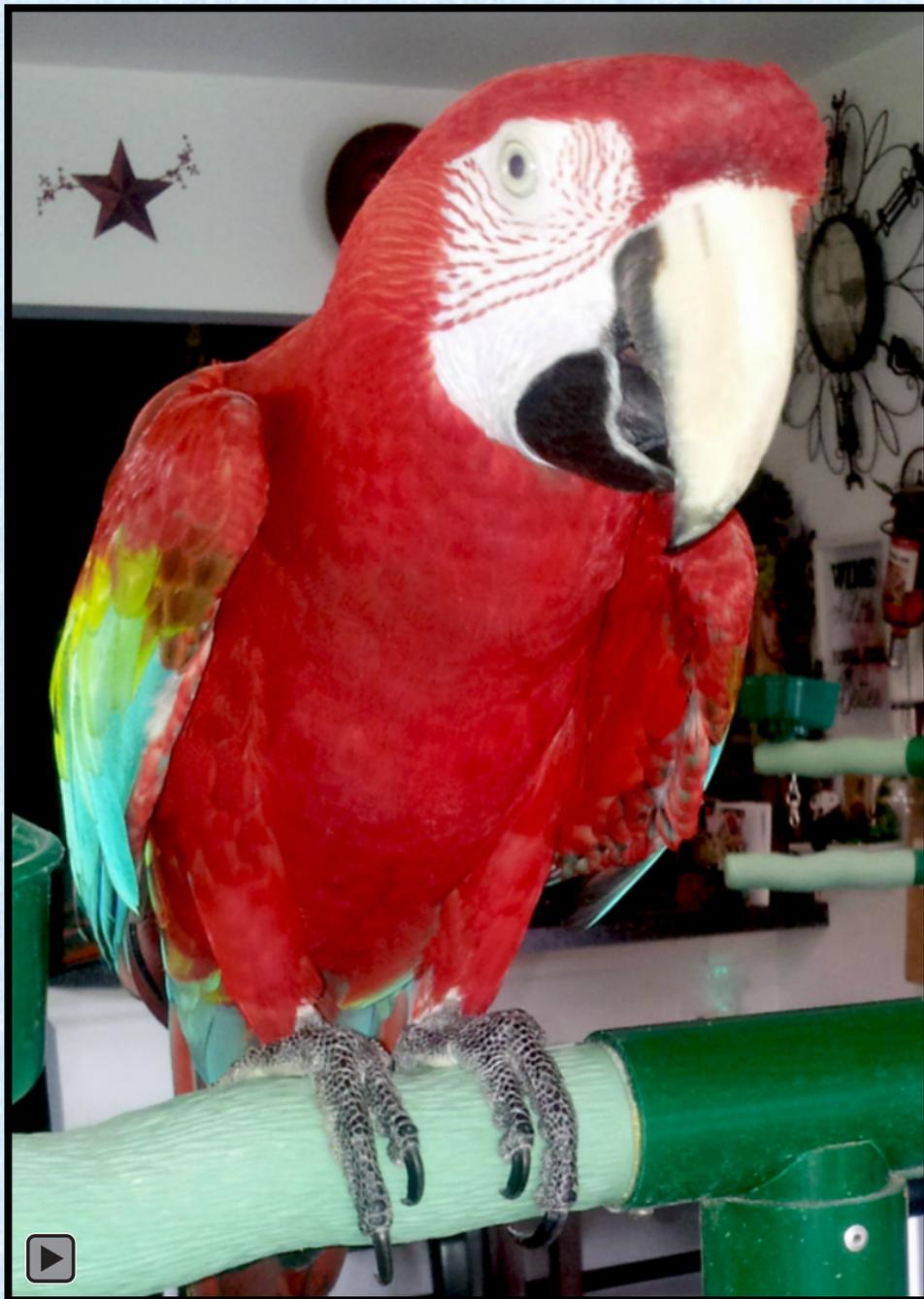


Flappers

A monthly publication of the Flapping Feathers Parrot Club
Volume 7 Issue 4 April 2016



The Flapping Feathers Parrot Club



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Editor's Message

When the club was first founded, I thought it was a good idea to have a meeting twice a year on a Sunday afternoon so that those who could not attend our regular Wednesday night meetings would be able to make it to a Sunday afternoon meeting. But lately nobody who does not normally come to a Wednesday night meeting has come to a Sunday meeting, and members who normally come to Wednesday night meetings often cannot make a Sunday meeting due to other plans. So it was unanimously agreed upon at the April Sunday meeting to no longer have the twice a year Sunday meetings.

The club will now always meet the 4th Wednesday of each month, except in November if the 4th Wednesday is the day before Thanksgiving (which it usually but not always is), and except when we have a weekend party in place of a regular meeting (which we usually do twice a year).

The Massachusetts Cage Bird Association Mart has been moved from May 29th to June 12th.

The [2016 Parrot Lover's Cruise](#) is November 6 - 13, sailing from San Juan, Puerto Rico.

The [2016 AFA Convention](#) is August 4 - 6 in Cromwell, CT. Everybody should go to at least one of these, especially this one because it is so close to where most of us live. You can register online [here](#). I have not seen any discount being offered for early registration yet, so I don't know if this will be offered.

A reminder - if a photo has a blue border around it, such as the ones on [page 11](#) and [page 29](#), it means that you can click on it, usually to see an associated video.

Some recent interesting links:

[Flightless Birds](#) - click the arrow on the right side of each photo.

[Audubon Society Photo Winners](#).

[The Oasis Sanctuary Online Auction](#) - April 28 - May 18.

[Cornell Lab's Bird Cams](#).

[800 Ducks Making Wine](#) - I guess they have to make money some way.

[Tanzania](#) -it looks like an interesting place to go. Watch the video on the page.

[Some nice wildlife photos](#).

Happy Mother's Day, and I probably won't get the May newsletter out before the end of May, so Happy Memorial Day!

Shelly Orloff
Executive Director and Newsletter Editor
Flapping Feathers Parrot Club of NJ
sheldono@sprynet.com or
editor@flappingfeathers.org
201-791-0245 ∞



May 2016 Meeting

Wednesday, May 25, 2016

7:30 pm

[Land and Sea Diner and Restaurant](#)

20-12 Fair Lawn Avenue

Fair Lawn, NJ 07410

201-794-7240

Repeating stuff follows for the regular meetings that we have at the diner:

Everybody receiving this newsletter, and even those who do not receive it, are welcome to attend any or all of our meetings. I usually send out an email a few days before each meeting as a reminder to everybody I know in this area whose email address I have. If you happen to read this newsletter and you did not get a reminder message, it probably means I do not have your email address; please [email it to me](#) if you wish to be notified.

If you wish to check the menu before coming to a meeting, [click this link](#) and then click the Menu button. You will then need to click the lightly colored menu pages, one page at a time. Or [click here](#) to see the entire menu as one scanned pdf document.

Please let me know 1 or 2 days before each meeting if you are coming or if you think you may come, so that we can arrange for the correct number of tables to be set up. You can also come without notice, but it's a little better if we know ahead of time. Contact Shelly at sheldono@sprynet.com or 201-791-0245 to let me know if you wish.

So far our waitresses have been giving us separate checks, which is very convenient. Hopefully this will continue. But even if they don't, each of you will just pay for what you order; the bill will not be equally split. So if you just have a cup of coffee, you will not have to pay \$10 for it.

Hope to see you at the meeting,
Shelly ∞



Flapping Feathers Parrot Club

Web address: www.flappingfeathers.org

[Visit our Facebook Page](#)

Email: flappingfeathers@flappingfeathers.org or info@flappingfeathers.org

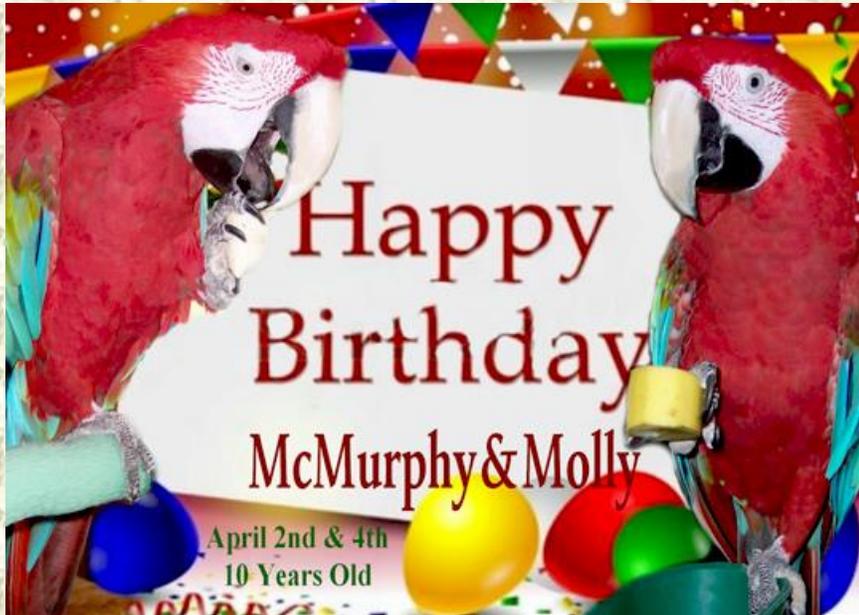
Phone: 201-791-0245

Location: Fair Lawn, NJ 07410

[Instructions for viewing and printing the newsletter](#)

[View the cover movie](#)

April Birdie Birthdays



Greenwing Macaws McMurphy and Molly

Birthdays: April 2 and April 4

Age: 10 years

Parent: Linda Costello



Citron-crested Cockatoo Lucy

Birthday: April 16

Age: 26 years

Parent: Linda Wielkotz

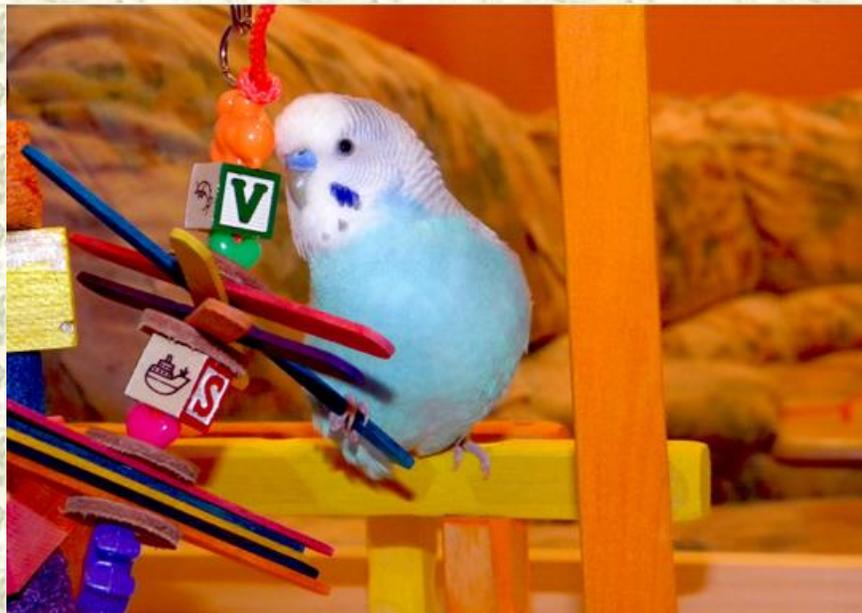


Please submit pictures of your bird(s) the month before their birthday(s) for inclusion on our Birdie Birthday page.

Email to Shelly at sheldono@sprynet.com.



April Birdie Birthdays



Budgie Charlie

Birthday: April 30

Age: 2 years

Parents: Ann and Mark Zych



Out and About with Pookie

by Steve Plafchan

VP and Editor

Rainbow Feathers Bird Club and Rescue

www.rfbirdclub.com

April 2016

Reprinted with permission from the author

Well, Steve's recovery and retraining from his bout with the Cockamaw virus is continuing although the retraining is doing better than the recovery. First I'll talk about his recovery issues.

If you recall last month's article, one of the more severe side effects of the Cockamaw virus (aside from the desire to hold, handle and keep a Cockatoo in our home) are the medical side effects, the worse of which is blindness. Yes, because of his handling and snuggling with Cockatoos prior to his body creating anti-bodies to fend off the virus, Steve went blind in his left eye. After undergoing laser surgery to reattach his retina, his vision has somewhat recovered; however, there are at least two more surgeries, possibly as many as four, to go yet. By the time this article goes to print he will have had cataract removal surgery in his left eye. If that is successful, then he will have to have additional laser retinal surgery in his left eye followed by cataract removal in his right eye. Oh, and before I forget he also must squeeze in some oral surgery. I haven't mentioned teeth prior to this time because we are parrots and we don't have to worry about teeth, we

have beaks. Problems with a human's teeth are also a rare side effect of contracting the Cockamaw virus; they become soft and brittle and have a tendency to break and fall out. I will do my best to keep everybody apprised of how Steve is coping with his medical issues.

We also have another plan of action; we have enlisted the help of an expert in the hazards and recovery of having the Cockamaw virus. His name is Doctor Max or Maxine (we're not sure) and he is proficient in assisting with the recovery of humans that have this affliction. According to Dr. Max the best thing to do is increase Steve's exposure to African Grey affection. So we had Dr. Max move into the back room by Steve's computer so regardless of what he is doing there is a Grey nearby. We have African Grey parrots in the family room and in the computer room spreading grey dust throughout the entire house. Hopefully his exposure to grey dust all day long every day will wean him off of the desire to handle Cockatoos. He will still have to undergo surgeries to correct the blindness and dental problems but with any luck maintaining a close proximity to a true Grey all day every day



will assist Steve in his recovery and place the Cockamaw virus into remission. I will do my best to keep everyone abreast of his progress.

Chirps and Squawks
Pookie

∞



A Word From Me...

Caveat Emptor

by Flapping Feathers member [Elise Negrin](#)

April 2016

*Caveat emptor is a Latin term that means "let the **buyer beware**." Similar to the phrase "sold as is," this term means that the **buyer** assumes the risk that a product may fail to meet expectations or have defects.*

That said, we all should be "Buyer Beware" when it comes to our pets. Animals can't tell us their history or background. How do you truly know if that bird you saw in the pet shop is a year old or 5 years old? You don't; not really. I get a lot of feedback from the average pet owner, one who does not necessarily have a lot of experience with birds. In the last 6 months, 3 people have come forward to tell me they bought a bird (at a high cost) that they were told was a year old and it turned out to be more than 3 years old according to their veterinarian. I'll never mention the name of the bird store, but right here in South Florida all 3 were from the same bird store. I'm so disappointed I want to say something to the owner, but then again he will not care and I will make an enemy, which is bad for our parrot club. Also, the shop I am discussing herein is dirty.

Too many shops are dirty and the public screams about

corporate stores like PetSmart or Petco. I have never walked into a corporate store that was dirty. I can only pass on the warning to people to ask they not believe what the local pet shop proprietor tells you. They are in it for the \$\$\$\$. Even highly regarded, highly knowledgeable owners of bird stores lie. For them, it's the bottom line that counts. Birds die. Birds get sick. We can sell them another one.

Baby birds are adorable; very helpless and dependent. Now I know I am preaching to the choir in this forum, but people... If you know someone who is acquiring birds too fast and too many, step up and say something. I have.

Back to the pet shop problem: What can we do about it? If a store is dirty, leave. It is much better to leave the poor bird behind because if you make a pity purchase, the store owner was successful in making a sale. He obtains another older surrendered bird for the same purpose and so the cycle goes. One thing I have to laugh about, which is really not funny is the lie that the store trained the young bird they are trying to sell to you. Not true.



There are so many rescues and clean decent breeders out there, there is no reason to buy from a store. Anyone can contact their local bird club to find breeders and rescues.

Q. What is the difference between an African Grey of 2-3 years old bought at a pet store (being told the bird is just a year old) and an adopted Grey of 3 years old?

A. \$500-\$1500 dollars.

Awareness is key. All of us experienced parrot owners must be vigilant and try to publicly let people know their alternatives. Much like recent legislation disallowing pet stores from selling puppies and kittens, I would like to see the same for bird stores. 'Buyer Beware' should be our mantra in all we do.

∞

Maureen's Musings - April Showers

by Maureen Halsted

Member of the Budgerigar & Foreign Bird Society

www.bfbsbirdclub.com

April 2016

Reprinted with permission from the April 2016 Budgerigar & Foreign Bird Society newsletter



“April showers bring May flowers!” Okay, so what is it about that sentence that causes humans to get excited?? I mean EVERYONE knows rain is instrumental in helping things grow, like grass and such. Ever notice how the budding trees (in the Spring) suddenly have more new leaves after a gentle April shower? So why do they single out one particular flower? Why not say “April showers bring Crocus.” Hmmmm, after saying that out loud, the Clan and I have realized that it just does not sound as flowing and pleasing, maybe that is why.

Mom says May flowers, (also known as “Trailing Arbutus”), are a very pretty, tiny, trailing vine like flower with a sweet scent, (sort of like an apple blossom), and they are very elusive. Mom says they had one wee patch of them where she

used to live in Quebec. Well whatever. We have never ever seen any, so we will just have to take her word for it!!

April the 1st is also known as “April Fools’ Day”. Apparently on this day, some humans play pranks on one another, then say: “April Fools!” That sounds very juvenile to The Clan and I, so after the usual “round cage” (er, table) meeting/discussion, we have decided that is waaaay beneath our superior intelligence.

However, upon scratching around a little deeper into this topic, we discovered April Fools apparently originated in the 1500s, and had something to do with some guy ordering a new type of calendar. Once again, more to do over nothing. Just more paper to shred as far as we are concerned!

Some years we also have the yearly visit from the Easter Bunny in April. However, this year he visited the good ‘chicks’ (kids) in March.

Now what is much more exciting (to us anyways!), is the fact that more and more of our little



summer feathered friends are returning everyday!! Some are already nest hunting, or renovating an old nest.

Unfortunately, the big old pine in our back yard by our house, took a major hit in the ice storm we had near the end of February. That was always a safe haven from the hawks for our wee friends. Many nesting sites have been lost. We do have other pines, however they are not as close by, and therefore not as safe.

Anyways, I must fly now, as I am missing out on the latest ‘gossip’!

*Rikki, The Clan
and
Maureen Halsted*

∞

The Cockatoo Dilemma

by [Lynda Lewis](#)

President of The Alaska Bird Club

www.alaskabirdclub.org

April 2016

With days getting longer we see an increase in what I call the cockatoo dilemma. This is where we get almost overwhelmed with cockatoo calls. Either for help (thank you thank you for keeping your bird and working through this) or to rehome. Male cockatoos bite suddenly, females are nesting in every dark space they can find, refusing to come out. Personally I would rather stick my hand into a nest of rattlers than a dark space with a nesting 'too inside! Both sexes scream, shred, pluck. So I want to give a few starter tips that may help someone new to cockatoos.

1. If I am a plucker, please don't adopt me with intentions of "fixing" me! More than likely you will be sadly disappointed. First thing you should do is consult with a vet. Make sure your cockatoo feels safe and secure with lots to play with and tear up. Plucking is a habit very hard to break and once plucked for a length of time becomes permanent. Adopt for the love of the bird and not appearance of the feathers. Also just because the bird plucks does not mean it is abused. I have seen the best taken care of birds pluck and mutilate and the birds in the worst condition beautifully feathered.

2. It is not that your bird won't eat this, that and the other. It is more like you have not consist-

ently offered your bird that food in creative ways at the right time. If you consistently offer fresh food fed in various forms and times of the day, your bird will eventually eat it. If your bird loves pasta and won't touch kale and carrots, try cutting up the veggies into shreds, topping it with pasta and giving it as breakfast with no other food in the cage.

3. Screaming... the biggest complaint I hear. Yes it can drive us to tears and at times seems like it will never stop. But you chose this! If you did any self-education before buying a 'too you should know they are notorious for screaming. They scream for a reason. Whether it be hormones or attention or boredom. The worst thing you can do is respond each time your bird screams. Screaming back gives the bird attention, good or bad it is attention. Running into the room teaches them to call you. Better to ignore ignore ignore. When your buddy settles down and is quiet even for a minute praise to the highest, give a reward and the attention he/she seeks. If they start, walk away again.

4. Be ever watchful for behavior you want to see repeated. Praise praise praise to the highest and give lots of attention when you see those behaviors. Your companion needs to know what you expect. They do truly want



you to be happy with them. They live to love you and be loved back!

5. If your bird is starting to get worked up and you know bad behavior is coming, redirect immediately. As you get to know your bird you will learn to read body language. If you know a yell or misbehavior is brewing, redirect with a toy or song before the behavior occurs. Learn to train your companion for a few tricks. These tricks can be used to redirect your bird's mind when you see that temper tantrum coming! The better you train, the easier life with your bird is. I think training a bird to step up on a perch is essential. No one can train your bird but YOU. It again, like everything else, takes time and commitment.

6. As you can read a bird's body language, they can read yours. If you are stressed, angry, yelling,

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Common Household Hazards to Parrots

by Michael Sazhin, "The Parrot Wizard"

www.trainedparrot.com

March 31, 2016

Reprinted with permission from the author

Keeping our companion parrots safe and healthy is a top priority. Sure parrots are evolved to survive well on their own in the wild. However, the artificial environment of the human home can pose many dangers that a parrot would not be exposed to in the wild.

Being familiar with common household dangers is a must. But simply being familiar isn't enough. It is important to enact rules and systems into place that ensure that these dangers are removed or cannot be accidentally introduced. This article is by no means a definitive list but it is something to help get you thinking about bird safety.

Dangerous Food

Anything bad for people is already bad for parrots. Definitely no alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, or narcotics. Coffee, tea, and chocolate are a big no-no for parrots because the light buzz effect we might get from them can cause heart problems and dehydration in parrots. Nothing with caffeine in it. And frankly no human drinks either. Parrots don't need to be drinking anything but water (nectar drinkers aside). A little bit of natural fruit juice can be safe but doesn't serve a purpose, better off just eating fruits then.

Parrots should not be given peanuts! The peanuts themselves aren't toxic but the shells can contain Aflatoxins which

can be lethal. The risk just isn't worth it when there are plenty of safer nuts available. Excessively salty, sweet, or processed foods aren't toxic but they are bad. The more natural the better. Be careful to properly wash or peel skins from fruits as they can contain dangerous pesticides. Fruit pits/seeds are known to contain cyanide and should be avoided as well.

Avocado is another food that can be lethal if consumed by parrots. [According to Donna Muscarella PHD](#), "Avocados are definitely toxic to parrots. They contain a cardiac glycoside ("persin") that leads to rapid cardiac arrest and death." While there have been some sightings of wild parrots consuming avocados, it is not understood if they have specific adaptations, natural dietary supplements, special selection skills, or if they do eventually succumb. For this reason, Dr. Muscarella concludes that "because avocados are so highly toxic to at least some species - and because there is no way to know this for a particular bird ahead of time - it is best to avoid feeding them."

Below is a video of Lorelei Tibbets LVT on the subject of intentional or unintentional feeding of avocados to parrots:

Dangerous Pets

Other pets, particularly carnivorous pets such as cats, dogs, snakes, and ferrets can pose a



life threatening danger to household birds. There are too many cases where the innocent dog that never hurt a fly catches a bird like a frisbee and that's the end of the bird.

However, another pet that can pose a big danger to a companion parrot is another parrot. Whether of the same species or not, even birds that get along can sometimes hurt or maim each other. It is important to give in depth consideration to keeping multiple parrots in direct contact of each other almost to the same degree as other kinds of pets. Also, parrots can harbor diseases or parasites so contact without quarantine can be dangerous as well.

Dangerous Plants

Both household pot plants and woods can pose a hazard to your bird. Some woods, including oak and nutmeg can be dangerous. Obviously don't use these for perches but also take care that your bird isn't chewing up something that contains these. Plywood and MDF board can be dangerous because of the glues used to put them together.

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Certain pot plants can be dangerous as well. Here is a [pretty extensive list](#).

Flight Hazards

Parrots are birds and birds can fly. Even with clipped wings, under certain circumstances, birds can fly just enough to fall into the same dangers that put flighted birds at risk. It is important to prevent the danger of ceiling fans, open doors, open windows, open water, and other dangerous things around the house. Furthermore, it's important to be careful not to slam a flying (or walking) bird with a door. It's important to hide/remove any toxic things around the home (or bird roamed area) that can be dangerous if chewed. Most of these will fall under environment anyway. [But here's a more extensive flight safety article I wrote in the past](#).

Environmental Hazards

There are many things that can harm our parrots around the

house with or without them coming in direct contact. If they chew on wires, they can get electrocuted. There are many things that are toxic or just too dirty to be chewed. Care must be taken to prevent or supervise because left alone, you can only imagine the kind of trouble your parrot could get into. Teflon cookware, even used at a distance, can spew lethal fumes throughout the house. Aerosols sprays, scented candles, paints, and glue fumes can be dangerous as well. Avoid whenever possible. Keep the bird far away and the area well ventilated if unavoidable.

Human Hazards

Perhaps the most under looked danger to household parrots comes from humans themselves. Sure there are dangers such as mishandling or stepping on a bird. But the biggest danger still is complacency. Ignorance is just as dangerous but hopefully can be solved through learning. But complacency is being aware of things that are dangerous but

doing them anyway. This type of mindset is what ultimately leads to harm to birds and it is the worst kind because it was avoidable.

The biggest reason people get complacent is because most of these hazards do not lead to instant death or do not necessarily cause harm every time they are encountered. Not every bite of avocado will be toxic, not every peanut will have aflatoxins, not every dog will try to eat the bird. However, over time, the continued exposure to these risks substantially increases the likelihood that the parrot will have long term health damage or death as a result. [This is an article about how making excuses harms your bird](#).

There are so many dangers that are outside our knowledge or beyond our control. The least we can do to make our experience together safer is to take the known threats seriously and avoid them.

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(Continued from page 10)

upset, your bird picks up on your emotions very easily. If you are high energy or negative energy, you are more likely to experience a bite. Take a cool down time and lower your energy before letting your bird out. Do not fight or yell at your SO or children in front of the bird! This will encourage your bird to look at that flock member negatively.

7. Read read read. Read books, read the tips from experts on the Internet. Then take what works for your bird and use it. Not every book and tip work nor is anything a bible of birds. Like with children, we all have our own ways of dealing with our companions. Learn all you can. Use what works the best for your lifestyle. We all just do the best we can with our feathered friends and none of us are perfect. NONE of us - not even the experts!

I hope this helps while you are learning with your companion parrot. Remember it does not matter if we have had our birds twenty years or two months, we are always learning something new. Having a companion bird is not like having a pet or a child - it is like having a lifetime of adventure! They drive you to distraction but you end up loving them so deeply and they impact your life so strongly. Not even words can express the feelings of having a deep bond with a bird. ∞



Cockatales - Who Says Budgies Are Wimpy???

by Dave Kearsley

President, Durham Avicultural Society of Ontario

www.twitter.com/durhamavicultur

April 2016

Reprinted with permission from the author from the April 2016 Durham Avicultural Society newsletter

The other day, while watching my flock of budgies flying around and interacting in their flight cage, it occurred to me just how interesting and appealing these little guys can be. Feeding, squabbling, pairing up, preening, and of course, never ending chatter. None the less, they can be fun to watch. Recently, several DAS members attended the store of one of our advertisers, and I watched as quite a number of people gathered around their budgie display, and a number of birds were picked out and sold. Children and adults alike, the appeal of these colorful little birds was unmistakable. And yet, even though they are always a popular bird, always in demand, it's amazing how little is actually known about them. Just watching and listening to the talk, this was very apparent.

There's always some old wives' tale involving budgies. For instance, it's not true that only the male will talk; this stems from the fact that it's usually only the male canary that sings. However, the female budgie can talk as well as the male, and sometimes better; the secret is to get them as young as possible. Another thing, they do not

need another budgie as a companion. Yes, they are flock birds, flying, feeding, and breeding in huge flocks in their native Australia. In the home of the owner, this owner should be the companion they think the bird needs. If two or more budgies are placed together, they will bond with each other only, and will regard their owner only as someone who feeds and supplies their needs. And the practice of placing a mirror in the cage with a lone bird should be discouraged, if a person wants hands on relationship with their bird.



Whenever I go to these meet and greet affairs and we take birds along, we get crowds coming over to view them, and it's great speaking to these folks. Some always ask if we are selling them, or adopting them out. But when I ask them if they have a bird or birds at home, I'm often surprised at some of the answers I get. Some have never owned a bird, but right away, they want a more glam-



orous bird like a cockatoo or macaw. We try to recommend a cockatiel or budgie as a first time bird for these people, and the odd time, they seem disgusted with that idea. "Aw they're wimpy!" is what I hear, or if someone does have one at home, they seem almost ashamed to admit it. And why? Well, some consider them to be a living, feathered toy, a plaything for children. And yet, in a home where a budgie is a very tame, well talking bird which freely mingles and associates



(Continued on page 15)

Quality of Environment Explains Why Some Birds Choose to Neglect Their Hungriest Chicks

by University of Oxford

www.ox.ac.uk

March 30, 2016

Reprinted with permission from University of Oxford

Scientists have long been aware that in some species of bird, parents will prioritise feeding the neediest chicks, whereas in others they will focus on the strongest offspring. Until now, though, the reason behind this discrepancy has remained a mystery.

A comprehensive new study from the University of Oxford finds that the quality of the local environment can explain which chicks in a nest a parent bird decides to feed. This helps resolve a long-standing question in ecology about whether parents respond to signals of need (such as how much a chick begs) or signals of quality (such as a chick's colour) when making feeding decisions.

For example, species living in favourable, predictable environments (such as tree swallows in North America) choose to feed begging chicks that are in poorer condition relative to their siblings, whereas parent birds in unfavourable, unpredictable environments (such as blue-footed boobies in the Galápagos Islands) preferentially feed chicks that are in the best condition, regardless of how much other siblings in the nest beg.

The study is published in the journal *Nature Communications*.

Shana Caro, a PhD student in Oxford's Department of Zoology who led the research, said: 'There have been hundreds of studies looking at the phenomenon of begging in birds, many of which have found strange results and contradictory patterns.'

'Our analysis of these studies found that there is a universal explanation for these discrepancies: the predictability and quality of the local environment.'

The researchers compiled the available literature – more than 300 studies – on the parental care preferences during feeding of 143 bird species across the globe and analysed how this variation in care relates to the condition and behaviour of offspring, as well as the environmental conditions in the area in which each species is found.

Shana Caro said: 'In good ecological conditions, such as those with predictable and abundant sources of food, you tend to find that the chicks in greatest need of food make the most noise and do the most begging.'



Tree swallows in North America are among the species of bird that feed the neediest chicks first.

Photo: [Shutterstock](#)

'But when the ecological conditions are less favourable – for example, if the amount of food available is less predictable – it's the highest-quality chicks making the most noise. It's almost like boasting instead of begging – they're essentially saying "invest in me, I'm the safest bet".'

'In the latter case, parents want to focus their attention on the strongest chicks to make sure at least some of their offspring survive in these unstable environments. Some species, such as the hoopoe, will even try to force-feed bigger chicks when they don't need food, completely ignoring weaker offspring that are making much more noise.'

The findings indicate that local environmental conditions can influence the evolution of parent-offspring communication systems and explain why

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previous studies that do not consider environmental variation have not been able to identify consistent behavioural patterns across bird species.

Shana Caro said: 'We also found that there are multiple signaling systems being used simultaneously by chicks. As well as the traditional begging signals such as loud noises and the wide opening of mouths, there are what we call "structural" signals and cues,

including how bright orange a chick's mouth is, how big it is, or how much UV light is reflected by special feathers only seen during the nestling period.'

'These structural signals are closely associated with high-quality chicks in poor environments. Parents pay more attention to structural cues like body size because they can't be exaggerated – the worse the environment, the more incentive there is for a chick to make more noise in an effort to be the one that survives.'

Senior author Professor Stuart West of Oxford University said: 'By looking at the variation across species we are able to explain why we observe so much variation in the ways animals attempt to get food from their parents.'

The paper 'Unpredictable environments lead to the evolution of parental neglect in birds' is [published in Nature Communications](#).

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(Continued from page 13)



with its family, visitors are in awe with the talent and vocabulary the bird comes out with. Because this bird got lots of attention and hard work put into it. They talk to it all the time, were gentle with it and probably very generous with the treats. When people go to the pet shops and buy male and female pairs, do they get these results? Not likely. That's why if you check the Internet ads, there are a lot of ads concerning unwanted budgies looking for forever homes. Ads which include, the cage, food and accessories, and often at an inflated price. I bet if one bird

had been procured, the story might have been different.

I've heard the store help tell people all kinds of things. Like they need another bird with them, that old birds are young, that females are males and vice versa. And that they will do well on just a seed diet. They can exist on just seed but many people are surprised to learn that their budgie can eat veggies too; corn, broccoli, romaine, spinach, celery, and apple. Many held the belief that wing clipping is cruel. One lady actually believed that we purposely amputated their wings, and wanted to report us to the authorities. I heard so many tales about owners who took their unclipped birds outside, secure in the belief that their bird would never leave them. Only to see them take wing and fly off, never to be seen again. On the subject of a well loved pet, go on YouTube and look up Disco. This is a normal, light green budgie who can speak well over a hundred words very clearly; he is positively amaz-



ing. Budgies tend to learn from a female voice rather than a male, maybe something in the pitch.

One thing I've also noticed, the store owners sometimes tell me that green birds are very hard to sell, too ordinary I'm told. Well, the bird doesn't know what color it is. Again, it's the age of the bird, and the amount of attention they get from the start; they are, after all parrots. You know, the average person doesn't know that. But if you were to take a young budgie, give it the time, and just maybe, that little bird won't be such a wimp after all. See you at the meeting.

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Parrot Brains More Efficient Than Ape Brains

by Christine Hsu

www.hngn.com

March 3, 2016

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Calling someone a birdbrain might actually be a compliment. New cognition research suggests that bird brains are actually more efficient than our significantly larger mammalian brains.

Researchers said the latest findings may finally reveal why some birds like ravens and parrots, found to be smarter than most mammals, are equally as clever as apes despite having much smaller brains.

In the past, scientists thought that birds were only "smart" in specific situations like gathering food. However, newer research reveals that bird intelligence is actually more versatile and complex than previously thought. Like apes, some birds can think logically, recognize themselves in the mirror and empathize with others, according to [new research](#) out of Germany's Ruhr University Bochum.

There are many obvious structural differences between bird and mammal brains, but the minds of both animal families are strikingly similar. Unlike mammals, birds do not have a multilayered cerebral cortex to use for cognition. Instead, they use something similar called the pallium. After taking a closer look at the anatomy of bird brains, researchers found

new similarities between bird and ape brains. Lead researcher Onur Güntürkün and his team found that the brains of birds and apes are actually very similar on a cellular level. While they may contain very different structures, closer examination reveals that both contain a prefrontal brain structure and similar wiring.

"Assumptions on the neural basis of cognition usually focus on cortical mechanisms. Birds have no cortex, but recent studies in parrots and corvids show that their cognitive skills are on par with primates," Güntürkün and his team wrote in the study.

"These cognitive findings are accompanied by neurobiological discoveries that reveal avian and mammalian forebrains are homologous, and show similarities in connectivity and function down to the cellular level," they added. "But because birds have a large pallium, but no cortex, a specific cortical architecture cannot be a requirement for advanced cognitive skills. During the long parallel



New cognition research suggests that bird brains are actually more efficient than our significantly larger mammalian brains. Researchers said the latest findings may finally reveal why some birds like ravens and parrots, found to be smarter than most mammals, are equally as clever as apes despite having much smaller brains.

Photo : Pixabay

evolution of mammals and birds, several neural mechanisms for cognition and complex behaviors may have converged despite an overall forebrain organization that is otherwise vastly different."

"What is clear is that the multi-layered mammalian cortex is not required for complex cognition," [concludes](#) Güntürkün. "The absolute brain weight is not relevant for mental abilities, either."

The findings were [published](#) by the journal Trends in Cognitive Sciences.

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Re-thinking What “Bird Brained” Means

by [Susan Orosz](#),

PhD, DVM, Dipl ABVP (Avian), Dipl ECZM (Avian)

www.lafeber.com

April 6, 2016

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About 30 years ago, I gave a talk at the University of California Davis entitled “Bird Brains Aren’t that Simple.” It was an interesting topic because, at the time, people — and mostly scientists who studied the brain — thought that birds operated at a very simplistic level, and they felt that they were operating on essentially their reflexes only. This was because birds had a smooth surfaced brain, or a lissencephalic brain. The surface of the brain of mammals, including humans, has folds of cortex that are gyri with the invaginations called sulci. This increases the surface area of the cortex and the theory goes that, as you guessed, the animal that had the most gyri would be the most intelligent — us humans! And as the number of gyri decreased, that animal species would be not as intelligent. So when you get to birds and reptiles, the thought was that they must operate on reflexes only, as they have smooth-surfaced brains.

But what if that was not right? What if Bird Brains were not that simple? It seemed that many of the tracts within the brain that takes information to various brain centers and others taking information down the spinal cord to the peripher-

al nerves were similar between mammals and birds. And the brainstem of birds was like mammals. There were also many corollaries except for that smooth outer surface of bird brains that seemed to get in the way of human thinking. Slowly there were other neuro scientists who were beginning to think that birds were — well, intelligent. How could they do this and why did some evolve to be more intelligent than we humans thought?

The Crow Knows

The intelligence of the corvid family — a group of birds that includes crows, ravens, magpies, rooks and jackdaws — rivals that of apes and dolphins. Parrots are also in this mix of intelligent birds. It is just that more studies have used crows as their model. Recent studies reveal impressive details about crows’ social reasoning, offering hints about how they developed interpersonal intelligence even as we humans evolved similar types of intelligence. While the brain structures may vary in form, crows developed the capacity to solve not just physical problems, but to process and use social information.



For example, if you are a food-storing corvid, the social context of caching stores of food is important, as caches are vulnerable to pilfering from other crows that are watching. The ability to observe conspecifics of their own kind and remember what, where, and even when the food was stored is valuable information in coming back and successfully pilfering that store.

A clever crow may use counter-strategies to lower the risk of cache pilfering, which may depend on cognitive processes. For example, it could hide food behind barriers to block the view, or make a cache of a non-food item. Perhaps a more clever crow would return to caches made while conspecifics looked on and then recache the

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food in a new place! This would correspond to “bait and switch” deception in the human world. The bird’s ability to recache these stores depended on an awareness of what the other birds were seeing and were likely to do, and then developing a strategy to deal with that threat.

Interestingly, it seems that corvids could distinguish that there was no need to recache if their actions had not been observed by conspecifics. This mix of prospection and retrospection in regard to what potential plundering conspecifics could have seen is remarkable. This mental feat rivals that of nonhuman primates. This suggests that many birds that cache food must remember the what, where and when of these specific caching events – that requires episodic memory for success.

Additionally, those species that store food must be sensitive to the social context of caching. This may also occur with parrots that need to find food in a vast tropical forest with the social context of a flock. The more social interaction within the flock, the greater the intelligence to deal with its flock mates. Comparative studies of caching in different species of birds suggest different levels of adaptive social learning.

Nathan NJ and Clayton NS proposed that cognition of crows is similar to the cognition

of great apes. Their theory of evolution of similar cognitive abilities was based on the fact that these species face similar socioecological challenges that include locating perishable food distributed in time and space or understanding the relationships between different individuals within large social groups. This required that these problems were solved using 4 cognitive tools that have driven complex cognition from birds to primates. These 4 components of the cognitive tool kit are: causal reasoning, flexibility, imagination and prospection.

Causal reasoning

Bird owners have remarked and made videos of their birds as they take objects and manipulate them to cause another effect - like getting to the food inside the toy. This use of enrichment is a form of causal reasoning, and we see that our large flock parrots like cockatoos are better at figuring out these more complex tasks to get to the food.

Flexibility

The ability to act on information with flexibility is considered a cornerstone of intelligent behavior. Flexible learning strategies form the basis of creativity. Birds like crows that cache food at various temperatures and retrieve those items relating to decay rates of various food items have great flexibility. This also relates to those birds that are able to take

a general rule and generalize them to solve a unique problem. Jays, for example, are very good at using concepts and then applying them to novel situations in the research lab as well as out in the wild.

Imagination

The ability to form representations of objects outside of perception or object permanence is considered a precursor to imagination. The work of Dr. Irene Pepperberg with Alex suggests that this occurs in birds as well. She describes how Alex understood the concept of zero, or nothing, just before he passed away.

Prospection

The ability to imagine future events is the concept of prospection. Caching is an act of future planning. Recaching only when conspecifics noticed the caching and its site is an act of prospection for pilfering of caches.

While there is convergent evolution of cognition, there is not convergent evolution of the structure of the brain. There are parts of the brain that is the same from a structural and functional point of view between birds and primates. But that old smooth surfaced cortex figured out the concept of zero in Alex without the use of gyri and sulci! And we humans should never think that certain bird species like our parrots can’t anymore.

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FAA Aims to Save Millions of Birds by Changing Static Red Airport Lights

by Oliver Milman

www.theguardian.com

March 24, 2016

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Federal Aviation Administration aims to stop millions of birds dying each year by changing static red lights, which attract birds, to flashing lights.

In an attempt to save some of the millions of birds that die each year after being bewildered by airport illumination, changes will be made to the US lighting towers that warn approaching pilots.

The Federal Aviation Administration [said it will change the lighting on towers](#) across the US after its research found that birds are attracted to steady red lights that highlight obstructions to pilots at night. The FAA said its changes will save thousands of birds each year.

The research found that static red lights attract birds – often in large migratory flocks – which then circle the light repeatedly, often collapsing of exhaustion and dying on the ground. Some birds perish after hitting towers or surrounding wires.

It's thought that constant red lights disorientate birds far more than blue, white or flashing lights. A [2012 study estimated](#) that 6.8 million birds

a year die in the US and Canada due to this confusion – up to four times the amount that are killed by shooting.

The FAA conducted a trial in Michigan to compare different lights and found a large decrease in bird fatalities when flashing lights were deployed. The federal regulator has now instructed all new towers to be fitted with flashing lights, with operators of existing towers required to transition to the new system.

“This looks like a very good step forward and I’m glad to see the FAA is responding to the research,” said Steve Holmer, senior policy adviser at the [American Bird Conservancy](#). “There are lots of mortality events involving lighting on towers, it’s an issue when there are large flocks. Hopefully they won’t be attracted to them as much now.”

In addition to the millions of birds killed due to confusing tower lighting, about 13,000 a year are killed when they hit aircraft in flight. Globally, bird strikes have also resulted in more than 258 people dying from 245 plane crashes since 1988.



In addition to the millions of birds killed due to confusing tower lighting, about 13,000 a year are killed when they hit aircraft in flight.

Photo: Avpics/Alamy

Perhaps the most famous bird strike upon a plane occurred in January 2009, when a US Airways flight was safely ditched in New York’s Hudson River, saving the lives of those on board, after Canada geese were ingested in both engines.

Researchers are still looking at ways that bird strikes can be avoided.

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“Captivating Conures: The Aratingas”

One of the most popular “small parrot” groups in the world has historically been the Aratinga Conures. In fact one could argue rather rightly that these psittacines in their wild-caught-imported phase were primary ambassadors to the general public about the fascinating realm of hookbill birdkeeping, at least beyond the common budgerigar and cockatiel.

Those wild-caught *Aratingas* of the 1980s were quite attractive colorful parrots, a step up in size (especially the beaks!), and intelligence from ‘tiels, with a bit of talking ability thrown in for good measure. They were reasonably priced, quite long-lived when well cared for, and if trained patiently, overtly affectionate - oftentimes to the point of jealousy in a household situation.

Of course the most famous of these psittacines were members of the “yellow group,” that is, the Suns, Jandays, and Gold Capped. All three are delightfully social parrots, very smart, quick to befriend and sometimes quicker still to go after somebody or some bird they perceive as a threat. Queen of Bavaria (Golden) Conures were once classed with *Aratinga* also, but have long since been given their own *Guaruba* genus.

The Sun Conure (*Aratinga solstitialis*) was perhaps the most successful psittacine species bred and marketed in

pet bird aviculture. Suns are prolific and not particularly difficult to coax into reproducing, provided savvy parent birds make up the pairs. They are stunningly beautiful and appeal to the eyes of most potential buyers. As handfed chicks, their playfulness, curiosity, and endearing devotion to owners are near legend! Is it no wonder that when they first were imported, prices hovered around \$2400 per pair?

I have kept pet and breeder suns for over twenty years and find them loyal, smart, easy to keep with full wings and freedom to fly around, great ‘watch parrots’ concerning any odd activity or intruders on the property, and loving of close warm touch by owners they trust. Hens are significantly less ‘macho’ and possessive, while males tend to have strong personalities and a curiosity sometimes bordering on stubbornness.

The reputation Sun Conures picked up in the 1990s as serious noisemakers never seemed to bother me. They have a higher pitched squeal than the larger Jandays and Nandays and Red-Headed Conures, all of which bother my ears more. Incidentally during weaning it is a prime time to begin screech-training for *Aratinga* conures destined to be pets. One of the basic complaints with this species has been that they are too loud, though I do not agree:



Nanday and Mitred Conures are loud; suns are merely *shrill*. When our fledglings spent too much time screeching, we would take them in hand, hold them gently and clasp the beak softly saying “Shhh, quiet.” That then becomes the training phrase for all youngsters destined to be pets.

Golden Capped Conures are my ultimate favorites among the yellow group - showing stronger mini-macaw personalities, though being more difficult to reproduce. They are often quieter and more reclusive than Jandays. Peach Fronted Conures can be smaller, quicker, quieter and feistier in my opinion, and very comparable in personality to a sun.

Aratingas like to perch high up - exceptions happening only during breeding season when one may find aviary birds down on the ground taking grit. This means if you house them in a tall vertical cage rather than a long cage, you are going to get parrots that spend 90% of their time up at the top, though the droppings will be able to soil the

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entire way down. My perfect conure aviary was 3' x 4' x 10'. Most are built with an extra "L" shape at one end so the birds may learn high speed turns to right and left and have some privacy away from each other. Inexperienced aviculturists do not realize that many male parrots like to stand day watch away from sight of the nestbox opening, although at night *Aratingas* usually sleep together in a box even with babies.

As fledglings these conures are captivatingly cuddly, frolicsome and curious. They love handling and can soon become quite protective of owners. Puberty arrives about eighteen months to two years, after which the bird may decide it is at the top of the pecking order, even in a home full of amazons, greys, and macaws.

Janday Conures are larger and lankier in build than suns and Goldcaps. They behave in ways more characteristic of some larger *Aratinga*, being more reserved in their emotions, particularly watchful in houses having pets or lots of children and commotion. The ones I have known were lovely pets, but were quite loud when assuming the role of "watchbird" in the home and yard. They like a cage which is sheltered, and a protected sleeping spot. Many appreciate one of those soft fabric "tubes" to sleep within, especially if they are in a room where humans make noise and stay up well past sunset. I would recommend always letting your conures go to sleep about the

same time as do the wild birds out of doors. There are fewer Jandays in the marketplace because of a tendency to produce smaller clutches fewer times per annum, and the fact that suns dominated the niche for so long. Many offspring represented as *jendaya* show traits left over from hybridization with sun conures years ago. Many of the original wild trapped Jandays became heavy feather pluckers in lackluster breeding barns around the U.S. As aging weaker birds and hens die off, I believe that this is a species which is going to be hard to keep extant in captive aviculture over the next few decades. Once common, soon rare perhaps...

Gold Caps and Peach Fronts are even more uncommon these days. The Gold-Capped Conure is in some ways the "Rolls Royce" of this group. A sleeper bird unknown to most pet buyers, goldcaps have personalities similar to Blue Crown Conures, or even the smallest mini-macaws. They are often stately and reserved in behavior, frequently quiet except in arousing situations when greeting owners' arrival home, or when coaxed into calling bouts by noisier birds. Yet, they are every bit as endearing to owners as their yellower cousins. The two subspecies we have encountered in the U.S. pet trade have been so mixed and matched in breeding cages that it can be all but impossible to distinguish them.

Goldcaps and Jandays are probably the strongest gnawing species of these three conures. The hens can be shy but less

likely to enforce their territory when strangers come to call. I have known both as free flyers in the distant past and found them whip smart and very cautious. These days I prefer my conures fully flighted indoor and in large walk-in flights.

The yellow group, like most smaller conures, are cavity sleepers in captivity. They will prefer to sleep in a nestbox or playbox or cloth "snuggie" year round. So by all means provide one for your pet and try to train it so. For early-pulled chicks that have no concept of the dark and light at the nestbox opening, hence are fearful of a dark box, it is best to cut a second rear hole in the box like a tunnel which can then be modified and slowly closed over once the birds are sleeping inside. This fear can be a problem with first time handfed hens.

Oppositely, certain hens raised in captivity may immerse themselves in constant laying cycles when given a full nestbox. This is bad for conditioning and may bring about poor habits such as tiring of setting eggs or plucking of chicks (also caused by too humid a nest cavity). We take out the box and provide a hollow sleeping tunnel or log too light inside to stimulate laying. This will usually shut the hen down for several months a year. Face it, 'tis not natural to lay and raise babies year round.

With aloha,
EB

Next month: Aratinga avicultural tips.

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When Should I Take My Bird to a Veterinarian?

Adapted from AAV's Client Education Brochure Series

April 2016

The Association of Avian Veterinarians

Bird Club News Releases 2016

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Many species of pet birds have a long lifespan, and most people who obtain a companion or aviary bird expect a long-term, rewarding relationship with their bird. An avian veterinarian, monitoring your bird's health, can play a vital role in this goal. The Association of Avian Veterinarians (AAV) recommends regular checkups for companion birds to ensure they live a full, healthy life.

How Your Veterinarian Can Help

Your avian veterinarian can advise you as to the characteristics of the many pet bird species to help you decide which would be most suitable for you. An avian veterinarian can also teach you to identify obvious signs of illness, which will help you to choose a healthy bird. Bird health is difficult to evaluate, and the knowledge of how to recognize a healthy bird is a valuable tool. A quality bird source, whether a pet store or a breeder, will welcome an informed shopper.

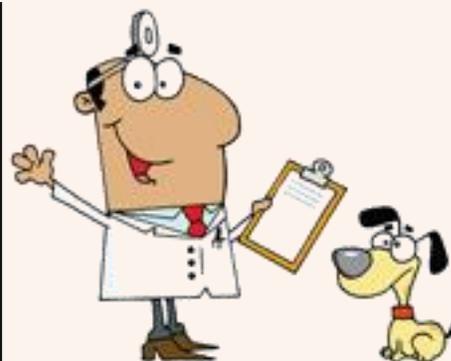
Post-purchase Exam: Start with a Healthy Bird

When buying a cat or dog, it is customary to take the new pet to a veterinarian for a health check. This same health check is important for a newly purchased bird, not only to protect your financial investment, but also to protect the health of other birds, pets, and even people in the home.

Many diseases and other health problems are not obvious by just looking at the bird. An avian veterinarian is trained to recognize subtle signs that indicate health problems and can use testing to screen for problems not visible on physical examination. Ask your avian veterinarian about screening tests for bacteria, viruses, and parasites, and about blood tests to monitor organ function and other physiological processes. A blood test should also be done to determine the sex of your bird since males and females can have different health issues. Additionally, discuss vaccinating your bird against viral diseases.

Learn How to Best House and Feed Your Bird

Your veterinarian can recommend an appropriate cage with proper perches, fun toys, foraging feeders, water bottle, and other cage accessories to ensure that your bird is comfortable and secure. Your avian veterinarian can also make recommendations for feeding your bird properly, and what treats are healthy and



safe to give to your bird.

Have a Well-trained, Responsive Bird

Your avian veterinarian can explain normal and abnormal behaviors and many avian veterinarians can assist with behavior modifications so you may truly enjoy the companionship of your pet bird. Birds need to learn that biting, screaming and other unwanted behaviors are unacceptable in the home environment, and at the same time, owners must have realistic expectations of a pet bird. The psychological well-being of the owner and the bird are equally important to establish and maintain a good relationship.

Annual Health Checkup

AAV recommends that you have your bird seen by an avian veterinarian a minimum of once per year. Annual visits allow your veterinarian to 1) establish normal values that can be used as a baseline, and 2) to screen for problems that cannot be seen. Disease and other health problems in birds can be difficult to

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Jon Hamm Rescues Small Birds, and You Can Too

by Hannah Waters

www.audubon.org

February 23, 2016

Reprinted with permission from Audubon

Here are the do's and don'ts of escorting trapped birds outdoors.

If only every bird were so lucky. On Sunday night, a [short video](#) showing Jon Hamm rescuing a trapped hummingbird melted bird - and *Mad Men*-fans' hearts alike. (It was originally posted to Instagram by Jenni Konner, producer of HBO's *Girls*)

The scene (watch below) opens with the bird - of an unidentified species, although Anna's Hummingbird (common in southern California) is a decent guess - trapped inside a house, dangerously close to a crowd of raucous humans. It flutters near the ceiling as two *Girl*-sactors attempt to assist it with a towel and a baseball glove. Then Hamm swoops in with a baseball cap and in one fluid motion ushers the hummingbird out of the house and through an open door to freedom.

We will never know exactly why this hummingbird crashed a celebrity party, but the answer is probably less glamorous than the star-studded attendees - it was probably just after the snacks. Birds typically fly indoors while searching for food says Paula Goldberg, the executive director of City Wildlife, the only wildlife rehab center in Washington, D.C.

Last summer, she received a call when a hummingbird flew into a D.C. grocery store. She suspects the promise of nectar from the store's floral section lured it in. "The poor bird thought it hit the jackpot! But then it got trapped," she says.

Trapped birds often fly upwards to attempt a quick escape - but are foiled by the ceiling and dizzying lights.

Here's how you can best help any small bird that might stumble into your home:

DO count to 10 and calm yourself down. It is not an emergency. The bird is safe and so are you. "There is not a high likelihood of the bird scratching you or biting you," says Goldberg.

DON'T yell or chase the bird. It doesn't need more stress.

DO remove immediate dangers from the room. Turn off the ceiling fan. Escort pets elsewhere. Quench open flames and, if you're in the kitchen, cover hot pots. "They don't know that water in the pot you're boiling for pasta is an issue," says Goldberg.

DO give the bird an opportunity to see itself out. Turn out the lights, open the windows, close the door, and leave it alone. Be patient. If it's dark outside, you may need to wait overnight for



A male Rufous Hummingbird.

Photo: [Linda Tanner](#)/Flickr CC (BY-NC-ND 2.0)

it to see the light. "The bird will follow light if it's light outside," says Goldberg.

DO remove all food and water sources from the room. Give it no reason to stay.

If the trapped bird can't find the exit, a more hands-on approach may be necessary:

DO wash your hands, even if you don't plan on handling the bird. Even a small amount of oil from your skin can damage a bird's feathers, and "a bird is not releasable if its feathers are at all damaged," says Goldberg.

DO hold up a towel or sheet to block the bird from flying farther indoors.

DO calmly chase the bird to tire it out if it has not already exhausted itself. If you must use a broom, wave it; don't swat at the bird. When tired, it will stop flying around and rest on a comfortable perch.

(Continued on page 29)



AFA in Brief

April 2016

Editor - Julie Corwin



Please remember affiliation for all club and specialty organizations are due. These affiliations run from January to December. Be sure to get your affiliation sent in. Make sure your delegate(s) is a current member of AFA.

Special contribution announcement

We have a very giving announcement to make. There is an anonymous donor who is willing to contribute up to \$20,000 to AFA with some conditions. The donor will match all new memberships at the Supporting level (\$75.00). The donor will also match any existing member who upgrades from an Individual membership to the Supporting level (extra \$35.00). This deal is until December 2016 or the amount of \$20,000 - whichever happens first.

AFA at Work for you !



AFA at work: Members of the AFA legislative committee met with US Fish & Wildlife Service on March 30 in Washington, DC. The meeting was very productive. The committee, led by Mary Ellen Lepage with guidance from Marshall Meyers, was able to gather and assemble several pages of data and information to emphasize our points. The committee was able to discuss all of the points of concern regarding listings on the ESA list. USFWS recognizes our concerns and we discussed some ways to make the ESA more supportive of conservation and less restrictive for aviculture. The important take away from the meeting

is that we (AFA) and USFWS both share a concern about conservation of birds in the wild. Here we are waiting for Fish & Wildlife. Thank you Mark Stafford for providing the picture. We are working on a meeting for people to learn more about the permitting process.

Comment period open for Scarlet Macaw being added to Endangered Species Act

The proposed rule to list the northern subspecies of scarlet macaw (*Ara macao cyanoptera*) and the northern population of the southern subspecies (*A. m. macao*) as endangered under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA).

The revised proposed rule can be found [here](#). Comments can be made before June 6, 2016.

Comments may be submitted by one of the following methods:

- 1) [Federal eRulemaking Portal](#). Follow the instructions for submitting comments to Docket No. [FWS-R9-ES-2012-0039]; or
- 2) U. S. mail or hand-delivery: Public Comments Processing, Attn: [FWS-R9-ES-2012-0039]; Division of Policy, Performance, and Management Programs; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, MS: BPHC; 5275 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22041-3803.

Based on the Service's review and new information received during the public comment period, we are proposing several substantive changes, including adding a proposal to list the southern population of *A. m. macao* and hybrids of the two subspecies as threatened due to a similarity of appearance. With these revisions, the proposed rule now covers all known wild populations of scarlet macaw.

We are also proposing a rule under section 4(d) of the ESA to allow certain activities for captive-bred scarlet macaws listed as threatened without a permit. Breeders would be allowed to sell their animals in interstate commerce and owners of pet birds would be able to import and export their birds without a permit, provided the requirements of the Convention on

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International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora and the Wild Bird Conservation Act are met.

To assist us in making a final determination, we are seeking comments or scientific and commercial information from other concerned government agencies, the scientific community, or any other interested parties concerning these proposed rules. If you would like to provide comments, to allow us adequate time to conduct this review, we request that we receive information on or before June 6, 2016. Comments may be submitted by one of the following methods:

- 1) [Federal eRulemaking Portal](#). Follow the instructions for submitting comments to Docket No. [FWS-R9-ES-2012-0039]; or
- 2) U. S. mail or hand-delivery: Public Comments Processing, Attn: [FWS-R9-ES-2012-0039]; Division of Policy, Performance, and Management Programs; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, MS: BPHC; 5275 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22041-3803.

[Macaw Species Added to the U.S. Endangered Species Act](#)

Events

[2016 Avicultural Society of America Education Conference](#)

[Lory League Bird Show at the ASA Conference](#)

[Visit Lory League Walk Through Aviary at the ASA Conference](#)

The American Federation of Aviculture, Inc.

AFA is a nonprofit national organization established in 1974, whose purpose is to represent all aspects of aviculture and to educate the public about keeping and breeding birds in captivity. AFA supports public and private programs that are designed to support conservation of birds in the wild.

AFA members include: Pet owners, bird breeders, avian veterinarians, rescue and rehoming organizations, sanctuaries, exhibitors, show judges, cage dealers and designers, pet store owners and operators, zoo employees and curators, biologists and conservation scientists, ecotourism operators, seed farmers, mills and food distributors, toy developers, behavioral consultants and experts, vitamin and supplement manufacturers, research scientists, bird watchers, and so much more. **Join AFA and the Future of Birds!**

Not an AFA member yet? Want to learn more about AFA? www.afabirds.org

We'd like to invite you to [join the AFA](#) and enjoy all the benefits we offer!

Visit our [Facebook page](#).

Information about the convention is posted on the [event page](#).

Did you know that AFA is run by volunteers who donate their time, travel and all expenses for each AFA function they attend? If you see an AFA table at an event, stop by and say 'Hi'. The AFA volunteer(s) will really appreciate it and you can learn the latest news from AFA.

[This picture](#) is one great example of a table at an event, set up by volunteers

Regional Meetings [[photo](#)] are a great way to connect State Coordinators, Club Delegates, Members and more.

Legislation

Please watch for any legislation that affects animals; many times the wording in legislation will include birds, or they can easily be added at the last minute.

Do you have a Legislative issue? Anyone that needs help or input with legislative issues should contact AFA Legislative Vice President Genny Wall at Gwall-co@aol.com.

Disaster Relief

With recent weather issues including fires, flooding, tornados, landslides and more, the AFA Disaster Relief Team is ready to assist anyone in need due to a recent weather-related disaster. Contact the AFA Business Office at 512-585-9800 or your Regional Director immediately so that AFA can assist you with your bird-related needs.

Education [[photo](#)]

[The Avian Biology Classroom \(ABC\)](#) is made up of modules authored and compiled by Jason Crean, MA, MS, AFA Education Chair. These are geared towards classroom teachers, bird club programs, and anyone else interested in learning more about the biology of birds. The first module teaches participants about scientific problem-solving through the conservation story of the kakapo. It also has an additional activity that highlights the owl studies of researcher and AFA member Caroline Efstathion. We hope you can use this module at your next bird club meeting or

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share it with other eager learners. Other modules will be available in the future here where you can download them for free!

Clubs, organizations, schools, animal educators or individuals interested in educating others can help promote aviculture by using our new outreach program. We have put together some IDEAs in our new IDEA Program. Standing for Interactive Display and Exhibit Animals, we want to continue to spread the positive message of bird ownership to everyone. This program is designed to provide information to anyone who wants to share their love and knowledge of aviculture with others. [Download it for free!](#)

Check out the new AFA Coloring Book, featuring birds from around the world. [Download it for free!](#) [Editor's note: For some reason, the coloring book will not download on my system using Internet Explorer. It downloads fine using all other browsers. If it won't download for you and you are using Internet Explorer, try a different browser.]

[Fundamental Of Aviculture Courses:](#) A Great Gift - online courses that you can do in your own time frame, from the comfort of your easy chair. Learn more about so many different topics regarding birds. It is also an excellent resource. You can go back and review the information any time you have access to the internet.

Fundamentals of Aviculture Level I: This online course provides a foundation for the emerging science of aviculture. It is presented in nine chapters ranging from anatomy and physiology to avian behavior; from laws and regulations affecting aviculture to how to provide proper housing and prevent illness of birds in our care; and much, much more.

Fundamentals of Aviculture Level II: The Intermediate Aviculture Course is offered in 15 chapters covering conservation and research, courtship and nesting, basic avian genetics, color mutations, hybrids, breeding stimuli, incubation, hand-rearing, non-parrot studies, basic microbiology, illnesses, first-aid, avian enrichment and more. Admission to this Level II course requires that all students complete Level I prior to enrollment.

DVD's are a great resource.

Didn't make it to the recent AFA Educational Conference? Want to share a particular speaker's presentation with your local bird club? Looking to add to your private avian library? Over 100 titles are now available in our library - [order for yourself or your organization.](#)

Give the gift of education with a sponsored membership to someone who wants to learn more. Also consider a gift membership.

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Special thanks to all of the Individual Sponsors!

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For every donation of \$10 or more, receive a packet of genuine heirloom Blue Hopi Corn seeds for your home garden. Every time you look at your Blue Corn, you'll be reminded of how much we can accomplish when we work together to help parrots in the wild.

Become an AFA Conservation Partner - Donations of \$1000 or more qualify you as an official AFA Conservation Partner. You will be recognized in the AFA Watchbird Journal and on the AFA website in our Conservation site pages.

For more information contact the AFA Office or the Conservation Committee chairman at afaoffice@afabirds.org.

Membership

Message from Membership Chair Concetta Ferragamo:

Club events: Hello AFA members and affiliates. Membership would like to try something new. Please send Concetta Ferragamo (Membership Chair) a list of upcoming events that any AFA affiliated club is holding such as expos, marts, shows, outreach programs or special speaker presentations. We are going to attempt to publicize it on Facebook by region which will get your clubs more exposure and hopefully more members. I will need the name of the club or organi-

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zation (must be an AFA affiliate), the logo (jpeg), the dates of the event and a brief summary of the event. Please send the info to NorthEastDirector@afabirds.org and/or CFerragamo@stny.rr.com.

AFA membership committee has many resources to help affiliated clubs, including speaker information, flyers and more. Email: membership@afabirds.org.

Remember Club affiliations run per calendar year, January to December.

AFA Membership Chair has issued a challenge to all AFA members. Get 5 new people to join AFA before this year's convention. This can include members who have been expired for several years and you convince them to re-join AFA.

Member Benefit: Pay attention to the ever growing "Member to Member Advantage Program" (AFAM2M). These commercial businesses are offering the 10% off discounts to AFA members like you!

Member to Member participants include:

14 Karat Parrot, ABC Birds, Avalon Aviary Bird Store, Avitech, Beaker's Parrot Place, Bird Jewelry by Dawn, Bird Toys Etc., Birdie Boutique, Black Beak Press, Blue Jungle Parrot, Cedar Hill Bird Store, Celltei, Chopmist Hill, Fauna of NYC, Graham's Bird Toy Creations, Hangall Etc., Harvest Pride, Inca's Secret, Kikos Toy Chest of Tacoma, Leather Elves, Parrot Ambassadors, Parrot Safari Toy Factory, Rick Jordan Totes, Spoiled Bird Toys, Varietees Bird Shop, Winging It Aviary.

Meet the Members

Name: Madeleine Franco

City and State: Las Vegas, Nevada

Years in Aviculture: 33 years as an adult.

How did you start? Waterfowl Rehab - Special Purpose Permittee of USFWS for rehabilitation of migratory waterfowl, Salt Lake City, Utah.

What was your first bird? English Budgie, when I was 6.

What types of birds do you keep? Parrots - mixed flock.

What do you love most about the birds you keep? Everything!

Where do you see aviculture 10 years from now? It's hard to know. Aviculture seems always to



have been on the fringes, and that may actually be a good thing. I think it deserves more recognition as an art and science, but I'm also happy with it remaining somewhat off the RADAR. There may actually be a lot to be said for being "one of those weird bird people," and hopefully we will learn better how to work the mystique.

If you could keep only one species of bird, what would it be? Cockatoos, but I hope it doesn't come to that!

If you could give one piece of advice to someone interested in birds, what would you tell them? Read, read, read . . . learn, learn, learn . . . and never stop learning!

What other pets do you keep? Dogs.

You are stranded on an island, what is the one thing you would want to have with you? Why? Indoor plumbing! I'm not much for being stranded on an island, unless it's Manhattan.

If your friends could describe you in one word, what do you think that word would be?

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I'm not sure one word would do it, but many have observed that I'm very present tense.

Do you have a favorite quote? "Spirituality is like a bird: If you hold it too closely, it chokes, and if you hold it too loosely, it escapes." Israel Salanter Lipkin

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[Registration is open.](#)

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Offsite trips:

Wednesday - August 3

[Beardsley Zoo](#)

Transportation, lunch and admission included \$55 per person.

Sunday - August 7

[Horizon Wings Raptor Rescue](#)

Transportation, lunch and donation included \$55 per person.

Super 8 Tickets available soon!

American Federation of Aviculture, Inc.

512-585-9800

afaoffice@afabirds.org

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DO turn a box on its side, hold it next to the bird, and push it inside with a small towel. Use the towel (or another object) to cover the opening as you quickly and steadily carry the box outside.

DON'T accidentally drop the box on the bird if attempting to capture it from above (this could hurt the bird).

If the bird readily flies away, pat yourself on the back. You are a hero the likes of Jon Hamm. If it doesn't, call your local wildlife rehabilitation center.

And finally, DON'T attempt to capture and release a trapped hawk or other large bird. Call animal control or your local wildlife rehabilitation center.

∞



Jon Hamm and [@theandrewrannells](#) save a hummingbird.



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Upcoming Area (and some other) Events

- [Phoenix Landing Educational Seminars](#) - **Owings Mills, MD** (May 14 - Positive Reinforcement Training) - **Fairfax, VA** (May 21 - Things I Wish I'd Known) - **Alexander, NC** (May 21 - No Place Like Home) - **Millersville, MD** (May 21 - No Place Like Home) - **Chesapeake, VA** (May 21 - Things I Wish I'd Known) - **Otter Creek, MD** (Jun 12 - Laura Ford: Core Class) - **Alexander, NC** (Jun 18 - ABCs of Behavior) - **Alexander, NC** (Jun 24-26 - Step-Up Workshop) - **Fairfax, VA** (Jun 26 - Parrot's Point of View) - **Springfield, VA** (Jul 9 - 13th Annual Luau) - **Rockville, MD** (Jul 10 - ABCs of Behavior) - **Cary, NC** (Jul 10 - TBD) - **Alexander, NC** (Jul 16 - Parrot Care Information) - **Fairfax, VA** (Jul 23 - No Place Like Home) - **Alexander, NC** (Aug 12-14 - Step-Up Workshop) - **Fairfax, VA** (Aug 20 - The Contented Companion) - **Millersville, MD** (Aug 20 - TBD) - **Alexander, NC** (Aug 20 - ABCs of Behavior) - phoenixlanding@earthlink.net
- [Parrot University Classes](#) - Pineville Towne Market, 321 South Polk St., Suite 2C, Pineville, NC 28134 - **May 7** (Avian Health & Medicine - 2 pm) - **May 14** (Acupuncture in Animals - 2 pm) - **May 21** (Volunteer Orientation - 1 pm, Sex & the Single Bird - 2 pm) - **May 22** (Positive Reinforcement - 2 pm) - **May 28** (Toy Making - 11 am) - **Jun 4** (Parrot 101 - 2 pm) - **Jun 5** (Fun With Food - 2 pm) - **Jun 12** (Avian Health & Medicine - 2 pm) - **Jun 18** (Toy Making - 11 am) - **Jun 25** (So You Want a Talking Bird? - 1 pm, Sex & the Single Bird - 2 pm) - **Jun 26** (Positive Reinforcement - 2 pm) - 704-889-2325 - parrots@parrotu.com
- May 7 Clearfield, PA - [Pennsylvania Avicultural Society Tailgate](#) (exotic pheasants & poultry) - Clearfield County Fairgrounds, 5615 Park St., Clearfield, PA 16830 - 9 am - 12 pm - 814-857-4970 - richchiro1@verizon.net
- May 14 - [International Migratory Bird Day 2016](#) - 866-334-3330 - info@environmentamericas.org
- May 14 - [Global Big Day](#) - 800-843-2473 - cornellbirds@cornell.edu
- May 14 Kirkwood, PA - [Feathered Sanctuary Exotic Bird Rescue 2nd Annual Picnic with Dr. Irene Pepperberg](#) - Feathered Sanctuary, 1674 Kirkwood Pike, Kirkwood, PA 17536 - 12 pm - 5 pm - 717-529-2966 - Lynnebird04@gmail.com
- May 14 - 15 Charlotte, NC - [Charlotte Pet Expo](#) - Metrolina Tradeshow Expo, 7100 Statesville Road, Charlotte, NC 28269 - Sat 10 am - 6 pm, Sun 11 am - 4 pm - 800-977-3609 x114 - expo@charlottepetexpo.com
- May 15 Erie, PA - [Erie Cage Bird Club Annual Bird Fair](#) - New Perry Highway Hose Company, 8281 Oliver Road, Erie, PA 16509 - 10 am - 4 pm - 814-456-4125 - britestar41048@aol.com
- May 19 - 22 Cape May, NJ - [Cape May Spring Birding Festival](#) - Grand Hotel, 1045 Beach Ave., Cape May, NJ 08204 - 609-861-0700 x10 - deb.shaw@njaudubon.org
- May 21 Lancaster, PA - [Lancaster Bird Expo](#) - Lancaster Host Resort, 2300 Lincoln Hwy E, Lancaster, PA 17602 - 9 am - 5 pm - 717-608-7424 - lod_expos@yahoo.com
- May 21 Belmont, NC - [Greater Charlotte Cage Bird Society Spring Expo](#) - Belmont Armory, 300 6th St., Belmont, NC 28012 - 9 am - 4 pm - 704-827-2138 - gcbs@bellsouth.net
- May 27 - 30 Trescott Twp, ME - [13th Annual Down East Spring Birding Festival](#) - Cobscook Community Learning Center, 10 Commissary Point Road, Trescott Twp, ME 04652 - [schedule](#) - 207-733-2233 x330 - birdfest@thecclc.org
- May 28 - 29 W. Warwick, RI - [New England Cockatiel Breeders & Exhibitors SPBE Quad Show](#) - Club Frontenac, 1143 Main St., West Warwick, RI 02893 - 9 am - 5 pm - 978-443-5218 - TuckersTiels@verizon.net
- Jun 2 - 5 Bar Harbor, ME - [18th Annual Acadia Birding Festival](#) - Mount Desert Island, Bar Harbor, Maine 04609 (Acadia National Park) - 207-233-3694 - beckym@acadiabirdingfestival.com
- Jun 3 - 5 Paul Smiths, NY - [14th Annual Great Adirondack Birding Celebration](#) - Paul Smith's College, 8023 State Route 30, Paul Smiths, NY 12970 - 518-327-6241 - bmcconnell@paulsmiths.edu

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- Jun 4 Cheektowaga, NY - [Great Buffalo Bird Fair](#) - Leonard Post, Jr. VFW, 2450 Walden Ave., Cheektowaga, NY 14225 - 9 am - 4 pm - 315-573-6464 - GreatBuffaloBirdFair@gmail.com
- Jun 4 Winchester, VA - [Maryland Budgerigar Society Show](#) - Travel Lodge Winchester, 160 Front Royal Pike, Winchester, VA 22602 - 10 am - 5 pm - 631-988-4100 - horsejudge27@aol.com
- Jun 4 - 5 Forest Park, GA - [Tim Vogle's Southeastern Exotic Bird Fair](#) - Atlanta State Farmers Market, 16 Forest Pkwy, Forest Park, GA 30297 - 9 am - 4 pm both days - 813-431-8799 - vlinenterprises@yahoo.com
- Jun 10 - 12 Arkville, NY - [Taking Flight: Birding in the Catskills](#) - Catskill Center, 43355 Route 28, Arkville, NY, 12406 - [schedule](#) - 845-586-2611 - cccd@catskillcenter.org
- Jun 12 Lowell, MA - [Massachusetts Cage Bird Association Mart](#) - Elks Lodge, 40 Old Ferry Road, Lowell, MA 01854 - 10 am - 3 pm - 508-479-2789 - goshawk3@aol.com
- Jun 18 - 19 Brooklyn, NY - [New York Pet Expo](#) - Brooklyn Expo Center, 72 Noble St., Brooklyn, NY 11222 - Sat 10 am - 6 pm, Sun 11 am - 4 pm - 800-977-3609 x114 - info@amazingpetexpos.com
- Jun 25 - 26 Pittsburgh, PA - [Steel City Pet Expo](#) - Monroeville Convention Center, 209 Mall Boulevard, Monroeville, PA 15146 - Sat 10 am - 6 pm, Sun 11 am - 4 pm - 800-977-3609 x114 - info@amazingpetexpos.com
- Jul 9 - 10 Richmond, VA - [Richmond Pet Expo](#) - Richmond Raceway Complex, 600 East Laburnum Ave., Richmond, VA 23222 - Sat 10 am - 6 pm, Sun 11 am - 4 pm - 800-977-3609 x114 - info@amazingpetexpos.com ∞

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