

BIRD TALK: Remembering Alex

This pioneering parrot gave us a new definition of intelligence

By Leigh Ann Hartsfield

I'm still unable to fully grasp the idea that our precious Alex has passed from this world. His death was so unexpected; there was no dreadful accident, no sickness, no exposure to dangerous fumes or materials; none of the things we all worry about in caring for our feathered companions. He was simply taken in his sleep on September 6, 2007 at 31 years of age. Those of us who held him so dear are still reeling from the shock of our loss.

Upon hearing of Alex's death from Dr. Irene Pepperberg, I remember my first conversation with my friend Arlene Levin-Rowe, manager of the Pepperberg Lab and Alex's devoted caretaker for the last several years. Through our tears, Arlene said, "How could this have happened? He was Alex; he was larger than life."

****For the full article, pick up the January 2008 issue of BIRD TALK magazine****

Did you like this excerpt? Subscribe now to read more like it.