

There are many recipes to be found from the resources mentioned above of nutritious and tasty foods for your bird

- ✦ **Toxic Foods** - Some foods, safe for humans, are lethal to birds. These include such items as avocados, chocolate, alcohol, caffeine, raw kidney and lima beans, cigarette smoke and pesticides in fruits and vegetables.
- ✦ **Grit**- Don't use Grit. Most birds don't need grit and can even get an impacted crop from it. Grit is only recommended for birds who eat whole seeds - shell and all. Most birds crack their seeds, leaving the hulls and so have no need for the grit.
- ✦ **Cages** - Get a cage that gives your bird plenty of room to spread his wings, climb around, jump, swing and play. Be sure bars are not spaced so that a bird can wedge his head between them and get caught. Since birds tend to favor the higher parts of the cage, get one with the largest width and depth you can. Remember, your bird spends many hours in his cage, so the bigger the better. Be sure to place cages away from drafts or near doors to the outside. Temperature should not vary quickly or go below 55 degrees..
- Perches** - Birds spend a lot of time on their perches. They need perches of varying diameters to prevent foot problems such as arthritis and atrophy. Avoid perches made from dowels, which are uniform and don't exercise feet. Never use sandpaper perches that harm the skin on a bird's foot. Tree branches are very good for the feet and also help satisfy the chewing urge. A cement perch can help keep nails trimmed. Put a wooden perch high in the cage, which birds prefer. Make sure perches aren't over bowls or other perches so droppings don't hit them. Use multiple perches, but leave room for birds to move about in the cage.



More about CARI

CARI is a non-profit educational organization whose specific objectives are:

- ✦ **To promote** the welfare and prevention of cruelty to all bird species
 - ✦ **To offer** avian education through written publications, seminars and meetings
 - ✦ **To support** the preservation of endangered and threatened avian species
- To encourage** self-sustaining captive bred populations of exotic birds
- ✦ **To support** other charitable organizations dedicated to education, research, and conservation.

You are cordially invited to join us at our Monthly Meetings, held every third Friday of the month September through May, at 7 p.m. in the meeting area behind **The Bird Brain (303)446-BIRD** store run by **The Gabriel Foundation** located at 1025 Acoma Street in Denver. The store will be open for shopping from 6 p.m. till 7 p.m. Special events are held June- August. Call our hot line for information on those events! Donations appreciated!

Non-Members and non-bird owners are welcome. For further information call: **303-629-5900x215** or **Visit our website: <http://www.cari-bird.org>** (Copyright CARI, Denver, CO 2005) Non-Members and non-bird owners are welcome.



**Colorado
Avian
Resource, Inc.**



Basic Information For Companion Bird Owners



One of the most wonderful things that can happen to you is the addition of a companion bird to your family. However, there is a lot a new bird owner must know in order to develop a loving and trusting relationship and to keep a bird healthy. . So join a bird club, talk with breeders, read magazines and avian books. Join a bird mailing list or visit an internet bird chat, and do research on some of the many useful and informative web sites, such as Birds n Ways.

✦ **Feeding** - An all seed diet is not recommended, and birds have starved to death when their owners thought they had a bowl full of seeds. Pet parrots crack seeds and eat the inside portion. The hulls often remain in the feeding dish giving the appearance that the bird has plenty of food when in reality there are no seeds left. **Replace your bird's food daily.**

✦ **Diet - Nutritionally, seeds are very poor.** They lack calcium, protein and many other vitamins and minerals which birds require. Seeds and nuts are also high in fat, which can lead to liver disease. While birds do eat seeds in the wild, they supplement their diet with many other food sources - nuts, berries, fruit, bugs, etc. Like humans, birds require a balanced diet to remain healthy. Birds enjoy veggies, fruits, pasta, sprouts, grains and even cooked meat such as chicken. Pellets are also a good source of nutrients. Many experts recommend pellets should be no more than 50% of the diet, while others feed a higher percentage. Seeds and nuts can be given as treats.



✦ **Feathers** - Feathers grow back. If your bird accidentally loses some feathers, don't panic. They'll grow back. Bird also molt. It is their way of replacing worn feathers. Different species molt at different times and lose different amounts of feathers. Feathers grow back usually in 2-3 weeks. However, if you see bare patches of skin, this may denote a disease or feather plucking. In this case see your vet.

✦ **Vets** - Birds are very different than cats and dogs. Find an avian vet, a vet who specializes in treating birds. Take your bird for a new bird exam to ensure it is healthy and to establish a baseline blood chemistry for comparison in case of illness. And develop a relationship with your vet. Find a vet or hospital that you can contact at night or weekends in an emergency. Birds should have an annual exam to ensure they are healthy. Be sure to keep your vet's phone number handy in case of emergency.

✦ **Attention** - Birds are very intelligent and social animals who require love and attention. Although the amount of attention varies by species, a bird that is ignored or bored can go insane, pluck his feathers or even mutilate himself. Keep your bird in an area where there is family activity, but be sure he has a quiet area to sleep in at night. Talk to your bird during the day. If you work, leave a radio, CD or TV on when you are gone. Take him out for play and cuddling every day. Be sure he has lots of toys and things to play with while in his cage. Give your bird lots of love and it will be returned tenfold.

✦ **Communication** - One of the most important aspects in creating and maintaining a successful relationship with your bird is the ability to

✦ understand his vocalizations and body language. Birds learn to communicate with us through sounds, behavior and actions. Using their body language and vocalizations they can "tell" us when they are happy, content, frightened, sick, hungry, tired, angry, or ready to be held and cuddled. It is of utmost importance that bird owners learn to interpret the meanings of their bird's sounds and behaviors in order to successfully tame, train, and provide them with the very best of care

✦ **Potty Training** - Birds are extremely intelligent and can be potty trained. There are lots of articles on how to accomplish this. With a little patience you can alleviate a source of frustration in owning a bird..

✦ **CARI** members are available to give advise and suggestions, but in the meantime read and learn all you can and be sure to give your bird lots of love and attention. You will be amply rewarded.

✦ **Some of this information is reprinted with permission of Birds n Ways e-zine and Carol Highfill.**

Colorado
Avian
Resource, Inc.



C.A.R.I.