**Budgie Care Sheet**

Housing

Their home should be spacious enough so they can flap their wings without bumping them. The cage should be in a warm, safe, active environment. Kept away from drafts (open windows, air conditioner, heating vents)

The cage should include perches, swing, food bowls, and a cuttlebone

Birds love mirrors and to climb on things. Bells are also a favorite. They also seem to be fond of destroying things so maybe a toy to shred.

Birds can see a full spectrum of colors. So keep the cage vibrant and have them use all their senses.

Use of non-toxic cleaners for cage cleaning, toys, and food bowls at least once a week – We use White vinegar diluted with water.

Water

Water should be clear and clean. Never allow their poop to sit in the water to be consumed later.

Diet

Parakeets like any bird require a healthy diet. Most pet stores sell seed and/or pellet. They need fruits, vegetables, nuts, treats to go with the staple diet. Sometimes they will ignore the fresh food because most pet stores only offer seed/pellets. Just leave it in their cage and gradually they will inspect it and give it a try.

Treats should be offered sparingly. I offer ours a treat a week. There is honey that holds the treat together which is high in sugar. Same goes with fruit, offer only a couple times a week.

There are a number of foods that can be toxic such as yucca, mushrooms, chocolate, tomato leaves/stems, avocados, raw peanuts, uncooked beans, seeds and pits of most fruits

Healthy parakeets have a good appetite. As soon as you notice something wrong, take them to a vet or figure out the cause and correct it ASAP. A sick bird only shows its illness when it is too late.

Grooming

Nail trimming is not really necessary. But they can grow long depending on how fast your bird is growing and may need to be trimmed.

Wings will also need to be trimmed for safety reasons and to make the taming process easier

Red Flags

Nasal or ocular discharge, white deposits around legs/feet, Lack of appetite, red/swollen eyes, avoidance of one foot, green feces, runny droppings, fluffed/soiled feathers, coughing/respiratory distress, beak swelling, lack of grooming, avoidance of perch

When acquiring a bird, you want to pay attention to a few things. How clean is the cage? Are there multiple birds in with the bird you want to adopt? Do any of the birds have poop near there vents? Are they missing feathers? What condition are the toes? Any mites? Bird are prey animals and normally don’t show illness until it’s too late. By checking these conditions, you can make sure you are not purchasing a sick animal.

A healthy bird will have a waxy cere, firm & intact beak, and firm droppings.

Common Diseases

**Avian Chlamydiosis** (AC): Caused by the bacteria *Chlamydia psittaci*. All birds can be infected by AC, and the infection can be passed to humans as psittacosis. Psittacosis caused mild flu-like symptoms that can result in pneumonia.

It is mainly spread through direct contact or breathing dust containing dried saliva, feathers, mucous, and droppings from infected birds. The organism is resistant and can remain infectious for several months.

Birds with AC infection may not look sick. Stress may cause the appearance of clinical signs in birds that carry without symptoms. Signs can include:

* Mucous and/or pus from nostrils & eyes
* Cough
* Diarrhea or dark green droppings
* Poor feeding
* Difficulty moving or flying
* Death with no warning signs

**Feather plucking**: Not seen in wild birds. Caused by a medical, behavioral, environmental issue, or an overlap of the three. Basically, you need to sit back and figure out why this worry-some behavior is happening.

Medical:

* Skin inflammation or infection
* Parasites
* Disease
* Cancer
* Poisoning
* Metabolic disorders

Environmental:

* Nutrition
* Allergies
* Humidity level
* Nicotine

Behavioral:

* Boredom
* Stress

**Diarrhea**: Birds do not get true diarrhea. But more of a deviation in the stools appearance. This can be caused by a number of factors.

* Disease
* Diet
* Stress
* Parasites
* Poisoning

**Mites**: Birds are susceptible mites. If not treated, it can spread to you, and lead to serious illness or death for your bird.

Mites feed on your bird’s blood, can live and thrive in your bird’s nest or cage, and can reproduce at a rapid rate.

It can be hard to tell if a bird has mites.

* Crust on the beak, and/or around the eyes.
* Legs/feet will be scaly and irritated.
* Difficulty breathing from the mites settling in the trachea and sinuses.
* Feather loss
* Active at night

However, there are steps you can take to treat the infestation so it does not return. By sprinkling some mite powder on your bird, and surroundings. They are easily taken care of. If you have a sever infestation, you may need to call in an exterminator to help you take care of the problem.