



# Angel Wings

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

September 2014  
Volume 9, Issue IX

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## Angel Toys For Angels

September's Footer Frenzy



[Button Footers](#)  
Medium - Large Birds



[Footer Curls](#)  
Medium Birds



[Toni's Tongue Twisters](#)  
Medium Birds

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



### ***2014 Fall Auction is Coming!***

Dear Parrot Toy Angel SUPPORTERS,

Look what you have helped accomplish:

23,000+ toys and supplies have been delivered!

Without you, this would not have been possible. We hope you too are amazed at this huge number, and we want to gratefully acknowledge you. You gave, and we worked hard and delivered. How we wish our job was done. We dream of the day when not another bird is abandoned, mistreated, or malnourished. But the truth is that daily, somewhere, a bird is found in an undersized cage, sometimes in a dark garage, barely surviving.

So, once again we come to the people who have been here, whom we can count on, and ask to support us in our auction. You already know that no money goes anywhere except directly to the birds. We have two major fundraisers a year and they are very important.

There are ways you can help:

- ♥ Do you own or work in a store that is willing to donate something to us? We are non-profit and your donation is tax deductible.
- ♥ Do you have a new item that you think someone might like and bid on?
- ♥ Are you willing to tell your family and friends to support our auction...take a look at our items, think of future birthdays/Christmas that could be shopped for, maybe even a bird you know whose life would be made better by buying one of our auction toys?
- ♥ Can you donate a gift certificate? Starbucks? A movie basket with AMC tickets and candy?

You have been generous, we have counted on you in the past, and now we hope with all our hearts that you stay strong with us and continue with our commitment to help "ONE BIRD AT A TIME".

Please drop us a line at [donations@parrottoyangels.org](mailto:donations@parrottoyangels.org) if you would like to help out.



## ANGEL ANNOUNCEMENTS

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



Donate to Parrot Toy Angels by shopping Amazon Smile...see ya there!

**Shop at AmazonSmile**  
and Amazon will make  
a donation to:  
**Parrot Toy Angels**

Get started

amazon smile



Weekly MINI AUCTIONS!!  
Bid for the Birds!

**Bid now  
to support  
our cause**

ebay  
Giving Works



## Flax Seed Meal Blueberry Muffins By Toni Fortin

- 2 tbsp. flax seed meal
- 6 tbsp. oats (regular)
- 6 tbsp. whole wheat flour
- 1 tsp. baking powder (aluminum free)
- 1 tbsp. slivered almonds
- 1 egg, beaten
- 5 tbsp. natural applesauce
- 2 tbsp. water
- 1/4 cup fresh blueberries

Mix all dry ingredients, add applesauce and water. Fold in blueberries. Let batter sit for 10 minutes. Spoon into mini muffin pans (liners can be used). Bake in 350 degree oven for 14 minutes.

Yield: 18 mini muffins



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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 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!!



### 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](mailto:editor@parrottoyangels.org). (By submitting your article(s) you agree to allow the Angel Wings Committee to make any editorial changes deemed necessary.)



#### Beak-A-Boo News - Issue IX

Hey, my feathered fans. Boo here once again, giving you a peek into my little world.

Oh, this last month was busy, and I must tell you about my latest (mis)adventure. Mom and I were playing at her desk and someone came to the door. Mom answered it. While she was standing there talking, I wandered over to see who it was. I climbed up mom's leg and sat on her shoulder, facing the wide open door. And for once, mom didn't make me go back to my safe spot. I was just sitting there preening and talking to our visitor, when suddenly there was a very LOUD noise, and I must admit, I was STARTLED. I jumped, and the next thing I knew I was FLYING!!! Up I went, and welllll...shoot, I don't fly much, so I landed on the roof of our house. I liked it up there, the sun was warm, and I could see lotsa stuff I'd never gotten to see before. But, well...I didn't know how to get down. It was kinda fun watching mom and dad try to figure out how to get me down. They finally managed to convince me it was time to come back in the house, but I made 'em work hard for it. I gave mom a good nip when I saw the nasty ladder she was on. Don't think Im gonna try that again!

#### Rikki Sez

Rikki will try and answer frequently asked questions here.



Rikki, Mom went a bit crazy at the bird store and got me an atom and a boing. Now she's looking at a jolly ball. Tell me more about these toys she bought.

Signed, Loaded With Toys

Dear Loaded, Sounds like your mom wants to give you places to explore and hang out. An 'Atom' is a type of hanging play stand, they are usually round and have many perching areas for you to hang out on to hang toys from. A 'Boing' is a spiral shaped hanging play area, usually made of rope with wire inside it to hold its shape. A 'Jolly Ball' is a large ball with holes big enough for you to climb into, usually hung with strings of beads and other stuff for you to play with. All of these are great additions to a parrots play area.



Beak-A-Boo tip of the month: Don't scare your parronts. Seriously! Mom's being super cautious now, and I just can't have ANY fun! :(

Mom's Note: That was the SCARIEST half hour of my life! I can't believe I was so distracted. I know all it takes is an instant for a bird to escape. I'm still berating myself for being so mindless. We had to sneak a small ladder up under the edge of the roof because I know Boo is afraid of ladders. I had to spray her down with water to make her WANT to come down - and I also hoped that it would weigh her down enough to keep her from flying higher if she got startled AGAIN. Needless to say Boo has had her wings clipped, and will NEVER ever be anywhere near the door when it's open again. \*sigh\*



Rikki, Mom looks at my poop when cleaning cages. She says it tells her if I might be sick. I ate some red colored pellets and some of my poop was a bit red. Do you know why?  
Signed, Colorful

Dear Colorful, Sometimes the things we eat or even play with (if our toys have been colored with food coloring) can make our droppings change color. Colored pellets are often the cause of unusual color in our droppings. If mom is ever really concerned about an unusual appearance in them, she can always contact your vet.



Rikki, Next month I see the vet again for my exam. He always does a CBC and gram stain tests. What are those?  
Signed, A 'Vet'eran

Dear Vet, A complete blood count (CBC) is a blood test used to evaluate your overall health and detect a wide range of disorders, including anemia and infection. Gram Stains are done to look for infections and possibly to find out what type of infection it could be. Both are tests to make sure you are healthy and catch any problems early.

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



## Setting Up A Cage

By Kim Perez

When I set up a cage for a new bird, I take several things into consideration: 1. Type of bird; 2. Baby or mature; 3. Single or multiple; 4. Tame or not. The type of bird and whether single or multiple will determine the cage size. I like to think that when I provide a cage for a bird, I give them ample room that would also be appropriate for a pair. Sometimes, I do set up cages for multiple birds and I do increase the size of the cage in this instance.

The general cage size rule is it must be big enough for the bird's full wing span minimally, and can be as large as you can afford and have space for. For example, if a cockatiel's full wing span (without clipped wings) is 16 to 17", then the cage must minimally be that dimension square. I recommend no smaller than 18" x 18". But if you have room for a larger cage, they LOVE the play space.

The age of the bird(s) determines perch placement, food and water placement, the types of toys and toy placement. If you have a young bird, because they are clumsy and not terribly sure-footed, there should be at least one or two perches low to the cage floor. As they become comfortable climbing, you can gradually increase the height of the perches. For every bird type, perches should be of varying diameters for optimum foot health and comfort. You should also have different types of perches: wood, rope and pedicure.

Toys appropriate for your size and type of bird should be provided. Like perches, the younger the bird, the lower the toys should be placed in the cage. According to a bird behaviorist who spoke at a recent bird seminar, you should have eleven toys in each cage. I think she may have been kidding (a little), but she wanted to stress the importance of toys to their mental health. I recommend the types of toys they can chew up/destroy as these are the ones the birds like the best and will keep their time occupied. You should hang toys at different areas in the cage, high and low, to encourage activity.

If you have young birds, you want to put their food and water dishes in a similar location as to where the breeder had them. For example, I put dishes on the floor of baby cages where they can't help but to stumble across them. In their first 'real' cage, I put the dishes on the floor until they are comfortable with them, and then place them where they will ultimately be - hanging on the side of the cage, inserted into doors made just for them, etc. The birds should then adjust to the new placement of their dishes, but be sure to monitor what they eat and drink for the first few days.

The cage door is one feature about which I hear the most complaints. People don't consider what is practical at the time of purchase. You definitely want to be sure you can easily get your bird in and out of their cage. If the bird is tame, this is not a big issue, but if your bird is not friendly, you need to have ample room to maneuver your hand(s) with a net or washcloth (to prevent bites) in order to catch your bird. There are so many different styles of doors, it is not an easy thing to describe. But it is something to definitely consider, so please be aware when you are making a cage purchase. If the door is too small, you can injure the bird trying to get it out of the cage.

The picture below was provided by a lady who bought one of my baby cockatiels. This bird has a lot of play space and is granted ample out-of-cage time daily. You can see there are several toys, perches and food/water cups and the bird has a great view of their yard. You can also see the large door is open and the little cockatiel is up on top!



Safety Today: Colorant  
By The Safety Angel



Parrot toys, with vibrantly colored wood

Cats and Birds, Oh My!  
By 'Sana Emberg

We've all seen them: The 'cute' videos all over the net, in which a cat and a bird are playing, cuddling, and grooming each other. Most folks think they are just that, oh so cute. But personally, I cringe and just want to reach through my screen and shake folks every time I see this! I'm sure the folks who posted it mean no harm, but the potential for disaster is there.

pieces, are not only attractive to our human eyes, but may also entice parrots to play. Some birds don't care, but it's been my experience that most do play more with colored wood toys and some even have favorite colors.

So now we need to know what to use to color the wood. The most widely used colorant is Wilton's icing paste found in stores where cake decorating supplies are sold. Next in popularity is VitaCrittter coloring, created specifically for coloring parrot toy parts. VitaCrittter can be found online at [www.parrottoyangels.com](http://www.parrottoyangels.com) and other bird supply sites. Least liked, but inexpensive and easy to find, is the McCormick's food coloring found in the baking section of most grocery stores. Some toy makers mix their coloring with water and some use isopropyl (rubbing) alcohol. The advantage of using alcohol is that the mixture can be kept for much longer because bacteria cannot grow in alcohol and it disinfects the wood.

The ratio for mixing Wilton's icing paste and VitaCrittter colorant is 1 oz. to 12 to 16 oz. of water or alcohol. To mix the Wilton's paste, place the jar of paste in 1 cup boiling water for a few minutes to soften the paste, then pour the softened paste into alcohol or water and shake vigorously.

The ratio for using McCormick's food coloring is 10 drops to 1 cup of water or alcohol. Coloring mixed with water will only last up to 3 days in the refrigerator, whereas coloring mixed with alcohol needs no refrigeration and will last up to 2 weeks.

Kool-aid, berry juice and vegetable juices are not recommended. Kool-aid has many undesirable ingredients and preservatives. Using the juices from foods may encourage our feathered friends to ingest the wood. So, play it safe and use the right coloring for your bird toys.

This article originally ran in the November 2008 issue of Angel Wings



First, there's the obvious, claws, teeth and beaks which can, in a flash, bring pain and suffering to either animal. I've seen the damage a bird beak can do to a cat, and I've seen the damage cat claws can do to a bird, even between animals that normally get along. Cats and bird are, by nature, predator and prey. While a lot of pets have overcome those natural instincts, all it takes is something unexpected such as a loud noise or anything that may startle either animal to cause an 'accident'.

A lesser known danger from cats is the pasteurella bacteria they carry in their saliva. This bacteria is mostly harmless to cats, though it can sometimes cause respiratory infections or abscesses, but it's deadly to birds if not treated quickly. Even the tiniest of scratches or claw prick can give your bird a lethal infection. If you even suspect your bird might have been nicked or scratched, they MUST be treated immediately. Any scratch or bite must be treated with antibiotics, and they need to be started right away.

My other real concern with these 'cute' videos is the audience. Sure, YOUR pets may get along just fine. But what about that first time bird owner, who doesn't understand all the possible issues. They see that 'adorable' cat and cockatoo playing and decide to try it out with their brand new bird, who's never been exposed to a cat and doesn't know how to react except with fear or by attacking to protect himself. In a flash, they have injured pets, and it's a tragedy that could have easily been avoided. Please, think before you expose your little loved ones to something like this. Also, think about the audience before you post those videos, as well.



## Angels Wanted!!

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.

Click here for: [Angel Application](#)

Click to join Parrot Toy Angels Yahoo! Group:



Not a toy maker? Come join our Facebook Group:



### 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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