



## Bird information fact sheet

### **Check list**

- A parrot cage with removeable grid (largest you can accommodate)
- A selection of suitable toys
- A rope perch
- A concrete perch
- Bird seed
- Pellet mix
- Coop cups
- Calci grid
- Bird litter
- Cage cleaner spray
- Mite & lice spray
- Wormer
- Avi-vite

### **Setting up your cage**

Birds love attention and like to be involved in the family, with this in mind you should place your Bird's cage where it can be with the family ie. Lounge room or kitchen. An ideal location for your bird should include filtered sunlight. Do not place your bird too close to heaters or heating ducts. Steps to setting up your cage: First you should wipe out your cage using Cage Cleaner Spray, then wipe it down with a clean cloth to remove any residue. Place a layer of bird litter in the bottom tray. This should be changed weekly. Position the main perch so that it is level with the food and water dishes. You should avoid placing a perch directly over food and water dishes, as your birds dropping will fall into them. Position your concrete and rope perches. Vary them so that your bird has different heights throughout the cage to perch. Position your toys in the cage. Make sure that your bird has easy access to reach them but that they are not in the way of the food and water dishes. Place your coop cups on the sides of the cage, but not directly above the food and water dishes.

### **Introducing your baby to its new home**

Your bird will have been sent home in a carry box, place this box inside the cage and open it. Allow your bird to come out on its own. It will not take long for your bird to come out and explore its new home.

### **Keeping your bird healthy**

Birds can be quite deceptive when it comes to their health, because in the wild if they show that they are weak or ill they will quickly be preyed upon. The best way to keep an eye on your bird is to be familiar with its droppings, know the normal texture and colour. The first signs of illness can be detected by noting a change in the droppings. We recommend you acquaint yourself with your local avian vet (avian vets specialize in complete bird health and medicine) and as part of your yearly health routine take your bird twice a year for a complete health check. There are many illnesses that can affect your bird. We have listed the most common ones that you should be aware of and some advice on treating them, in all cases of illness you should always consult your avian vet. As some of these illnesses can be transmitted to people, we recommend that you avoid allowing your bird to put its beak into your mouth or share food or drink from the same dishes and cups as you. Not only could these habits make you ill they can also cause your bird to become ill as well. You should clean your bird's cage once to twice a week using either cage cleaner spray or avi-safe.

### **Mites & lice**

Some of symptoms for mites and lice can be; poor feather condition, continual scratching and bald patches. We recommend spraying your bird and cage on a monthly basis with bird mite and lice spray. Always hold the bottle at least 30cm away from your bird and avoid spraying directly into your bird's face. Remove water and food containers before you spray the cage.

### **Worms**

Some of the symptoms of worms can be; diarrhoea, weight loss and poor feather condition. We recommend worming your bird every three months with a bird all wormer such as Worm Out Gel. Simply follow the directions on the bottle and add the wormer to your bird's water. Never worm your bird on a really hot day as your bird can overdose itself.

### **Feather plucking**

Feather plucking occurs mainly from boredom, emotional stress, poor diet, lack of bathing and illness. We recommend contacting your local avian vet if your bird shows any sign of pulling out its own feathers to determine the cause. We recommend leaving the radio on as a low background noise when you are not at home to prevent your bird from being lonely. Always have at least three toys in your bird's cage to keep boredom at bay. You can also use stop pick spray if it is caused by behavioural issues.

### **Coccidiosis**

Coccidiosis can affect your birds digestive track, the most common symptoms are diarrhoea, lack of appetite and poor condition. Coccidiosis can occur through your bird drinking from water that is contaminated either by droppings, dirty containers or water containing the bug. We recommend using water guard in your bird's water to help prevent bacteria forming. Never place your birds water dishes directly under its perches and always provide fresh clean water and dishes. Sulphadim can be used for birds with diarrhoea. Always carefully follow the directions. If the diarrhoea persists for more than 24hrs immediately contact your avian vet for advice.

### **Psittacosis**

Psittacosis can be life threatening to your bird. Some of the symptoms of psittacosis are, sneezing, diarrhoea, weight loss and fluffed up feathers. Psittacosis can occur by poor hygiene where your bird is eating food that has been contaminated by droppings or playing with toys that are contaminated by droppings. We recommend keeping your bird in a parrot cage with a removable grid to keep your bird from eating food off the floor that may have landed in droppings. Clean your cage twice a week using cage cleaner spray or avi-safe. All toys, perches and dishes should also be cleaned with cage cleaner spray or avi-safe. The only way to test for psittacosis is by a blood test conducted by an avian vet. Psittacosis can be successfully treated when detected early by oral medication and weekly injections by your avian vet.

### **Toys**

Birds are quite intelligent so you need to occupy their mind to prevent them from becoming bored and selfdestructive. You should place no less than three toys in your bird's cage but not too many to clutter and reduce space in the cage. Once a month these toys should be taken out and rotated with three others to prevent your bird from becoming bored with its toys. Once a week you should thoroughly inspect and clean your bird's toys to ensure they are still safe and pose no harm. Rope toys should be trimmed if the ends start to fray. The best toys are rope/wood toys and acrylic toys.

### **Perches**

It is important to have at least two or three different thickness and material perches in your bird's cage. This ensures the correct exercise and stimulation for your baby's feet. Cement perches are fantastic as they have different thickness and shape and also trim your bird's beak and nails. Rope perches are fun for your bird and are easily kept clean. You should clean all of your bird's perches at least once a week. We recommend using cage cleaner spray or avi-safe.

### **Perches**

Birds commonly do this when they are falling asleep. It is completely normal and shows that your bird is content and in good health. Your bird should take care of its own hygiene with daily preening and also by rubbing its beak on its perch to clean it after meals. If your bird suddenly stops this routine contact your avian vet as birds neglect their hygiene when they are ill.

### **Further Information**

For more information there are many books available on each breed of bird, as well as books on training, behaviour & health.