

Truly Bored Bird, Now What?

Perk up a bored pet bird with music, foraging toys and more with these tips.

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Find something that will pique your pet bird's interest to avoid boredom.

We know that parrots are intelligent animals, so it certainly follows that they become bored with the same old thing. Maybe your bird seems droopy, and things that used to hold its interest have lost their spark. Your avian veterinarian checked your bird over thoroughly and is comfortable that no problems exist. So what now?

As always, a successful approach depends on the bird's personality. If the bird is skittish by nature, make incremental changes that won't unsettle it. Birds that are more self-confident can handle bigger changes without upset. The whole point is to pique your bird's interest and brighten its life, so think in terms of ways to achieve that.

- 1) Music is critical to my well-being, and parrots seem to feel the same way. A happy new CD played at parrot volume is a great way to rejuvenate things. Karaoke, after all, is an age old parrot tradition. My macaw is totally tone deaf but loves to sing. Trying to harmonizing with an off-key parrot never ceases to elicit a laugh from me, which just fuels Sam on more.
- 2) People enthusiastically bopping and grooving often inspires even the most sluggish parrot into some dancing activity, at least in terms of head bobbing.
- 3) Try a new pet bird cage location. Your parent may be bored with the same old view. (Make certain a new cage position provides a feeling of safety, with a partial solid wall and hiding place.)
- 4) If the cage site overlooks a window, you might place a new bird feeder outside to attract some free entertainment. Wild birds fascinate many companion birds as do fish tanks (with safely sealed lids to prevent accidental drowning). Small, inexpensive fish neighbors seem just as interesting to parrots as expensive salt-water counterparts.
- 5) New play areas around the house make life more attractive as well because your parrot can move from one to the next at different times of day. My macaw always wants to be at her window perch when kids pass the house on the way to and from school. Contrary to the latest books on child-rearing, she thinks that children should be yelled at.
- 6) Inexpensive things like a safe green branch stuck in a Christmas tree holder or a spring-loaded curtain rod put up in the shower stall provide new play areas, but won't damage your finances. In a recent discussion on the Amazona Society list, EB Cravens recommended play areas of ficus trees with additional green branches and vegetables for heightened interest. For medium-sized and smaller birds, hang a branch from chains and attach it to a plant hook. Put newspapers underneath, hang a few interesting toys and voila, you have a new play area.
- 7) The same old foods in the same old dish cause boredom in most of us. I offer my macaw a mixture of four different pellets and am interested to find she eats one to the exclusion of the others and then switches to another one for a while. This mimics the feeding of parrots in the wild, because they seem to eat something seasonally ripened to the exclusion of other things, moving on to something else when that season ends.
- 8) New toys items are also fun, and there is free/inexpensive stuff out there that parrots can enjoy, as long as you know where to look, are careful and use common sense.

My macaw loves to shred phone books stuffed through her cage bars or, after drilling a hole through one, hung from a heavy-duty parrot skewer.
Adding machine paper can be wonderful fun, and many birds love to decorate their cages with loops of white strips. pet bird travel carrier, you can take your pet bird to the park to watch you feed the pigeons. (For obvious reasons, don't allow contact between the wild birds and their droppings and your parrot.) Make the outing more interesting by packing a picnic of healthy snacks for you and your parrot.
- 10) The most important thing will be your attitude. We are creatures of habit, and we easily slip into familiar but boring patterns. If you brighten your outlook and climb up out of your old rut and into a new groove, your parrot will likely be happy to follow. By perking up your parrot's existence, I'm betting you will find the same thing happens to your life as well.