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## COMMON MEDICAL DISEASES

- 1.) Nutritional deficiencies - A variety of ocular, nasal, respiratory, reproductive and skin disorders caused by chronically improper diets.
- 2.) Feather picking - A behavioral disorder, sometimes secondary to a primary medical problem, where the bird self-mutilates by picking out its own feathers. It is most often due to depression from lack of mental stimulation or companionship and more commonly seen in larger species. Purchasing your pet birds only in pairs can help prevent this disorder from developing.
- 3.) Bumblefoot - All caged birds are susceptible to developing "bumblefoot" or pododermatitis. This disease manifests itself as blisters and infections of the feet caused by dirty perches or perches that are all the same size, shape and made of the same material. i.e. smooth wood.



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## PROPER HOUSING



Proper housing for a macaw and other large birds

Finding the right parrot cage for your feathered friend depends on the size and needs of your bird. For example, while a parakeet needs a smaller cage that can sit on a counter-top or table; the macaw needs a HUGE cage practically the size of a small room! It is always safest to "go big." Avoid galvanized metal wiring due to the potential for lead poisoning, and clean the substrate on the bottom of the cage daily to weekly. Birds are messy creatures that love to dive into their food bowls! Perches should vary in size, shape and material; including various woods, sand paper and cloth. Clean perches regularly to prevent diseases of the feet. Finally, decorate the cage with toys galore! Rotate out toys regularly to provide constantly new mental stimulation for your pet bird.



For a complete list of works cited; ask a representative of  
Elmhurst Animal Care Center \*

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## COMPANION PARROTS: LARGE & SMALL

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How best to care for these diverse and colorful birds and to ensure that they will live long and healthy lives.

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# PSCITTICINES: PARROTS, PARAKEETS & PARROTTLETS

The psitticines are an order of bird containing 393 different species commonly referred to as “parrots.” They are colorful, social, and highly intelligent animals found mainly in tropical to subtropical areas of the world. They make wonderful pets but require lots of work and must have a companion at all times to avoid acquired behavioral problems. See below for general information about the most popular pet parrots.



## PROPER DIET 101

1.) The key to your bird’s diet is pelleted foods! Seed-based feeds are **NOT** good for birds and will cause nutritional deficiencies and medical problems over time. Lafeber makes wonderful balanced bird foods available in pellets and “nutri-berries.” Seeds and millet sprays can be used as occasional treats.

2.) Fresh fruits and veggies are extremely important, and your birds will love to eat them on a daily basis. For a complete list of healthy greens to feed your feathered friends visit:

<https://lafeber.com/pet-birds/bird-food-guide/>

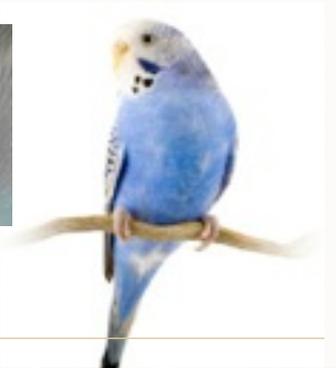
3.) Large water bowls cleaned daily are necessary for drinking and bathing. Birds love to bathe everyday and a water source should be provided to allow your birds some “splash” time!

### THE BUDGERIGAR:

The budgerigar, also known as the “budgie” or “parakeet”, is a lovely small parrot species native to Australia. They are moderately intelligent, are best housed in pairs or colonies, and have a typical lifespan of 5-8 years. The sex of a budgie can be determined by the color of the cere, which is pink in females and blue in males.

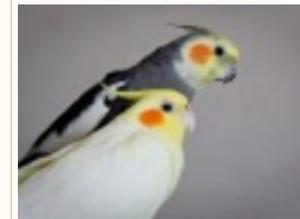


Male (left-arrow to cere) and two females (right) budgerigars



### COCKATIELS AND CONURES:

These medium sized parrots make wonderful pets! They are moderately intelligent and very social. They can be trained and are best housed in pairs or trios. They live 15-25 years. Cockatiels are yellow and grey with red cheeks, and conures vary in color from yellows and oranges to greens and grays. Both species are very loud with piercing calls.



Cockatiels



Sun Conures

### COCKATOOS, AMAZONS, MACAWS AND AFRICAN GREY PARROTS:

These large species of parrot are not for the beginner! They require a large amount of time, work and space and do best in pairs. They have large and powerful beaks which can break fingers and are incredibly intelligent, requiring constant stimulation. For the right owner, these birds can be magnificent companions of 40-80 years.



Amazon parrots



African grey parrot - said to have the intelligence of a 4-6 year old human child