

NOT JUST A PRETTY POLLY

Caring for your captive parrot

What does Polly Need?

Love and attention: solitude is torture for a parrot

A BIG cage: to stretch, flap and move around

Indoors & outdoors: Provide cover for shade & shelter and an open area to sunbathe and rain-bathe

Exciting perches: Different thicknesses and heights for exercise and interest. Ensure perch space for all birds

Space to himself: Not all birds get along. Excessive fighting leads to fatal injuries

A nice high roost: Never put the cage on the floor – parrots hate that

A bath: In the rain or with a gentle spray-bottle. He loves it and he'll look and feel much healthier

Cuddles: you need to scratch his hard-to-reach places for him

A playmate: Boredom makes him aggressive and miserable. He needs toys and a friend (human or parrot) just as human children do

Ways to Stop Polly Biting

Free Time: let him out of his cage at least once a day

Play Time: he needs toys and interesting things to explore. Bored birds will bite

Social Time: sit still and let him climb on you. Don't simply try and hold him – let him come to you

Quiet Time: too much noise and fuss will frightened him and he'll bite

Time Out: sometime's he's just plain grumpy, so leave him be for a while

YOUR TIME: *If you don't have the time, then please don't get a parrot*

Parrot-Wise

How long should Polly live? Wild Belizean parrots can live 45-90 years but most captive parrots die within 5 years through poor diet and bad care. Follow this guide and your bird will live MUCH longer.

Why is it bad to take baby birds? Belize's tourism industry needs our wildlife, but parrot numbers are declining every year: soon they will all be gone. Nest-robbers are killing our future.

Why did my baby bird die.

Baby birds die from shock, from not enough food and water or the wrong kind of food. Baby birds belong with their mothers. PLEASE don't encourage the trade by buying baby parrots from nest-robbers.

Do captive parrots in Belize need special care?

Yes! Belizean parrots know that they are parrots. Every day they hear and see their parrot cousins flying free, so they are more difficult to handle than the same bird in the US or UK.

How can I get him to talk more

The older the parrot the better it talks. Look after your bird, he will live for 50 years or more and then he will talk! But you MUST look after him.

Are parrots really that smart? Oh yes! As smart as a 3 year old child. Parrots think, evaluate, reason and remember. He is an emotional, intelligent, wild creature - it's hard work to make friends with him.

Is it really illegal to keep a parrot? Yes! Check with the Forestry Department about how to license your parrot.

I don't think I can cope with Polly any more

That's simple: call Belize Bird Rescue on 822 1145, and we'll teach him to be wild again.

PLEASE: don't just let him go – he will not survive.

WING CLIPPING

He needs wings to keep warm & dry, to protect soft body feathers, to exercise muscles, to avoid injury on hard landings. SO If you must do it, do it right!

DO NOT cut all of the feathers. See the diagram for the ONLY way you should clip your parrots' wings.

Never clip baby parrots: they need at least 3 months with wings for muscles to develop properly.

Never cut growing feathers: they have nerves and a blood supply. Your bird can bleed to death.

Use sharp nail clippers to avoid scissor injury.

Clip both wings in the same way. Mismatched wings cause uncontrolled, painful falls.

Do **NOT** cut his tail feathers: that's just ugly.

If you're still not sure – call us – we can help.

Food

You bird needs a varied diet –Try him with a little of

everything: Banana, watermelon, papaya, unsalted cashews, unsalted and/or raw peanuts, sunflower seeds, mango, figs, sugarcane, oranges, kinep, plums, celery, spinach, pineapple, carrot, okra, craboo, hibiscus flowers, fresh corn, dried yellow corn, green beans, ackee, all apples, grapes, chilli peppers, in fact most fruits and vegetables and even flowers. (Note: Too many peanuts & sunflower seeds will make him fat)

This will make him sick: salt, alcohol, fizzy drinks, sweets, sugary cakes, salty chips etc.

This will kill him!! chocolate, avocado, onion.

ALWAYS make sure he has CLEAN, FRESH DRINKING WATER all the time

Play Time

Making toys for your parrot

Join together craft beads & sticks, wood blocks, bush sticks, sugar cane, bottle tops, leather strips, leaves, coconut, flowers, pasta pieces, toilet roll inners, rags, buttons, nuts, mango seed, babies' toys.

To connect the toys: pipe- cleaners, ropes, string, dog chains, vines and cable ties (also excellent for securing branches for perches)

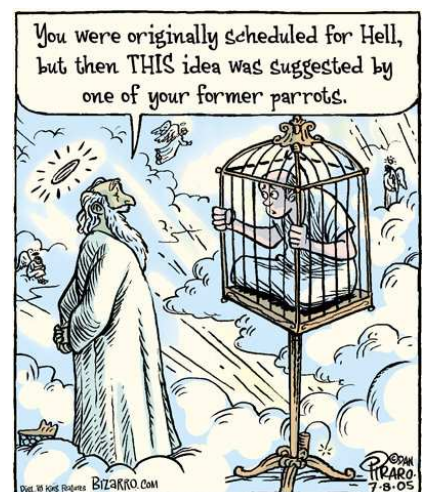
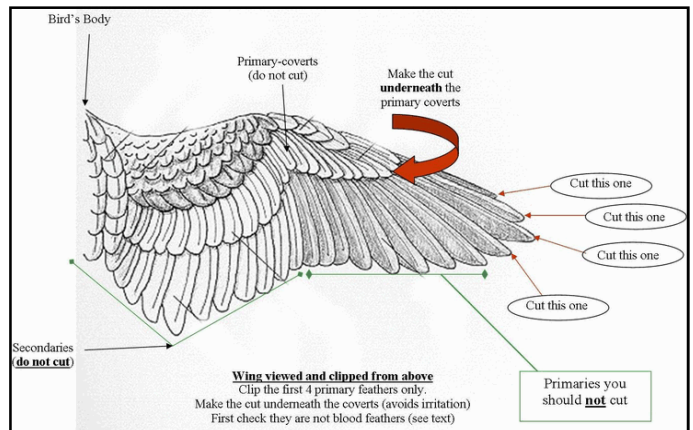
Hopefully, you now have some more ideas to help give Polly a long and happy life. You owe it to Polly to help him – you are his only friend.

If you would like more advice or toy and food samples then please call us.

If you decide that you would like Polly to go back to the bush, call us to arrange the start of his new wild life

BELIZE BIRD RESCUE

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Belize Bird Rescue is a privately funded organisation. Contact us for more information, or to arrange educational visits.