

Adoption Information – pledge to abide by BRS Inc. standard of care



Cost of Bird Care

The cost of caring for a bird surprises some people due to the fact that they were once marketed as a cheap and low maintenance pet. Costs for the following services and supplies should be considered when determining whether you can commit to caring for a bird:

- veterinary care – annual health checks are expected for all adoption birds
- quality housing
- enrichment
- grooming
- diet

Veterinary costs may be decreased through pro-active health care measures such as providing a nutritious diet and plenty of captive enrichment. We aim to re-home birds into a better life, not just a longer existence.

Inexpensive foraging devices can be created using safe items from around the home.

Veterinary Care

Not all veterinarians specialise in birds, so locating an avian veterinarian is important. Birds naturally mask signs of illness in order to survive in the wild. This is also true for birds in captivity. For example, species such as Budgerigars, Cockatoos, Lorikeets and Lovebirds are known to commonly carry PBFDV, a contagious viral disease that in some cases may only be detected by examination of a blood sample. For these reasons it is important to have your bird's health examined annually.

Time

Birds are social animals and enjoy daily interaction, companionship and routine. Some species form monogamous breeding pairs and spend most of their time in large flocks. Time should be dedicated each day to interacting with your bird. The result will be a mutually rewarding relationship that can last a lifetime (some birds can live for more than 100 years!). That said, be sure that you can commit to the lifespan of your bird and make arrangements for care in your absence. BRS Inc. offers a bequest program, so you can ensure your bird will be cared for if it outlives you. Bird Boarding provides a premium boarding service.

Diet

Birds require a varied diet that is rich in vitamins and minerals. Dry seed diets are high in fat, lack essential vitamins and minerals and have been proven to contribute to health and behavioural issues. Veterinarians have been pushing this issue for over forty years! Seeds should generally be offered as treats in conjunction with a diet of pellets, fresh

fruit and vegetables. Toxic foods such as avocado, chocolate and coffee should never be made available to a bird. Fresh, clean water should be made available to captive birds at all times.

Enrichment

Birds in the wild spend the majority of their daily lives solving problems, foraging for food, chewing on foliage, grooming and socialising with other animals. Birds in captivity also need daily mental and physical enrichment to avoid boredom and encourage learning. As the bird's caregiver you will need to supply the bird with a range of different sized perches (including natural branches), foliage and flowers (that double as enrichment items for chewing and climbing), captive foraging devices and non-toxic toys that are rotated regularly.

Environment

Harmful bacteria is usually found in unclean and unhygienic environments, therefore frequent cleaning is required to maintain a safe and healthy home for your bird. Some species, such as Sulphur-crested Cockatoos and Galahs, have powdery feathers that can distribute 'dust' around living areas very quickly, adding to your cleaning chores. Basic daily husbandry tasks include, but are not limited to;

- Changing cage paper linings;
- Cleaning food and water cups, toys and the cage itself with an avian friendly (non tissue toxic) cleaning product such as Vetafarm Avi-care and warm water;
- Replacing or cleaning soiled and damaged perches and toys; and
- Providing fresh branches, foliage and flowers.

Grooming

Grooming such as nail trimming and wing clipping may be required. These services should only be performed by an experienced handler within the avian veterinary profession. Performing these procedures yourself will damage the relationship between you and your bird. An inexperienced handler performing grooming procedures carries with it a range of potential risks and can result in death, serious injury or severe trauma.

Flight in birds is an adaptation evolved for a number of reasons, one of which is to escape from fear stimulus. Taking away this option (for example, through severe uni-lateral wing clipping) increases the chances of fear driven aggression that is rarely seen in the wild. BRS Inc. advocates light bi-lateral wing clipping in some cases. The aim of a wing clip of this description is to have the bird flying at approximately half the height and half the speed to avoid injury around the house.

Space

A suitable sized cage can take up a significant amount of space in your home. The size of a bird's cage should allow the bird to stretch its wings without any obstructions, contain at least 2 perches, 3 bowls for food and water and enrichment items such as toys, foraging devices/creations and foliage.

Noise

Vocalisation is natural and should be expected. Most birds have the ability to project loud calls, some of which are beautiful and others not so appreciated by human ears. These calls are not restricted to birds in the wild. Excessive vocalisation is unfortunately a common behavioural issue amongst birds in captivity. This can be avoided by educating yourself in positive behaviour modification techniques and captive foraging. Contact a behaviour professional if you are unsure.

Bird Re-homing Services Inc. standards of care

Bird Re-homing Services Inc. (BRS Inc.) takes adoption and re-homing very seriously. It is important to the organisation, the new caregiver and the bird that the correct process is followed.

BRS Inc. employs the following standards of care:

Health exam: Birds considered suitable for re-homing by BRS Inc. require a health examination and blood test for Chlamydiosis (psittacosis) performed by an avian veterinarian or through WBVC's Bird Care Program. The bird is medicated or euthanised, if required.

Formulated diet: The bird is converted to a formulated diet of Vetafarm pellets. It is expected that any caregiver will provide a formulated diet – in addition to fresh foods – for the duration of the bird's life.

Grooming: bathing, nail clipping, wing clipping corrections, collaring

Behaviour modification: addressing existing behaviour issues such as screaming, biting and feather destructive behaviour (common to surrendered birds) and ongoing behavioural assessment by professionals.

Enrichment: stimulating and non-toxic toys (tactile and visual enrichment), foraging and a variety of food including pellets, fruit, vegetables, nuts and seeds (as treats only) (dietary enrichment), interaction, scratches and cuddles! (social enrichment), exercise (supervised time away from their cage).

Your pledge (Terms and conditions)

Are you willing to continue to meet these standards of care?

Bird Re-homing Services Inc. reserves the right for first refusal (including in the event of desired release, selling, passing on and in the event of your death).

Sign **Date**

Overview of the bird re-homing process:

- Read BRS Inc. documents 'Adoption information – pledge to abide by BRS Inc. standards of care'.
- Read and sign BRS Inc. 'Your Pledge'
- Complete and return a BRS Inc. 'Adoption Application Form' and 'Your Pledge'
- BRS Inc. will make contact with you about the status of your application
- If your application is successful, BRS Inc. will arrange a time for you to meet the bird in a controlled environment
- **Adoption fee is charged;** cash or proof of electronic funds transfer accepted
- New caregiver takes bird to new home
- Communication is maintained between the new caregiver and BRS Inc.