

# MGP

## CARE SHEET : LOVEBIRD (agapornis spp)

Lovebirds are some of the best birds to have as pets. They are small members of the parrot family but don't let their size fool you, Lovebirds have big bird attitudes and playfulness!

Average Adult Size 5 - 7 inches long, head to end of tail

Average Life Span 15+ years with proper care

Diet herbivores

**Bird pet parents should avoid non-stick cookware and appliances as they can release hazardous fumes, as well as any type of spray including air fresheners, insecticides, as these may prove fatal!**

### Feeding

Fresh food and water should always be available.

- \* Feed specialized pellets and seed plus fresh vegetables and fruits. Discard any uneaten fruit and vegetables within a few hours.
- \* Clean, fresh, filtered chlorine-free water

**DO NOT FEED** avocado, fruit seeds, chocolate, caffeine or alcohol as these can cause serious medical conditions. Avoid sugar and high fat treats.

### Housing

- \* Lovebirds acclimate well to average household temperatures, not to drop below 65 F \* degrees or to exceed 80 F degrees. Habitat should be placed off the floor in an area that is well-lit and away from drafts.
- \* A habitat 18"Wx18"Dx24"H, with metal bars spaced no greater than 3/8" apart, makes a good home for a pair of Lovebirds, however, a flight habitat is recommended. It is best to provide the largest habitat possible.
- \* All door and food container openings should be secured as Lovebirds tend to be excellent 'escape artists'!
- \* Perches should be at least 4" long and 1/2" in diameter; a variety of perches sized to exercise feet and help prevent arthritis is recommended.
- \* A metal grate over the droppings tray will keep the bird away from droppings; line the droppings tray with habitat paper or appropriate substrate for easier cleaning. To avoid contamination, do not place food or water containers under perches.
- \* Lovebirds can be kept alone to bond with pet parent or in pairs to bond with each other. Different types of birds should not be housed together.
- \* Birds should be socialized daily by the pet parent.

### **Normal Behavior**

- \* Single Lovebirds bond best with owners but keep in pairs if you cannot devote enough daily interaction time.
- \* Love to chew, so ensure plenty of toys to chew on.
- \* They can be territorial, have a unique chatter and naturally loud call.
- \* Provide toys which promote important mental stimulation.

### **Habitat Maintenance**

- \* Clean and disinfect the habitat and perches regularly with soap and water, replace substrate or habitat liner weekly or more often as needed.
- \* Replace perches, dishes and toys when worn or damaged, rotate new toys into the habitat regularly.
- \* Ensure that there are no habitat parts or toys with lead zinc or lead based paints or galvanized parts as these can cause serious medical issues if ingested by your bird.
- \* Do not use a lot of cleaning agents around your bird as the fumes can be harmful. It is recommended to use a natural cleaning product.

### **Grooming & Hygiene**

- \* Lovebirds love to take baths, so at least twice weekly provide filtered chlorine-free, lukewarm water for bathing; remove the water when done. As an alternative, mist the bird with water.
- \* Clipping flight feathers is not necessary, but when done correctly it can help prevent injury or escape; consult an avian veterinarian on what is best for your bird.
- \* Nails should be trimmed by a qualified person to prevent injury to the bird.

### **Health**

#### Signs of a Healthy Animal

- \* Active, alert, and sociable
- \* Eats and drinks throughout the day
- \* Dry nose and bright, dry eyes
- \* Beak, legs and feet normal in appearance
- \* Clean dry vent
- \* Smooth, well-groomed feathers

#### Red Flags

- \* beak swelling or accumulations
- \* fluffed, plucked, or soiled feathers
- \* sitting on floor of habitat
- \* wheezing or coughing
- \* runny or discolored stools
- \* favoring one foot when not sleeping
- \* eye or nasal discharge
- \* red or swollen eyes
- \* loss of appetite

### **Common health issues** - consult with avian veterinarian

Chlamydiosis - symptoms - appetite loss, fluffed feathers, nasal discharge, lime green feces, conjunctivitis.

Conjunctivitis - symptoms - red eyes, tearing, closed puffy eyes.

Diarrhea - fecal portion of stool not formed, multiple causes, from change in diet to internal parasites.

**Caution** - Because all birds are potential carriers of infectious diseases, always wash your hands before and after handling your bird or habitat contents to help prevent the potential spread of disease. Pregnant women, children under the age of 5, senior citizens and people with weakened immune systems should contact their physician before purchasing or caring for birds and should consider not having a bird as a pet.