



# Angel Wings

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

September 2011  
Volume 6, Issue IX

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## Angel Toys For Angels

### September's Featured Toys



[Fishy Fun](#)  
Medium Birds



[Caged Balls](#)  
Medium - Large Birds



[Button Chimes](#)  
Small 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:

♥ [New Items](#) ♥

♥ [Happy Flappers](#) ♥

♥ ♥ ♥



♥ ♥ ♥



Roasted Cauliflower for  
Parronts and their birds  
By Toni Fortin

This cauliflower tastes so good, a bit  
spicy & sweet.

Recycling, Angel Style  
Funnel Fun  
By Wyspur Kallis



Funnel Fun

Supplies you will need:  
Plastic Funnel - your choice of size  
Whiffle Ball  
Cotton Supreme Rope™ \*\*  
Pear link or baby link for hanging  
Masking Tape  
Scissors & Pliers



Whenever using cotton rope, put a small  
piece of tape on the ends to prevent  
unraveling. String the rope through the funnel.



1/2 head of cauliflower  
Olive oil  
Red pepper flakes

Cut washed cauliflower in pieces. Dry with paper towels. Put cauliflower in a bowl, drizzle with olive oil to coat. Add a couple shakes of red pepper flakes and toss gently. Turn out onto a baking sheet. Bake at 425 degrees for 20 to 30 minutes. Serve to parronts with a little sea salt.



As always my guys say  
"I like it, I like it and it's good."



Thread the rope through the large opening of the funnel, then through the whiffle ball. Tie a knot in the rope. Remove the masking tape from the knotted end.



Pull the rope snugly from the top to remove any slack. Tie a secure knot on the top of the funnel.



Cut off any extra rope and make sure you've removed any tape. Add a hanger. Another fun toy to introduce to your feathered loved one!

\*\* Vegetable Tanned Leather can also be used.



Featured Fid ~ Lineolated Parakeet  
By Kim Perez



The Lineolated Parakeet (*Bolborhynchus lineola*) is also called the Barred Parakeet and Catherine Parakeet. To the owner, these are known as the Linnie. It is a small parrot, only about 6 to 7 inches in length and weighing in at around 55 grams. The Linnie is native to southern Mexico, western Panama, northern Columbia, Venezuela and the Andean Mountains in Peru. They prefer forests and mountain regions. They are exceptionally tolerant of the cold temperatures found at higher altitudes. Linnies in the wild are found typically in small groups, from 6 to 30, but have also been seen in groups of more than 100.

The normal color of a Linnie is green with black bars on their wings, sides and backs. There are many color mutations, including olive, turquoise, cobalt, mauve, creamino and lutino. All have the black bars except for the inos.

In captivity, Linnies are very sociable birds as well. They get along as well with their human flock as they do with their feathered flock. Like other parrots, hand-fed Linnies make the best pets. However, even bird-raised Linnies are not aggressive and have many friendly qualities. They have a pleasant voice and sweet call. They can talk with their cute little voices and mimic other sounds.

A Linnie's diet in the wild consists of fruit, dry and germinated seeds and insect larvae. In captivity, a typical parakeet diet works well, including a basic seed mix, fruits, vegetables and pellets.

As with all birds, you should always give a Linnie the biggest possible cage. I would not put a single or pair of Linnies in a cage smaller than 24" x 36". Fill that space with ladders and toys and your Linnie will be happy and busy.

Linnies are not destructive birds, but they love to play with toys. They use their feet much the same way large parrots do, and you will find them holding their toys, so foot toys along with hanging toys will be appreciated.



### Cleaning Cotton & Sisal Boings and Rope Perches

By Wyspur Kallis

Most parrot owners have either cotton boings, sisal boings or rope perches. Parrots are very good at messing on them. Between poops and wiping their beaks on them, there's no way they'll stay clean and fresh. Many parrot owners have spent countless, tiresome hours scrubbing these items clean. For those of you that need a better way to get your parrot's cotton or sisal cage accessories clean, here are the steps that will make this project an easy process:

- ♥ Remove boings or perches from cage, screw end on and tighten.

### Rikki Sez

Rikki will try and answer frequently asked questions here.



Rikki, I was playing on my play stand when my Parront picked me up and placed me in my cage. I totally freaked out to find this colored wood thing hanging in my cage. My Parront said it was my new toy, but I wanted out of my cage so bad. What is going on here? Why did they put that thing in my cage?

♥ Place boings or perches into a pillow case, using one pillow case for each boing or perch.

♥ For large boings, wind them up and use zip-ties to keep them from coming apart in the wash.

♥ Tie a knot in the pillow case and throw it in the washing machine. (They may be washed with other items of clothing.) Avitech Cleaner, Oxifresh Cleaner, Pet Focus or vinegar may be used in place of laundry detergent.

♥ When washing machine is done, remove the boings or perches and air dry. They can also be dried in the sun.

♥ In about 24 hours your boings and perches are ready to be placed back in the cage.

♥ ♥ ♥



♥ ♥ ♥

### ANGEL TIPS

♥ To cut grease on dishes: Add a tbsp. of white vinegar to hot soapy water.

♥ To prevent formation of ice in your freezer: Rub table salt on the inside walls.

Got a tip for us? Send it to:  
[editor@parrottoyangels.org](mailto:editor@parrottoyangels.org)

♥ ♥ ♥

### Signed, Scaredy Bird

Dear Scaredy Bird, Maybe you can tell you parront that you need a little time to get used to something new hanging in 'your' house. You never know what those colored wood things might jump up and do! They could put it on a table near you for a day so you can see it without being so close. Next, maybe hang it outside your house so you can observe it and get close to it and give it a nibble. THEN put it in your house.

♥ ♥

Rikki, Please tell me why I have to see the man in the white coat once a year? I don't like it. He makes me sit on a scale, picks me up in a towel, turns me every which way pressing this and that and then turns out the light and looks at me with a light in his hand. Mom never says why she takes me there.  
Signed, Scared in Ohio

Dear Scared, The man in the white coat is an avian veterinarian. Your Mom wants to be sure that you are healthy. Since he cannot understand your chirps and squawks, he has to check your weight, take blood, look in your mouth, check to see if your nares are clear and listen to your heart, lungs and air sacs. He will probably also do a Gram Stain. All this prodding, poking and looking tells the doctor exactly what's going on with you. Now that you know why he does these things, I bet your next visit won't ruffle your feathers.

♥ ♥

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

♥ ♥ ♥

### Bedding For Nest Boxes By Angel Savannah

Safe bedding is an issue we deal with daily in the vet clinic with all animals and birds. One of the most commonly used beddings with pets is pine shavings because of its price and availability. We buy big bales of pine shavings which are approximately 3' x 1.5' x 4' high and hold

### Sterilizing Pine Cones By Kim Perez



a huge amount of compacted shavings and only cost us around \$5. This bedding will work for most animals.

Cedar bedding is almost twice the price for the same size bale. We do not use this at the vet clinic. Cedar contains oil which can cause different problems for different animals. It causes problems with hunting dogs as the oil scent throws off their smelling ability. It causes problems with hamsters and guinea pigs in that they can be allergic to it and it makes their hair fall out! For many other animals and birds, the oil scent can be toxic. It can cause breathing problems, lung irritation and can kill particularly fragile birds or animals.

Aspen bedding is another wood shaving many people use. This one is safe to use with all small animals and birds. It is more expensive than pine, but it's a little bulkier than pine. For this reason, aspen makes a great bedding for nest boxes. If you buy the compacted bedding, you can throw it in the box in chunks and let the birds go through it and build their nest. This particular action actually leads to egg laying, as it is part of the natural nest building cycle.

Another bedding commonly used, but not a wood shaving, is something called CareFRESH Pet Bedding. This is a recycled product that looks like shredded egg cartons. It is soft and is something we use in brooders with baby birds. Babies don't really try to eat it and they do not get the impacted crops like they do with pine shavings (which are the main reason we advise against pine shavings in the brooders).

To sum up, pine shavings are used in dog beds, small animal cages and on the floors in some kennels. Aspen shavings are used in bird nest boxes and small animal cages. CareFRESH Pet Bedding is used in brooders for baby birds. Cedar shavings are not used with any of our pets.

Editor's Note: CareFRESH is the registered trademark of CareFRESH which is part of the Absorption Corp.

Like many of you, I have some wonderful bird toy parts in my own back yard - pine cones! There is a simple two part process to clean them so that there are no bugs in them and nothing to hurt your birds.

First, you place your pine cones in a bucket of cold water. Leave them in the water for 12 to 18 hours. This will make the bugs come out and clean them pretty well. The pine cones will then close up.

Take them out of the water and place them on a cookie sheet and in the oven at about 200 degrees. Check them in 20 minutes and remove any pine cones that are opened back up. Put the rest back in the oven and check them every 5 minutes for those that are "done."

Let them cool and then make toys.

**Toy Tip:** One of my birds' favorite foot toys is a pine cone with treats stuffed into it. I use anything and everything in the making of these toys, including foods and fun toy parts. My birds particularly like when I put a little peanut butter on the pine cone and roll it in crushed pellets or small seeds. With large pine cones, you can hang them in the cage. Smaller pine cones make great foot toys.



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



## Converting to a Healthy Diet

By Lori M. Nelsen

This article originally ran in the August 2008 Angel Wings.  
We thought the information was valuable enough to rerun the article.

We all want our birds to eat well in order to be healthy, but what is a healthy diet? Certified avian vets all seem to agree: parrots need a varied diet. Despite pet food manufacturer's claims, there is no such thing as a "total diet" for a parrot, be it pellets or seed based mixtures. A healthy parrot diet must include fresh live foods such as vegetables, greens, fruit, and proteins (2 parts sprouted grains to 1 part sprouted legumes) along with Essential Fatty Acids and healthy natural green supplements. Formulated diets or pellets are a handy shortcut to a varied diet but are not the miracle food that the manufacturer's claim. The recommended use by many vets and breeders is less than 20% leaving the rest of the diet for fresh live foods. There is no substitute for the vitamins, minerals, and amino acids that occur in fresh foods. Some veterinarians have attributed 80% or more of all avian illness to dietary related causes. Any time and effort spent converting your bird to a good, healthy diet will come back to you in beautiful feathers, long life, great disposition and in hard earned dollars not used at the vets.

Parrots tend to eat twice daily - a morning and a late afternoon meal with a bit of grazing during the day. They are also social eaters, and are happiest when their human and avian family eats together. These two facts can be used to your advantage when trying to get the bird to develop healthier eating habits. I feed three times a day. I feed a mash diet in the morning and also, the rest of the mash plus extras in the late afternoon (pasta, chunks of fruit, pieces of veggies). I feed a few nuts and seeds and maybe a couple of pellets before bedtime.

The generally accepted procedure for switching a bird's diet is the gradual transition method. Measure what your bird normally eats and take away a small bit of it, adding fresh mash in its place. Feed immediately in the morning when your parrots are the hungriest and are more willing to accept the change in diet. Over time, sometimes a long time, the amount of mash is increased until your parrot is eating mostly the mash diet. This conversion can not be about wasting food, it is about getting them to touch and taste the new diet.

Make up the mash diet and mix the mash into the preferred diet of your parrot so that they are well coated. You can then put one or two dry pellets on top and sprinkle just a tiny bit of their favorite seed on top too. The mash diet I use consists of approximately 45% sprouted or soaked grains and fully sprouted or cooked legumes (2 parts grains to 1 part legumes). The rest of the mash consists of 50% green leafy vegetables, green vegetables, orange and red vegetables, a small amount of fruit (usually berries) and some extras such as ginger, garlic, egg, or yogurt. The last 5%: nuts, coconut, pasta, etc. All of my mash diet is run through the food processor adding my natural green supplements and EFAs so there is "no picking and choosing". This conversion cannot be about wasting food, it is about getting them to touch and taste the new diet.

During this conversion time, pay careful attention to the weight of your bird. This transition can take months or even years with some parrots. A good gram scale is invaluable at this time. A weight loss of 10% can mean trouble.

Leaving a bowl of food in the cage overnight for the larger parrots can contribute to picky eaters. You may want to leave food for the little ones as their little bodies use their food energy quickly.

Although the littles: finches, canaries, cockatiels, budgerigars and other grass parakeets do eat a higher percentage of seed, these are usually germinating seeds or green seeds still on the plant and not yet ready for dispersal. Both have a higher nutritional content than the seed mixes commercially available. Their conversion to a healthier diet includes freshly sprouted grains and legumes with a bit of minced veggies and bouquet of greens or the same mash as the larger parrots with more seeds and sprouts.

Sometimes conversion can be attained easily by spreading some food on a tabletop and letting them forage while encouraging them to eat - try tapping your fingers round the food on the table too, to get their attention to the food. If you taste their food and make yummy noises - they can hardly resist. You can also place some healthy mash on the edge of your plate so they think they are stealing your food or let them help you prepare it.

Parrots are a nosy bunch. Their curiosity will get the better of them, eventually, and they will taste it. One day soon, you will see tails up when it is breakfast time. Or if you have a goof-ball like my Gonzo hollering at the birds in the feeder, at his window to "EAT YOUR SUPPER" while he is tails up and head down in his bowl (peeking to see if they are listening.)



## We All Need Angels in our Lives

### Become a Volunteer!

Have you ever had a time in your life when you needed an angel riding on your shoulder? Have you ever thought that a bird might need the same? How about the generous, big-hearted humans who help birds in need, many times going into debt to save one helpless bird. These are the real Angels:

Won't you open your heart and become a Parrot Toy Angel?

As a Parrot Toy Angel, you will be asked to contribute on a monthly basis to help support our ongoing work. Contributions include making toys, donating parts or supplies or sending a small monetary donation to help with the costs of toymaking materials and shipping.



Have these stories got your toymaking talons twitching?  
Do you want to help make a difference in somebirdie's life?  
Come join our ranks! We have angels from all different backgrounds and walks of life, and there's always room for another generous heart.

Apply for membership:

[Angel Application](#)



## 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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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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