Protect Your Bird From Potential Holiday Hazards

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

Pet accidents increase dramatically during the holidays. If your pet bird spends time out of the cage, have a safe area in which he can play. Keep in mind that if your bird accidentally escapes from his cage during the holidays, there are more hazards than usual. We do not mean to spoil your fun with these cautions, but hope to keep your holidays safe and pleasant.

- Prevent exposure to electrical wires, which could cause dangerous burns or electrocution. Conceal them or use pet-proof covers. Otherwise, your bird may mistake them for a chew toy.
- Prevent access to holiday plants. Never allow your bird unsupervised access to poinsettia, holly, mistletoe, or other plants commonly used to decorate during the holidays.
- A decorated tree is a magnet for birds, but unfortunately has the potential for causing problems. Do not allow your bird to have access to the tree. Tinsel, flocking, and artificial snow can be dangerous. The tree may also be coated with potentially harmful fire retardant, fertilizer, or insecticide. Larger decorating lights can become hot and cause burns. Some decorations may have small pieces that could be broken off and swallowed, causing digestive problems.
- Many of the foods we set out during the holidays can be unhealthy or even toxic to birds, including chocolate, sugary cookies, salty snacks, and other favorites left out for nibbling and, of course, alcoholic drinks.
- Perfumes, potpourri, adhesives, glues, cleaning products, and of course, fumes from heated Teflon®, can all be toxic.
- Do not let your bird out of his cage when you have open flames in the house. Stoves, candles, and fireplaces always pose a serious threat.
- Do not tie ribbons on your pet or his cage, or leave them lying around. The inks and metals used in gift wraps and ornaments can be toxic. These items also pose chewing and entanglement risks.
- Discourage guests from bringing their dog or other pets into your home. If they do, understand that your pet and theirs are sure to be anxious. Keep them separated and do not relax your vigilance.

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We hope these tips help you and your bird
enjoy a happy, fun, and safe holiday season!

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