



# ALASKA BIRD NEWS

## February 2011

Lin Westgard, Editor

Volume 23 – Number 02

Available on-line at [www.alaskabirdclub.org](http://www.alaskabirdclub.org)  
Dedicated to all the current and future parrot owners of Alaska

By Bird Club member: Lynda Lewis

## It Pays To Increase Your Bird Power!



I made this up as a play on the Readers Digest "It Pays To Increase Your Word Power" These are words you might not hear often but has something to do with birds. If you want more info on the word after you find out it's meaning Google the word. Hope I helped you become a smarter bird! Lynda

### 1. Altricial:

- A. A bird that can alternate between sexes.
- B. A small finch
- C. A baby bird that hatches naked and blind requiring extensive parental care.

### 2. Brood Patch:

- A. A patch of skin that is naked and used to keep eggs in the nest warm.
- B. A place where the bird has picked it's feathers because it is mad.
- C. A place where the bird chooses to nest.

### 3. Archaeopteryx:

- A. A part of the birds spinal column.
- B. A part of the birds digestive system that carries food down to the crop.
- C. The earliest and most primitive bird known.

### 4. Pielium:

- A. The top of a bird's head extending from the base of the bill to the nape.
- B. Part of the sinuses
- C. A species of mockingbirds

### 5. Gonydial angle:

- A. A defect in the vent of a bird.
- B. Measurement of the depth of a bill or beak.
- C. The way a bird gets egg bound.

### 6. Precocial:

- A. A very social bird
- B. A baby that hatches with eyes open and is independent within days of hatching
- C. The egg yolk sac attached to baby birds

### 7. Nidicolous:

- A. Chicks that remain in the nest after hatching
- B. A deformed chick usually thrown from the nest by the parent.
- C. A bird with a strange color mutation

### 8. Strigopidae:

- A. A species of rare pygmy parrot.
- B. A term used to describe a fledgling bird.

*(Continued on page 3)*

# 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  
Anchorage, Alaska 99510-1825  
(907) 868-9070

**President:** .....Michael Stanton...315-5417

**Vice President:** .....Amber O'Neill...351-2762

**Secretary:** .....OPEN

**Treasurer:** ..... OPEN

**Member-at-large:** ..... Herb Lewis

**Sergeant-at-arms:** .....Garry Wallan

**Editor:** .....Lin Westgard

E-Mail: westgard@gci.net for article information

**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. 1<sup>st</sup> 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

🦜 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)

- C. The scientific word for parrots from New Zealand

**9. Extant:**

- A. External Feathers.
- B. Still in existence ( not extinct)
- C. A genetic deformity found in birds

**10. Covert Feathers:**

- A. One of a set of feathers that cover other feathers
- B. A term used to describe ingrown feathers
- C. Deformed feathers

Answers to Bird Power: 1.C 2.A 3.C 4.A 5.B 6.B 7.A 8.C 9.B 10.A



**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.

**Meeting Information:**

March 1st, 2011  
Come share your favorite bird links on the web!  
7:00-9:00 pm.



# Calling for 2011 Volunteers!

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

**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 and/or Treasurer** - Our current Secretary / Treasurer will be taking on a slope 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. Board of Directors meet once a month. Come join us and make a difference!

## 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](http://www.alaskabirdclub.org)

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Brazil Nuts: \$85.00 ea



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## Website of the Month

[www.onthewingonline.com](http://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](mailto:akpeac@gmail.com).

## Comfy Clawth Blankets for Birds

See [www.comfyclawth.com](http://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](mailto:birdieblankets@comfyclawth.com)

## PEAC (Parrot Education & Adoption Center)

[www.akpeac.org](http://www.akpeac.org)

929-BIRD

Seminar Schedule

Advanced Registration Recommended

(note new starting time!)

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](http://alaskabirdclub.org) e-mail: [akbirdclub@yahoo.com](mailto: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

Submitted by: Michael Stanton, President 2011, The Alaska Bird Club

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The transition from winter to spring is a thing to marvel at—especially if you are an Alaskan who has parrots or a single parrot. Their little feathers are starting to “pin out”; and, as the new sheaths form, so do new attitudes, perceptions, and levels of stress rise and fall proportionately for human and parrot. Literally, these are the times that try parrot lovers’ souls. As such, some of us are very close to making a pact with the devil for a little sanity as the days lengthen. Combine parrot and human cabin fever into one mixing bowl and you get a recipe we’re not sure if we want to even test bake it. Patience, a good sense of humor and remarkable sense of companionship unique to living with a parrot—hopefully—will be enough for all of us to make it to the brighter days of Spring and the warmth that Summer promises.

Our March meeting hopes to offer a spectacular live Internet visit to popular parrot and bird websites. So if you have any favorites, be sure to bring them to the meeting. Hopefully a theater type experience on a big screen will allow us to enjoy a unique evening. Don’t forget to present any bird problems/solutions for them next time we meet.

The bird/s of the month will be Michael Stanton and Bettie Smith’s Meyers and Blue Fronted Amazon, which were adopted last year from the Alaska Bird Club’s Adopt-A-Bird Program. Hope to see you there!

**Through the Alaska Bird Club, Bailey and Angel (renamed BayBay and Angie) were adopted fall of 2010 by us, Michael Stanton and Bettie Smith. BayBay is a 14-year-old female Meyers and Angie is a 6-year-old Blue Fronted Amazon.**



This flock-bonded pair had made the rounds through a foster care placement over the past few years when we decided to give them a permanent home. If ever there was an odd couple in the parrot world, then these two female parrots certainly qualified. The little African parrot and the New World parrot have literally been inseparable. How they came together is still a bit of a mystery, yet they are best “buds”.

Many aficionados of *Poicephalus* fans consider *Poicephalus meyer* the nicest of this known-to-be-very-nice family. It is the smallest parrot of this family found in the southwestern part of Africa, and ranging from Senegal to South Africa. It is the most common *Poicephalus* parrot in the wild. They are famous for lying on their backs and doing funny things with their feet. While Senegals are generally regarded as one-person birds, Meyer’s parrots have a tendency towards

more balanced interactions around groups of individuals-seemingly comfortable with meeting new people and investigate new conditions. Bay-Bay likes to hang out and around her cage, and not stray too far away from Angie. Allopreening is a daily activity throughout her day. Her favorite

foods are organic salad greens, some fruits, nutriberries and almonds. Her vocalizations are gravelly and diminutive: “Bang!

Bang!” “Rainier Beer”, kissing noises, and undecipherable world salad are part of her repertoire. She loves to snuggle and hide in shirtsleeves and collars. She doesn’t express extreme aggression or shyness.

*Amazona aestiva*, The Blue-fronted Amazon, range from northeastern Brazil to Paraguay and the northern parts of Argentina, foresting in tropical and subtropical rain forest-like environs. Blues are a popular species, easily tamable, good talkers, with a talent for imitation and variety of sounds that are impossible to ignore. They are generally not cuddly birds and can be nippy at times depending upon mood and upon reaching sexual maturity. They have a reputation for not being little bundles of activity-they tend to just sit and become perch potatoes. Managing their diet is important to avoid getting fat. Angie is taking some time adjusting to her new home. When she first arrived, Angie was a biter, grumpy, fearful and very distrustful of being handled. Rebuilding her trust in humans is going to take awhile, but she is stepping up, allowing some tiny head scratches, and allowing some beak rubs. She has the annoying habit of stealing nutriberries or almonds out of Bay Bay’s beak, but BayBay is a fast learner by moving quickly away. Angie greets BayBay at their cage top perch with a “Hi, girl. You go girl, Watch do-in’Girl?” every morning.

Cute. Love and patience has brought this odd couple far. Bettie and I look forward to the journey.

- Michael Stanton and Bettie Smith

# Foraging: Why This Natural Behavior Is So Vital

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

Searching for and finding food, or foraging, consumes most of a parrot's waking hours in the wild. With our companion birds, we place a bowl of food in the cage, thinking that if it is nutritionally complete, it is all our bird needs. We may not realize how awfully boring this is. It eliminates our bird's personal role in "finding" her food, a role so crucial that eliminating it may be one of the reasons so many birds resort to destructive behaviors – they're simply bored and unchallenged.

Birds have a natural instinct for using their wits to find food, and a testament to this is that they will often abandon a dish full of food in order to work out a single nut from a [foraging toy](#) or puzzle. Foraging doesn't just fill their bellies, it occupies their minds. It gives them the kind of mental challenge they are not only intellectually suited for, but absolutely require for good mental health.

It is easy to give your bird foraging opportunities. Keep the [pellets](#) or her regular diet available in her bowl, but present her treats in a challenging way – hide them. Use items you don't offer in her regular diet, such as [nuts](#), [dried fruit pieces](#), or chunks of [commercially available treats](#). They are especially prized by your bird when she has to use her wits to fish them out of toys or treat puzzlers, or dig them out of the cavities of cholla or wood beads. Foraging gives your bird a sense of satisfaction she cannot get from any other activity.

You'll be pleasantly surprised at the

kinds of problem-solving abilities your bird displays as she tries to get at the treats, giving you a new appreciation of her "bird brain."

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## 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.

**Two 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](mailto: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 might fit best in with your family dynamics, we highly recommend PEAC class "Parrot Personalities". See



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A wet Double Yellow Headed Amazon lovin' her bath!

## Reminder! Bird Club Memberships 2011 Now Due!

**The Alaska Bird Club needs you. The more members we have, the greater capacity we have to help birds and disseminate information. Aviculture and avian care continually change as new data is collected about birds needs and behaviors.**

**By increasing our membership, we will have more people who have access to current information, more people who can help us in our mission to educate other parrot owners.**

**Please renew or join today!!** (Membership forms can be found on Page 5) Please note: Newsletters delivered by US Mail and E-Mail will not be sent out to lapsed members after 3/1/11.)

## More *Alaska Style* from David Jensen Photography

Visit David's website at: [www.alaskaportraits.com](http://www.alaskaportraits.com)

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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