

## Prevent Lost Pet Birds

### Things you can do now to prevent your pet bird from getting lost.

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Courtesy David S. Feldman, New York  
Take steps to prevent a lost pet bird.

Losing a pet bird is a difficult, frustrating and emotional experience. There are precautions you can take now to prevent your bird from becoming lost.

**Step 1) Trim wing feathers & don't take birds outside unrestrained.**

Trimmed wing feathers will help keep your bird from gaining too much altitude and flying too far away. However, even if your bird's wing feathers are trimmed, there is still a chance that it can fly away or get caught in a wind draft (especially with gifted fliers such as cockatiels). Have an outside cage for your bird or put it in a harness and leash. Also, make sure you supervise your bird when it is outdoors. An unattended bird outside can unlock the birdcage latch or a thief can easily take it when you're not looking.

**Step 2) Bird-proof your home.**

Check screens on your doors and windows for any holes and rusted or weakened areas. Also, when you open a window, make sure that the screen is securely fastened to prevent it from popping open when you least expect it.

If you are having supervised free-flight time or out-of-cage time with your bird, hang a sign up on your door to let your friends and family know. A bird can easily fly out an open door or window in another room. You can print out your own copy of our "Flight in Progress" sign [here](#).

**Step 3) Keep current information about your pet bird.**

Keep information on your bird all together. If you have multiple birds, you might want to get a clear, plastic page holder or a folder for each bird in your flock. Having up-to-date information increases your chances of being reunited should your bird go missing. Keep all of the information in a place that you can easily access.

Information to include:

**Bird Profile:** Keep a profile of your bird's information and any medical conditions. Include a brief description of your bird's name, species, colors (mutation type, any significant color makings), physical (missing toe, scars), talking ability (phrases your bird regularly says), whether your bird's wing feathers are trimmed, and if it wears a leg band or has a microchip.

**Keep Current Pictures:** Take current pictures of your pet bird. They will prove useful in the event that your bird goes missing. While most proud pet owners regularly photograph their feathered friends, it is important to know what pictures will be most useful. Be sure to take photos that show your bird entirely, not just its face, and that will make your bird look unique and unmistakable on a flier. Make sure that the picture is clear and in focus.

**Leg Band Info:** The information on a leg band can be a big help in reuniting a lost bird with its owner again. Be sure to keep a record of the information listed on your pet bird's leg band.

**Microchip Your Bird:** A tiny microchip can be inserted into your pet bird. If your bird is lost or stolen, your bird can be identified by the information scanned. This can be helpful if your pet bird does not have a leg band. If you do microchip your bird, make sure that you:

1) Register your microchip.

2) Keep your information on the microchip up-to-date. It does not help to reunite with your pet bird if it has old contact information in the system.

In the event that your bird goes missing, check out our [Lost Bird Flier Tips](#) and create your own online. Check out our tips on what you can do now with our [Lost Bird Action Plan](#).