

Birds USA: The Scoop On Poop

What's on the cage floor provides vital clues to your bird's health

Article & Photos by Lisa Paul, DVM

To recognize an abnormal bird dropping, be familiar with and understand what "normal" should look like. Birds eliminate waste from the kidneys and the intestines into one common chamber called the cloaca. This waste is then passed out of the cloaca through the vent and onto the cage floor as one or more droppings.

A normal bird dropping consists of three basic parts: feces, urine and urate. The fecal portion of the dropping results from the digestion of food and is usually tube shaped and green to brown in color. It may be curled upon itself or broken into one or more segments.

Diet determines the exact coloration of the feces, and artificial colors found in food and treats change the color even further. Birds eating more vegetables in their diet usually have a lighter green color to the feces, while birds eating more seeds have a brownish-green tint to the stool.

****For the full article, pick up the 2008 issue of Birds USA or click here to buy the issue.****