

Adoption Required Reading (7 pages)

ADOPTION DISCLAIMER

Beak n Wings, Inc. is an all volunteer rescue group. Currently the only birds Beak n Wings is taking in are domestic birds from finch to macaws. Many birds in the area still need to find new homes. All of the birds in our rescue program have been surrendered to Beak n Wings, Inc. by their previous owners. Beak n Wings, Inc. strives to have a wellness check on all birds from conure to macaw by a licensed veterinarian (as funding allows). Many of our birds are still in need of behavior modification and diet transition. Each individual bird will be discussed with potential adopters and they will be informed on any issues. Beak n Wings, Inc. strongly urges anyone adopting a parrot through BNW to take their new pet to an **experienced Avian Veterinarian** to be tested for Polyoma, Psittacosis, PBFD, and Pacheco's Virus and have a complete avian blood panel - CBC, chemistry, fecal exam and culture. Beak n Wings, Inc. also advises current parrot owners to quarantine their newly adopted companion away from other parrots in the household for at least 90 days (veterinarians recommend 90 days) to monitor health and get test results back. Beak n Wings, Inc. suggests making sure all birds within a household have been given a clean bill of health through an avian veterinarian prior to introductions.

Please remember that no matter how many tests you run on your bird, there is NO guarantee that your bird is 100% healthily.

Adoption Information:

Beak n Wings, Inc is all about finding new homes for birds in need. Because our birds are in private homes, they are only able to receive visitors by appointment. This is set up after an application has been filled out and a home visit performed. We bring our birds out as often as possible to adoption events to allow the public to see them. If you would like to know where we will be taking them, please check our events calendar. Although we desperately want to see our "homeless" birds find good homes, we have to be picky. Most of our birds come from homes that could no longer keep them, or from situations that were bad for their physical or mental health. In order to prevent that from recurring, BNW has set up strict criteria for bird adoption. These criteria require attendance or viewing of our Basic Bird Care training class.

Training Class:

Our Training class is for those who want to adopt a bird from Beak n Wings. This class is in place to ensure that the potential owner is going to be able to give the basic proper care to the new family member. This class is Veterinarian approved.

This class is "Basic Bird Care 101". The class is a requirement to adopt a bird. You will have to take this class prior taking possession of the bird. It is only required to attend the class once. Refusing to take our training class will result in your application being declined.

This training class is not only for those who adopt a bird. This class is open for all who wish to attend. This class is offered twice a year at our Bird Expos and at other times throughout the year, please check out our Facebook calendar for details.

Topics covered include:

- a. Basic Care and Nutrition**
- b. Taming, Training, and Grooming**
- c. Emergency Care of Ill or Injured Birds**

Therefore, those wishing to adopt must live in within the specified distance. The requirements for adoption are as follows:

1. An adopter must be willing to fill out and send in an adoption application with a copy of your DL, or other ID.
2. Be willing to open your home for a home visit from one our members (small birds excluded).
3. You must attend "Bird Care 101 Training Class", see the details above.
4. The adopter must pay BNW a pre-set adoption fee set by the board of directors before adoption. Beak n Wings is not a source to acquire free or low-cost animals. The adoption fees we charge help us defray costs we incur when providing for the birds in our care. Our volunteers receive no pay.
5. While financial status is not the primary issue in adoption, gainful employment is required for adoption to assure BNW that the adopted bird can be taken to an avian veterinarian for basic health care.

6. After adoption, the adopter must allow a follow up home visit from one of our rescue/adoption staff. We follow up for, but not limited to, 2 years.
7. The adopter must understand that an Adoption Contract will be entered into. This is a legal and binding document and will be acted upon if the rules of adoption are not adhered to.

How the adoption program works

1. An adoption application must be sent in (mail, fax, or you may bring to an event to turn in the application).
2. A representative of Beak n Wings will contact you to set up a time for a home study can be completed after you have attended the "Basic Bird Care 101" class.
3. Once approved (approval can come from the Executive Director or the Vice President of R/A only)
4. You must visit the bird you are looking to adopt two (2) times for a minimum of 30 minutes each time.
5. You will be required to sign a contract and pay the adoption fee before finalizing the adoption.

Our Boundaries:

We have set boundaries for adoption. We adopt within 150 miles of Lenexa, Kansas. This is due to the distance our volunteers are willing to drive.

WE DO NOT BUY OR TRADE BIRDS!

NOTE: To read more on how the program works, please follow the links provided on our web page.

*****BNW reserves the right to refuse any adoption*****

Parrot Advisory Statement

Before we discuss any kind of adoption arrangements, I'd like to talk about having a large parrot for a pet. Also, I would like to ask why it is that you are interested in a particular species above all of the other parrot types out there. I'm not sure where your knowledge lies, so I will try not to be too elementary as to insult you, but I would like to give you some information to think about.

I do not know your age, marital status, living arrangements, schedule or stability in all of these things, but, all of which are important aspects of having a large parrot as a pet. Parrots are magnificent creatures and are a very demanding, highly specialized pet. They require close to as much care as our own children, and live 20-80 years depending on the species. That in itself is a huge responsibility.

Think of it like this...it's like having a 2-3 year old child for the rest of your life. And almost inevitably, the bird will outlive you, just as your own children will. The difference is that the bird stays at a 3 year old level. It will not grow up and take care of itself like your children will. Some birds are placed in people's wills for new living arrangements when the parrot owner dies, but finding a suitable new owner that is willing and able to take care of the bird in a similar manner as the previous owner did is not so easy. Parrots are creatures of habit, just like humans...and any kind of change can stress them out. Even the presence of so much as a new toy can cause them undue stress when they are unsure what it is or if it will harm them.

The scenario of a bird placed in the owner's will is that of a good, knowledgeable, willing owner. Most owners have the best of intentions, but have no idea what they are getting into. They see these birds on television and think it would be a lot of fun to have a pet that could talk to them and do tricks. The chain pet store the owner buys the bird from doesn't tell them how to properly care for the bird, what is healthy to feed the bird, how long the bird will live, how to train the bird, or to take the bird to an avian vet for an initial check-up. The associates at the store are not properly trained and the store is primarily in it for the money. So the new owner spends all this money to soon find out they got way more than they bargained for. Before long, they try to find another home for their new, no so cool parrot. On average, by the time a large parrot such as a macaw reaches the age of 12 years old it will have had 8 different homes. How sad is that? Why, you ask, do people get rid of them?

Well, let's see. Parrots can be extremely loud, messy, destructive and nippy. They require a lot of attention. In addition, they require a lot of time out of the cage. They are selfish—as they have a 3 year old mindset, and they can become very jealous. Parrots love to chew and do so instinctively. It is something you cannot stop, but you must be able to provide them an outlet—give them wooden toys, etc. or they will destroy your wood furniture. They will bite, sometimes just a nip...and sometimes drawing blood. It will happen and it's part of owning a parrot. They will squawk, talk, whistle, yell and scream. Some of which are happy noises, some excited, some scared and some mad...but no matter what the emotion—your bird will tell you about it. If you live in an apartment, your neighbors might dislike you—as some parrot screams can be heard more than five miles away. They are innately very messy eaters. They peel and crush and dip everything. They throw what they do not like, or just throw food for attention. They dip food in water as they do not have saliva, so constant water changes are required. They can be quite destructive to a household, they love to shred paper and cardboard, gnaw on wood, pull carpet, gnaw wires, pluck keys off keyboards, tear up blinds—you name it—they will test it or play with it, and if it's fun they will destroy it. You can deter behavior and train them to do many things, but chewing, screaming, biting and being messy are all traits of having a parrot. If you are going to live with a bird, you have to be willing to live with and learn to work with these behaviors as well.

Parrots most often bond with their owners. They do not have a parrot mate, but a human mate. You are their object of affection and favorite toy; they will adore you, if you do so for them. You must try to keep your bird well socialized to help prevent aggression towards other people. If you are married, the bird may bond to you, but not with your spouse...in fact the bird may hate your spouse and try to attack out of jealousy. Often the same problem occurs with children in the household. This is more common when you get the bird as a single person and then you get married or have children. The bird does not cope with change well. It was used to you and only you, now it has to share you with whoever else lives in the house. These scenarios can go on and on. Considering how long the bird lives, it is obvious it will have to endure changes. Moving from house to house, job/schedule changes, people in/out of the house, vacations, and new pets. No matter what comes up— you must be willing to help your bird accept and acclimate to the changes. If you do not, you will not like the outcome. Screaming fits will commence—frequent biting may occur, purposely throwing food bowls, toys, etc, will happen. Similar to that of a three year old toddler's fit; only a parrot tantrum may last much longer than that of a child, if not addressed right away.

Parrots have very bad separation anxiety. This does not necessarily mean that you are gone all the time, although that might be the case. This anxiety may also be caused by some of the above changes, such as a new child in the household or a new pet. You initially spent all this time with your beloved pet parrot, but now something else draws your attention. The parrot many times will resort to a form of self-mutilation called feather plucking. Many people will say this is from boredom, but often times it begins after the above behavior such as screaming and biting did not work. The bird will just start plucking all of its feathers out--this can be a very serious disorder, and if let go too long, can be very difficult to correct.

Changes in the bird's behavior will also occur when the bird reaches the age of sexual maturity. Your sweet, lovable baby may suddenly turn aggressive. Although if dealt with correctly; these aggressions can be minimized, and should not turn problematic. Maturity ages very depending on the species of parrot, but a large parrot may begin these behaviors as early as 5 years of age and they may continue during certain seasons for years to come. Some birds are worse than others, but all can be dealt with if the owner is willing.

Another problem with having a pet parrot is the expense. Not only are the initial bird, cage and supplies really pricey, but a trip to an avian vet is not very cheap either. It is not something one wants to think about, but with a pet that lives so long, it is more than a possibility that your parrot will get sick. When it does happen, you need a vet specialized in avian medicine. Birds are very different than dogs and cats and can not be treated the same. So before a pet parrot is ever purchased, an avian vet in your area must be found and contacted, so they can check the bird out as soon as you receive it to make sure it is in good health. Beak and nail trims are something else an avian vet should do. Inexperienced owners should never attempt grooming on their own.

Once you are knowledgeable and willing to take on such a responsibility, a pet parrot is one of the most rewarding relationships you will ever have. Parrot owners tend to say that their birds actually own them--and it's true. You fall in love with them and answer to their every whim, and they will make you laugh and cry, but if you love them, they will show you more affection and trust than you could ever imagine.

Please take time to research these wonderful birds on your own, and be honest with yourself whether or not you are prepared for this type of commitment, as it is not the kind of decision that should be taken lightly or rushed into. If you can't commit for the long haul (new relationships, changes, everything) please reconsider your decision.

Best wishes and good luck.

Dean Tyson
Executive Director
Beak n Wings, Inc.
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Quarantine Procedure

Quarantine procedure for foster and newly adopted birds:

Whether fostering or adopting, all new birds must complete a quarantine period in a new home before being introduced into your flock. Why quarantine? Moving to a new home is stressful, and the stress may make the bird susceptible to preexisting or new illnesses. If you do not quarantine, your flock will be exposed to this new bird and any possible illness. The results can be expensive, time consuming, and even deadly. If foster bird(s) and/or personal bird(s) become sick due to quarantine violations, the foster/adoptive parent is responsible.

TIME PERIOD

Minimum of 90 days (foster birds may be brought to adoption events after 30 days if no problems are observed but they should be watched closely for 90 days):

1. During this time, observe your bird closely for any signs of illness including, but not limited to; severe loss of energy or vitality, blood, diarrhea, watery droppings; discharge from the nose, eyes, or mouth, respiratory distress, and seizures. Make sure the bird is eating. A sudden change in environment can be traumatic for a bird and cockatiels in particular, may stop eating. Even if they appear to be toying with the food, be sure they continue to poop regularly and to drink water. If you don't see the bird eating from the regular food dish, offer treats such as millet or wheat toast. It is more important for the bird to eat, especially during a transition period, even if their diet isn't as healthy as it should be.
2. Weigh the bird regularly, with a gram scale if possible. If you don't have a scale, ask us or a bird store about getting one. Keep a record of the bird's weight. Watch for sudden or significant weight loss.

VET VISITS FOR FOSTER HOMES

1. If the bird is in immediate danger, take it directly to the emergency vet. Contact Beak n Wings if you have any questions. The care of the bird is always the most important. Contact Beak n Wings as soon as possible. If you cannot reach anyone, take the bird to the vet as soon as possible.
2. If the bird is stable, contact the Beak n Wings to get authorization for a vet visit.
3. A sick bird should remain quarantined until it tests negative for illness and has completed any medications. Foster birds should complete any short term medications before being released to an adopter.

QUARANTINE ENVIRONMENT

1. Quarantined birds must be kept in a secure room, away from the rest of your flock. The room should have a door that can be shut securely to prevent any of your flock from accidentally entering this room.
2. Ideally, this room should have a separate source of fresh air. At the very least, the home's air-intake for furnace and A/C should not originate in the quarantine room. HEPA or other good quality air filters (without ionizers) are good ideas for any quarantine space to limit the stress on the quarantine bird's immune system.

- 3.** New quarantined birds mean a new quarantine room. Unless they come to your home on the same day, from the same place, keep new bird additions in a separate room from older additions.
- 4.** Even if your new bird looks healthy, your bird may be carrying bacteria or viruses that could easily be spread to the rest of your flock. Remember, birds hide illness!
- 5.** It may be advantageous to keep an apron or over-shirt in the quarantine room to wear while handling the quarantine bird(s) and while cleaning their cages. Wash your hands after removing the protective garment. Remember that your clothes can transport dander, fecal matter, and bacteria. If there is any possibility that your quarantine bird may have a contagious condition, or if other bird(s) in the house is/are vulnerable to infection, it is best to change your outer clothes after handling quarantine birds.
- 6.** If you are medicating a quarantine bird, keep the medication, syringe, etc. away from dishes, food and medicine being used for other birds. Wash your hands before and after handling the medication and syringe.
- 7.** Provide your new bird with a sterilized cage, perches, dishes and new toys.
- 8.** After your bird is settled in and before quarantine is completed, throw away any old toys and perches that can't be sterilized.
- 9.** Change cage liners daily and consider the use of a grate. Lightly misting the cage liner with water before clean-up will help reduce the amount of dander and fecal matter that gets kicked into the air during cleaning.
- 10.** If possible, use a HEPA or other good quality air filter (without ionizer) to help reduce airborne antigens, fecal matter, and dander.
- 11.** Wash quarantine crocks and dishes in a different sink than your flock's or at least a different dish scrubbing brush. Sterilize the scrub brush and dishes thoroughly in the dishwasher.
- 12.** No sharing between quarantine flocks. No sharing used food, water, dishes, toys, hands, shoulders, humans, etc.
- 13.** Quarantine your home, avoid external exposure. If you walk through areas outside your home with duck, geese, and other bird droppings, do not take these shoes into the home. If you visit zoos, aviaries, pet stores, other friend's homes and handle the birds and/or reptiles, wash your hands and change your clothes before or as soon as you get home.

These are recommendations, of course Beak n Wings can not order anyone to QUARANTINE your birds, but we hope this will help you to keep your birds safe.