



We know that getting a new pet is a joyful and busy time. We have put together this package of vital information to help you navigate the world of pet parenthood.

We are proud to be a partner in your pet's care and happy to offer all of these exciting services:

- Digital X-ray ● In-House Ultrasound ● Complete Lab Services
 - Doggie Daycare ● Boarding for Dogs, Cats, and Exotics
 - Obedience Training ● Agility Classes
 - Grooming for Dogs and Cats
- Acupuncture ● Physical Rehabilitation ● Full Surgical Suite

**For more details on our Services please check out our website
www.emeryvilleanimal.com**



Congratulations on adding a feathered friend to your family! Birds are beautiful, intelligent, and complex companions. They require careful and consistent management of diet, environment, and social interaction. We at Emeryville Animal Hospital look forward to helping you make the most out of your years with your new family member!





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Your Bird's Environment

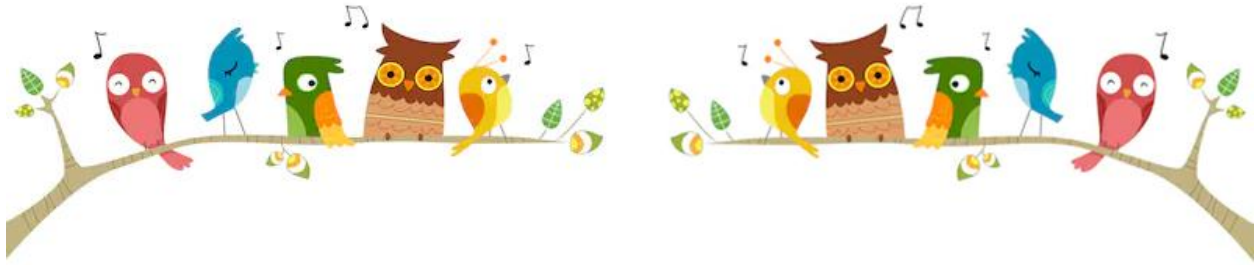
A cage is your bird's primary environment, and it is important they be able to flap their wings, climb, play, forage, and perch at multiple levels within that environment. Keeping your bird in a cage that doesn't allow for participation in these activities will be detrimental to the physical and mental well-being of your companion and may lead to the development of behaviors such as screaming, feather plucking and aggression.

- Your bird's cage should be placed in an area where they can interact with you, their flock, on a regular basis. Place their cage so they can easily observe people and other family pets entering their room.
- Buy the largest possible cage that you can afford from both a space and financial perspective.
- Placement of the cage with a nearby view of a window may provide a source of entertainment and stimulation to your bird. This will give them an opportunity to observe weather, outdoor birds, and experience daylight cycles.
- At least one side of the cage should be against a wall or in a corner to enhance their sense of protection.
- Do not place a cage near an outside door or window where they may be subject to rapid temperature changes.
- Birds need to have a dark and quiet place to sleep (10-12 hours) and therefore their cage should be in a room where they are not subject to late night activity.



Your bird should not be able to put its head through the bars, and each bar should be large enough to ensure that the bars can not be bent or broken by your bird. A combination of vertical and horizontal bars will help to facilitate climbing and allow for more options when hanging toy accessories in the cage.

Bird Species	Recommended Bar Spacing/Bar Diameter	Minimum Internal Width
Finch, Canary	1/4" - 1/2"	18"
Parakeet, Parrotlet, Lovebird	1/2"	20"
Alexandrine, Cockatiel, Conure, Caique, Quaker, Pionus, Senegal	5/8" - 3/4" (3mm)	24"
African Grey, Amazon, Eclectus, Small Cockatoo, Mini Macaw	3/4" - 1"	(4mm) 32"
Large Cockatoo, Large Macaw	1" - 1 1/4" (5mm)	36"



Air Quality & Temperature Control

By design, to enable a bird's ability to fly, their respiratory systems are highly efficient and virtually all the air in their lungs is replaced with every breath. Birds also breathe at a high rate (25-40 times per minute) – which means that air pollutants can impact birds quickly and severely.

A partial list of common household items that contain or generate toxic pollutants hazardous to birds:

- Non-stick cookware and other items that utilize Teflon such as irons, ironing board covers, heaters and hair dryers will release toxic gas when overheated.
- Tobacco products
- Aerosols (hairspray, deodorant, perfume, cleaners, fabric deodorizers)
- New carpeting
- Wood stoves, kerosene heaters
- Incense, scented candles, and air fresheners
- Cleaning fluids
- Do not house your bird in or near kitchens

Domestic birds enjoy a consistent indoor temperature within a range from 18-35 °C (65-95 °F). Under extreme temperature conditions (variance greater than 10 degrees within 24 hours), heat stroke and hypothermia can occur.

- Ensure they have a spot where they can retreat from the sunlight within their cage.
- Keep cages at least 12 inches away from exterior windows to avoid drafts.
- If the room temperature rises above 85 °F, use a fan or crack a window to increase room air flow but do not place your bird's cage directly in front of a fan or air conditioner.
- Never leave your bird in a car on a hot day. It takes as little as 10-15 minutes for heat stroke to kill a bird.
- Daily misting and bathing will help your bird regulate their temperature on hot days.
- Skinny birds may have difficulty regulating the cold, while obese birds may have difficulty with the heat.
- In outside aviaries, always provide plenty of shade with access to lots of cool water for bathing and consumption. Check throughout the day to make sure your bird still has access to shade.
- If needed, place a space heater near the cage area.
- If your bird gets chilled, warm it on a heating pad and massage its feet to aid circulation.

Get Moving!

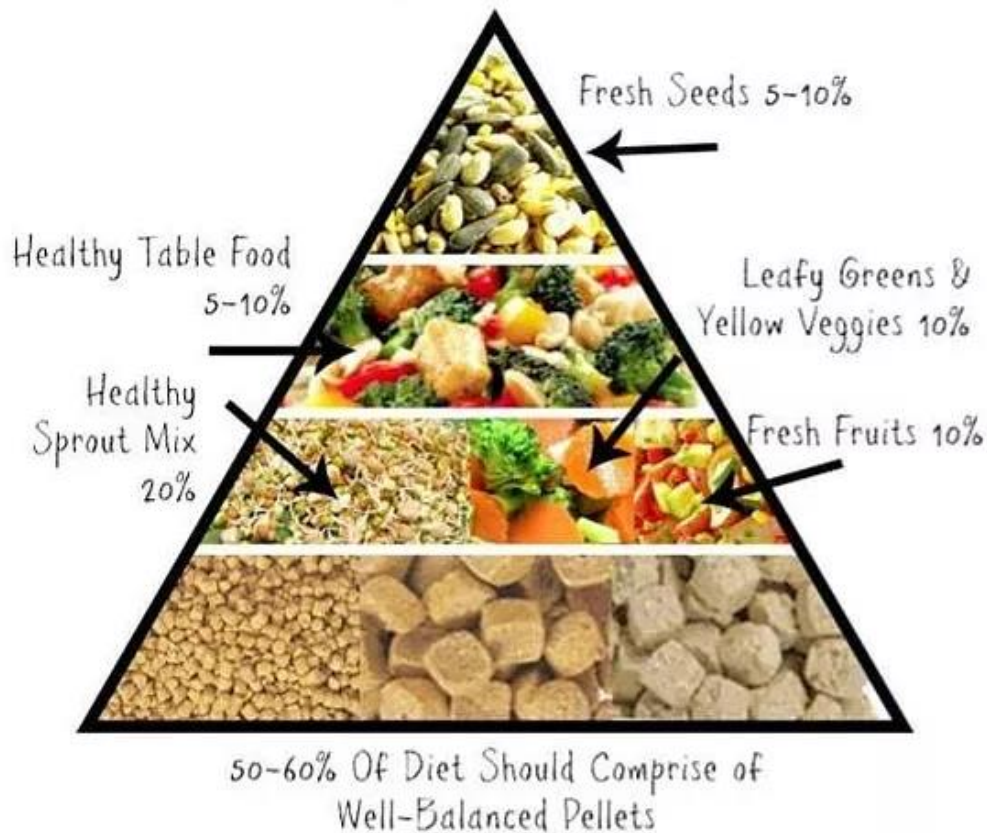
In captivity our pet birds live a sedentary existence which can lead to obesity and related long-term health problems. Providing outlets for exercise will help them reduce their stress level, improve their balance and coordination, and keep them fit.

- Provide toys that stimulate movement (swings, ladders, and bungees).
- Provide preening toys to engage your bird in activity.
- Provide out of the cage play areas (playgyms, cargo nets).
- Place foraging stations high and low around your bird's cage to encourage movement (foraging toys).
- Provide a cage large enough for your bird to fully flap his wings.
- Purchase an indoor or outdoor flight cage.
- With your bird securely perched on your hand, get a firm grip on your birds toes and encourage flapping by gently moving your arm up and down or swinging it in an arc while your bird hangs upside down. Your bird will flap its wings to maintain balance.
- Work on step up's and other commands and tricks with your bird.
- Play games with your bird such as hide and seek, ball toss and chase me.
- Dance with your bird!

Aim for a minimum of two 5 to 10 minute sessions a day that combines the above activities and games. If your bird starts breathing heavily during wing flapping sessions make sure to stop and let him catch his breath before continuing.



AVIAN FOOD PYRAMID



The specific nutritional requirements for each species will differ but, in general, all birds require a varied, well rounded diet that includes a daily combination of fresh greens, vegetables, grains, legumes, fruit, and pellets. This can be supplemented with a sprinkling of seeds and occasional treats but, in general, these should be just a small portion of what birds eat each day (<10%). Hide treats in foraging devices to stimulate them both physically and mentally. Always provide fresh water. If your bird loves to dunk and soak his food, consider using a water bottle to avoid bacterial contamination.

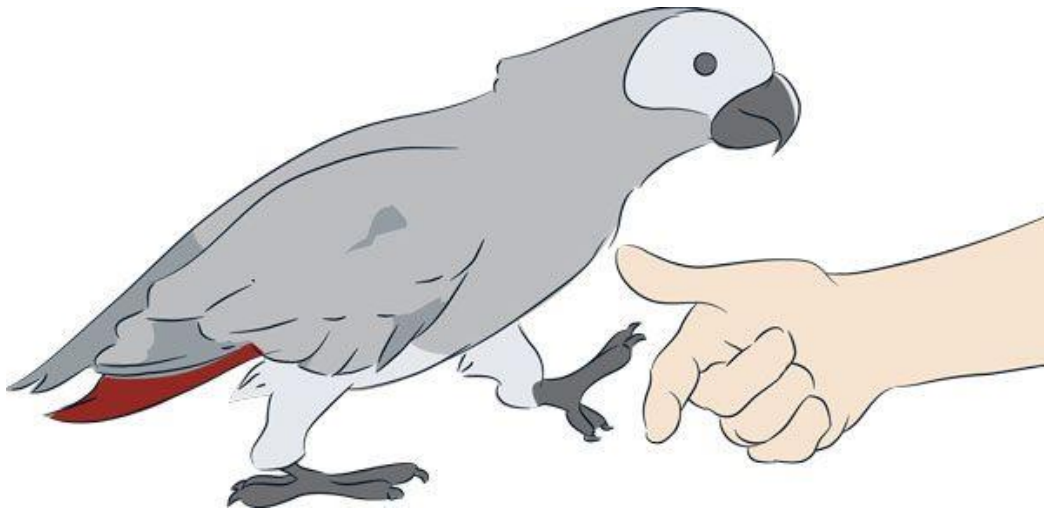
- Wash fresh fruits and vegetables to remove bacteria as well as pesticide and fungicide
- Check for mold and fungal growth
- Remove fresh food from your bird's cage after no longer than 2 hours due to bacterial growth

An incomplete list potentially toxic food to your birds: avocado, chocolate, carbonated beverages, alcohol, caffeinated beverages, seeds and pits from fruits (apple seeds contain cyanide), mushrooms (many species are potentially toxic), onions (can destroy red blood cells), commercially grown strawberries (extremely high pesticide residues), tomato leaves, uncooked beans, uncooked eggs.

In general, other foods that should be avoided include salty foods, refined sugars, fatty foods, and dairy products.

Step Up!

It is important to minimize stress and risk of injury while handling our feathered friends. Before removing your bird from its enclosure, ensure doorways and windows are closed, pull down window blinds to cover the glass, minimize hiding areas, and make sure electrical cords are not exposed. Some birds can be taught to “step up” - they will step onto your finger and sit as if it is a perch. When teaching this command, keep sessions not more than 15 minutes long. Always teach in a calm and patient frame of mind. Depending on how comfortable your bird is with human contact, you may need to start by just resting your hand in the cage. Eventually, your bird should take treats from your hand, then you can start encouraging “step up” on one hand when your bird lifts its foot to your hand and giving a treat with your other hand. You can also teach “step down” when returning your bird to its own perch.



For medical procedures (nail, wing, and beak trims, administering medication, inspecting wounds, etc.), it is helpful to wrap your bird in a small towel to restrain safely and protect you against bites. Holding a towel appropriate to your bird’s size in either one or both hands, calmly push your bird toward a side of the cage and drape the towel overtop, wrapping your hand around the body with your second and third fingers on either side of the neck. Be mindful not to push on the chest as this will restrict your bird’s ability to breathe.

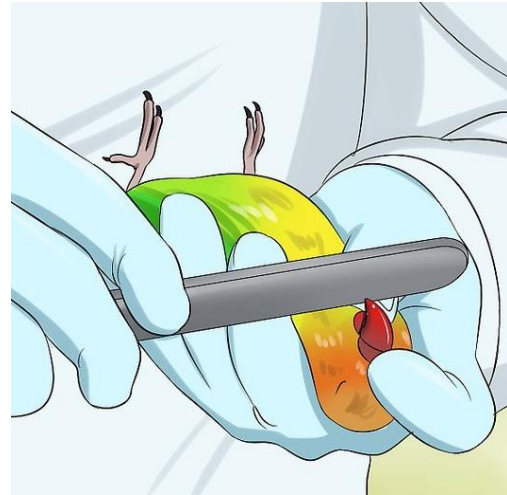
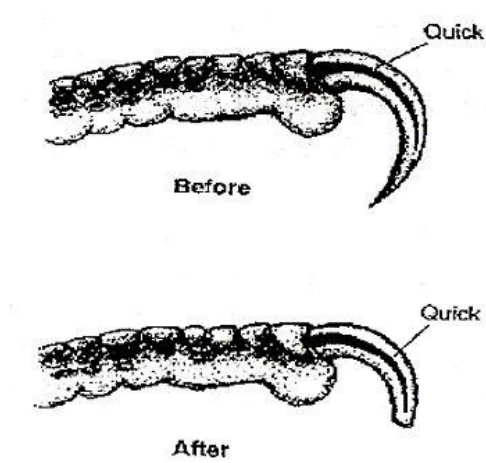


Nail, Wing & Beak Trims

Birds in captivity require regular trimming of their nails and beak to avoid overgrowth. Trimming can be done at home with some practice or can be done here at Emeryville Animal Hospital with our experienced Doctors and Registered Veterinary Technicians.

Nail Trimming

For larger birds, a Dremel or small cat nail trimmers can be used. For small birds, use human nail clippers. The quick is very hard to see and the nail may bleed – no need to panic! Simply hold a paper towel to the end of the nail and use a styptic powder to stop the bleed.

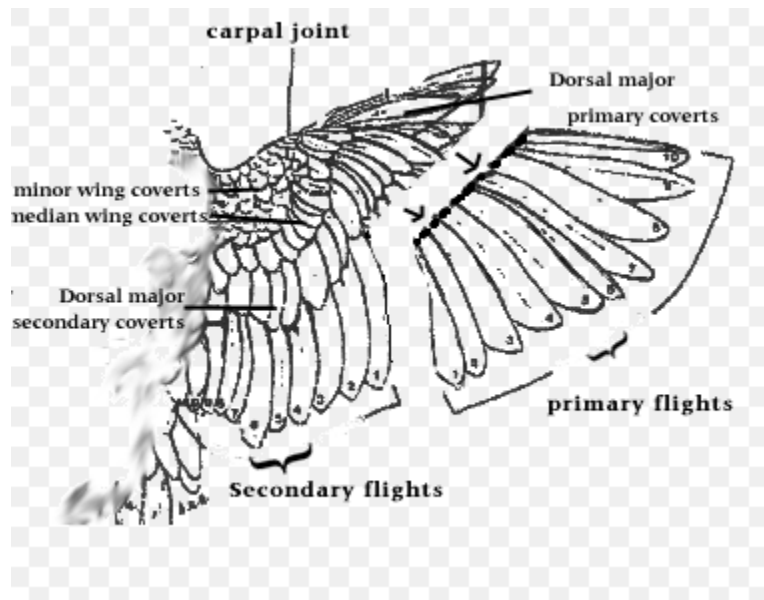


Beak Trimming

An overgrown beak can make it difficult for your bird to eat and preen. Beaks can be trimmed using cat or human nail trimmers (size dependant), a nail file, and/or a Dremel. Trim slowly and use a reference guide specific for your bird type.

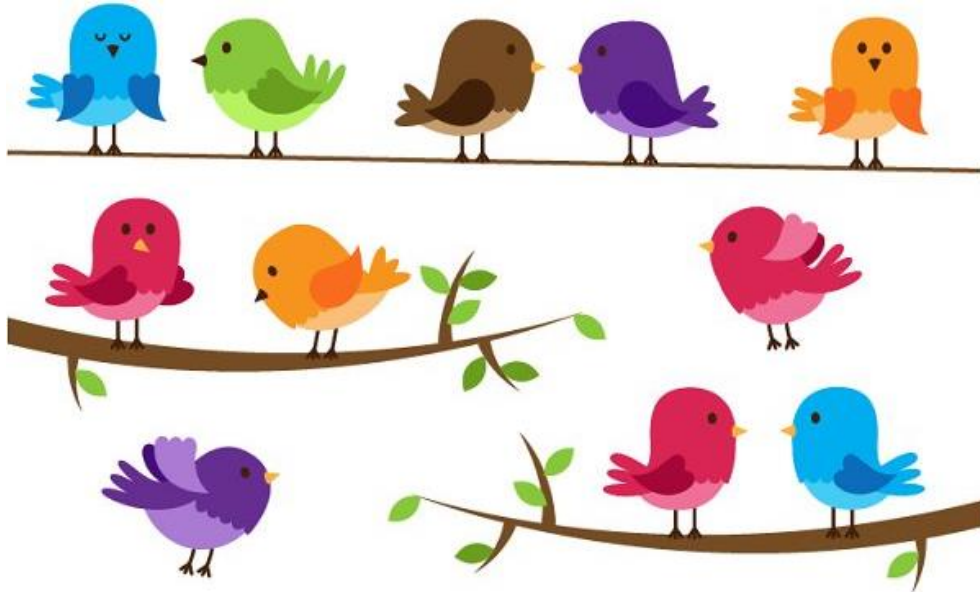
Wing Trimming

You may or may not decide to trim the wings of your bird – this will inhibit their ability to fly, reducing their chance of escape. It is recommended at least when your bird is new to your home, while they are learning to trust you and their new environment, and if traveling with your bird. If a “blood” or “pin” feather is cut, remove the bleeding feather entirely and apply pressure to the area.



Socialization & Behaviour

Flock animals have an innate need for companionship and social interaction. Flocks participate in many activities together such as eating, traveling, bathing, playing, roosting, and socializing. Isolation can lead to the development of negative behaviors like biting or screaming. Include your bird in routine day to day activities, establish fun rituals to enjoy with your bird every day (interactive games, songs, greetings, goodbyes), and respond to your bird's contact calls to reassure him when you are in other parts of the house. Including mirrors in your bird's enclosure will help mimic companions.



Medical Awareness

Any deviation from your birds "normal daily routine" could indicate a problem. Birds hide their illnesses very well, so it is important to contact your veterinarian as soon as symptoms are noticed. Look for signs such as: a change in eating, drinking, or activity, different posture, change in feathers, partially closed eyes majority of the time, lameness or swelling of the body, and difficulty breathing (head bobbing, open-mouthed breathing).

Sources of Information

The information in this package was adapted from www.avianenrichment.com, www.lafeber.com/vet, and www.veterinarypartner.com. These websites are a reliable and informative source to learn from! For more information and questions, reach out to our knowledgeable Exotic Veterinarians: Dr Jeun and Dr Grant!