

A proper diet is essential:

- ☺ Fresh water should be available at all times and should be changed daily.
- ☺ The majority of a bird's diet should be pellets. Try some of the many different brands of pellets available to see what your bird likes.
- ☺ It is best to start birds out on pellets as early as possible while they are curious and will readily try new things. Converting an older bird from an unhealthy diet to pellets can be challenging. This can be done by gradually introducing a small amount of pellets. Continue to offer the original diet, but slowly increase the amount of pellets when you see your bird is eating them and maintaining their weight. When adding pellets to a bird's diet, offer them in a separate dish from their usual food or try hand feeding pellets as treats.
- ☺ The diet should also be supplemented with items from your table. Sharing food with your bird is a great way to bond with it as well as provide additional nourishment. A good guideline is that most things that are healthy for people are excellent for birds as well, just remember to consider a bird-sized portion.



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- ☺ Fruits and vegetables are good choices for birds and can be placed in the cage with a clothespin.



- ☺ Grains and pastas, such as crackers and spaghetti are frequent favorites.



- ☺ Seeds and nuts, such as almonds, walnuts or other nuts should only be used in small quantities as treats.



Some common signs of illness:

- ☹ A change in the bird's personality or usual habits.
- ☹ A change in the color, structure or consistency of droppings.
- ☹ Sneezing or nasal discharge.
- ☹ Weight loss
- ☹ A fluffed up appearance to the feathers.
- ☹ Feather picking.
- ☹ Regurgitating or decreased appetite.
- ☹ Abnormal appearance to the beak or the nails.

Yearly Work-up:

We recommend annual physical exams and diagnostic work-up on every bird to help identify and treat problems early. This consists of blood work to evaluate the bird's immune system and body functions, a fecal to monitor for parasites and a gram stain to examine the health of the digestive system.



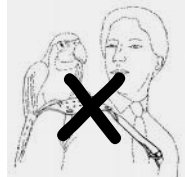
** The doctor may use a towel to safely handle and examine your bird.*

Other recommended testing:

- ① DNA testing can be done to determine your bird's sex. For most pet bird species, there is little or no difference in the appearance of males and females.
- ② Psittacine Beak and Feather Disease is a fatal disease affecting a bird's beak and feathers.
- ③ Polyoma is a viral disease that can cause sudden death and liver disease.
- ④ Psittacosis is a zoonotic disease that birds can carry and they may not show signs of illness.

Handling:

Teach your bird to step up and step down for safe transport in and out of the cage. When holding your bird, allow it to perch on your hand or forearm. Birds should not be allowed to perch on your shoulder as this allows the bird to be able to move around without any control of the handler and can be dangerous. A startled or upset bird on a person's shoulder can quickly bite and injure a person's ear or face. To prevent a bird from walking up you arm to your shoulder, hold your hand higher than your elbow and the bird will naturally want to climb to the highest point, your hand.



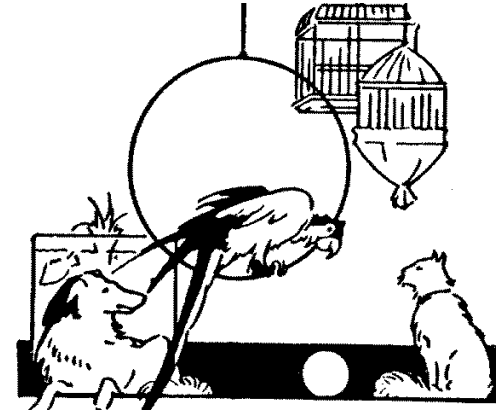
(Not recommended)

Household hazards:

Avoid using strong scents or chemicals around your bird. The fumes released from burning Teflon® pans are extremely toxic to birds. Glass windows and ceiling fans can cause injury in a flighted bird. Other pets can be dangerous to your bird and it should be kept safely away from dogs and cats to prevent injuries, such as bite wounds. Fish tanks and toilets should be kept covered to prevent accidental drowning.



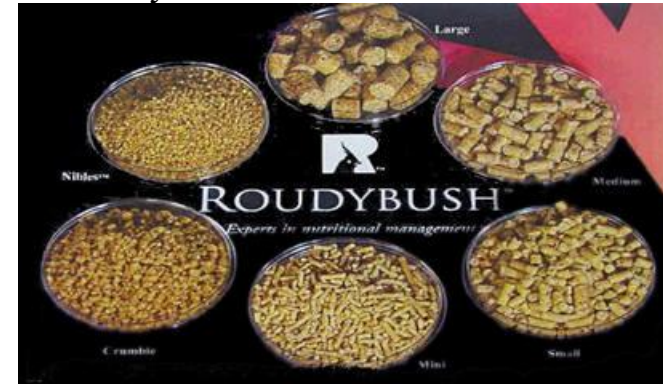
Avoid taking birds outside to keep them safe and protected from disease and dangers. Remember, when startled, a bird can fly away and may be impossible to catch.



What are some good pelleted diets?

Here is a list of some major brands of nutritionally balanced pelleted diets:

This is what we carry:



Roudybush® (available here)

Here are some other quality brands:

- Exact®
- Zupreem®
- Harrison's®
- Pretty Bird®
- Lafeber®

What are some things that a bird can not eat?

- ⊗ Avoid things such as sweets containing chocolate, coffee, and soda and tea.
- ⊗ Chocolate, caffeine and avocado are toxic to birds and should never be offered.



The proper environment can affect health and well being:

Look for a large metal cage for easy cleaning. Ensure that the bars of the cage are close enough together to prevent the bird from getting its head or feet caught in the cage. Avoid old cages as they may contain lead-based paint which is toxic to birds. Choose a large cage and place it in a lighted, social area without large temperature changes (not near an air conditioner or a heat vent). Look for an area that is inaccessible to other pets and remember cats can climb and jump into higher areas.



Choose a cage with enough room for your bird to move around and play.

Use paper towel or newspaper in the bottom of the cage to allow for quick clean up and easy monitoring of droppings. Clean the cage bottom and dishes daily and the entire cage thoroughly at least once a week.



Provide several perches within the cage of varying diameter and place them far enough from the sides of the cage to allow the bird to turn around without hitting tail feathers on the cage. Pesticide-free, non-toxic branches, such as fruit trees or hardwoods can make excellent perches as well as chew toys.

To help keep your bird safe, do not allow it out of the cage unsupervised. Keep birds of different sizes separated with space between cages and do not allow a bird to climb on the cage of another bird to avoid injuries to the toes and beak.



Birds can be protective of their cages and can inflict serious bites to other birds climbing on their cage (even if the birds normally get along outside their cages).

Toys provide enrichment and prevent boredom:

Birds are very intelligent creatures and require distractions and toys to keep them entertained.

- Swings or climbing toys are excellent choices for all sized birds.
- Wooden blocks, branches, cardboard boxes or paper towel rolls are good choices for chew toys.
- Hanging toys, such as bells with secured clappers or infant toys can be used, but ensure that there are no open clips or small pieces that can be swallowed by the bird.
- Some birds enjoy mirrors, but others can be threatened by the other bird in the mirror, so watch your bird's behavior when introducing a mirror.
- Avoid toys made out of lead or zinc.



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Bathing encourages normal preening and minimizes dustiness:

Many birds enjoy a dish of water to bathe in or a gentle misting with a spray bottle. Some larger birds also enjoy a perch in the shower. Ensure that the bird bathes in a warm area so it can dry off without getting chilled.

(spray bottle)



(dish/bowl)



(shower)

