



ALASKA BIRD NEWS

January 2011

Lin Westgard, Editor

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Available on-line at www.alaskabirdclub.org
Dedicated to all the current and future parrot owners of Alaska

A Parrot's Bill of Rights

By steward A. Metz, M.D.

1. **GET TO KNOW ABOUT PARROTS BEFORE YOU BRING ME HOME.** I am not a domesticated pet like a dog or cat. I still have the spirit of the jungle in me. I have special needs, which you may find it hard to fill. Please don't learn these too late for my well being. And please don't acquire one of my cousins wild from the jungle- it will jeopardize his survival and well being, and that won't be a party for you either!
2. **GIVE ME THE LARGEST HOME IF POSSIBLE.** I am use to flying through rainforests or savannas. I have given up this great gift for your pleasure. At the very least, give me enough room to flap my wings and exercise. And I need toys for my amusement and wood to chew - otherwise, I might confuse your home with the forest and it's trees.
3. **GIVE ME A NUTRITIOUS DIET.** I need a wide variety of fresh and nutritious foods, even if they take time to prepare. I cannot survive on seed alone. Take time to learn what my needs are.
4. **LET ME HAVE A "SOCIAL LIFE".** I am a gregarious flock animal - but I am not one of you. I need lots of socialization to learn how to act with you, and with my siblings. I also need to have adequate quality time with you everyday - no matter what your schedule or other needs are. I am a living, feeling creature. Above all, I need to be able to have complete trust in you, and count on your predictability in looking after me - every day.
5. **LET ME BE CLEAN.** I may like to drop food or even throw it, but I need meticulous cleanliness to be healthy. My skin itches without frequent showers, the barbs of my feathers won't seal if they become oily and, worst of all, I may become ill if my food or water is not always sanitary.
6. **I NEED MY OWN DOCTOR.** You may not understand my physiology and therefore you may not recognize it early on when I get sick. And it may be too late when you do, because I hide my illnesses (remember what I said about my being an animal of the jungle, where there are lots of predators). And I need an avian vet - a specialist (no HMO's for me please). If you can't afford one, perhaps you shouldn't have taken me home.
7. **PLEASE DON'T PUNISH ME.** Just as I don't always understand your peculiarities, you may not understand mine. I don't TRY to get into trouble, remember - a house is not the jungle. If I do screw up, don't yell at me and never hit me. I have sensitive ears and I may never trust you again if you strike me. Hands are sometimes scary things to us (why in the world would you not be zygodactylous like us?) Even more im-

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CLUB INFORMATION

The Alaska Bird Club is a 501(c)(3) non-profit incorporated in the State of Alaska. It meets the first Tuesday of every month at Serendipity Adult Day Services in Anchorage at 7:00pm. Location: 3550 East 20th Ave (off of Northern Lights Blvd & Nichols St).

The mailing address is:

THE ALASKA BIRD CLUB
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Hospitality Chair Person: Open

Membership Chair Person: Open

You can e-mail the Alaska Bird Club at:
akbirdclub@yahoo.com

Or visit our website:
Www.alaskabirdclub.org

We welcome any comments, articles or any ideas for the club or the newsletter. Current issues and extra copies of previous editions of The Alaska Bird News are available at the monthly meetings.

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The following locations have copies of our newsletter if you need extra. We have also noted the clinics that have avian vets by the 🌟

ANCHORAGE:

Alaska Mill & Feed
1501 E. 1st Ave.
276-6016

Alaska Pet-ography
9130 Elim St.
868-1680

🌟 Chester Valley
Veterinary
Dr. Thomas
1571 Muldoon Rd.
333-6591

🌟 College Village
Animal Clinic
Dr's Basler & Nicholson
2036 E. Northern Lights
274-5623

🌟 Hillside Pet Clinic
Dr. Bluestone
2101 Abbott Rd. #1
344-7913

Petco
8621 Old Seward Hwy

🌟 Pet Emergency
Dr. Doty
2320 E. Dowling Rd.
274-5636

🌟 The Pet Stop
Dr. Riley Wilson
1921 W. Dimond Blvd.
522-1006

The Pet Zoo
901 E. Dimond Blvd.
344-2966

🌟 VCA Alaska Pet Care
Dr. Frederickson
3900 Lake Otis Pkwy
562-PETS (7387)

VCA Alpine Animal Hospital
12531 Old Seward Hwy
345-1515

VCA E. Anch Animal Clinic
2639 Boniface Pkwy
337-1561

EAGLE RIVER:

🌟 Ravenwood Veterinary
Clinic
Dr. Cuthbert
11525 Old Glenn Hwy
694-9665

The Pet Zoo
12046 Business Blvd.
622-2966

WASILLA:

All Creatures Veterinary Clinic
Mi 7.4 Palmer- Wasilla Hwy
(907) 376-6016

The Pet Zoo
1481 E. Parks Hwy
357-7335

PALMER

Far Country Animal Hospital
2701 N. Liahona Dr.
Palmer
(907) 746-7297

North Star Animal Hospital
840 S. Cobb St.
(907) 746-7387

Palmer Veterinary Clinic
Mi 39 Glenn Why
(907) 745-3219

The Pet Zoo
10201 E. Palmer-Wasilla Hwy
746-0056

FAIRBANKS:

Mt. McKinley Animal Hospital
800 College Rd.
Fairbanks, AK 99701



(Continued from page 1)

- portantly, we don't learn by punishment. We are gentle creatures who only strike back to protect ourselves; we learn through patience and love.
8. **SPEAK MY 'LANGUAGE'.** I know you get upset with me when I knock over my water bowl, throw food, scream or pluck my feathers. I don't do these to annoy you - I am probably trying to tell you something (perhaps that I am hurting, lonely or sad). Learn to speak MY (body) language. Remember that I, alone of all creatures on this planet, I learn to speak yours!
 9. **SEE ME AS AN INDIVIDUAL.** I am unique and feeling being... no two of us are alike. Please don't be disappointed in me if I don't talk like you wanted, or can't do the tricks that your friend's parrot can do. But if you pay close attention to me (and I always empathize with you, whether you know it or not) I will show you a unique being who will give you so much more than talking and playing.... Give me a chance to show you who I am, I think you'll find the effort worth it. And remember - I am not an ornament; I do not enhance ANY living room décor. And I am not a status symbol - if you use me as such; I might nip your un-turned nose!
 10. **SHARE YOUR LOVE WITH ME.** Above all, please remember that you are my Special Person. I put all my trust and faith in you.... We parrots are used to being monogamous. (No barhopping for us!). So, please don't go away for long periods or give me away - that would be a sadness from which I may never recover. If that seems to be asking a lot, remember - you could have learned about my needs BEFORE bringing me home. Even having a baby or taking a new job isn't a fair reason - you made a commitment to me FIRST! And if you think that you must leave me because you might die, provide for me forever after you leave. I may live to a ripe old age but I can't provide for myself. Remember I'm in a small cage amongst people who are not of my blood.

YOUR RIGHTS. You have lots of rights, but I can only assure one. And that is, if you treat me the way I described above, I will reward you with unwavering love, humor, knowledge, beauty, dedication and a sense of wonder and awe you haven't felt since you were a child. When you took me home, you became my Flock Leader, indeed, my entire universe - for life. I would hang on the moon and the stars for you if I could. We are one in Heart and Soul.

Calling for 2011 Volunteers!

The Alaska Bird Club is seeking volunteers for the following positions:

Newsletter Editor - Create the Bird News with current events, past meeting information and avian care articles and be a writer! It's great fun to produce this newsletter and training will be provided. This position has sub-volunteers that help distribute, mail and get it out to the public. Should be familiar with Microsoft Publisher and Adobe Acrobat.

Adopt-A-Bird - administrative volunteers. This program is one of the strongest assets of the Alaska Bird Club and offers a tremendous amount of help for people that must re-home their parrots and for those that are wonderful enough to consider adoption over buying a bird. Help is needed to handle the logistics of a bird once it is placed into the program (helping facilitate the relinquishment and adoption) by helping with paperwork and interviewing. This is probably the most rewarding position in the program. Adopt-A-Bird chairperson, Amy could certainly use the help. It's a long process to find the perfect home and we need help!

Secretary/Treasurer - Our current Secretary/Treasurer will be taking on a sabbatical job and is unsure of her ability to take on this position. Soliciting volunteers at this time.

Volunteering can be a very rewarding experience and helps birds throughout Alaska

Meeting Information:

February 1st, 2011

Feathers and Feng Shui

Check out the Alaska Bird Club's Website!

Find out about our latest Lost and Found Birds, our birds that are available in our Adopt-A-Bird program and other various articles and videos. Advertise your un-wanted cages via newsletter and website! See what's up and coming and stay in touch!

www.alaskabirdclub.org

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(907) 868-8058



REMEMBER: Teflon and other non-stick finishes are deadly to your bird. Do not take chances. Bird deaths have been recorded when nonstick cookware was used even at low temperatures. This includes looking at ALL non-stick surfaces (irons, bread making machines, waffle makers, etc). Also be aware that using the self-cleaning option on your oven can also be deadly and to remove birds to be safe.

Website of the Month

www.onthewingonline.com

Car-Toons! Breed specific decals made of white outdoor vinyl and are easy to apply to the outside of your rear car window. Several breeds to choose from with prices ranging from \$2.00 to \$5.00.

Parrot Behavior Consultations

Need help with any of the following?

Aggression
Excessive screaming
Inappropriate vocalizations
Feather Destructive Behaviors
Diet
Environmental Enrichment

Contact Karen Webster
to schedule your consultation today:
929-BIRD (2473) or akpeac@gmail.com.

Comfy Clawth Blankets for Birds

See www.comfyclawth.com for Alaskan made bird blankets that can be used to train your parrot to be toweled in a safe and comfy environment.
birdieblankets@comfyclawth.com

P E A C (Parrot Education & Adoption Center)

www.akpeac.org

929-BIRD

Seminar Schedule

Advanced Registration Recommended

(note new starting time!)

February 15 6:30-9:00pm

Environmental Enrichment

March 15 6:30 to 9:00pm

Preventing or Avoiding Common Behavior Problems

April 12 6:30—9:00pm

Wild About African Greys

THE ALASKA BIRD CLUB MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



alaskabirdclub.org e-mail: akbirdclub@yahoo.com phone: 868-9070
Non Profit Club EIN# 92-0134866

The Alaska Bird Club's mission is to promote responsible avian ownership through education and when possible, to provide rescue and adoption services for abandoned and unwanted birds in communities across Alaska.

We are a statewide 501(c)(3) [non-profit] educational club. All money collected as dues is used to provide educational training and activities to assist people in caring for companion birds. Our main activities include convening educational monthly membership meetings, producing a monthly newsletter, offering an annual seminar featuring experts in avian care and managing a website. Additionally, The Alaska Bird Club manages a statewide Adopt-A-Bird Program offering placement referrals, emergency/foster care and rescue services. The Alaska Bird Club also has a Lost/Found-Rescue Committee that aids in the rescue and capture of lost birds. There are numerous other activities and services that The ABC offers. You do not have to attend the meetings to be a member.

MEMBERSHIPS:

Membership is due annually, and runs from January 1st—December 31st. (rate discount of 50% applies to members joining in August and later). New members receive membership packets and free newsletter mailings.

_____ Single: \$20.00 _____ Family: \$25.00

Mail Payment and Form to:
The Alaska Bird Club, PO Box 101825, Anchorage, AK 99510

Name(s): _____

Address: _____ City _____ State ____ Zip _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail Address _____

Type of Companion Birds you live with and their names:

How would you like to receive your newsletter?

US Mail ___ e-mail ___ Pick-up at membership meeting ___

Would you like to be listed on a registry that is available to other members? Yes ___ No ___

Would you be interested in carpooling from the Valley with other members? Yes ___ No ___

Would you like to be on a committee? Yes ___ No ___ and if so, do you have a preference?

Adopt-A-Bird: ___ Lost/Found-Rescue Committee ___ Hospitality Committee: ___

Membership Committee: ___ Educational Committee: ___ Seminar Committee: ___

Emergency Services Committee: ___ Other: _____

The Bird Club uses e-mail as the preferred method of communication. Do you wish to be included on this mailing list or not? Yes ___ No ___

Comments: _____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!!

Revised 12/2/2009

President's Perch

Extreme winds are once again disturbing the members of our household flock-human and feathered. Things that occasionally go “bump”, “thud”, and “clunk” in the night are disturbing enough in our home: yet, for two 'Toos, two lovebirds, two cockatiels, one quaker, one Meyers flock mating with a Blue fronted amazon.

The past couple of nights and days go beyond night frights. A few times I put on my bathrobe and padded to the bird room to comfort our birds. A choral cacophony of “tweets!”, “peeps!” and “squawks!” with a few “Hi, Dad!”, “Peekaboos”, and, “Whatchadoins”, greets me and then the fun begins settling everyone down. Of course I can't turn on all the lights to do this-that would involve giving everyone a nutriberry treat and probably a short bed time story or skritch-which I don't want to as I really want go drag my tired butt back to bed. So, I give them five minutes of “Shush!” 's and some firm “Night, night”'s, in my best step up command voice and all is calm for an undetermined amount of time. Of course none of the above narrative is found in Parrots for Dummies or The Well-Behaved Parrot guide-books. By the way, has any pet store or breeder ever told any of you about this wonderful scenario? I thought so! As I write this (and the sun has been down for two hours), I notice the absence of 90 gazillion mile per hour winds-could I possibly have a full night of rest tonight?

I certainly hope so.

Good night Alaskan Parrot lovers,

Michael Stanton
2011 President
The Alaska Bird Club

P.S. Feathers and Feng Shui discussion topics for next February's member meeting should prove interesting. Belated Happy New Year to feathered and human creatures!

The Association of Avian Veterinarians

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Considerations in an Aviculture Setup

Susan L. Clubb, DVM

Prior to establishment of an aviculture collection the aviculturist should determine the ultimate design goal. The important factors for consideration should be: 1) indoor vS outdoor aviaries; 2) cage design; and 3) disease control.

Indoor vs outdoor aviaries.

Indoor housing has the advantage of easier pest control, ability to manipulate light and dark hours, temperature and humidity control, protection from the elements, and increased theft protection. However, due to increase proximity of other birds and less fresh air flow, the potential for spread of disease may be higher. Cost-per-unit of housing as well as maintenance costs are typically higher for indoor facilities. Further consideration include ease of maintenance (cleaning, sanitation), provision of full spectrum light, air quality control, and filling the psychological need of the birds.

Outdoor aviaries usually provide more space and cost less to build and maintain. Disadvantages include inability to control climatic factors, less efficient pest control, increased theft risk, and exposure to wild birds and predators. And unless unusual circumstances exist, fresh air and direct sunlight are easier to provide.

With outdoor aviaries, the suitability of the species as relates to the local environment is a factor. For example, species which inhabit dry, high-altitude environments may be unduly stressed if housed in a warm, humid climate. Further considerations when planning any aviary include traffic flow through the aviary, sources of water and electricity, means to minimize disturbance, and inclement weather protection.

Cage Design

There are two primary styles of cages, suspended and ground-based. Suspended cages have the advantage of simple construction, ease of cleaning underneath, less expense. Because birds have less exposure to their feces and accumulated food waste, disease and parasite control is simplified. Alternatively, ground-based cages may provide more space and may be more aesthetically pleasing, but are more difficult to keep free of pests.

Other considerations in cage design include reduction of contamination of food and water, cage door size, escape-proofing, cage spacing or double wiring to prevent aggression between cage occupants, nest box placement and design, and perch placement and design.

Disease control

Insects and other pests are possible vectors for disease and parasites as well as a source of irritation and disturbance for breeding birds. Cockroaches, ants, red mites, rodents, snakes, and large mammalian predators should be excluded from the aviary if at all possible. Electric wire, wire-screened cages for small birds, greasing or baffling poles supporting raised cages, and limited use of insecticides may be employed to exclude these pests from an aviary. Overhanging tree branches should be monitored as a source of access for predators.

Traffic flow should restrict caretakers from tracking disease or parasites on their shoes, between cages.

Hormonal Parrots! Yikes!!

Right about now you will start to see hormonal behaviors in parrots. It can be a very trying time for parrot owners. We cannot stress enough to do your research on the type parrot you have and what their normal hormonal periods are. During your research, you should also discover certain behaviors that are common with this period (in example, nesting... biting.... Screaming.... Un-explained outbursts, etc).

Just when you think you KNOW your parrot, this cycle begins that can really affect relationships you have with your bird and extra precautions and a lot of understanding will get you through these times. Hormonal periods can last months. Take precautions to avoid bits and explore more cage time for the big birds. Sleep is important as well. You'll find this in your studies.

Diet can also help during these times. When you do your research, learn what foods to avoid (cut back on) and what foods can help them. Other suggestions can be to removing nesting materials and areas (for the females) and to cut back on your lights and most importantly, watch your parrot and look for the signals so you can adjust how you live together.

Help your family understand why they might be acting differently. Remember that birds are confused as well. We have taken a wild parrot and put them into cages (we often put their food and water in the same bowl day after day) and yet they are instinctually trying to forage for food. Understand that hormones are a natural behavior. Study your parrot and learn how they are dealing with it and then change or alter environments to help them avoid these hormonal signals they are giving you.

ADOPT-A-BIRD UPDATE AND AVAILABLE BIRDS

Mealy Amazon— 50 yrs old. Needs a family preferably a woman as his primary care taker), dedicated to his care that doesn't have any other parrots.

Three sets of Cockatiels. Each set has personalities of their own and needs some love and care.

Two flock bonded Sun Conures - these guys can be loud! Must enjoy that!

Green Wing Macaw, Male—This guy's over 25 years old and has outlived his current owner sadly enough. He's in need of a second family willing to see him through the next 25 years.

An Umbrella Cockatoo, age unknown. This male Umbrella will require an experienced bird owner and a home visit/inspection is required prior to adoption.

Contact the bird club at akbirdclub@yahoo.com if you are interested in adoption or fill out the adoption application located on page 6 and send it in.

Remember if you are unsure of which species



Rainbow Bridge

“Bird”

1996 - 2011

Editors note: Non-Stick coating warnings are real. They are toxic to birds. Bird's mommy would like you to learn from her tragedy and beware.



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Jardines Parrot



Remember!
Bird Club Memberships

expire 12/31/10

Time to Renew for 2011!

Membership Forms can be found on page 5

More *Alaska Style* from David Jensen Photography

Visit David's website at: www.alaskaportraits.com

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David

(907) 868-1680 david@alaskaportraits.com

David Jensen has been our volunteer judge for our
Photography contest every year at the Alaska Bird Club
for five years now.



Photo by David Jensen



The Alaska Bird Club
P.O. Box 101825
Anchorage, AK 99510

Place
Stamp
Here