

W.A.E.S.

Wasatch Avian Education Society

June: 2018

### Summertime, and the living is breezy, or not!

With temperatures increasing in summer birds are feeling the heat. Do you know how to prevent or deal with **heat stress**? Most pet birds' comfort range is between 65 and 80 degrees Fahrenheit. They can withstand a much broader range, however, of 40 to 90 degrees Fahrenheit. The following very informative article can help us all be a bit more aware:



Whether or not your bird is more comfortable with temperatures on the lower or higher end of the range depends on a number of factors:

**Access to moving air.** If your bird has access to moving air, it can usually withstand a little more heat (often as high as 90 degrees Fahrenheit) than if the air is stagnant. Two ways you can provide air movement for your indoor bird is to place its cage next to an open window so that it can feel the breeze, or place a fan close to the cage. "This allows your bird to get air to cool its respiratory tract so that its core temperature doesn't rise," explains Larry Nemetz, an exotics-only veterinarian in California. If your birds are in outdoor pens, they may be able to handle heat up to the mid 90s, especially if there's good ventilation, and if the birds can fly to get the air moving.

**The bird's weight.** Another factor is the bird's weight. Very skinny birds have less "meat" on their bones to help them keep warm and may not be able to handle as chilly temperatures as a bird that's a little plumper. Overweight birds, on the other hand, are prone to overheating and do not function as well in very hot weather compared to lower weight birds. "The fatter the bird, the less ability it has to cope with heat and the lower the temperatures necessary to cause heat stress," says avian veterinarian Gregory Harrison. "Birds cool themselves down by breathing and expanding their air sacs and fluffing their feathers out, increasing the conduction of heat through skin and out through the feathers. Obese birds can't do this as well. The fat layer on their body acts as insulation and compresses the air sacs so they can't get any air in and out." If an obese, indoor parrot was suddenly put outside in 85 degrees Fahrenheit weather, that bird would probably suffer heat stress, Harrison says. However a lean parrot could probably stand 90 or 95 degrees Fahrenheit without any problems.

**The usual temperature in which they live.** A third factor is what environmental temperature the bird is used to. Birds can tolerate extreme cold or hot weather if they are allowed to gradually adjust, or acclimate, to it. "People who have outdoor jobs don't feel the heat or cold as harshly as those who are almost always indoors with furnaces or air conditioners.

#### Monthly Meeting

June 9, 2018

7:00 pm

#### Salt Lake County Complex

2001 S. State Street

Room N1100

(North Building)

Our meetings are free  
and open to the public.  
Come meet other parrot  
enthusiasts.

Refreshments & Raffle  
Table

Come see what our  
volunteer

Flock is all about.

## Calendar of Events

WAES offers monthly meetings the second Saturday of every month excluding August.

July WAES Meeting 7/14

Topic to be announced

## **WAES 2018 Board**

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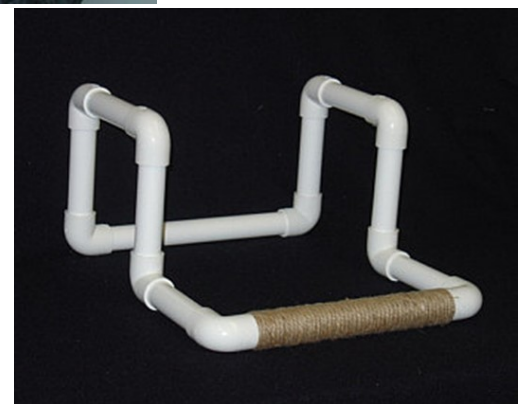
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cont.

Our birds can also adapt, and there are aviculturists with outdoor aviaries who report that their birds do just fine even when there is snow on the ground," notes Missouri veterinarian, Julie Burge, DVM.

**Geri Driggs, President, WAES**

**This Month's activity** - Making Birdie car seats. If you want to make one, please let Geri know by Thursday ([geridriggs@msn.com](mailto:geridriggs@msn.com)), so she can prepare the materials. Cost, depending on size (sm-med-lg) will be between \$7 and \$10 without feeding dish, the dish runs about \$5.



## **ADOPTIONS**

Four of our foster birds found new homes this month. They are Congo, a Congo African Grey; Kiwi, a Blue and Gold Macaw; and Sunny and Lola, a pair of Jenday Conures. **Congratulations to all!!**

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