

Squawk 'n Talk

Greetings from the Presidential Perch!

Our July 19th Meeting is our last meeting before our Annual All-American Hookbill Fair August 22nd. We traditionally spend the July meeting socializing and having a great time making toys for the Raffle at our Fair. We will have a multitude of toy parts and supplies and we need your talent and creativity to make them into raffle worthy and parrot enticing toys.

We had a great turnout at our last meeting and thoroughly enjoyed Dr. Patricia Anderson sharing her research and information about the "Human Avian Bond". We all know we love our birds and now we have a much better understanding about many aspects of our relationship with our own birds and to some extent our relationships with fellow "bird people". The video of her lecture will be posted to our site and to our FaceBook group soon.

The AFA Annual Conference, in Chicago July 30th, 31st, and August 1st is fast approaching. The list of speakers and their topics is posted at http://www.afabirds.org/convention_index.shtml

Please take the time to review the large variety of speakers and topics that will be a short 5 hour drive from here. You can decide to register for the entire convention or you can chose to attend a single day. The opportunity to expand your knowledge about birds and to meet people from all over is very seldom so close to home.

In addition to the speakers, there will be a Bird Show held at the Conference on Saturday August 1st. A number of bird species will be at this show including many that the majority of us have never seen. The most interesting bird I know will be at the Show is a Curl Crested Aracari, a member of the Toucan family. I saw my first one at the Show last year and I know there will be one or more there this year.

We try to offer topics of interest and education to you at our meetings each month but we cannot provide the wide range of knowledge that this opportunity can provide to you.

We are always in need of member Volunteers to help at the Fair on August 22nd. Plan to help – greet and assist our Vendors; at the Registration desk; fill in at the Membership area; help set up the Raffle; spend a bit of time helping serve Hot Dogs or Brats; plus other areas that interest you.

Janet Marks is our Volunteer Coordinator. Look for her at the Meeting July 19th.

Georgia

June 2015 AAV Bird Club News Release

Feather Loss: Cause and Treatment

Adapted from AAV Bird Care Brochure

Normal Feather Loss and Replacement—Molt

Molt is normal feather replacement. Feathers are normally replaced about once per year, a few feathers at a time, but never to the point where patches of bare skin are seen. It's normal to see a few feathers from time to time at the bottom of the cage. During molt of the larger wing and tail feathers, it may appear that there are more feathers lost than usual. Feathers must be replaced regularly for good health and function.

Abnormal Feather Loss

Abnormal loss can eventually result in the loss of enough feathers to reveal underlying down feathers and/or bare patches of skin. Abnormal loss of wing feathers in a flighted bird impairs the ability to fly. The following can cause abnormal loss:

Removal of feathers by other aggressive cage mates, or due to trauma.

Disease of the actual feathers, feather follicles and skin. In some cases, new ingrowing feathers emerge abnormally, fall out, or are pulled out.

Feather destructive behavior, such as shredding, clipping or removal of otherwise normal-appearing feathers.

Determination of the cause of this kind of feather loss can be difficult. While some cases may be truly linked to behavioral abnormalities, many are actually a result of an underlying medical problem. An examination and complete diagnostic work up are the first steps towards determining the cause.

Traumatic Feather Loss

Feathers may be removed by other birds or by household pets such as dogs or cats. Feathers can be caught in toys, cage doors or other objects and be lost as the bird struggles to free itself.

Feather Destructive Behavior from Diseases Not Directly Related to the Feathers

Unfortunately, in many cases, self-removal of feathers is due to causes that have nothing to do with the skin, feathers follicles or the feathers themselves. While the exact mechanism isn't certain, some diseases may result in discomfort or even pain. As pulling out a feather is actually painful to a bird, self-removal may mask other underlying pain or produce an abnormal response that isn't fully understood. Many experienced avian veterinarians report that correction of underlying disease conditions results in lessening or cessation of feather destructive behavior. While a great deal of research remains to be done on this topic, underlying diseases that have been anecdotally reported as linked to feather pulling include: exposure to toxins, chronic reproductive stimulus or reproductive disease, liver, kidney and heart disease, and others.

Behavioral Abnormalities

Some feather destructive behaviors may be due to boredom, poor socialization or anxiety. Proper housing, provision of toys and teaching birds to "forage" for food is important for any bird. A consultation with a qualified avian behaviorist may be beneficial.

Actual feather plucking may have behavioral origins as well. However, as pulling feathers out is actually painful to birds, this represents a serious behavioral abnormality. All attempts must be

made to rule out underlying medical disorders before diagnosing any bird with a strictly “behavioral” feather disorder.

Diseases Affecting the Feathers, Feather Follicles and Skin

Diseases of the feathers, follicles and skin themselves include: viral disease (polyomavirus and Psittacine Beak and Feather Disease), parasitic diseases (mites, lice), and bacterial or fungal diseases of the skin and/or feather follicles. Feathers may emerge abnormally and fall out or be removed by the bird. Parasitic, fungal or bacterial diseases may cause itching and result in feather removal.

Nutritional deficiencies may affect feather quality, and could lead to feather loss. Extreme malnutrition may result in inability to make new feathers. Old, tattered feathers are eventually lost and may not be replaced.

Birds may remove feathers that are contaminated with sticky substances that can't be removed during normal grooming. Some propose that tobacco smoke or other airborne pollutants may cling to feathers resulting in self- picking.

Long Term Feather Loss and Regrowth of Feathers

Feather pulling can result in permanent damage to feather follicles. In some cases, even if the causes of feather pulling is determined and corrected, damaged follicles may be incapable of growing new feathers. Therefore, some areas of bare skin may be permanent.

Prevention

The feathers are often a reflection of the general well being of the bird. As there are many causes of feather damaging behavior and feather loss in birds, including underlying illness, a thorough work up is important in order to formulate a treatment plan and attempt a cure.

Looking for an Avian Veterinarian Near You?

For help finding a qualified avian veterinarian in your area, go to www.aav.org and click “Find a Vet.”

Upcoming Events:

July 19 Toy making party

August 22 All-American Hookbill Fair

November 15 Nominations

December 13 Elections, Holiday Party

Not a member yet?

Download a membership application and bring it to our next meeting, or email it to Al Marks, our membership secretary membership@gatewayparrotclub.org .

Our new PayPal email address is payments@gatewayparrotclub.org

You can also now join and pay dues securely from our site: <http://gatewayparrotclub.org/join-now/>

Our Officers and Board members: <http://gatewayparrotclub.org/about-us/>

Welcome new members!

A special shout out to our new members, Doug and Kristen Smith, and Gayle and Terrie Taylor!

The Gateway Parrot Club, Inc. is a 501c3 not for profit organization based in St. Louis Missouri and established in 1988 to:

Bring people together in a friendly atmosphere in the interest of exchanging information on bird care and breeding.

Create interest in bird care and responsible breeding through monthly educational programs and annual bird fairs.

Reduce neglect, cruelty and abuse of captive birds through education and public outreach.

Educate the public, as well as ourselves, on the ever present danger of extinction in the wild.

Become a Member Now

Thanks for speaking, Patricia Anderson!

June's speech was about the human-avian bond. For those who missed it, it will be posted to our site and to FaceBook soon.

Check out our website!

Join our FaceBook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/GateWayParrotClub/>



Email Jessica at kmurray@kmurraycreative.com if you want to submit an article, send cute pics to post on the website or future newsletters, have a suggestion, etc!

June Attendees, Gateway Parrot Club:

Georgia Fletcher
Dick Grommet
David Kinkade
Al Marks
Nancy Marron
Renee Davis
Carole Grommet
Christine Kinkade
Janet Marks
Jane Mueller
Cindy Burquin
Scott Collier
Georgene Collier
Heidi Hellmuth
Linda Kraft
Jessica Murray
Sandy Newcomb
Penny O'Grady
Rick Ruderer
Cathy Timma
Gerry Van Der Heide
Deborah Van Der Heide
Pam Walsh
Sandy Warren
Hannah Welby
Tracy Schwartzrauber
Guests:
Patricia Anderson
Josh and Jessica Atkins
Jen and Brian Goetz
Steve Johnson
Travi Karpilow
Barbara Klink
Ralph Klink
Audra Lee
Dorene Olsen
Sue Rodgers
Mava Steele
Jennifer Szalkowski
Steve Worthington