

# Fine Feathered Press

*Fine Feathered Friends Sanctuary Inc.*

“Don’t buy, don’t breed—  
Adopt a bird in need”



Amy & Gabby

## Birds Adopted in 2009

African Greys	5
Amazons	12
Budgies	25
Canaries	3
Caiques	4
Cockatiels	22
Cockatoos	13
Conures	12
Doves	1
Eclectus	4
Indian Ringnecks	2
Finch	1
Jardines	2
Lory’s	4
Lovebirds	11
Macaws	12
Meyers Parrot	1
Moustache Parakeet	1
Parrotlets	5
Pionus	2
Quakers	8

Total Adoptions 150

## Lead Story Headline

### PROS & CONS ON VITAMINS

Vitamins added to a bird’s water (no matter what the manufacturer says) are NOT recommended by avian vets for several reasons:

Vitamins added to water adds color—some birds stop drinking completely (which isn’t good).

Vitamins added to water are impossible to calibrate as to actual dose—owners have no idea how much they are giving and how much the bird is getting. Directions often call for “x number of drops” for a particular size bird, but neglect to mention the size of the water bowl. Without speci-

fying the volume of water in the bowl, manufacturers are completely ignoring the concept of dilution. Knowing the actual concentration the bird is receiving is therefore impossible.

Vitamins added to water maintain potency for a short time—maybe as little as an hour. So if your bird doesn’t drink right away, it may be getting no benefit at all.

Vitamins added to water DO benefit the bacteria that normally inhabit everyone’s water (bottled or otherwise). Makes them big and strong. (That is what makes a slimy feeling in

the bottom of a water bowl) —bacterial growth.

Vitamins added to water have been implicated as the cause of some cases of feather plucking—birds that bathe in their water bowls can end up with sticky feathers that the bird can’t get clean—so they get pulled out.

So obviously, vitamins should be added to fresh food, not water, and a vitamin-mineral powder is much better than just vita-

## Volunteer Spotlight

Karen & Clover Thrasher have been volunteering for us since Nov. 2008. Karen also serves on our Board of Directors as Director of Media Relations and does a wonderful job. She sends out all our email notices as well. Karen has a can-do attitude and plenty of fundraising ideas and we don’t know what we’d do without her. Clover is Karen’s daughter and she also volunteers for us. She

works to help socialize the birds, feeds and waters them and even helps keep them clean. This is all summer time and after school work but she is here as often as she can be, probably not often enough for her tastes though, according to Karen. Thank you Karen & Clover for all you do.



## Nutrition 101

### IS YOUR BIRD EATING A GOOD DIET?

***You need to break your birds diet into each of the following categories. Base diet, (seed mix/pellets), Vegetables/Fruit, Protein and Carbohydrates.***

#### **FIRST: The myth of Vitamin C**

Most animals do not need vitamin C supplementation in their diet, because they manufacture their own. The only ones that don't manufacture it are the primates and guinea pigs.

#### **SECOND: Calcium to Phosphorous Ratio**

Of all the mineral interrelationships, the most critical in companion bird nutrition is the relation between calcium & phosphorous. A parrot needs about 1 1/2 –2 times as much calcium to phosphorous in their diet. If you feed something high in phosphorous—like seed for instance, then you need to counteract the high phosphorous intake by getting your bird to eat 1 1/2—2 times as much calcium-rich foods like beet greens, mustard greens and broccoli tops.

#### **THIRD: Vitamin D3**

Vitamin D3 is the vehicle by which the body can absorb calcium and phosphorous from the diet. Inadequate Vitamin D3 levels in the body can cause calcium deficiency symptoms in an other

wise Calcium adequate diet. Sources of vitamin D3 are simple: Unfiltered sunlight, full spectrum lighting or Vitamin D3 supplements.

#### **FOURTH: Vitamin A**

Vitamin A is critical to a healthy immune system, and maintaining cell wall integrity in the mucus membranes, among other things. The mucus membranes cover the gastrointestinal and respiratory tracts, functioning to protect the organism from outside invaders or pathogens. Classic signs of vitamin A deficiencies in parrots include signs of upper respiratory disease and abscesses in the mouth.

Those apples that are supposed to *keep the doctor away* are simple pitiful nutritionally. Essentially sugar water and a little fiber. Many items I thought to be nutritious turned out not to be — things like oranges, grapes, pears and grapefruit. Bananas another favorite on the parrot hit parade Bananas has 3 1/2 times as much phosphorous as calcium. That means the

human has to feed and the bird has to eat, 5-7 times as much calcium-rich foods to counteract it. Grapes are also a problem, with twice as much phosphorous as calcium. Yellow peaches had a nice shot of vitamin A, but white peaches had only a 1/10th as much at 100 IU. Otherwise, the two were identical nutritionally. (The white peach is considered to be a wonderful achievement for fruit growers, but in removing the color they removed the only nutritional value of the fruit! And this is supposed to be an improvement?? Humans are so cool, sometimes, aren't we?).

Written by:

Liz Wilson, Parrot Behavior Consultant.

## THE BIRD CAGE

Many behavior problems can be attributed to having your parrot in improper surroundings. Their cage should be a safe haven for them with plenty of things to keep them busy. A good cage should be easy to clean, and it should NOT be round. The bar spacing should be appropriate for the type of bird that is housed in it. Whether or not you have a play top or a dome top is up to you. One of the best gifts you can give yourself and your parrot is a top of the line cage. When you skimp on a cage you end up replacing it again and again. Do your research and get a cage that will last the lifetime of your parrot.

The cage should be placed in an area where you are sure your parrot will be able to view his surroundings safely without feeling threatened. You do not want to place a parrot directly in front of a window or in the center of a room. Our first response is to assume that they would enjoy the outside view or being right in the middle of a room so they can see everything. The truth is that this type of placement may be fine while your parrot is young. But once your parrot becomes sexually mature and aware that it is a prey animal, this type of placement will cause extreme stress upon

him. A parrot should be placed against a solid wall, if this is not possible then the back half of the cage should be covered at all times. This will give him the sense of security that is needed. Parrots do not live out in the open in the wild. They build nests inside of trees or in dense forest areas. So they may live and raise young safely. We should try to mock this environment by placing the cage in a more indiscreet area of our homes. One where they can take pleasure in their surroundings and not feel threatened. You will need also to consider your parrots sleep requirements. Does the placement of the cage allow for the proper amounts of undisturbed quiet and darkness? If not do you have a sleeping cage in another room? Sleep deprivation is a problem with many parrots. So if your parrot is not receiving at least ten to twelve hours of rest each night you will need to re-evaluate his cage placement.

### PERCHES

There should be 3 different size perches in the cage. These perches should also be different textures with at least one of them being a rope or Booda perch. The rope perch should be the one that is placed at the highest point for sleeping.

Place this perch in a U shape in an upper back corner of the cage. This is especially important if you have a feather picker. It gives a sense of safety to the parrot, plus if they turn to pick, the rope is right there and they will opt to shred that. The other two perches should be wood or one wood one of a different texture of choice. There does not have to be perches in front of every food dish. We tend to make life just a little too easy for these busy birds. Make them work a little.

### TOYS

There should be at least 3 working toys in the cage at all times. Working toys are ones that make them work for their treats or favorite food. The other toys should be things that are easily shredded such as soft wood, paper, and leather, preferably all of the above. Good toys have many different shapes and textures for the bird to explore and destroy. Your parrot should have a minimum of ten toys in his cage at all times. You should not be able to see the parrot easily when he is in his cage. This is his home and he should feel camouflaged as he would if he were in the wild. We have to remember that it is up to us to learn to understand these birds needs. Set their cage up in a way that is fun for them, keep it interesting and your bird will be happy.

## Featured Parrot

This is Homie, a Blue & Gold Macaw. Homie is almost 14 yrs old and is a wonderful bird. He is a bit spoiled but he loves to show off. He could be the first one to say "Hello" when you visit the sanctuary. He loves to play Peek A Boo. Catch and just hang out with anyone that will pick him up. But he will also "test" you to see if you show any fear. If you

do, he will not step up for you but he will lunge at you and act like he is the fiercest bird in the place. Once you get to know him though, you will find he is a real pussy cat at heart. He loves to dance, and sing with you, and just generally cuddle. He is in full feather and a very beautiful bird, he can be very loud though, so no apartment dwellers.



## How Can You Help!

### Our Wish List!

- Cages
- Bird toys
- Bleach
- Towels
- Paper Towels
- Perches (new only)
- Newspaper
- Play gyms
- Printer Paper
- Pocket File Folders
- HP F4240 Printer Ink
- Black & Color #60

**Consider volunteering.** Our sanctuary is dependent on our voluntary staff members. Whether you're experienced or a novice, you can help support and enrich the lives of our birds.

**Made a donation.** Everyone involved with Fine Feathered Friends is a devoted volunteer. No one gets paid a salary. We are dependent on donations, boarding fees and sales of food and toys to keep running. Donations of any amount are gladly accepted. Engraved donor bricks are available for \$50-100.

**Become a member.** See the form below for details.

## Fine Feathered Friends Sanctuary Inc.

"Don't buy, don't breed-- adopt a bird in need!"



1570 County Road A  
Edgerton, WI 53534  
608 541-0090  
email: birdlady76@yahoo.com

## Become a Member

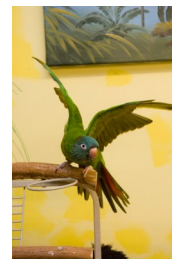
Our membership opportunities are:

Senior	\$20
Family	\$25
Supporter	\$50
Sponsor	\$100
Patron	\$200
Angel	\$500

### Benefits include:

- All levels receive a personalized membership card, one year subscription to Fine Feathered Press Newsletter, Discounts at participating retailers, and invitations to upcoming events.
- Supporter receives a free tote bag
- Sponsor receives a FFFS T Shirt
- Patron receives both bag and T Shirt
- Angel receives bag, T-shirt, and a personalized brick

Crackers-Blue Crowned Conure



[www.feathered-friends.com](http://www.feathered-friends.com)  
[birdlady76@yahoo.com](mailto:birdlady76@yahoo.com)

## Our Hours

Closed Monday and Tuesday  
Wed. through Fri. Open 11-3  
Sat. & Sunday Open 11-4



Tommy & Friends!