Is Your Bird So Bored She Could Scream?

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In large birds, boredom is one of the leading causes of behavior problems such as biting, screaming, and especially feather picking. If your bird spends the day alone, you need to provide positive outlets for her energy. Emotionally, birds are like toddlers. They have short attention spans, tiring quickly of any activity. With nothing to do, they will find even self-destructive behavior to be satisfying. To optimize physical, mental, and emotional health, you need to engage regularly in activities to challenge, stimulate, and train your pet.

Physical Challenge

A sedentary bird is a bored bird. If possible, provide your bird a large cage. Finches and canaries especially need sufficient space for side-to-side flight. For members of the parrot family (psittacines), afford your bird time out and away from the cage, both to alleviate boredom and flex her muscles. An out-of-cage playstand, complete with ladders and toys, provides a secure station for your bird and an opportunity for self -diversion. Large birds can comfortably spend more time out of their cage equipped with a Flight Suit, designed to control droppings.

Intellectual Stimulation

Mental growth comes from doing and a variety of life experiences. Experiment to discover the types of toys your bird finds the most interesting and challenging. Keep in mind that no matter which toys you provide, and regardless of how intriguing, your bird will eventually tire of them. It is important to rotate them every few days.

Birds require a staple diet, but this does not mean you should serve exactly the same food day in and day out. Variety is critical to nutrition, and important to the satisfaction of your bird. To keep things interesting, you can select from a variety of high quality foods to satisfy her palate. Offering a variety of vegetables and fruits will also help. Your bird may enjoy working for her food. For instance, try feeding corn on the cob instead of just kernels.

From time to time, your parrot or other psittacine may appreciate a change of scenery, even if it comes by simply moving her cage about your house. Also, many birds and their cages travel quite easily. Consider taking her along on your next vacation or long weekend.

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Interacting with your bird is every bit as important as providing an interesting environment. The secret to keeping your bird happy is the frequency of attention, not the duration. A few minutes of attention every half hour or so works wonders.

Teaching brings you and your pet closer together. If you have a talking bird, a number of audios are available to build her vocabulary. Others provide song and speech examples to stimulate your bird.

Treatment and Prevention

Sometimes, stimulation alone won't resolve the boredom-induced problem. You can provide well for all of the basics - food, water, shelter, sleep, and social interaction - but undesirable behavior may persist. If so, your pet may be ill, or suffering anxiety, stress, or phobias. Under these conditions, we recommend that you consult with an avian veterinarian to identify and treat the problem. Ask your veterinarian if a preventive coat spray may help.

Contented birds will have good appetites, enjoy exercise, and be responsive to your attention. Bored birds will often show self-destructive and attention demanding behaviors. Pay attention to what your bird is telling you to avoid behavioral problems.

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