement
BR	Bird Receipt	PTS	Put To Sleep
BL	Birdline	PP	Parrot Passport
dBase	Database	SH	Safe House
EVAL	Evaluation Form	SC	Species Check
FA	Foster Agreement	TSHA	Temporary Safe House Agreement
HC	Home check	Vits/Mins	Vitamins & Minerals
MGR	Manager		

Birds

AMMIE	Amazon	'KEET	Parakeet
BFA	Blue Fronted Amazon	(L)SC2	(Lesser) Sulphur Crested Cockatoo
B/G	Blue & Gold Macaw	M2	Moluccan Cockatoo
BHC	Black Headed Caique	MBC	Maroon Bellied Conure
BUD	Budgie	OWA	Orange Winged Amazon
CAG	Congo African Grey	QUAK	Quaker / Monk Parakeet
CAN	Canary	ROS	Rosella
CC2	Citron Crested Cockatoo	SENNIE	Senegal Parrot
CEL	Celesial / Pacific Parrotlet	'TIEL	Cockatiel
EKKIE	Eclectus Parrot	TAG	Timneh African Grey
GCC	Green Cheek Conure	'TOO	Cockatoo
G/W	Green Wing Macaw	U2	Umbrella Cockatoo
IRN	Indian Ringneck Parakeet		