

BIRD CARE SHEET

GENERAL NOTES FOR ALL BIRDS

- When you first bring a bird home leave it alone for the first week, no handling or cleaning, just change the food and water as needed.
- Cover cage for first 24 hours with a sheet or blanket, this will help calm the bird.
- Their bird should be kept in a warm location, with no drafts or direct sun. Do not place in or near a kitchen, fumes from non-stick cookware and oven cleaning can kill birds very quickly!
- The bird must remain on the same food as they are eating at Paradise Pet Center.

HANDLING

Be very gentle, you do not want to squeeze too hard or place too much pressure on the chest or stomach, or the bird may not be able to breathe.

Never hold a bird upside down; the bird may suffocate. (Birds use gravity to swallow unlike most other animals that control swallowing with muscles)

WING CLIPPING

Wing clipping is important for the safety of any hook billed bird. The purpose of wing clipping is not to keep the bird grounded but to prevent it from flying into dangerous environments. A bird's wings should be clipped every 8 to 12 weeks and can be done with a good pair of scissors, cut the first 6 feathers or flight feathers. Watch out for blood feathers, if they are cut the bird could bleed out quickly, they must be plucked if they are cut. This should be done with any bird you want to handle, birds like canaries and finches don't have to have their wings clipped.

Paradise Pet Centre has wing clipping available, please call or come in for pricing.

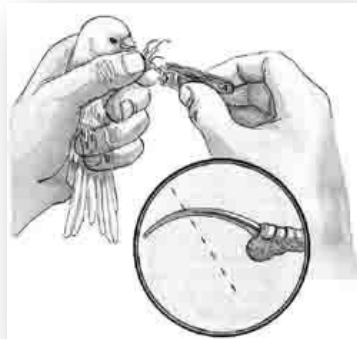
NAIL CLIPPING

Cut the sharp tip off the nail without cutting into the quick. Cut a little bit at a time (1/16 – 1/32 inch at a time) using the Living World nail scissors. If you cut into the quick, the nail will bleed and it will hurt, even when you get close it may still hurt a little. If your pet has dark nails, it is safest to just clip off the nail tip.

If you cut the quick, don't panic!

For any bleeding, simply apply pressure to the tip of the nail with some blood stopper powder.

Make sure the bleeding has stopped before placing the animal back in its cage or leaving the animal unattended.



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CAGES

The bigger the better.

Bars should be horizontal to allow the bird to climb the sides of the cage (important for hook billed birds who use their bills to climb). Purchase the largest cage within budget to provide the best home.

The best cages are made out of non-toxic metals. They **should not** have toxic metals such as zinc, lead, copper or brass. Paradise cages are made from steel free of any hazardous metals.

The bars should be no more than $\frac{1}{2}$ inch apart for smaller birds (canaries, finches, budgies, lovebirds), $\frac{3}{4}$ inch apart for medium/large birds (cockatiels, most parrots). The space between the bars should be small enough to prevent the birds head from going through the bars.

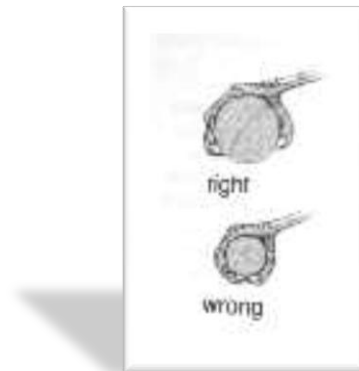
The cage should be placed in a quiet location and out of direct sunlight. Keep the birds away from drafts, air conditioners and noisy or busy areas. The minimum temperature is 20°C, this means they may require a heat source, a heat glo bulb for reptiles works good.

DO NOT SMOKE NEAR BIRDS OR KEEP THEM CLOSE TO THE KITCHEN (NON-STICK COOKWARE AND OVEN CLEANING RELEASE TOXIC FUMES).

For more information call 780-459-6896 or come visit us!

PERCHES

Perches should be bought in varying lengths and diameters, and placed at different heights throughout the cage. If you choose to use sandpaper perch covers use them only on one perch as they can cause foot irritation. Choosing the proper perch size (diameter) is important also. Improper perch sizes can cause foot irritation as well and lead to bumble foot. The best diameter for a perch allows a bird's foot to form a half circle around it. Twigs and branches from outside should not be used since they may harbor mites and other parasites



CAGE LINER

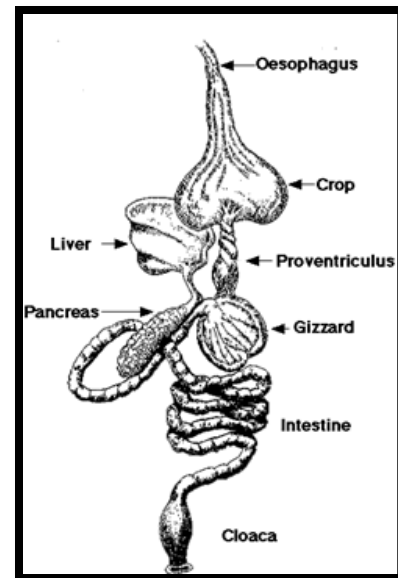
A liner should be placed on the bottom of the cage. This makes cleaning easier because it can easily be removed and replaced. Clumping or clay based cat litter is not a good choice for a bird cage, since the bird might start to eat the soiled lining. You can use corn cob or pellet litter.

GRAVEL PAPER

Gravel paper is a type of cage liner that has a gritty surface which helps trim bird claws. If this material is ingested it can help with *crop digestion*.

Grit: helps the bird's digestive enzymes reach the inner portion of the seeds by grinding and wearing away the outer shells of seeds

Crop: Some bird species have an enlarged area of the esophagus that is called a crop. The crop serves as a temporary storage location for food and allows food to be softened before it enters the stomach.



COVERS

Covering a bird cage can be useful because they minimize night time drafts. Also they decrease the amount of light, therefore mimicking night and therefore calming the birds.

AVIAN BULBS

Avian sun lamps provide birds with safe levels of UVB and UVA to improve physical and psychological health.



UVB helps birds with synthesizing vitamin D3 for proper calcium metabolism which is needed for normal growth, maintenance of strong bones, and proper egg production.

UVA is visible to birds, enabling them to recognize mates, locate food, and identify different species

NUTRITION

The bird must go home on the same food it is eating at Paradise Pet Center or the 5 day warranty won't apply.

A good diet consists not only of seeds but of pellets, fresh fruit and veggies, and treats such as millet spray (with millet spray holder to keep from falling to the bottom of the cage). Seeds should make up less than 25% of the diet. Pellets provide a balanced diet and prevent birds from picking out their favorite food and leaving the rest. As with all pets make sure that there is a fresh supply of water **at all times**.

After at least a month of being home safe leafy vegetables such as kale, broccoli, dandelions, spinach, celery, peas, and watercress should be offered. Small amounts of fruits such as apples, oranges, grapes, bananas, and melons can also be offered. Offer only in small quantities.

Water containers should be attached to the side of the cage to prevent spilling or contamination. Food containers can be placed on the bottom of the cage but be sure not to put the dishes directly under a perch or the food may become contaminated by the bird's droppings. Water bottles are another option which stay cleaner than a dish.

The dishes should be cleaned and filled daily.

VITAMINS

A vitamin supplement such as Prime is recommended. It is a powder that is added to the food, the food must be mixed daily so that the powder doesn't fall to the bottom. Vitamin drops that go into the water are also available. Using a vitamin powder will ensure the bird is getting a balanced diet and all the vitamins that it needs to stay healthy.

For more information call 780-459-6896 or come visit us!

MINERAL BLOCKS

Mineral blocks can be used for any bird; they provide a variety of minerals but most importantly calcium. Calcium benefits birds in many ways, it helps in digestion, ensures normal development and maintenance of bones, the nervous system, muscle function, blood clotting, and cardiac function.

TREATS

Vegetables and fruits make excellent treats for birds, because they should only be fed in small quantities. There are also many commercial treats that can be purchase at a pet store. Always remember that treats should be fed in **small quantities** and some are bird specific.

CUTTLEBONE

A cuttlebone is recommended to be in a bird's cage to promote beak and jaw exercise. It is not actually a bone, but rather the internal shell of the Cuttlefish. It is composed of calcium and is an excellent calcium supplement and exercise toy for birds. Holders are also a great idea so you can attach the cuttlebone to the cage bars to keep it cleaner and easier access for the bird.



OYSTER SHELL/BIRD GRAVEL

Oyster shells are an excellent source of calcium. Calcium is necessary for all caged birds to help with the formation of strong bones and firm egg shells. Oyster shell supplements for birds are usually in a crushed form which can be sprinkled over the bird's food. Do not put in water as it can cause bacteria to grow in the water



TOYS

Toys provide entertainment and exercise for birds. Swings, ladders, mirrors and bells are great toys for all birds. Make sure that these toys are the appropriate size for the bird so they don't get any part of their body stuck. Keep in mind that a bird can make a toy out of pretty much anything so make sure that all dangerous appliances along with valuable items are safely put away.

Note: do not use a mirror if you wish to handle your bird.

BATHS AND SHOWERS

Birds love taking baths or showers. Choosing between the two depends on the bird's preference. No matter what the bird chooses there are specific rules that should be followed to ensure the safety of the bird.

- The bath and cage area should be draft and breeze free
- Bath time should be in the morning so he/she will be dry by bed time
- Do **not** towel dry or blow dry - **ONLY AIR DRY** (using a heat lamp is OK)
- Always keep the water temperature **luke warm**

Birdbaths can be purchased that fit into the door of a bird cage. They should be filled with lukewarm water and left for the bird to enter as he or she chooses.

Showers can be done by misting the bird with a spray bottle or letting the bird play in the sink under a running faucet (lightly). If you let them play in the sink make sure their wings are clipped!

Birds take care of much of their grooming needs themselves. The owner's involvement in their bird's grooming doesn't need to extend beyond giving them a bird bath or misting, keeping them comfortable during molting, trimming their nails, and clipping the wings.

CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE

Every week the cage should be cleaned from top to bottom. The best place for your bird while cleaning is in a secondary cage.

- remove all liner/litter from the cage
- wipe down the cage with bird cage cleaners and rinse thoroughly (natural enzymes, no chemicals!)
- any cage attachments should be cleaned at this point as well
- wash the dishes with bird safe cleaners
- once the cage is cleaned place fresh liner, food and water, and any attachments back in the cage

Birds are very sensitive to chemical cleaners and they can be fatal if they are not rinsed off properly.