



Paws, Claws & Wings

Physical and Behavioral Rehabilitation for Animals



Dangers in a house for pet birds:

Due to their small size, extremely fast metabolism and very sensitive respiratory systems birds are very vulnerable to a wide variety of dangers. Parrots especially, are very curious and will chew, taste and try to play with anything that takes their fancy.

It is up to the birds' owners to ensure their pets' environment is a safe one.

Overheated non-stick coatings:

Teflon and other such coatings commonly used on pots and pans emit fumes when overheated. These fumes can also be produced by waffle irons, bread machines, irons, ironing board covers, curling irons, space heaters, blow dryers and many more commonly used items.

Electrical cords:

Any exposed or accessible electrical cord is a huge electrocution risk to a bird. Parrots especially, always explore with their beaks and are able to bite through the outer plastic cover of an electric cable easily. Electrical cords should be kept away from birds or covered with a durable, hard corrugated plastic coating.

Poisoning:

Birds can be poisoned by ingesting / eating or inhaling / breathing toxins. Insecticides, ammonia, bleach, oven cleaner, glues, nail polish remover, paint, perfumes, heavy metals (mainly lead) and poisonous plants are all deadly to a bird.

Water:

Due to their curiosity birds will explore anything, especially water. Be especially careful about leaving a bird in any area where they can drown. Open toilets, baths and filled sinks are the most common culprits for a bird drowning. Also ensure that your bird has no access to boiling or heated water as they can be very seriously injured.

Toys:

Even toys made especially for birds can be dangerous. Ensure that your bird cannot chew or break off pieces small enough that they may be able to swallow the pieces. Rope toys may tangle a bird up and especially thin strands may get wrapped around a leg and may cut off the circulation. Birds may also get themselves strangled by string toys. Toys that are made out of metal must be carefully examined to ensure that they are not rusting, have no sharp edges and that the bird is unable to break any pieces off.

Foods:

Fatty or salted foods are very unhealthy to a bird. Birds can have some table food as a treat but always remember that they are a lot smaller than a human so they will need an extremely small amount. Chocolate, avocado pear, caffeine and alcohol are toxic and may kill a bird very quickly.



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Mirrors, Doors and Windows:

Birds that are flighted will easily fly into windows and mirrors and this can cause concussion, brain damage or even death. A bird will also be able to escape from any open doors and windows. If an interior door is closed while a bird is perching on top of it, the bird may be seriously injured or even killed.

Quality of air:

As birds have a very efficient respiratory system and basically breathe every breath twice, they are very susceptible to any airborne contaminants. No aerosols or smoke should be used anywhere near a bird.

Fans:

Ceiling fans can cause serious injuries if a bird flies into them. Birds are also nervous when something is moving around them so a fan may scare them. Ensure that your bird is not in the direct path of a fan as constant winds can cause them to develop a flu like illness.

Other pets:

Although many birds have a good relationship with their families of mixed species they must always be supervised. A larger animal may easily squash a bird without being aware of it and a birds flapping or running may provoke the prey instincts of a dog or cat. Cat scratches are especially deadly to birds.

Sr. Emmylou Rivers

