



Angel Wings

A monthly journal for human angels who make a positive difference in companion birds' lives.

January 2013
Volume 8, Issue 1

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WELCOME

Theresa A. and Theresia B. from Indiana

HAPPY★NEW★YEAR

This issue of Angel Wings is dedicated to Shiloh, Caique

Angel Toys For Angels

January's Featured Toys



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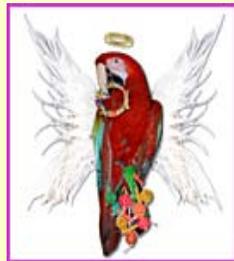
Fly free, little one

Small to Medium Birds

Check out all the [Angel Toys for Angels](#) now!

ANGEL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Watch for upcoming events, news, website updates, etc. [here](#)



NEW NEW

ON THE SITE:

- ♥ [Happy Flappers](#) ♥
- ♥ [Gift Certificates](#) ♥



Fall Auction Update:

Our Fall 2012 Auction was a great success!
 We raised much needed funds so we may
 continue doing what we do best...
 Making a difference...
 one bird at a time!

THANK YOU

A heartfelt thank you to all
our generous donators:

- 14 Karat Parrot
- Avian Advantage Central - Dee Hayston
- Avian Antics Boutique - Doug & Shelly Wing
- Best Birdy Toys - Steve & Joan Letter
- Birdie Road Creations - Heidy Clark
- Bridget Wagenbach

From the Angel's Toy Chest

By Wyspur Kallis



Perch Pacifier

This 4" diameter Perch Pacifier is a great way to entertain your parrot. This toy is a 3" wrapped paper bagel with lots of plastic and wood toys to play with. Just slide a perch through this toy and let the fun begin. This toy is suitable for conures, caiques, small cockatoos and macaws. The Perch Pacifier also comes in a 3" size for smaller birds. This toy and others are available for sale at <http://www.parrottoyangels.com>



Chopper's Toys - Claudia & Chopper
Diane McKinney - sculysmom
Einstein & Marcia Kwargsick
Frogblossoms - Linda
Gail Armstrong
Grey Parrot Studios
Ilona Peterson
Kristie Rodgers
Lori & Bob Nelsen
Make Your Own Bird Toys - Deb White
Mary Ann Tremmel
Meryl Sheridan
Nature Chest Bird Shop - Debra Morgan
Owls and Friends - Paula Fitzsimmons
Parroteelia Bird Toys - Delta Holder
Phoenix Foraging Rolls, LLC - Lucy Towbin
Rhonda Heflin
Rockport Roost - Deryl & Elke Davis
Rothby's for the Birds - Laurie
'Sana Emberg
Toni Fortin
Verna & Peter Lucey
Vicki Hartsfield
Wyspur Kallis

To all those that bid...we appreciate your support!



A heartfelt THANK YOU goes out to the
Central Indiana Cage-Bird Club
for their very generous donation!
We appreciate your support!

Central Indiana Cage-Bird Club



Calling All Writers!!

Have you ever wanted to see your Bird's name in "lights"?...Do you have a story to tell about how you and your bird met?

Over the years you have read our stories, seen our photos, looked at our toys and how we make them, hopefully shared some of our recipes with your feathered children. You have gotten to know us, well; we'd like to get to know you too.

Do you have a story to share?? Do you have a super easy toy you'd like to share instructions for? A recycled toy idea? How about your birdie's favorite recipe? A cute story? A sad story? We'd love to run it in an upcoming edition of Angel Wings. Please submit it to: editor@parrottoyangels.org.. (By submitting your article(s) you agree to allow the Angel Wings Committee to make any editorial changes deemed necessary.)



Rikki Sez

Rikki will try and answer frequently asked questions here.



Quinoa Pilaf Birdie Style
By Toni Fortin

While you're in the kitchen preparing your holiday meal for you and your guests, don't forget about your fids. This can be whipped up in a few minutes minus cooking time.

- 1/3 cup quinoa
- 1/3 cup Barley
- 1/3 cup Millet
- 2 cups of water
- 1/3 cup slivered almonds
- 1 cup of garbanzos, soaked, skimmed and cooked
- 1 cup chopped broccoli
- 1/2 cup cranberries (fresh or frozen)
- Sprinkle of chia seeds

Place all grains and almonds in a medium sauce pan sprayed with cooking oil. Lightly toast everything. Pour in the water. When all comes to a boil, turn to low and simmer for 15 minutes with a lid on the pot. When finished, let sit for 10 - 15 minutes. Then fluff with a fork adding garbanzos, chia seeds, broccoli and cranberries.



*Bird Cages Galore
Affordable Quality*

Why buy a Bird Cage from Bird Cages Galore?? Because we do not "just sell" top quality cages at reasonable prices, provide free shipping and a free toy with each cage; we offer first rate customer service and will answer your



Rikki, I got scared recently when all covered up for the night. I yelled out and Mum came running. She uncovered me to see what the commotion was about and took me out of the cage. She never does that at night. I really liked that. Now I yell frequently at night to see if she will do it again, but so far she won't come. Dad is getting really angry at me and yelling at me to stop. I hear Mum telling him to ignore me.... what's with that??? I don't want to be ignored.

Signed, Scared

Dear Scared, Your mommy and daddy really love you, but you have to understand they are older, and need sleep. If they don't get enough sleep, they get cranky and forgetful. And if they get too forgetful, they might forget to do something really important, like give you your morning scratches! One time, I kept my mommy up for 3 nights in a row and she forgot my morning millet spray, and I had to really scream till she finally remembered! They also probably have to go to 'work' so they can get you good food, treats and toys, and if they don't get to sleep, they could forget ALL that! So it's best not to keep them up late at night, huh? If you are really scared, it's okay, mom will understand. But no faking it, okay?



Rikki, My mom is always looking at my poop when she cleans out my cage, feeds, or plays with us. She says it's important because she can tell if we are sick or not. Is that true?

Signed, Ohio Birdies

Dear Ohio, You might not realize it, but you have an extra way of communicating with your mom. Sometimes moms are so hard to get through to, we have to use 'poop signals' to let them know we are not well. When you aren't

questions about most bird-related matters. Visit us on the web, browse our selection, join our discussion forum and sign up for our free Newsletter, [The Caged Bird Courier](#).

We are here to help, because we care about your bird!!



feeling well, your poop might look different. It might be runnier than normal, or a different color, or even smell funny! A lot of moms are real 'Poop Professors' and can tell when it's just not right, which can help them to know when we are not feeling well. So, when mom is scooping out your droppings, just remember you are furthering communication between you, and let her have her fun. :) I usually try to help as much as I can by leaving her samples in as many places as I can!



Do you have a question for Rikki?
Please send it to The Editor at
editor@parrottoyangels.org



Leave it to Gromit
By 'Sana Emberg

Many years ago, we got our first Cockatiel, who we named Gromit (after the Wallace and Gromit cartoons). Gromit was hand raised practically from day one, since his mother booted him out of the nest and wouldn't take him back. We fell in love with him from the first time we saw him, and went back several times to see him before we had a cage and everything set up to take him home. We'd been prepared to have to 'tame' our first bird, but Grommy came home already sweet as pie, and quite a character. It only took a few days, and he'd won over everyone who met him.

Three months after we got him, my sister called and told me they had birds 'just like yours' at the pet store for \$20. I didn't believe her, because we'd paid quite a bit more than that for ours, so I had to go see. Sure enough, they had two big beautiful females in a cage, and the sign said \$19.99 each. We'd already talked about getting another one, so I decided to take one of the girls home.

We named the new bird Kali, and she had been completely parent raised and never handled by people. That much was obvious. She was so different from Gromit. She wouldn't let anyone near her, would bite if she could reach any part of you, and would move as far away from you as possible when you had to change her food or water.

We kept her in our bedroom, away from Grommy, and did all the things we'd read about to try and tame her, but she was having none of that! After 6 weeks, we were seriously frustrated, and so was Gromit, because he knew we had another bird, he'd heard her, and he wanted to see her. One day, when I was in working with her, I hadn't completely latched the door, and suddenly I heard the sound of wings flying in the room. Plop! Gromit lands on my shoulder, takes one look at the female in the cage, and hops on top of the cage.

She looked at him. He looked at her. She chattered and squeaked at him. He squeaked and chattered at her. Back and forth they went for a few moments, and suddenly Kali marched to the open door of the cage and looked at me. Gromit hopped onto my shoulder and chattered at Kali some more. Kali looked at him, squeaked and hopped onto my arm, climbed up it, and sat quietly on the opposite shoulder. Needless to say, I

was speechless!

The three of us sat in the bedroom for an hour or so, and Kali never bit me once, nor shied away in any way. She watched as Gromit bent his head for scratches, and while she didn't quite want to go that far, she did step up for me a few times.

We tell everyone, we didn't tame Kali, Gromit did! From that day on, we never had a problem with Kali, and she got to be quite a cuddly little lady. In later years, she and Gromit had a couple of clutches of totally adorable babies, which we co-parented (meaning we let the parents feed them but we handled them early and often, so they got the best of both worlds) and Kali was a wonderful mom, as well.

Kali passed away a couple of years ago, but Gromit, who turned 13 this year is still with us, and is still a character. He loves everyone, but especially anyone female, and will fly to their shoulder, lean over and give them kisses. If they will offer him a finger to perch on in front of their face, he will sing and sing and sing to them!

Anytime we've added a new cockatiel, Gromit is always the one to show them around the 'tiel room, offer them a favorite foot toy and make sure they eat their veggies and wheat grass. We call him our 'Cockatiel Ambassador. ;-)



We'd love to run your "Favorite Bird Story". Send it to us at editor@parrottoyangels.org

Toys in the New Year

By Kim Perez

Are you thinking about a resolution for your bird's new year? How about a resolution to keep your bird "in toys" for the year? When I picked up a rescue African Grey on Labor Day, I was truly disappointed to see the so-called toys hanging in his cage. There were at least two dozen toy remains hanging there and the only perch he had was where all of the chains were hanging, so he couldn't even walk across the cage without dozens of chains hitting him on the head and back. I removed all of the dead toys and allowed him a couple of days to walk without obstructions just to see if there was a place he liked to hang out before I put something back in there for him. Turns out, they had been blocking him for so long that he didn't know what to do with the space and freedom!

Don't let this happen to your bird.

Tough Toenails

By Angel Savannah

People always ask me where I got the scars on my arms and hands from! I have worked 4 years in a no-kill shelter where I cared for 300 cats, and did receive some scratches from them, but my scars are from our birds. Baby birds are the worst offenders, as their nails are thin and razor sharp. We try not to clip any nails until birds gain a little self-confidence. When you clip them too soon, the bird doesn't get a good grip on something, and they can become frightened of it and even develop phobias.

Once a bird develops a sense of confidence in climbing on different branches, perches, and toys, we begin to introduce pedicure perches. Most pedicure perches do a reasonable job of keeping nail tips rounded and save our skin! The only way that a pedicure perch will work is if you get the proper size. The proper size for your bird might seem way too big to you, but it needs to be large enough in diameter that when the bird sits on it, their nails will touch at the 3:00 and 9:00 positions. If their nails wrap further around the perch, they will not adequately rub on the perch to trim them.

The first thing you should do is take inventory of what is already hanging in your bird's cage. Is everything in there in good, playable condition? If not, get it out of there. Think about where your bird likes to hang out in the cage and hang toys nearby so he can play with them, but not so that they block his path to get there.

Buy the toys that your bird likes the best. Don't just buy toys that last forever. As many of you know, if the toy lasts for a long time, it's because your bird doesn't like it. The ones they chew up the fastest are usually the toys they like the best.

When you hang a toy, don't hang it directly above a perch, but rather hang it a couple of inches in front of or behind the perch. They need the room to walk across the perch without getting struck by a toy. They will lean forward to play with a toy if they like it.

Take an inventory of your bird's perches, as well. If you have any rope perches, please assess their condition and trim any frayed threads.

Your resolution to keep your bird in toys should include maintaining their safety. I quickly scan my birds' toys daily when I feed and water them, and once a week I scrutinize every toy and its condition. I do not use any toys with sisal rope anymore, as I had a sisal perch fray, a cockatiel wrapped her leg in it and it amputated her leg. It was amazing to me that this could happen within a few hours, and I won't take chances again with this type of rope, although it is deemed as a bird safe item. The lesson from this is that you must know your bird. If your bird fixates on frayed rope and won't leave it alone, I wouldn't use it.

Check everything on the new toys you hang in your bird's cage - length of exposed rope or chain,

This does not always work with older birds. If they have very sharp nails and they are no longer babies, you should trim their nails first and then give them pedicure perches to keep them rounded. To trim their nails, you can use a nail file or emery board, Dremel tool, or nail clippers. Always have Qwik-Stop or other blood coagulant on hand before beginning. Be careful not to cut too short, as their nails have a quick (blood supply) in them and if you cut too short, their nails will bleed. Pack them with Qwik-Stop and they should immediately stop bleeding, and be more careful on subsequent nails.

When choosing a pedicure perch, I have found that the smooth ones work very well and they do not subject your birds to unnecessary foot calluses or sores like bumpy ones can cause. You should also have natural branches in a variety of diameters. In the natural branches, I don't use a lot of hard woods, as these offer no pedicure properties. Cholla wood (a type of cactus) is nice for them, too, and I have some which have been packed with a calcium mixture which helps with their nails and beaks, and is good for them to chew on as well.

If you find that your bird still has sharp nails, I like to make a game of filing them. My birds will lie in my lap and I can give them one file to play with while I file their nails with another. If your bird does not cooperate as well as mine, you can do this while they are in their cage. When they come hang on the bars of the cage, you can usually sneak over to them and file a couple quickly. Simply grab a toenail that is wrapped around a cage bar and file it a little. Make a game of it and they will not be bothered by it.

There are other types of pedicure perches - many types of them. Besides the bumpy ones (I met a military macaw with bloody, scabby feet from sitting on one of these), I have seen product complaints about heated perches. Just the concept of a heated perch is enough to tell me that I wouldn't get one for my birds because of what I see as a risk. I have seen photos of these perches that birds have literally chewed up. This is not safe for your bird.

I see a lot of birds in cages with PVC perches. These are okay if they are textured. And yes, only okay. Other than the fact the bird cannot chew the perch at all, there is little benefit from this type of perch. There is a company who makes these nice PVC light weight perches and then coats them with sand. These are a wonderful, high quality pedicure perch. The

whether any O-Rings are fully closed, the hardware is all safe, lengths of cloth won't wrap around the bird's neck, no frays, and if you are concerned, no foam, hard plastic, rubber, brass or bleached cotton rope.

If you have any toy safety questions or safety topics you'd like us to address, please submit them to: editor@parrottoyangels.org



company I am thinking of makes a corner PVC perch, and swings as well. They also have a line of sand covered Manzanita perches. All of their products are excellent and I use them with all of my birds.

On a side note, if your bird's nails require trimming and you are not comfortable with that, take the bird to someone who is. Birds can sense when you are nervous. They know when you take them to someone who is comfortable providing the service and this will make them more comfortable with the process.

**This article originally ran in the June, 2010 issue of Angel Wings



Help Us Help the Birds...

Our Angels generously donate their time making toys for our needy feathered friends. Quality toy-making supplies are expensive and shipping charges are outrageous. That's why we need your support to help keep us going. Every dollar amount, large or small, is gratefully accepted. Donations are tax deductible.

We also welcome donations of toymaking parts and supplies. A receipt will be issued for every donation. Contact us at [Parrot Toy Info](#) for further information on donating.

Donate



All donations tax deductible.



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While PTA at all times tries to ensure any information provided in this newsletter is accurate, all articles are submitted by volunteers, and we are not avian professionals and make no claim as to the suitability of featured products, food, or toys for your particular bird. PTA strongly recommends that you ensure that all toys are safe, that you make sure your bird is fed a well balanced diet, and that you always provide continuing medical care through your avian vet.

Do you have a question or comment? Perhaps you have an idea for our newsletter, or simply want to share a story on how an Angel has touched your life. Drop us a line at: editor@parrottoyangels.org



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