Beak Care

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

A bird's beak is used for many things - for climbing and playing, as a grooming tool, as a delicate way to feed a nestling.

A bird often uses its beak like another limb, providing critical mental stimulation to relieve boredom. The beak can also become a tool for defense. The main function of a beak, however, is for obtaining nutrition, which, obviously, is critical to health and survival. Because of the importance of this tool, it is imperative that you do all you can to ensure the good health of your bird's beak. Here are a few things you can and should provide for proper beak care:

Quality nutrition in a form appropriate for your bird's beak type. A g good foodis the foundation of a healthy beak, providing essential nutrients for growth and maintenance.

Beak conditioners such as Cuttlebones, Mineral Logs, and Mineral Treats. These chewing items contain essential minerals, like calcium, that help strengthen the keratin that makes up the beak.

Vitamin and mineral supplements containing calcium and Vitamin A to help strengthen the beak.

Big parrot owners, don't forget to get a sturdy cage for your feathered pet. Parrot owners we know have come home to a flimsy cage with snapped bars and the soldering (made of lead and zinc in some inexpensive cages) chewed off.

Perches with different textures, including those specifically made for beaks, like the Manu Mineral Perch, or one of our Nail and Beak Conditioning Perches.

Chewing toys
Any toy that a bird has to work at chewing will help keep his beak trim. These includebuild-your-own toys that you can make alternating mineral pieces with rope, wooden blocks, and plastic, as well as natural coconut toys, such as theNature Cluster. Remember, the more toys you provide for chewing, the more your bird will chew, and the less his chance of getting bored with the same one or two toys in his cage.

A beak is made from keratin, as are antlers in deer and fingernails in humans. And like antlers and fingernails, a bird's beak is

*Unauthorized use of any images, thumbnails, illustrations, descriptions, article content, or registered trademarks of **Foster & Smith, Inc.** is strictly prohibited under copyright law. Site content, including photography, descriptions, pricing, promotions, and availability are subject to change without notice. These restrictions are necessary in order to protect not only our copyrighted intellectual property, but also the health of pets, since articles or images that are altered or edited after download could result in misinformation that may harm companion animals, aquatic life, or native species.*

constantly growing. In fact, a bird's beak grows from one to three inches a year. If you suspect that your bird's beak is growing unevenly, see an avian veterinarian. This can indicate underlying problems such as liver or nutritional issues. Your avian veterinarian can determine the reason for the problem as well as trim the beak to prevent problems with eating or preening.

*Unauthorized use of any images, thumbnails, illustrations, descriptions, article content, or registered trademarks of **Foster & Smith, Inc.** is strictly prohibited under copyright law. Site content, including photography, descriptions, pricing, promotions, and availability are subject to change without notice. These restrictions are necessary in order to protect not only our copyrighted intellectual property, but also the health of pets, since articles or images that are altered or edited after download could result in misinformation that may harm companion animals, aquatic life, or native species.*