



## CARE GUIDE

Dear Valued Friend,

Congratulations on your very cool new pet! We are sure you are very excited to bring your new bird home with you. How you start your first days at home will be very important to setting a good tone for the future. This is where you will welcome your bird and begin to set acceptable boundaries. We encourage you to spend a few hours a day with your bird out of the cage when you start out at home. Practice coming in and out of the cage several times each day.

It's important to note there are three levels of stimulation for you to maintain a good balance between. The first stimulation is direct stimulation (cuddling together), the second is indirect stimulation (allowing your bird out of cage time without you holding or cuddling), the last is rest cage time (allowing your bird to rest in his/her cage). If you allow your bird a nice balance of the three simulations your life together will be very rewarding. It's important to note if you allow too much of any one stimulation you will likely end up with a bird who needs remedial training. We recommend using a small towel to handle your bird during your first few days to allow your bird to feel secure with you. Keep in mind you are much larger than your bird and your bird has just come to a brand new environment. Make your environment as quiet and calm as possible to help your bird gain trust. If your household has small children or animals within it, make sure to monitor closely how they interact with your new pet. Small children will frequently have a fear of being bit which can cause them to flinch and or make loud noises. We especially recommend having children sit on the floor while using a small towel to give your little Aviculturist some much needed confidence while interacting with the new pet. You are always welcome to come in for FREE training with your bird! Call on us anytime to assist you in your avicultural journey! Welcome to the EPBI family!

Best Wishes,

*Ryan Kellogg*

Ryan Kellogg, Certified Avian Specialist

*JSalafia*

Jamie Salafia, Certified Avian Specialist

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Sal Salafia, Certified Avian Specialist

## **Toys**

Parrots are highly intelligent, curious, playful and tactile. Give your bird a variety of toys and change them every few days. Avoid toys on open link chains, bent wires or other devices that could injure your bird and make sure to remove all packaging before placing in the cage. Be sure to buy high quality toys that you know are pet safe. If your bird is afraid of a new toy, leave it in the room within his line of sight and gradually move it closer to the cage. Once the bird shows interest in it, put it in the cage.

## **Interaction**

It is essential both for his happiness and for the formation of a trusting, peaceful relationship between the two of you. Exotic birds are not decorations for your home. They are emotionally sensitive and highly intelligent creatures; recent studies have placed them on the level of primates and marine mammals.

Small parrots can live 25 years; large ones up to 75 years and may well outlive you. The decision to buy an exotic bird is not one to be taken lightly. While an Amazon may not require as much scratching and cuddling as a cockatoo, they are all genetically social animals and need to be played with and talked to every day.

## **Bathing**

Yes, birds need baths. In fact, most birds love being bathed.

There are three basic ways to introduce wings to water:

1. Fill a clean spray bottle with tepid water and set the nozzle to mist.
2. Take your bird in the shower with you. (Be sure to not fully submerge them) or use human soap or water

3. 3. Set up a "bird bath" in the sink or with a shallow bowl and an inch or two of water.

How often ...

Two or three times a week should be enough and if at first the bird seems afraid, be gentle and be persistent. After a bath, gently towel off the excess water and avoid drafts. Remember, parrots are tropical birds. Always supervise all bathing carefully, as parrots cannot swim. Be sure to dry them off afterwards and keep them away from drafts

## **FOOD**

What you feed your bird is one of the most important things in bird care. Just like kids and Adults birds need their vegetables, grains, and many other types of foods to have a healthy balanced diet. We recommend a chop diet that 50% veggies and 5% fruit and a mixture of seed/pellet.

It is important that your bird also transitions to a mixed pelleted Diet. Our birds are weaned onto a seed/vegetable diet that has been developed for and by breeders. When the bird is ready to go home we recommend starting with a mix of 50/50 of seed and pellet and eventually working your way up to a 70/30 of pellet to seed.

As social eaters, wild birds feed in flocks of hundreds to even thousands in the wild. Pet birds, too, like to share mealtime with their flock-mates – either other birds in the house or their human caretakers. Eating with feathered companions is a great way to socialize them; however, there are some foods that humans love that should never be offered to pet birds because of potential toxicity.

### **Among the most common foods that are toxic to birds are:**

1. Avocado

While avocados are vegetables, and generally vegetables are good for birds, the leaves of the avocado plant contain persin, a fatty acid-like

substance that kills fungus in the plant. When ingested by a bird, this substance may cause heart damage, respiratory difficulty, weakness, and even sudden death. While certain types of avocado have been safely consumed by some bird species, it's hard to know which types of avocado will affect which species. It is also unclear how much avocado a pet bird would have to eat to be affected. Given the potential consequences, it's best simply to avoid feeding avocado and avocado-containing foods (such as guacamole) to birds. Skip the dip, and offer your bird a carrot stick, pea pod, or other vegetable, instead.

## 2. Caffeine

We all love caffeinated beverages, such as coffee, tea, and soft drinks, because they taste great, stimulate us, and wake us up. We might think of offering a sip of these tasty beverages to our pet birds, but even a sip or two of these drinks can be toxic to our feathered companions. Caffeine can increase heart rate, induce arrhythmias and hyperactivity, and even cause cardiac arrest in birds. So, avoid the caffeinated products, and opt for water or an occasional taste of fruit juice for your thirsty bird.

## 3. Chocolate

Like us, birds have a hard time resisting chocolate or chocolate-containing foods. However, even in very small amounts, chocolate can be toxic to birds. Chocolate contains both theobromine and caffeine which can cause vomiting and diarrhea, increase heart rate, result in hyperactivity, induce tremors and seizures, and even cause death in birds. So, the next time you're tempted to share an M&M or Hershey's Kiss with your birdie buddy, offer him a piece of sugary fruit, like a mango, papaya, or grape, instead.

## 4. Salt

A dash here and a dash there. Many of us casually add this loved condiment to all sorts of foods without thinking. We also love salty chips, popcorn, pretzels, and crackers. But, just as too much salt isn't good for us, it also isn't good for our birds, and even a little bit is potentially toxic to a small bird. Even one salty chip or pretzel can upset the electrolyte and fluid balance in a bird's tiny body, leading to excessive thirst, dehydration, kidney failure, and death. So, the next time you want to offer your bird a salty treat, choose a bite or two of unsalted popcorn or pretzels or a low-salt cracker, instead.

## 5. Fat

We all know that consumption of high-fat foods, such as butter, oil, fatty meats, and nuts can result in build-up of cholesterol deposits in the walls of our arteries (known as atherosclerosis), predisposing to heart disease and stroke. Excessive ingestion of these foods also can lead to obesity and all the health problems that accompany this condition. The same processes occur in birds, and certain bird species, such as Amazon and Quaker parrots, are prone to developing high cholesterol and triglyceride levels and subsequent coronary artery disease. Therefore, just as we should limit the consumption of high-fat foods, so should birds. Birds can have an occasional bite of lean, cooked meat, but they should not be offered heaping quantities of these fat-filled items, especially if they are small relative to the portion size. Birds love nuts, but one unsalted almond or walnut every day is plenty for a medium-sized bird such as an African gray parrot. Larger birds that eat more fat in the wild, such as macaws, may have a few nuts a day, while smaller ones, such as cockatiels and budgies, should be offered no more than a few slivers of almond or a piece of walnut every day. Encourage your bird to be a lean mean flying machine, and limit fatty snacks.

## 6. Fruit pits and apple seeds

While most fruit is safe and generally healthy for birds to consume in small amounts, certain fruits containing seeds (such as apples and pears) and pits (such as cherries, apricots, peaches, nectarines, and plums), should not be offered to birds without removing the seeds and pits first, as these seeds and pits contain small amounts of a cardiac-toxic cyanide compound. Without the seeds and pits, these fruits are completely safe for birds to consume. The seeds from other produce such as grapes, citrus fruits, squash, pumpkins, tomatoes, melons, mango, pomegranate, and berries, all are safe for bird consumption and can be fed without worry.

## 7. Onions and garlic

Many people expect that onions and garlic, like other vegetables, are healthy for birds. However, while these spicy veggies have heart benefits in people, whether fed raw or cooked, they are toxic to many animals, including birds, cats, and dogs. Onions contain sulfur compounds that, when chewed, can irritate the lining of a bird's mouth, esophagus, or crop, causing ulcers, and can induce rupture of red blood cells resulting in anemia. Garlic contains allicin, another chemical that can cause anemia and weakness in birds. So, spice up your bird's life with a small piece of vitamin A-rich hot pepper instead of garlic and onions.

## **Medical Care**

All birds should have a thorough medical exam after they come home with you. Remember, not all vets are avian specialists. Use an avian vet exclusively. In the wild and in our homes, birds mask symptoms of illness so as not to be perceived as weak and easily subject to predation. An illness may be quite advanced at the onset of any perceivable symptoms. Do not hesitate to contact your avian vet at the first signs of illness (loss of appetite, any discharge from eyes, nares and beak, runny or irregular droppings, sitting fluffed, wheezing, sneezing, listlessness, or a decrease in body weight of more than 10%).

It is a good idea to purchase a small digital bird scale and weigh your bird every few days). Any bleeding or vomiting should be treated immediately,

as these are usually related to serious conditions. Animal styptic powders are available at most pet stores and should be kept for use in an emergency.

**For more info and Pictures visit our site:**

**[Exoticpetbirdsrochester.com/safety](http://Exoticpetbirdsrochester.com/safety)**

## Parrot Bytes Chop Builder

[www.facebook.com/groups/parrotbytes](http://www.facebook.com/groups/parrotbytes)

Dark Green Leafy Vegetables (Pick at least three)	Red, Orange, and Yellow Vegetables (Pick at least three)	Fruit (Pick one or two)	Herbs and Spices (Pick one or two)
Arugula (Rocket)	Beets	Apple	Basil
Bok Choy	Bell Peppers	Banana	Ceylon Cinnamon
Beet Tops	Carrots	Blackberries	Cilantro
Broccoli	Jalepeño Peppers	Blueberries	Dill
Broccoli Rabe/Rapini	Pumpkin (fresh)	Cantaloupe	Mint
Brussels Sprouts	Poblano Peppers	Cherries	Oregano
Cauliflower	Radish	Cranberries	Parsley
Chard (Silverbeet)	Red Cabbage	Dragon Fruit	Rosemary
Collard Greens	Summer Squash	Kiwi	Thyme
Dandelion Greens	Turnip	Mango	
Kale	Winter Squash (Acom,	Papaya	
Mustard Greens	Butternut, Kabocha,	Peach	
Okra	Spaghetti, etc)	Pineapple	
Romaine	Sweet Peppers	Plums	
Turnip Greens	Sweet Potatoes (cooked)	Pomegranite	
Watercress	Zucchini	Orange	
		Star Fruit	



**Remember: 50% vegetables & 10% fruit**  
to be fed in conjunction with 40% pellets



# YOUR BIRD NEEDS CALCIUM

PARROT PROBLEM SOLVING



Feed **daily** as part of chop.

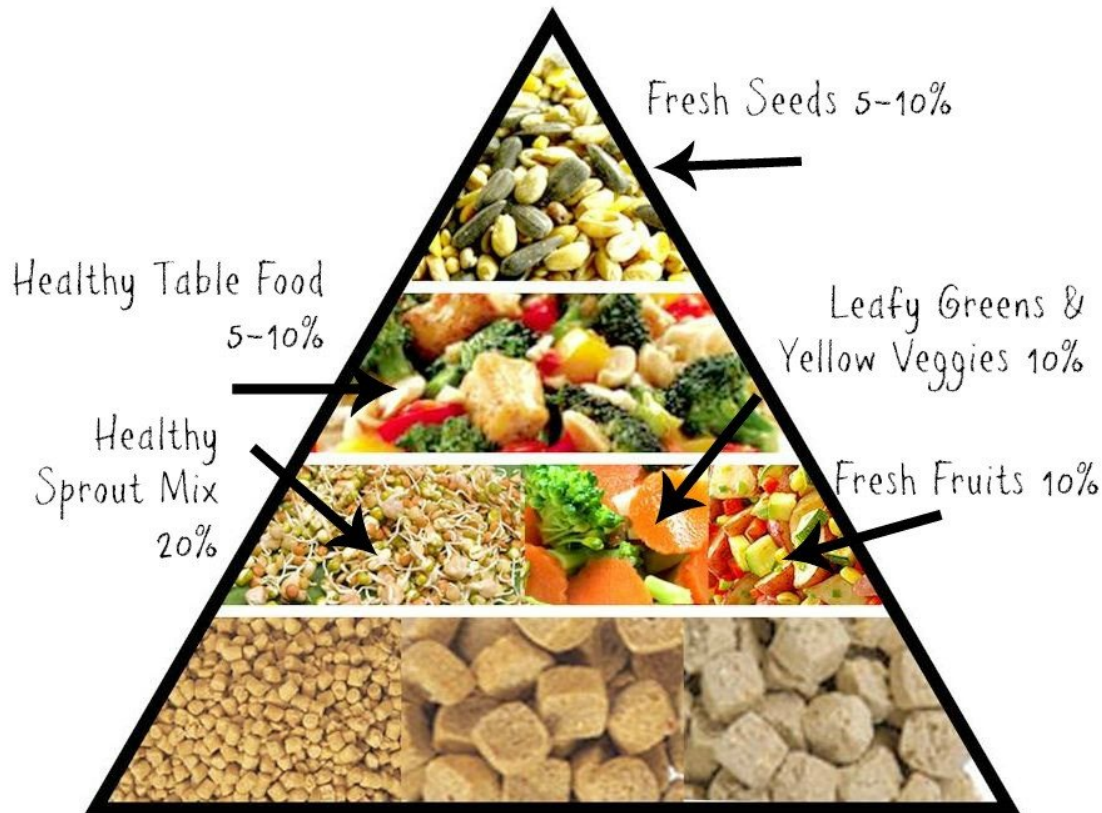


Feed **occasionally** as **treats**.



Eclectus parrots and lorikeets both have specific diets and may have exceptions to the rules of this chart. Consult an admin for the needs of your specific bird.

# AVIAN FOOD PYRAMID



50-60% Of Diet Should Comprise of Well-Balanced Pellets

## FRUITS

Mango's  
Kiwi  
Papaya  
Melons (no rind)  
Berries  
Pomegranates  
Grapes  
Cranberries  
Banana's  
Apples

## VEGGIES

Carrots (Tops Included)  
Sweet Potatoes  
Leafy Greens  
Peppers, Assorted Colors  
Green Beans  
Sweet Peas  
Sugar Snap Peas  
Squash  
Pumpkin  
Corn



Avocado's, Uncooked Beans, Chocolate, Alcohol, Caffeine, Shellfish & Undercooked Meat. Remove Fresh Foods After 2-3 hrs.

# DON'T DISH THESE UP

Food that is good for you, but  
not your bird.

BY LAURA DOERING



**No!**



The **avocado's** pit contains an oil that leeches a toxin called persin into the fruit. Signs of avocado toxicity include lethargy, anorexia, breathing difficulty and sudden death. Some birds have tasted avocado with no ill effects; however, that can depend on the variety of avocado and the bird species. Avocado seems to be especially harmful to lovebirds, budgies and cockatiels, but larger parrots can also be susceptible. Most avian veterinarians recommend playing it safe and keeping avocado off your bird's menu.

**No!**



Because **tomatoes** are an acidic fruit, many veterinarians recommend not offering fresh tomatoes to birds, because they could potentially cause ulcers. Larry Nemetz, DVM, of the The Bird Clinic in Orange, Calif., does not recommend, at any time, feeding birds raw tomatoes (including cherry tomatoes) because of their acidity. Dried tomatoes (the drying process takes out most of the acid) and plain spaghetti sauce (tomatoes in spaghetti sauce are cooked, removing the acid) are fine in moderation.

**No!**



**Onions**, whether cooked, raw or dehydrated, contain sulfur compounds that, when chewed, can cause hemolysis or a rupture of red blood cells, which can cause anemia. According to Margaret A. Wissman, DVM, DABVP — Avian Practice, they can also potentially cause irritation to a bird's mouth, esophagus and crop, and they can even cause ulcers.

**No!**



**Garlic** adds flavor to our dishes but it can cause problems in parrots. Garlic is related to onions and has similar chemical compounds. Garlic contains allicin, which in rare cases, can cause Heinz body hemolytic anemia in birds.

**No!**



**Celery** itself isn't necessarily bad for parrots, it's the stringy part of celery that can cause problems; namely crop impaction. Remove the stringy parts from celery if you wish to let your bird chomp into some.

**No!**



**Mushrooms** are a type of fungus. Raw mushrooms have been known to cause digestive problems in parrots, and the stems and caps of certain mushrooms can potentially cause liver failure in birds.



# Is Your Air Safe For You and Your Bird?

You and your parrot spend most of your time indoors. How safe is your air?

Brought to you by **Bird Channel**

## Choke Point

7 things in your house that can be deadly for your pet bird.

- Candles
- Nonstick pans
- Bug sprays
- Aerosols
- Self-cleaning ovens
- Smoking
- Chemical cleaners



## Messy Birds

Our pet birds do their share of contributing to air pollution in the home.

### Dustiest Parrots



Cockatoo, Cockatiel, African Grey



## Sources of Bird Pollutants

- Dander
- Droppings
- Powder down dust
- Food
- Feathers

**50%**

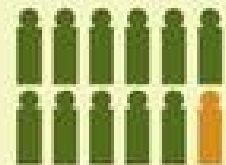
of parrot owners think the mess is the most difficult part about owning a parrot.

## BAD FOR THEM, BAD FOR YOU

We've come a long way from the days when we sent canaries into coal mines, but there's no denying that many of the things that can sicken your bird are bad for you too.

## 6 of the EPA's Top 10 Asthma-Inducing Pollutants Are Bad for Your Bird Too<sup>1</sup>

- Secondhand smoke
- Molds
- Nitrogen dioxide
- Wood smoke
- Chemical irritants
- Outdoor air pollution



**1 in 12 people have asthma<sup>2</sup>**  
 8% of U.S. Population

## Clean & Clear

Both you and your bird will thrive in a home that's kept free of air pollutants.



### Use An Air Cleaner

HEPA filters are capable of removing close to **99.97%** of particles down to .3 microns in size from the indoor atmosphere.

## Use Plants!



1. Boston Fern (*Nephrolepis bostoniensis*)
2. Dragon tree (*Dracaena draco*)
3. Rubber Plant (*Ficus elastica*)

## Manage Your Bird's Mess

Daily	Weekly	Monthly
✓ Change cage liner	✓ Remove all items in cage	✓ Wash window screens
✓ Spot clean the cage	✓ Clean/disinfect all items in cage	✓ Dust window covers
✓ Clean/wash bowls	✓ Clean filters and disinfect humidifiers	✓ Clean windows
✓ Vacuum around cage	✓ Hose down cage	✓ Dust and clean shelves and electronics

## Go All Natural <sup>9</sup> bird-friendly natural cleansers that are good for your home, you and your bird

**Lemon juice**  
 - Soap scum  
 - Hardwater deposits  
 Note: Lemon juice may bleach things if left out in the sunlight



**Corstarch**  
 - Removes grease  
 - Window cleaning  
 - Carpet cleaning

**Hydrogen peroxide**  
 - Stains  
 Note: Dilute with water before use



**Baking soda**  
 - Deodorizing  
 - Scrub surfaces like a nonabrasive cleanser

**Vinegar**  
 - All-purpose cleaner  
 - Disinfectant  
 - Deodorizer  
 Note: Dilute by adding equal parts water to equal parts vinegar

**Club soda**  
 - Spills on carpet  
 - Can be used in place of vinegar to clean windows or mirrors

**Olive oil**  
 - Polishing wood stains



**Plant-based soap**  
 - Combined with hot water, can loosen dirt and dried-on poop on cages  
 - Use to clean bowls and dishes

**Hot water**  
 - Can loosen dirt and dried-on poop on cage bars



[1] <http://www.epa.gov/indoor> [2] <http://www.epa.gov/indoor> [3] [http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5217a.htm?\\_id=mm5217a\\_4](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5217a.htm?_id=mm5217a_4)