

Small to Medium Parrot

African parrot species like Senegal small and medium-sized parrots are the best pet for anyone looking for an intelligent bird that loves to be out and playing with you as often as possible. They will become very attached to their owner and will give a great amount of joy with their charm and powerful personalities. Some of these parrots can be very vocal and should be kept where noise is not a problem. They can even learn to talk, and many will learn some very interesting sounds and whistles with little encouragement.

General Diet:

Small and medium-sized parrots eat many types of foods in the wild that can include seeds, nuts, fruits, vegetables, buds, flowers, and sometimes insects. It is important to feed them many types of foods in captivity. Good small to medium Parrot Mixes are available that include a mixture of seeds with dried vegetables, fruits, pasta, and pellets. Special pelleted diets for different parrot species are available as well. We will be glad to recommend the appropriate basic diet for your new pet bird.

Vitamins/Supplements:

Birds need a vitamin, mineral, and amino acid supplement added to their food everyday.

Extra Foods/Treats:

Parrots must be offered a variety of foods to stay healthy. Cooked and raw vegetables and fruit should be offered daily, along with their regular diet. These can include corn, peas, carrots, dark lettuces (no iceberg), all types of beans, apples, bananas, grapes, a little citrus and exotic fruit. Some cooked or raw pasta will be appreciated along with dark bread with peanut butter!

Basically anything good for you is good for them (just avoid avocado, asparagus, and anything sugary, salty, or greasy). So offer them lots of things! Sometimes new foods have to be offered for awhile before a bird will try them. Eating the food in front of them will also help! Treat mixes and stix are great to give to all parrots! Not only do they give extra nutrition but also the stix can keep a bird busy for hours! This is very important for a very intelligent creature like a parrot. Toys that you can put treats into and that the birds must work to get the treats out of are great for them as well.

Housing:

Parrots need a cage that they can flap their wings in easily and the bigger the cage the better for the bird. Parrots should be kept in cages that have thick metal bars to handle a parrot's incredible chewing ability. Luckily, there are many colors and styles to choose from and can be matched to the area that it will be placed. One feed cup and one water cup are basics with the cage along with perches and a tray on the bottom. Bird litter is best to use in the tray, and never use colored newspaper, cedar shavings, or corn cob bedding.

Sanitation/General Care:

Every day scrub out the water dish with a light dishwashing detergent and rinse well. Change their dry food everyday, and remove moist food more often as needed. The tray should be cleaned at least once a week or more often depending on cage size. Perches should be cleaned off (washed if plastic or made of a synthetic material, scraped if wooden) once a week or as needed. At least once a month, clean out the cage completely by washing the bars, base, tray, and all toys and accessories made of plastic or metal thoroughly.

General Maintenance:

Most parrots rarely need nail or beak trims, but owners should keep an eye on these just in case and have them trimmed as needed. Parrots can be offered special perches made out of a material that can help keep the nails short, and the bill is usually kept trimmed by the bird chewing on a beak conditioner and wooden objects. Wings need to be trimmed every 4-6 months or the bird will be able to fly. For bathing, lightly mist your pet with a plant mister only in the morning at least three times a week.

Health Care:

Parrots are generally very hardy and some of the smaller parrots can live up to 15 years, while the medium ones can live twice that long. They usually do not need any type of vaccines but should be checked by a veterinarian after your purchase and at any point as quickly as possible if they show any signs of illness such as lethargy, odd discharges, a change in their feces, or lack of appetite. Their cage should be kept in an area that is free from all drafts. Place the cage away from any vents, windows, or doors.

Special Section - Taming and Training to Talk:

Young parrots should always be handled quietly and gently at first, especially if they have not been hand-raised. (Hand-raised birds are very used to people and can be handled right away.) Young birds that are being tamed should have their wings trimmed (which is just like having your hair cut, it does not hurt at all). Then it is best to work with them in a small, quiet area. Keep them close to the floor, as they may try to fly away. When the bird is on the floor, push your hand slowly and gently against its lower chest. Once the bird is on, raise the hand and quietly talk to the bird. It may fly off a few times but be patient. (If the bird bites, use a perch instead of your hand at first.)

Once the bird seems quiet and comfortable, talk to your pet and let it get to know you. Use the bird's name frequently and repeat a word or short phrase over and over again for short periods of time (like 2-3 minutes) up to four times a day to teach your bird to talk. Realize that some birds may never learn to talk while others are very good talkers. It depends on the species and on the bird itself.

Supplies checklist:

Perches of at least three different diameters	Large wire cage
Vitamin/mineral/amino acid supplement	Food dish
Toys of many types and materials	Water dish
Beak conditioner	Treat dish
Books on Parrots	Bird litter

