



Your New Bird

Information and advice from the Multnomah County Animal Shelter
for a happy life with your new pet.

www.MultCoPets.org



CONGRATULATIONS

You are now the proud parent of an amazing bird. The Multnomah County Animal Shelter (MCAS) sincerely thanks you for taking the time to adopt your new pet from our shelter. We hope this is the beginning of a long and happy friendship.

Birds make wonderful companions and have a reputation for being very intelligent. Adopting your new bird is just the beginning of life with your new companion. This wonderful relationship involves significant responsibility, patience, and a long-term commitment which can last up to 50 years. In adopting this bird, you are pledging to take responsibility for his/her health and well-being for the rest of their life. To start off on the right track, a business card for Avian Medical Center, the only avian exclusive practice in the Portland area, is included in the adoption package. We encourage you to schedule an appointment at a veterinary practice within ten days of adopting to identify any medical problems and to make sure your bird is disease free. An appointment will also begin building a positive relationship with your veterinarian, since regular veterinary care will be very important for the long-term health of your new companion.

This booklet is designed to address many of the questions you may have about how to care for your new bird. However, please give us a call if you need any additional information or advice.

Multnomah County Animal Services (503) 988-7387

Remember to license your dogs and cats with your local county animal shelter.

Multnomah County (503) 988-7387

Clackamas County (503) 655-8629

Washington County (503) 846-7041

Clark County (360) 699-2096

Multnomah County Animal Shelter Services (partial list)

CRUELTY AND ABUSE INVESTIGATION: MCAS has humane officers in the field seven days a week handling a variety of animal cruelty complaints. Our officers are commissioned by the Governor of Oregon to enforce animal cruelty and related statutes. While their primary focus is educating pet owners about the proper care of animals, they will use all the power afforded them to ensure that all animals receive at least the minimal care prescribed by law. They have and will prosecute anyone guilty of gross negligence or abuse of an animal.

VOLUNTEERING and FOSTERING: Volunteers assist in all aspects of the shelter. Volunteers show animals, assist with adoptions, foster animals that may be too young or sick to be placed for adoption at the time they come to the shelter, help the shelter with its many and diverse special events, groom the animals, socialize and care for shelter animals.

Spaying and Neutering: With the help of Animal Shelter Alliance of Portland (ASAP), MCAS is able to assist low income families in Multnomah County with reduced cost spays and neuters. Additionally, MCAS has created the Apartment Cat Team (ACT) which works with the Feral Cat Coalition of Oregon (FCCO) to spay and neuter stray cats living near apartment communities in Multnomah County.

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PREPARE YOUR HOME

Before you bring your new bird home, it is important to “bird proof” (for his/her safety as well as that of your belongings) and to purchase a few basic supplies. Here is a quick checklist to get you started:

Prepare a safe cage and possibly room for your new bird. The cage will need to be large enough for your bird to flap its wings and fly to a perch. You should also purchase a lock for the cage, since birds are extremely smart parrots usually enjoy letting themselves out of their cages when they are bored. Petzel oval screw links or a masterlock will usually be a little too tricky for your feathered friend to open. You will also need 2 or 3 toys to keep your bird’s mind active. You can find a good selection of toys at your local pet store. If you have adopted an outdoor bird (chicken, peacock, pheasant, duck, etc.), please prepare a coop or run. If adopting waterfowl, please also make sure there is a place where the bird can swim and play in the water to groom itself. You can also provide your outdoor bird with toys, since they naturally want to investigate things with their beaks. You can take a piece of thin rope and loosely tie knots- your bird will probably enjoy untying the knots. Generally, birds enjoy mirrors and toys with bells too.

Many plants are poisonous to animals, so do a thorough check of your home before bringing your pet home. Here is a list of some of the most common household plants that are toxic: *Amaryllis*, *Azalea*, *Baby’s Breath*, *Bird of Paradise*, *Calla Lily*, *Cyclamen*, *Daffodil*, *Dieffenbachia*, *Easter Lily*, *Eucalyptus*, *Mistletoe*, *Narcissus*, *Oleander*, *Peace Lily*, *Primrose*, *Philodendron*, *Tiger Lily*, and *Tomato Plant*.

Birds are very sensitive animals so by keeping fresh air circulating by using a HEPA air cleaner and regular vacuuming you can help your birds’ respiratory health. Additionally, parrots and smaller birds need to be in a warm environment so make sure to keep their area between 70-80 degrees Fahrenheit.

Remember, indoor birds like to explore and can get on top of anything when outside of their cage. It is a good idea to put away breakables that may be knocked off a shelf by an exploring bird and always supervise your bird when outside of its cage. Always make sure windows and doors are shut, so your bird does not fly away. You should also talk with a veterinarian about wing trimming. Most domestic poultry cannot fly very high or far except peacocks which enjoy perching in trees. You should still make sure areas that you do not want poultry in are fenced off and/or that you have the top of your coop fenced.

Food: If you have adopted a parrot or small inside bird, there are great prepared diets for each size of bird available at your local pet store. Some common brands are: Zupreem, Harrison’s, and Lafeber. If you have adopted an outdoor bird, your local feed store can recommend the appropriate diet for the type and age of the bird. For any bird you can add fresh fruits and vegetables into the diet. It is also acceptable to use frozen fruits and vegetables, however make sure that nothing has been added to the fruits or vegetables such as sweeteners, butter, or salt. While treats are great, make sure that your birds’ diet **does not** consist of more than 20% treats (fruit and veggies) to ensure that you are feeding a nutritionally sound diet.

Food and water dishes: Please avoid plastic dishes as they harbor bacteria.

Harness: If you do decide to take your indoor bird outside make sure to put a harness on first, so your new family member does not get lost. If you have an outdoor cage for your feathered friend to enjoy fresh air and the sights, please do not put the cage in direct sunlight. This is to make sure that your feathered friend does not get too hot.

Grooming supplies: Never try to trim your own birds' beak, feathers, or toenails because you and/or your bird could be injured in the process. **Always** take your bird to a veterinarian to be groomed. You can keep a spray bottle with only water in it to mist your bird indirectly because parrots, especially love to groom themselves. You can also spray the cage bars because smaller birds enjoy drinking water off of cage bars and off of fresh leafy greens. Another way to help parrots groom is to run a hot shower and place the parrot on a standing perch in the shower. Make sure that the bird is not directly in the water, but instead pull the shower nozzle as close to the front of the shower as possible and place the bird at the opposite end of the shower. **Never** try to wash your bird with soap because the soap will strip the oil off of their feathers. Birds have an oil gland at the base of their tail which keeps their feathers water resistant. Additionally, if the oil is stripped from the feathers and the bird gets wet, it can cause them to get very cold.

THE RIDE HOME

Be sure to keep the bird as calm and relaxed--and the ride as stress-free--as possible during the ride home, as some birds do not like riding in cars. Here are some things that will help your bird during the ride home:

Please keep your new bird in their carrier. It is much safer to always transport your pet in their carrier. Have an adult carry the bird in its carrier to eliminate "swinging" of the carrier.

Do not allow children to tease, taunt, or excite the bird in the car or at home.

Do not leave the bird in the car unattended, even for a short stop to shop. The bird could escape the carrier or become chilled or overheated.

Please keep the bird in the carrier until you are safely inside your home. Once home, the bird will need a quiet cage or coop to settle.

THE FIRST FEW DAYS

Your new bird is embarking on a journey to a fun and wonderful life. You are aware of all the joys that lie ahead but your bird does not know what exactly is happening. The first few days can be very uncertain for your bird. Be patient and take things slowly.

Please review the information provided to you by the MCAS paying particular attention to any health and behavior information given by the shelter.

A frightened or unsure bird's tendency is to hide, pluck their own feathers, or bite. Make sure to work with your bird daily and keep a consistent routine and eventually your bird will become very comfortable with you and you with your bird. Under no circumstances should you force a bird to do anything they do not want to do. Coax gently with food or a toy.

CHLAMYDIA PSITTACI AND AVIAN INFLUENZA

Like people, birds can catch respiratory diseases and two of those are: Chlamydia psittaci and avian influenza. MCAS tests parrots and smaller indoor birds for Chlamydia before placing the bird up for adoption and it is important that if you own any indoor birds to have them tested. You can order the test through your veterinarian before bringing your new bird home. If you have a ventilation system in your home that does not pass air between rooms then you could bring your new bird home and keep them in a separate room from your current bird. Veterinarians require birds to test negative for Chlamydia before boarding. MCAS does not test specifically for Avian Influenza, but check for all signs of disease. There are over 200 strains of Avian Influenza, only 2 of which are zoonotic meaning that they could be passed to people. If you notice any discharge from a birds' nostrils or eyes make a veterinary appointment.

CARING FOR A BIRD WITH CHLAMYDIA PSITTACI OR AVIAN INFLUENZA

First isolate any bird showing signs of disease to prevent the disease from spreading to your other birds. Immediately after isolating bird(s), schedule an appointment with your veterinarian for them to diagnose and treat your bird.

FEATHER MITES & LICE

Feather mites and lice are a common poultry problem. To check for mites or lice slowly run your hand up the back from tail to head and you should see the lice or mites moving through the feathers if your bird has them. To rid your poultry of mites or lice you can dust them once a week with 5% Sevin dust, which is found at stores in the gardening supply section. If you use higher than 5% Sevin dust, you will be putting your birds' health at risk. You can also add diatomaceous earth to your bedding and switch to pine shavings instead of straw or hay. For birds, wood shavings are the best bedding to use because straw and hay retain more moisture and in turn harbor more bacteria than shavings.

TRAINING

To help your bird flourish in their new home, training is a great way to help them adapt and keep their mind active. At MCAS we have our volunteers work with our birds before you adopt them! Your bird learns basic commands, the training possibilities are endless. Here is our enrichment plan that you can continue with at home, no matter the size of the bird:

Level 1

The objective of Level 1 is to help the bird become less fearful when people approach its cage. An example of a good food reward is a piece of food that the bird is currently being fed or a small piece of vegetable or fruit (apples and bag of frozen mixed vegetables found in the frozen food section are good choices).

For Parrots & smaller birds

- ◆ **Do** reward bird for approaching front of cage by giving a piece of food.
- ◆ **Do Not** verbally request specific behaviors
- ◆ **Do Not** make loud noises or sudden movements
- ◆ **Do** move slowly and speak softly

For ducks, geese, chickens & larger birds

- ◆ **Do** sit next to enclosure and toss pieces of food onto ground near bird. Gradually toss the food closer to where you are sitting. If bird is approaching you, feed the bird out of your hand.
- ◆ **Do Not** verbally request specific behaviors
- ◆ **Do Not** make loud noises or sudden movements
- ◆ **Do** move slowly and speak softly

*If birds are not taking food, try closing your eyes and turning your body to the side or even have your back to the bird, still presenting the food in your hand. If bird still does not take food, drop the piece of food in food bowl or onto floor of enclosure/cage and try approaching later in the day.

Safety: If the bird's pupils are dilating and contracting repeatedly this is a sign that the bird is about to bite- step away to give the bird time to relax and try Level 1 again later in the day. Also, please remove or cover up all jewelry- birds naturally enjoy chewing on and biting shiny objects. **Never** try to give the bird "kisses" because it could easily bite your face.

Level 2

If the bird is readily taking food from your hand and positively responding after a few minutes of Level 1 training then you are ready to move on to Level 2. For Level 2 training, you will work with the bird to begin to develop basic adoptable behaviors.

For parrots and smaller birds

- ◆ **Do** open cage and offer finger or perch for bird to step up on. **Do** keep an eye on the bird at all times to make sure it does not try to escape through the cage door.
- ◆ **Do** offer a piece of food and softly verbally praise bird if the bird steps up.
- ◆ **Do Not** reward undesirable behavior
- ◆ **Do Not** request specific behaviors from bird
- ◆ **Do** reward for behaviors an average adopter would consider desirable that the bird naturally does. (Ex: talking, moving up and down-dancing, mimicking noises)

For ducks, geese, chickens & larger birds

- ◆ **Do** step slowly into enclosure and sit down. If bird tries to bite or is expressing an undesirable behavior then you should stand up and exit enclosure and try again when the bird has settled.
- ◆ **Do** reward the bird if it approaches you.
- ◆ **Do** reward the bird with food or soft verbal praise for sitting calmly anywhere in the enclosure.

Safety: If the bird's pupils are dilating and contracting repeatedly this is a sign that the bird is about to bite- step away to give the bird time to relax and try Level 1 again later in the day. Also, please remove or cover up all jewelry- birds naturally enjoy chewing on and biting shiny objects. **Never** get the bird to perch on your shoulder or try to give "kisses" because the bird could easily bite your face.

Level 3

The purpose of Level 3 is to develop more complex commands that will help adopters see how social and well behaved birds can be. These behaviors will also help keep the birds' minds active and make the transition to a new home a little easier. Some parts of Level 3 should not be attempted with very small birds like finches or lovebirds since they do not have the same vocal ability as a parrot. For the smaller birds, instead focus more on getting the bird to the point where it is easy to handle. If at all possible it is best to work in a quiet area of the shelter because some birds will shutdown and not respond to training if there are loud noises or people moving quickly around them.

For parrots & smaller birds

- ◆ **Do** follow all procedures for Level 1 and Level 2 as a warm-up before beginning Level 3.
- ◆ **Do** get the bird to step up on a perch or on your hand then lightly try to pet the bird's back, wings, beak, and feet. **Do** reward the bird with food and soft words.
- ◆ **Do** try to place on a harness (if bird is large enough), giving praise while putting it on.
- ◆ **Do Not** force the bird to do anything and stop training for a couple of minutes if the bird tries to bite or fly away more than once.
- ◆ **Do** begin trying to teach bird tricks by doing the action yourself and if the bird mimics give it a reward and verbal praise. (Example of action: laughing, saying "Pretty Bird", bobbing head up and down-dancing)
- ◆ **Do Not** repeat trying to teach a new trick more than 2 or 3 times. If the bird does not mimic the word or action, move on to trying to teach a new word or action.

For ducks, geese, chickens, & larger birds

Poultry, gamefowl, waterfowl, and guineafowl are very intelligent, but like finches and smaller birds, they do not have the vocal ability of parrots. Therefore, for these birds the objective of Level 3 is to have the bird comfortable with being handled. It may take up to several weeks before this group of birds is comfortable enough with people to allow handling.

- ◆ **Do** follow all procedures for Level 1 and Level 2 as a warm-up before beginning Level 3.
- ◆ **Do** reward the bird for approaching you.
- ◆ **Do** try to lightly touch the bird's wings, back, beak, and feet. **Do** reward the bird with food and soft words.
- ◆ **Do Not** force the bird to do anything and stop training for a couple of minutes if the bird tries to bite or fly away.
- ◆ **Do** try to pick up bird by placing hands over wings and under abdomen and slowly pick up. Once picked up, hold bird close to your body and reward with food, soft words, and keep softly petting bird.
- ◆ **Do Not** try to ever hold bird by neck or wings, it could seriously injure the bird.

Safety: If the bird's pupils are dilating and contracting repeatedly this is a sign that the bird is about to bite- step away to give the bird time to relax and try Level 1 again later in the day. Also, please remove or cover up all jewelry- birds naturally enjoy chewing on and biting shiny objects. **Never** get the bird to perch on your shoulder or try to give "kisses" because the bird could easily bite your face.

WHAT SHOULD I NOT FEED MY BIRDS?

- * Avocado
- * Raw meat
- * Vegetables with lots of butter
- * Cream, whipped or liquid
- * meat
- * Salted nuts
- * Many prepared foods such as microwave entrees
- * Bacon, ham and other cured meats
- * Cookies
- * sweetened drinks
- *flavored gelatin
- * Chocolate
- * Uncooked eggs
- * Fried foods
- * Cake icing
- * Butter sauces and cream soups that contain a lot of butter
- * Salted vegetables or meats
- * Many prepared foods such as microwave entrees
- * Candy
- * Sweetened juices
- * Sugary cereal
- * Alcohol
- * Potato chips
- * Fried foods
- * Cake icing
- * Seeds of any fruit
- * Ice cream
- * Salted popcorn
- * Cakes
- * Ice cream

WHAT CAN I FEED IN MODERATION?

- *plain yogurt
- *fruit
- *unsalted, unbuttered popcorn
- *unsalted nuts
- *veggies
- *apple slices
- *cooked eggs
- *rice
- *plain gelatin
- *plain grains

INTRODUCING YOUR NEW BIRD TO OTHER PETS

Before introducing your new bird to your other pets make sure your existing dogs and cats are current with their vaccinations. Introducing your bird to other pets should be done slowly. Keep your bird in a room that you can shut when you are not able to actively supervise all of your pets' interactions if you have dogs or cats that could tip over your bird's cage or bark at the bird. Active supervision means that you stay in the room and monitor any changes in personality of the animals and/or people that are interacting for the whole duration of the interaction. If you have children, make sure that they respect your bird's boundaries as well. Proper introduction is very important and can eliminate many problems from the start.

BIRD TO BIRD

If your existing bird or new bird is showing signs of illness, please do not introduce them until you consult with your veterinarian.

Make sure the new bird has a cage to themselves for a few days, allowing him time to adjust. Spend time with your new bird out of sight of your existing bird. And be sure to lavish attention on your existing bird.

Allow your original bird to follow their usual routine. Your existing bird will be aware that something is different. After a few days, you can begin to move the birds' cages closer together allowing them to view and hear each other. If either of the birds begin making a lot more noise than usual and/or begins plucking out its' own feathers, the birds are probably not ready to meet and you should put more distance between them. You can also cover the sides of the cages that would allow the birds to see each other.

If the birds seem to be chirping at each other, take one bird out of its cage and hold it on a perch near the other bird's cage. If the bird that is out of its cage attempts to attack or bite the bird that is in the cage, separate the birds and try an introduction in a week. If the birds seem to be getting along with one bird still in the cage, remove both birds and place them on the floor. You must actively supervise

the birds anytime they are out of their cages to make sure they do not become injured or eat anything toxic.

Improvement in attitudes toward each other can take a week or many weeks. Do not be discouraged if it takes longer. The length of adjustment will depend on the personalities of the birds and how long your existing bird was a solitary pet.

Be sure to lavish attention on all your birds to make everyone feel part of the family.

If all goes well, you will find them playing joyfully together. The social interaction level may vary--you may have birds that just tolerate the existence of one another and that is okay too!

*If you have adopted an outdoor bird from MCAS please make sure to finish up the 30 day quarantine period. The quarantine will begin on the first day that the bird enters the shelter. MCAS wants to make sure that your currently poultry stays healthy!

BIRD TO DOG OR CAT

Always actively supervise any interactions that your bird has with your dog. As an initial introduction, allow the dog or cat to approach the bird cage. If the dog and/or cat bark or hiss more than twice or attempts to climb up the cage remove your dog or cat and try the introduction several hours or a day later. If the initial introduction goes well, then let the bird out of the cage and allow the bird to climb on top of the cage if it is not ready to visit with the dog or cat. Your bird will walk down off of the cage to the floor if it is ready to meet with the dog or cat. The social interaction level may vary--you may have birds and other pets that just tolerate the existence of one another and that is okay too!

BIRD TO OTHER PETS

Remember, birds are very curious. Fish, rabbits, rodents, etc. should be protected from the inquisitive bird. Make sure cages are secure and well-maintained.

CHILDREN AND BIRDS

If there are children in your household it is important to teach them how to handle and act with your new bird to avoid stressing the cat and causing potential injury to the children. Children learn responsibility by good examples, so please guide your children and regularly monitor the care being provided for your pets.

Here are some guidelines to help your children and your new cat live happily together:

Instruct children to be calm, quiet, and slow-moving when being introduced to the bird.

An indoor bird should be taught to “perch” or “step up” onto a perch or hand. An outdoor bird should be picked up with thumbs and palms overtop of the wings and the fingers resting firmly on the belly. For outdoor birds, the bird should also be held close to the body to ensure that the wings do not flap around and become damaged or break.

Handle gently and tell children not to squeeze too tightly. Most children under 5-years old cannot hold a bird properly without squeezing too tightly. Young children should be taught to sit calmly while you place the bird in their laps. This way everyone is safe and happy.

Children should leave the bird alone when the bird is sleeping, eating, and grooming itself. Also, instruct youngsters not to put the bird in inappropriate places like the dryer, on the top bunk, in a closed box, etc.

Children should not chase the birds. If cornered and frightened, the bird may scratch and bite.

Never leave young children alone with a new pet.

Teach children appropriate play and petting. Provide safe toys for the bird and limit their access to dangerous items such as string.

Teach children to look for signals that show their pet is getting irritated or over-stimulated. A dilating and contracting pupils, shifting weight quickly between feet, or gentle nips can lead to being bitten. Always allow the bird to escape if he tries to fly. Never allow rough handling, as this teaches the bird that it is okay to be rough back! If the bird escapes and you must catch it, turn off all of the lights and grab an appropriate sized towel and throw the towel over the bird. Then grasp the bird's back and loosely hold the neck and put thumb and index finger on either side of the beak. The darkness will temporarily make the bird freeze since the eyes need time to adjust to the reduction in light. If done correctly the bird will not be able to bite you since you are limiting the neck and beak's range of motion. However, use this as a last resort- try to let the bird come to you.

KEEPING YOUR EXOTIC BIRD INDOORS

Keeping an exotic bird indoors is not cruel. You can keep your bird happy by scheduling regular playtime, giving them toys to peck at and puzzles to solve, and providing a stand outside of the cage when monitored. Consider harness-training your bird if you would like to take your bird for walks. While this can be done with patience, it is best to start harness-training early, knowing that your bird may or may not accept the harness.

Here are some of the hazards that await a bird that roams freely outdoors:

Becoming lost

Being stolen

Being killed by wildlife (even in the city!)

Having fights with other animals.

Being hit by a car

Getting infectious diseases, such as Avian Influenza

Getting fleas, ticks and worms

Being exposed to the elements

Neighbor complaints

Ingesting antifreeze or poisons

BITING

Some birds are gentle and give investigative bites, while others do not realize how hard they bite. However, birds can be taught to not bite and anything other than an investigative bite should not be accepted. If a bird bites during play, end the play and gently place the bird back into their cage. If a bird ever perches and refuses to get down, you can slowly lower yourself to the floor and roll until the bird steps off. Then you can use a perch to place the bird back into the cage. Always make sure to respect your birds' boundaries and if they are giving you the warning signs of a bite (dialating and contracting pupils and quickly shifting weight between feet) then back off and approach the cage later after the bird has calmed down.

PLAYING

When you play, be sure to avoid wrestling or roughhousing with your hand. This teaches the bird that it is all right to use claws and beak on you.

Avoid string, wool, curling ribbon (used for gift packages), or anything similar, as birds ingest these substances and can cause internal problems.

If you work all day, allow your pet to be with you in the evening. A brief play period and just being petted every evening will keep your bird happy. Longer play periods are also appreciated when you have a little extra time.

ON-GOING TRAINING

Birds love routine. They do the same things at the same time daily. Something as simple as closing the door to the room they routinely sleep in during the afternoon can cause a behavior change. Look out for these types of changes to your bird's routine when assessing a behavior problem.

The best training tools are patience and praising the desirable behavior. Never hit or physically reprimand your pet!

DISPELLING MYTHS ABOUT BIRDS

There are many popular misconceptions about birds. Here are some of the common ones:

My rooster hates me because he charges at me when I go into my chicken coop: FALSE. Your rooster might try to charge or bite at you or other animals for a variety of reasons. One reason could be that you need to spend more time with your rooster and try some basic training. If you are only going out to the coop to feed your birds or to pick them up, you are spending a limited amount of time with your rooster and this can lead to a limited relationship. Another reason could be that the rooster sees the coop and your hens as his territory and you are invading his territory.

Birds have wings, therefore they must want to fly outside: FALSE. Your bird can lead a perfectly fulfilling life indoors. If you do choose to take your bird outside, always use a harness or put your bird into its outdoor cage before going outside. Letting your bird explore your home outside of its cage, while actively supervising them, can also help with keeping your bird's mind active.

I enjoy a varied routine, so my bird will probably like the same: FALSE. Like most animals, birds love routines. Birds can be very sensitive to what may seem like a small change to you. A good example of this would be changing food bowls or a child moving out of the house once they are an adult. If you notice your bird plucking its own feathers, an increase in screeching, frantic attempts to escape the cage, or a noticeable change in your birds' typical behavior- these are signs that your bird is stressed. Talk to your veterinarian if your bird becomes stressed and mention any and all changes in routine, diet, or environment. Your bird will thrive in a predictable environment and can adapt to change as long it is a slow change. Providing your bird with a couple of toys (2 or 3) toys can also help to keep their stress low.

BIRD TERRITORIAL BEHAVIOR

Birds can sometimes become territorially aggressive. One thing that could cause the territorial aggression is when birds are laying eggs. Birds will make a nest and try to protect the eggs in it because they are trying to protect the potential life inside the egg. To help reduce territorial aggression, you can daily remove eggs. If this does not help, you should respect their space and speak with a veterinarian about other changes you can make to help your bird thrive in your home.

If your bird is not wanting to be handled, but you were previously able to handle your bird with ease- talk with a veterinarian to make sure that there are not any underlying health concerns.

CONCLUSION

Animals in our lives provide a blessing and an opportunity to share the world with another species. It is a responsibility to take seriously. "Working through" behavior and medical issues will deepen your relationship with your animals and provide a valuable lesson to children and adults that the bond is indeed one that will endure tough times and last for the lifetime of your pet. "Getting rid of" an animal because it does not meet expectations, has not been taught good manners or needs expensive medical care is a poor example of animal ownership.

When the match isn't right...

Sometimes a relationship is not successful. If you find yourself with an animal that does not adjust to your household, or is more than you can handle, you may decide to return it to Multnomah County Animal Services. If the animal is already surgically altered and you wish to place it yourself, please select the home with care. Please notify MCAS if you are placing your animal. Microchip and owner information will need to be altered in our database.

If the animal is still fertile, it must be surgically altered before it is placed. Otherwise you have an obligation to return the animal to MCAS with information about its behavior and medical history. Every attempt will be made to place it in another home that can meet its needs.

In some cases, an exchange will be offered to you for another animal. Depending on the reason for surrender, MCAS may place restrictions on the type of animals you select to prevent another poor match. For instance, if the cat you selected did not interact well with kids, it will be important that the next animal has a good history with children.

All of us at the Multnomah County Animal Shelter want to help you make the right pet choice and to keep the loving bond for the lifetime of the pet. Please give us a call with any questions you may

have. We are glad to assist. Thank you for choosing to provide a homeless animal with a wonderful life!

USEFUL LINKS

Avian Medical Center, www.avianmedicalcenter.net - only avian exclusive veterinary practice in the Portland area. They are located in Lake Oswego, OR

www.Behaviorworks.org – Information from Dr. Susan Friedman who specializes in parrot behavior. There is an enrichment booklet, which offers great toy making ideas.

www.911parrotalert.com –website to post lost and found parrots across the United States

Rose City Exotic Bird Club- exotic bird club in Portland, OR

Avian Welfare Coalition- <http://www.avianwelfare.org/welcome.htm> Great resource for avian welfare issues & laws