

## AVIAN HEALTH CARE INFORMATION

Due to the vast variety of avian species kept as pets and breeding stock, educating oneself to the individual dietary, caging and grooming needs of the various species is extremely important to the overall health of each bird one owns. From Eclectus Parrots to Hawkhead parrots and Hyacinth Macaws to Hahn's Macaws, there is a wide variety of behaviors and proper dietary recommendations. **Seek the help of experts for diet and training needs.**

**HOUSING:** The size of the cage should be large enough for the bird to be placed in the center, stretch its wings and not have the wing tips touch the sides, front or back of the cage. **Galvanized wire cages have been proven to cause fatal zinc toxicity in a variety of species of birds.** The perches should allow the bird's claws to encircle the perch by 75%. Natural "hard wood" perches are great if cleaned properly or bought from a bird/pet supply store. Stone or "pedicure" perches are fine for keeping nails trimmed to a dull point. (They may not keep nails short enough to prevent the need for trimming). Feed cups and bowls should be cleaned with soap and water daily and, if possible, washed in the dishwasher once per week. Newspaper, ground walnut shell, pine or aspen shavings and "Carefresh" bedding are safe coverings for the bottom of the cage. Particulate bedding should be raked out daily and wholesale changed once per week. Newspaper should be changed daily. The entire cage should be washed out once per week. Birds should be sprayed with water only or bathed once per week as well.

**FEEDING:** Over the last 10 – 15 years, Avian Veterinarians have documented an extensive log of nutritional deficiencies from feeding parrots "seed only" diets. Feeding pet birds table foods may also lead to nutritional imbalances. Obesity is a common finding in Amazon Parrots, Pionus parrots, Cockatiels, and Quaker Parrots fed food from the table with added vegetable oil or butter. All seed based diets contain a high level of cholesterol and triglycerides, which can lead to severe medical problems (just like in humans on a high fat diet). When considering a parrot's diet, the most important aspect to consider is: **What does your parrot eat out of what you offer?" Consult your Avian Veterinarian for the proper diet for your bird!!!**

The recommended diets (**intake**) for most psittacines (**\*exceptions below\***) are as follows:

- 1) Non-sunflower based diets - 60%  
Vegetables/Legumes\* - 30 to 40% (Broccoli, Carrots, Corn, Peas/Beans, Squash, Peppers etc)  
Fruits/Nuts\*\* 0 to 10% (Apples, Cantaloupe, Grapes, Oranges, Pears and Nuts)
- 2) Pelleted Diets\*\*\* 80 %  
Fruit/Vegetable 20%(Broccoli, Carrots, Corn, Peas/Beans, Squash, Peppers etc)

\* Eclectus Parrots need a diet of 60% green leafy vegetable intake to supply their Vitamin A requirements.

\*\*Macaws, and in particular the Hyacinth Macaw, need a higher fat intake, so a higher intake of nuts is tolerable.

\*\*\* Cockatiels usually fare better on a pelleted ration with a 10-20% intake of Cockatiel seed

**\*\*Dr. Rich recommends Harrison Bird Diet and Zupreem Avian Diets**