



## FOREST DEPARTMENT

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### **My bird is in a tree – why do I need to build a cage?**

*Many people do not like to see a bird in a cage. But, if you have clipped his wings you have taken away his only defence against danger, so you must put him in a cage for his own protection. You can cut leafy branches and put them in the enclosure with the bird to make his environment more natural.*

### **The reasons for building a cage are as follows:**

1. You cannot watch him all the time: it only takes a second for something bad to happen to a clipped bird.
2. It is difficult to ensure the bird gets food and water when he needs it
3. The bird could climb down and wander away and you would lose him
4. The bird is unable to control a fall with clipped wings. If he is frightened or just decides to take flight, he could fall and injure himself
5. Domestic animals are a real threat to clipped birds: cats can climb trees and dogs will snap at a bird on the ground
6. The bird is continually open and vulnerable to predators whilst in the tree
7. If the bird is in a tree and not hand tame, it is impossible to protect him from dangers or to ensure he is fed correctly. A bird that won't come down to a human will likely end up staying out at night. Parrots are especially vulnerable to night-time predators and a parrot that is clipped would totally be unable to escape. You must **never** leave a clipped parrot out at night.
8. Clipped feathers grow out one at a time. As each feather grows, there's a point when the bird becomes able to fly a distance from the tree top, **but** - once he lands he is then unable to take off. The owner believes the bird to be 'released' but in reality he will be killed by a predator or taken captive by another person.
9. Build the cage under the tree, that way you can allow him to roam free while you are watching, and he can choose to climb down and return to his safe home at any time.