



ALASKA BIRD NEWS

August 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

AVIAN CARE

By Lin Westgard

People often ask me what avian care really means. I take a deep breath and wonder where to begin. It means a lot of things. But in a nutshell it means getting the right kind of veterinary care for your parrot and a piece of mind for yourself. People are surprised when they are turned away from clinics that don't handle birds, but it's a fact. Just like medical doctors, it's up to you to find a vet that is experienced with avian care specifically. It can make a world of difference when you are faced a sick parrot or with an emergency. Parrots are hard wired to survive and they will hide illnesses from you and their flock mates. So knowing your parrot (and when he's "acting funny"), coupled with an annual visit to your avian vet can really make a difference. During your annual visit, your vet should be drawing at least a CBC blood test. They use these results to see if anything is abnormal and they compare them to your previous tests. Sometimes a high white blood cell count is normal for your bird and no cause for alarm to your vet. But if it's not, it's a

What it means to you and what it means to your bird.

huge indicator of something that might be going on with your parrot that might require further testing.

You might wonder why avian care costs so darn much - that is a common 'concern' I hear among bird

owners. If you were to ask a vet, you would probably hear

that diagnosing a bird illness is not always the easiest thing to do and it can take numerous blood draws and lab work before they can even begin to diagnose. It's true. Budgeting for this type of expense is im-

portant and more importantly, budget and stay current with your annual tests. This can prevent a major illness down the line. So in my opinion, is it worth it? Yes. Every penny. When your parrot is not feeling well or is sick and can't quite perch right or is not interested in his or her favorite treat, it's heart-breaking. Annual exams can save money in the long run with early detection of potential problems. They look at your bird with a highly trained eye - not



with the gushy "mama bird" eyes we tend to see them with. They will check eyes, ears, nares...the oropharynx... wings, feet, keels, vents... Their weight, feather condition and other "stuff". It's all important. Watch for upcoming articles on how to prepare and getting ready for a trip to the vet.

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
P.O. BOX 101825
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(907) 868-9070

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Adopt-a-Bird Chair Person: Open

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
1571 Muldoon Rd.
333-6591

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

🌟 Dimond Animal Hosp
Dr. Doty
562-8384 (24 hour)

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

Petco
8621 Old Seward Hwy

Pet Emergency
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.

🌟 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

Bird of the Month

Addie

Addie is a Standard Grey Cockatiel and is about 1-1/2 years old. He's in the Alaska Bird Club's Adopt-A-Bird program and is looking for a lifelong home. This species of parrot lives to be anywhere from 30-50 years old with good husbandry and good nutrition. Addie is a very sweet, social bird. He can spend all day singing to you from his cage. He is used to getting out several times a day where he has roams around the house. Most of the time he will come to where you are sitting and sit on your legs, shoulders and chest.

He does not like hands and needs help with that. Addie is almost afraid of them, but he will willingly jump on our arm and shoulder. Addie also likes to be talked to. Overall, Addie is very social and he likes being in the middle of activity. He's a very sweet bird.

If you are interested in him, please contact the bird club at 868-9070 and reference "Addie" in your voice mail. Or you can e-mail us at akbirdclub@yahoo.com

_ Thank you! _



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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Call Michael at 315-5417
wmichaelstanton@gmail.com
\$.25 of every pound donated to the Bird Club !!

Website of the Month

www.bringing_birdie_homeV.mov (U-Tube)

Kaytee posted a video to help you get ready before you bring your new pet bird home. It is a good idea to research all your birds needs before you welcome them into their new environment.

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

TBD - watch their website for updates!

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Birdie, Birdie, How Does Your Garden Grow?

In addition to the nutritious pellets you are feeding your parrot, they also need a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables. Vanessa's bird is seen here eating herbs grown in her outside aviary. It's not too late to grow your vegetables and nibbles for your parrots. You can do searches on the internet on wonderful plants that you can grow that are edible for your parrots. Some are just downright fun to chew. Grow them and watch the fun! Remember... Don't use fertilizers or soil with vermiculite. Safety should be your first concern.



Right now the chickweed is growing. If you have a patch that hasn't been tainted with car exhaust fumes or lawn fertilizers, wash and then stick a handful into your bird cages and watch your birds have fun! Sometimes it takes a couple of angles and areas of placement before they realize it's food and fun, so don't give up! Keep trying all those greens!

Photo by Vanessa Wike



A Parrot's Bill Of Rights

by Stewart 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 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 POSSIBLE** - I am used 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 its 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 seeds alone. Take time to learn what my needs, and preferences 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 every day - 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 HMOs 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 in 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 importantly, 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, learn to speak yours!
- 9 SEE ME AS AN INDIVIDUAL** - I am a 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 at your up-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 bar-hopping 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.
- 11 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 the moon and stars for you if I could. We are one in Heart and Soul.

The President's Perch

By Michael Stanton, President 2011, The Alaska Bird Club

The Annual ABC Membership picnic was well attended at the new park. About 30 folks drifted in and out of this beautiful location and Garry Wallan did an excellent job as the grill master. Our picnic pavilion consisted of a massive natural log structure complete with lighting, a gigantic professional grade charcoal grill—that would be the envy of any 5-star restaurant--and seating on concrete/stone bench high walls that lined the pavilion perimeter. Although it was overcast with occasional drizzle, a groaning table full of delicious side dishes, along with the usual variety of picnic meats grilled by Gary, made for a cozy and fun afternoon.



Sparkie, a Goffins cockatoo Bettie and I were foster sitting, has a new home. Maggie our personal care attendant, who looks after Bettie's mom, is foster caring Sparkie. It was love at first sight. Sparkie is living in the Big Lake area and is talking, feeling very comfortable around Maggie's family, and loves to be handled and fawned over. A lakefront view from a big corner picture window keeps Sparkie interested in her surroundings. Sparkie's behavior is no longer guarded or frantic. She has settled in quite nicely in a loving environment. Maggie is well on the road to adopting Sparkie—Maggie has provided the environment that Sparkie needed to bust out of her shell of mistrust and enjoy a happy new life. Well done, Maggie. PS—Maggie Adams is a new member the Alaska Bird Club. Also DNA testing revealed Sparkie is a female. Her new home. happy new life. Well done, Maggie. PS—Maggie gives her a clean bill of health.

As our meeting schedule picks up this August, I invite all members of the Alaska Bird Club to give thought to an agenda that will interest you. Please send in your suggestions to our email address. The past month has seen an increase of folks attempting to re-home budgies and cockatiels. Your contacts within the communities at large may provide sources we can refer those who can no longer provide a home for these birds.

(Continued on page 9)

ADOPTION APPLICATION
The Alaska Bird Club, Adopt-A-Bird Program

The Adopt-A-Bird Program is available to everyone who meets the criteria identified in the Adopt-a-Bird Program's Policy and Procedure. The committee will share your contact information (name, e-mail address and phone number) with people relinquishing the type bird you list below when one becomes available. **Please be VERY specific in the types of birds you would consider adopting.** Send your questions to akbirdclub@yahoo.com or call us at (907) 868-9070.

Please submit this application to the committee by one of the following methods:

- E-mail: akbirdclub@yahoo.com
- Mail: The Alaska Bird Club, P.O. Box 101825, Anchorage, AK 99510-1825.
- Fax: (907) 257-9971
- By Hand: Bring to our membership meeting; first Tuesday of every month at 3550 E. 20th Ave., Anchorage 7:00PM

Any family/household/individual who has previously relinquished 3 or more birds to the Adopt-A-Bird program will not be eligible to adopt through the Adopt-A-Bird Program.

LIST THE SPECIFIC TYPES OF PARROTS IN WHICH YOU ARE INTERESTED:

Adoption Fees: Extra Small- \$10.00, Small- \$35.00, Medium- \$50.00, Large- \$100.00, Extra Large- \$150.00, Extremely Rare- \$200.00

Are you 18 Years old or older? [] Yes [] No

YOUR NAME: _____ DATE: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-Mail Address: _____ Cell- _____

Phone Number(s): Home: _____ Work- _____

What is the best time to contact you? _____ Preferred method of contacting you would be via: _____

Do you consider yourself knowledgeable on bird care? [] Yes [] No Is this your first bird? [] Yes [] No

Species of birds you now own: _____ How many total? _____

Name of your avian vet? _____ How often do you vet check? _____

Diet your bird(s) _____

Are you interested in a companion pet or a breeder bird? _____

Would you consider adopting a bird with behavioral or health issues? [] Yes [] No

Are you aware of the type commitment a companion parrot takes? [] Yes [] No

How many hours per day would you have to provide direct care to this bird? _____

Briefly tell us why you would be a good home for any bird: _____

Are all members of your family willing to take part in the care of this bird? [] Yes [] No

Are any members of your household under the age of 12 years old? [] Yes [] No

How many other pets are in the home and what kinds? _____

Are you available for emergency placement if needed? [] Yes [] No
(If "Yes," please submit an Emergency Placement Application as well. Home inspection is required)

Have you read and understood the Policies and Procedures for the Alaska Bird Club's Adopt-A-Bird Program? [] Yes [] No

Do you agree to pay the associated adoption fee (listed above) once you adopt a bird from this program? [] Yes [] No

The Alaska Bird Club will keep this application on file. It is your responsibility to keep your application current and notify us of any changes to the information on this form. As birds become available for adoption, each application will be reviewed and your name and number will be given to relinquishing owners of the type species of birds you have listed. Please review the Adopt-a-Bird Policy and Procedure as there are limitations to the numbers of birds that a family may adopt through this program. An interview and/or home visit with the Adopt-a-Bird staff or the person relinquishing a bird might be required with some adoptions. The Alaska Bird Club strongly encourages you to vet check and quarantine any new bird coming into your home and that you get a release of ownership from the current bird owner. We would also like you to make this decision seriously as birds need lifetime homes. They have very strong emotional attachments that should be taken into consideration. Moving, Divorce, Children are all things birds can and should endure with you. We also highly recommend that you attend our educational meetings held monthly on the welfare and care of companion parrots. www.alaskabirdclub.org The Alaska Bird Club assumes no responsibility for the quality, health or training of any birds placed in this program. In addition, the Alaska Bird Club, its officers and members cannot be held liable for any damage or illness brought about by a bird placed or bought via the referrals submitted to this program.

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(Continued from page 7)

The Club needs to clean out it's storage facility. We have a lot of budgie, finch and cockatiel cages that need to go. In the next couple weeks volunteers will be needed to clean and assemble usable cages and do inventory. I want to hear from you any ideas on how to dispose of unneeded inventory that will get cages to people who need them and raise some dough for the Bird Club. Keep those cards and letters coming in, folks!! Maybe a fundraiser? Can you volunteer?

Recently Candi Denton stepped forward to head up our Membership committee. Thank you, so much. Volunteering offers so much than just coming to meetings. It is a chance to see how your Bird Club functions and the many ways we reach out to the community. You may be the first contact a companion parrot owner makes. As a volunteer, your life will change for the better, and so will the lives of people who cherish and love parrots. Volunteer today—now!!

- Michael Stanton - President 2011



Audrey



Chako



Addie

Adopt-A-Bird

"Many have forgotten this truth, but you must not forget it. You remain responsible, forever, for what you have tamed." - Antoine de Saint-Exupery

Available Birds up for Adoption

Audrey—Male Umbrella Cockatoo

Addie- Male Standard Gray Cockatiel

Buddy- Male Cockatiel

Chako- Male Galah Cockatoo (aka Rosebreasted Cockatoo)

When you reach out and help re-home a bird you "step-up" to a new level, whether you adopt or volunteer. Please contact Lin Westgard if you can help a parrot through the process. 868-8058 or Westgard@gei.net

More *Alaska Style* from David Jensen Photography

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

9130 Elim Street Anchorage AK 99507
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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 six years now.



Photo by David Jensen



The Alaska Bird Club
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Place
Stamp
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