Pet Birds General Care Sheet

Birds are very social animals that typically do well in pairs or groups. They require frequent interaction with their owners and should be a member of the household. Many bird species can learn to mimic sounds/words and are considered to be intelligent animals.

Diet

Recommended Diet

- Pellets
  - Should be 70-80% of their diet.
  - Recommended brands include ZuPreem, Roudybush, and Harrison’s.
- Lafeber’s Nutriberries/Avicakes
  - Give in addition to pellets to increase variety.
- Vegetables and Fruits
  - Typically, we recommend lots of vegetables for birds.
    - Spinach, carrots, broccoli, peas, squash, sweet potato, edamame, etc.
  - The amount of fruit that should be given varies by species but should be in moderation.
    - Avoid high sugar fruits such as bananas and grapes.

Not Recommended

- Carbohydrates, such as bread products
- Dairy
- Meat
- Eggs (especially egg yolk)
- Loose seeds, including sunflower seeds
- Avocado – TOXIC

Environment

- The larger the cage, the better.
- Various perches including natural wood branches and rope perches.
- Toys – paper shredding toys are a favorite; avoid toys with beads or string.
- Many birds enjoy being sprayed/misted with a water bottle or hanging out in the bathroom when the shower is running.
- Sunlight is very important. Try and take the bird outside in a well-ventilated cage when the weather is warm.

Recommended Veterinary Care

Yearly Physical Exams

- Body condition
- Nail/beak trim (if necessary)
- Review diet
- Baseline bloodwork in large parrots every 2-3 years
Signs of Illness:
- Decreased or loss of appetite
- Decreased, watery, or odorous stool
- Discharge from eyes or nares
- Lameness
- Difficulty breathing
- Episode of collapse / Sitting on the bottom of the cage
- Regurgitation/vomiting

Please call the Animal Medical Center at (212) 838-8100 to schedule an appointment with the Exotics Service.

Note: Our Emergency Room is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year and is equipped to see Exotics patients.