



# Angel Wings

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

October 2012  
Volume 7, Issue X

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## Angel Toys For Angels

### October's Featured Toys



[Scary Wiffles](#)  
Small Birds



[Halloween Beads](#)  
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[Halloween Foragers](#)  
Small to Medium Birds

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

### ANGEL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Watch for upcoming events, news, website updates, etc. here

### WE'RE BAAAAAAAACK !!!

Fall 2012 Auction is Coming 11/8/12



NEW NEW

ON THE SITE:

♥ [New Items](#) ♥



Pumpkin Logs  
By Toni Fortin

1 cup Garbonzo beans (chick peas) soaked, skimmed and cooked \*\*  
1/2 cup old fashioned Quaker oats  
1 egg  
1 tsp. agave nectar  
1/2 tsp. cinnamon  
1/4 tsp. nutmeg  
1/2 cup pecans, finely chopped

Using a food processor, add everything except the pecans. Put pecans in a small bowl.

Pulse until you have a thick paste. With wet hands roll into a ball the size of a large walnut. Then into a log 3/4" thick by 3" long. Roll in the pecans. Place on cookie sheet lightly sprayed with cooking oil. Bake at 325 for 25 minutes.

Yield: 15 logs

\*\* 1 lb. of dry garbonzo beans, soaked, foam removed and cooked will yield 6 cups of beans. When drained and cooled, put into 1 cup bags and freeze. Take them out to go into recipes for cookies, mash and breads.

And we hope you will be by our side again.

The year has been difficult for many families, furry friends, and feathered friends...and for us Angels.

Parrot Toy Angels has stepped up again this year to help provide toys, food and other necessities to not just our "Angel Projects", but also for some heart-wrenching "emergency situations" that arose. Your generosity and support made it possible.

Our auctions are the only fundraisers we hold. The generous donations and bids allow us to provide the endless necessities, buy supplies, make toys, and pay for shipping. The requests that come in for help are many, not being able to help them all and having to choose is pure agony.

Donations have been arriving and, again, this year's Fall Auction promises to have something special for everyone. We hope to have gift baskets, gift totes and buckets, bird toys and toy making supplies, jewelry, clothing, artwork and lots of unique surprises. Our goal is that you'll find gifts for yourself, your family, and of course, your feathered friends of all sizes.

If you have a business, a store, have a talent, do crafts...we will gratefully include your items in our auction. If not, please consider donating gift certificates and gift cards. These are items everyone likes. Some of the hits from previous auctions include any bird-related items, bird supplies & toy making supplies, gift baskets of all kinds, all animal-related items, retail gift certificates and gift cards, jewelry, art, household and holiday items.

It's through your support and that of our volunteers that we are able to do what we do for so many birds and make a difference in so many bird's lives. If you'd like to make a donation, please contact us at: [donations@parrottoyangels.org](mailto:donations@parrottoyangels.org).



All donations are tax deductible.



## Metal Toxicity in Parrots

By Leigh Anne Stewart

Parrots are curious creatures and will often play with and lick most things that they come into contact with. This includes toys, cage bars, and shiny metal objects. Certain metal substances can be very toxic to a parrot and can cause acute illness and may even cause death.

Diligence is the key to preventing metal toxicity in your parrot. The cage is best if it is powder coated. Use stainless steel bowls, and be sure the metal toys are made of stainless steel. Be sure that any metal, except stainless steel, is kept out of your parrots reach.

### Symptoms of metal toxicity

If the parrot has consumed metals, you may notice some of the symptoms below:

- Weakness
- Listlessness
- Vomiting
- Lack of activity

### Diagnosing the problem

If you fear your parrot has ingested any type of metal, the vet will generally do an x-ray. X-rays will show metals in the gizzard. The vet may also do blood tests for metal toxicity. The most common types of metal poisoning are copper, iron and sometimes lead.

### Varying treatments for metal toxicity

- Fluid therapy that flushes toxins from the body
- Antibiotics to prevent infection
- Surgery to remove metals from gizzard
- Metal chelating agent

### Common household metals

- Electrical leads
- Fishing sinkers
- Solder
- Bullets
- Children's metal toys
- New and old batteries
- Light bulb bases
- Costume Jewelry

### On a personal note:

I had a green wing macaw named Buster. I had adopted Buster and within 30 days Buster became very ill. I took him to the avian vet immediately and the vet concluded that it was an infection, and medications were given. Ten more days went by and Buster

was becoming even more ill. Back to the vet we went, and at that time the vet did an x-ray on Buster's gizzard where it was discovered that there were several pieces of embedded metal. The vet then came to the conclusion that surgery was needed.

Buster was very weak from metal toxicity so much so that surgery was a huge risk. At this time it was life or death for my parrot. I had to make a choice, and it was one of the hardest choices I have ever made. I opted for Buster to have the surgery done knowing the risks involved. Buster was admitted to the clinic for the surgery and I went home waiting for word from the vet after the surgery.

The vet called me to tell me that Buster had died just a few minutes after surgery started, he asked to do a necropsy (equal to an autopsy), through my grief and tears, I agreed. I then got myself together enough to drive to the vet hospital, which was 20 minutes away. When I got there the vet took me into an exam room, he had Buster wrapped up in a towel where I could see his face, and the vet handed him to me. The vet then showed me the metal pellets that Buster ingested. There were 3 of them, and they didn't look familiar to me. I will never know what they were. I have suffered guilt knowing that I could have done more to prevent this from happening. Buster's death was not in vain, I try to educate parrot owners on the seriousness of metal toxicity and how to prevent it from happening to their beloved parrot. I have researched the topic extensively and there are a lot of variables involved. Surgery is the last course of action because anesthetic can be dangerous to parrots for long periods of time.

I will miss Buster and his cute personality for the rest of my life. I will continue to educate parrot owners. Losing a parrot is one of the hardest things that we go through, no matter how long we have owned the bird.

See you at the rainbow bridge Buster, Mommy still and will always love you!



### Halloween Safety Tips

By Nancy Goulding



I don't know about you, but Halloween is not one of my favorite days any more. Now don't get me wrong. I love the costumes, the candy, the kids, but what it does to my birds and other critters is enough to make me want to pull my hair

### BIRDIE STOCKINGS



TIRED of sad little faces glancing at the mantle? Little eyes wondering "Where oh where will Santa Birdie leave my presents?"

out. I have tried to put together a helpful list of things that might help make the few hours of goblins and creatures invading the street and doorways easier.

- ♥ Don't let the birds get into the chocolate! Make sure that candy is secure and away from mischievous birds and other critters.
- ♥ Don't let your bird fly out an open door!
- ♥ Shield your bird from the frantic door ringing and scary costumes.
- ♥ Try to cut off trick or treating at a reasonable time so as to keep your bird on a normal schedule.
- ♥ If you have birds that are able to look out the window, close the curtain or blinds so the flashlights and Jack-O-Lanterns don't scare them.
- ♥ Keep birds away from candle flames. (Note: PTA does not advocate the use of candles around birds).
- ♥ Keep paper decorations away from your birds. Some contain unsafe dyes or strings that birds can get tangled in.
- ♥ Use common sense when it comes to your bird. It is only one day a year. Maybe it would be best to cage them for a few hours. When it's over take them out. Give them an extra birdie treat and scratch.

After all, it "is" Halloween and we all could use a treat!

Reprint from October, 2008 Angel Wings



Sequoia, 'Zon who owns Angel Toni



" Light up those faces now with our [Birdie Stockings](#)

"Stuffed" Stockings also available. Each stocking will have 20+ footers included. Ready to hang! Personalization is also available.

Please allow 2 weeks plus shipping time to custom make your stocking. Not only will your feathers love their own...but they make great gifts for any occasion.

[Order Now](#)

Personalized: \$24.00

Non-Personalized: \$20.00

Stuffed & Personalized: \$39.50

You can find all our Birdie Stockings at: [Stockings](#) or, drop us a line if you don't see your birdie.



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 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!!



## Featured Fid ~ Grey-Cheeked Parakeet

By Steve Letter



Shakti, 5 year old Grey Cheek  
Photo Courtesy of Martin Berson, Shakti's Caretaker

The Grey-Cheeked Parakeet,  *Brotogeris pyrrhoptera*, is the original Pocket Parrot. Also known as the Fire-Winged Parakeet, the Orange Flanked Parakeet or the Orange Winged Parakeet, these birds were imported in large numbers from the early 1970's through the fall of 1992 when import was halted due to the CITES treaty.

These birds were often sold as "Naturally tame" but natives of Peru and Ecuador would take babies from the nest, hand feed and tame them, then ship them to the U.S. They were so plentiful, one could buy one for as little as \$25. Because of their price, availability and sweetness, they were the third most popular bird to own after cockatiels and budgies (the common parakeet). Unfortunately, because they were so plentiful and cheap, few attempted to breed them in the U.S. When importation stopped and the demand for these birds continued, many did try but found them very difficult to breed. At this time there are very few breeders in the U.S. and these birds typically go for \$1000 or more.

They weigh around 65 grams, are 8 inches in length. The top of their heads are blue, their cheeks are grey, their backs are iridescent green and their underwings are orange. Their beaks are spotted when young but horn colored as adults. The males and females are not sexually dimorphic, requiring DNA or surgical sexing to tell them apart. They live an average of 15 years, some up to 20.

They are listed as endangered. Most are now kept as pets, even in their native lands. Many feel they are on a fast path to extinction due to loss of habitat, formerly international trade (primarily to the U.S.) and continued pressure for local trade. They are highly valued as pets (and have been) by the local population.

They live in semi-arid scrub lands and old growth forests. They build nests in termite mounds, decaying trees, or in tree hollows. They line their nests with moss and raise an average of 5 chicks in one season. In this country they have been bred in California as early as 1931, but due to the abundance of imports, breeding ceased during the 1960's and did not resume until the import ban was enacted. Currently there is only one significant breeder in the U.S., Luana Feigelstock in Manhattan Beach, CA.

Like most parrots they need a varied diet consisting of a quality seed mix, fresh fruit and vegetables (apples, oranges, papaya, mango, figs, berries, grapes, carrots, peas, sweet potatoes, etc.), and a good pelleted food. Fresh water daily, both to drink and to bathe are important.



## Halloween Toy Safety

By Kim Perez

One of the fun parts of Halloween for

Rikki Sez

Rikki will try and answer frequently asked

the kids - and the birds - is the snacking that goes along with it! Of course, you know that chocolate and other candies are inappropriate treats for your birds and can in fact be deadly. But what about popcorn? Many people make popcorn balls for their treats. You can use popcorn to stuff inside of bird toy parts. It fits into finger traps, whiffle balls and other stuffable objects. You can also use assorted nuts or dried fruits and vegetables in the same way.

An interesting toy fixture that you can use is the bird skewer. This is not to skewer the birds, but to use as a shish-kabob tool onto which you put foods that your bird likes. This will allow you to give your birds many good fresh foods with them believing you are giving them treats, not the healthy stuff. Mine like chunks of broccoli, carrots, sugar snap peas, pieces of melon and pieces of squash. This toy is definitely a great treat toy for the entire year, and you can be quite creative with what you string from it. You can even string toy parts from it, to change up what is hanging in your bird's cage.

One of the great finds during this season is Halloween shaped plastic toys at some of the local dollar stores. You can usually find some pumpkin shapes, ghosts, black cats and more in little treat buckets and other decorations that could be used as foraging toys or other toy parts. And the day after Halloween, you may even be able to get all of these great finds for half price!

A toy part easily found this time of year would be corn husks. There is something about the texture of dried husks that entice birds to chew on them. They can be added to most toys and you can wrap other toy parts inside of them to give your bird a little surprise when he is chewing through the husks.

While you are making your birds some holiday themed toys, don't forget to look over your bird's other toys and check for frayed ropes, sharp pieces or exposed lengths of chain or rope and anything else that might present a safety hazard. Replace or restring toys as you see

questions here.



Rikki, Could you please tell my dad that I love pumpkin seeds. I tried to tell him but he doesn't understand what I am trying to say. Pumpkin seeds are as good as cantaloupe seeds....I just love them. Do you eat pumpkin seeds? I love cooked pumpkin too. Do you have any good recipes to share with my dad?

Signed,  
Loving my treats in Arkansas

Dear Loving my treats, I'll be glad to tell your dad. Pumpkin seeds and cantaloupe seeds are good for us in moderation. We can eat them raw or dried. I just love pumpkin pulp. They say it is packed full of good vitamins for us. Tell your Dad to read Parrot Toy Angels Newsletter for some yummy recipes. This month they have Pumpkin Sticks. I hear they are the bomb. Can't wait to try one myself.



Rikki, I was playing with my favorite toy and my toe nail got caught in one of the rope strands. Mom saw that I was stuck and struggling to get my toe out. It was freaking me out. She cut the strands of rope and released my toe. I was so glad mom was home from work that day. Now I'm afraid to play with toys like that. Are all rope toys like that?  
Signed, Tigger from OH

Dear Tigger, Your parronts need to check for fraying strands in all toys and keep them trimmed or replaced. They should also make sure they aren't too long. I'm so glad your mom was home, you could have lost a toe nail or worse, your toe. All rope, cotton, hemp, sisal and jute will knot up or fray when chewing on them. These are some of my favorite toys. Don't be afraid, now that mom knows to check all your toys you can happily start chewing and preening on them again. Tell mom to check out [Parrot Toy Angels](#) site. They have some great toys. Happy chewing.



fit.



Do you have a question for Rikki?  
Please send it to The Editor at  
[editor@parrottoyangels.org](mailto:editor@parrottoyangels.org)



### Petri's Story By Angel Savannah

I want to share something that happened with my personal pet, Petri. Petri is a cardinal who was brought into the vet clinic where I work when he was a day old. He and his sibling were said to be barn swallows. The exotics vet at the clinic instructed me with what to feed them (hand-feeding formula for our birds will not work for them) but I lost the older one a couple of days later. I did a little research and learned what to feed barn swallows when having to raise them away from the parents, switched to that, and everything went smoothly. This was last September.

Because of the rough start in his life, Petri didn't wean until he was between 3 - 4 months old. It was about this time that his crest came in and I realized he was a cardinal. What a surprise! In January, when Petri weaned, it was far too cold, coupled with the fact that he wouldn't know how to fend for himself in the wintery weather, to be able to release him. Naturally, he became attached to me and his way of indoor life. Once the weather turned warm in the spring, I took him outside to try to introduce him to outdoor life and a female cardinal who was frequenting our back yard. He was so frightened. He would fly quickly back to the porch and try to get in the door! He'd sit there and cry until I let him back in. His little heart was pounding, he was so terrified. I tried repeatedly to teach him and prod him into wanting to move outdoors. He would have none of it.

So now my beloved Petri is part of my family. About seven weeks ago, I noticed it looked like he had a bump on his foot. Over the course of a few days, it had swollen. The exotics vet at the clinic put him on antibiotics, which he has been on for weeks. About a week ago, it began to look a little darker. Now that I am at vet school, the vet here saw him and could find no wound, no infection, no visible reason for why this lump was there and now changing colors. However, the swelling was causing his circulation to fail in his foot and his toes were turning black. The vet scheduled surgery for the next day and we had to amputate Petri's leg from his "knee" down. (This joint is actually a bird's ankle [called the intertarsal joint], but in comparison with our bones, similar in location on the leg to our knee.) He still has a partial 'peg leg' left. He is recovering nicely and resting on pillows both in his cage and in his favorite resting spots in the house.

Since the vet who performed the surgery could not offer an explanation as to what happened to Petri, I opted to have the foot sent to be analyzed and hope to have an answer as to the cause. While I am deeply saddened that Petri will live a one-legged life, I was invited to observe the surgery and it was very interesting. I learned that the reason moms are not allowed to be with their pets during initial anesthesia and during the recovery period is that they are reluctant to give in to the anesthesia if they are around their 'mom' and when waking up, they become more restless. It's better to let them be away from you during those periods. Once Petri was fully awake following surgery, he was placed in a brooder/incubator and I sat with him for a while. He was able to go home just a couple of hours later and is recovering quietly.

About the author: Because of my background with birds (my Mom has had birds since she was a child, so I have been around them since birth), the vet clinic where I have worked the past 2-1/2 years has always given me any incoming wild birds to raise. With my assigned role as 'bird fosterer,' my boss helped me acquire the appropriate wildlife rehabilitation license. Clients are always bringing in babies they find in their yards - some as new hatchlings, and some a little older. This summer, I successfully raised and released several birds, including robins, a grosbeak, barn swallows and a brown thrasher.

Releasing a couple of baby robins:



One in the lilac bush:



One up in the tree:



They hung around for a couple of hours and then flew off. They seemed to enjoy being released.

This is the rose-breasted grosbeak:



## A World Full of Feathers

A world full of noise, feathers,  
squawks, seed hulls on the floor,  
"birdie gifts" in unwanted places.

A world full of fun, joy, cheerful sounds,  
cages on the dining room table,  
and meals with some odd companions.

Welcome to the wild, wonderful world of parrothood,  
where worrying about a \$15 budgie

is as common  
as worrying about a sick child.

A world where you spend more time  
cooking for parrots  
than you do for yourself.

A world where you rent movie musicals  
because your birds like them better  
than action movies.

A world where you buy watch bands  
by the dozen.

A world where you sleep on the couch  
when you bring a new bird home  
cause it might get scared during the night.

A world where, even though you can't stand  
the smell of dry beans cooking,  
you cook them and gag anyhow  
cause your birds really like them.

A world in which you have only  
one egg left in the fridge,  
so you scramble it  
and share it with all the birds.

A world where a lovebird sitting  
on the edge of your cereal bowl  
is no big deal.

A world where you decorate  
in green and white  
for obvious reasons.

A world where you watch Barney  
because your macaw likes it.

A world where cockatiels whistle the theme  
from the Andy Griffith Show  
with wild abandon and to the point  
of driving you crazy.

A world where, every time  
you leave the room  
your African gray  
asks you where you're going.

It's our world, and welcome to it.

~Author Unknown~

Reprinted from FeatheredAngels <http://featheredangels.wordpress.com/>



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.



*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](mailto:editor@parrottoyangels.org)



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