

14 Parrots Stolen In Colorado Springs

Owner hopes for the safe return of his stolen parrot family

By Jessica Pineda

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Images Courtesy David Ball

Batman, a Senegal parrot, was returned home to Ball.

Murphy, a blue-and-gold macaw was one of the parrots stolen on April 15, 2008 .

There was a break in the case of the 14 parrots stolen last week from David Ball in Colorado Springs, Color. A woman came forward to return Batman, the Senegal parrot, which was one of the birds stolen. Batman has a cut on his foot from where his band was removed and he is holding his left wing. He has lost some flight feathers and the skin is peeling off near his eye where it had been swollen. Ball said Batman is eating well and seems to be fine aside from the cuts and bruises, but he won't let Ball touch him. "I used to be able to scratch his neck but now every time I raise my hand, he backs away," Ball said.

Police are following the lead from the woman who returned Batman. She told police that someone was selling parrots on a street corner in Fountain, Colo., about 20 minutes away from Ball's home. The woman claimed she received Batman as a gift. Because of Batman's missing band, Ball believes the bands from all his birds have been removed, which will make them harder to identify.

On Tuesday April 15, 2008, Ball came home to find 14 of his flock missing. His back door had been torn off and feathers and seeds were strewn on the floor. His blue-and-gold macaw, three blue-fronted Amazons, a Congo African grey parrot, three sun conures, three nanday conures, a Goffin's cockatoo, a Senegal parrot and an umbrella cockatoo had all been stolen.

"They took my family," Ball said, voice broken with emotion. He immediately notified the police, the cargo director at the Colorado Springs Municipal Airport and hundreds of online bird communities, such as Parrot 911, an international database for lost or stolen birds. It was also posted on the BirdChannel.com Forum and in blog entries on the BirdChannel.com Bird eClub.

At This Place For The Birds, a bird store where Ball works part-time, a customer offered a \$1,000 reward for the return of the stolen parrots.

The thieves left behind his cockatiels, quaker parrots, a green-winged macaw suffering from kidney problems and Skeeter, a free-flighted bare-eyed cockatoo. Police believe the thieves knew Ball, either from Skeeter because of his pictures posted on the Internet or from the days when Ball bred cockatiels. [Click image to enlarge](#)

Images Courtesy David Ball

Brollie, an umbrella cockatoo, is believed to have been seeing in Fountain, Colo.

The youngest of Ball's sun conures is only 1 1/2 years old.

A \$1,000 reward has been offered for the safe return of Ball's stolen parrots.

Ball worries for the safety of the rest of his flock, which were all rescues. "Most came from an adopt-a-bird program or from bad homes or from people who no longer wanted their bird." Ball said. "One of my birds, my grey, was so badly abused by his previous owner that it will not go to people."

He also worries about his remaining parrot. "My green wing [macaw] Phi-Phi, is good friends with my blue-and-gold macaw, Murphy. Phi-Phi has kidney disease and feather-plucks. I'm worried he'll pluck more because his friend isn't around.

The loss of his friend also seems to be affecting Phi-Phi's diet. "Usually he eats an entire banana when I offer it to him; lately, he won't touch them," Ball said.

There was a report of a parrot on a roof in a town south of Colorado Springs and Ball believed it was his umbrella

cockatoo, Brollie, based on the description. He and a friend went to the town and searched. They didn't find Brollie, but Ball hasn't given up hope. Brollie has a bent beak, from being improperly hand-fed when he was a baby, so he is more easily identifiable.

To anyone who may have purchased the stolen birds, Ball asked that they come forward. "Talk to the police and tell them what happened." Ball, in the meantime, remains strong, hoping his family will return soon. His bare-eyed cockatoo, Skeeter, is singing for Brollie to come home.

Anyone with information should contact the Colorado Springs police department at 719-444-7000. To e-mail Ball, [click here](#).