

**The
Real Macaw
Parrot Club**



March 2014





THE REAL MACAW PARROT CLUB

An All Species Educational Club

Next Meeting

**Movie Night
&
Ice Cream**



UPCOMING MEETING

Movie Night

Date: March 13, 2014

**Place: Paramus VFW Hall
6 Winslow Place, Paramus, NJ**

**Time: 7:30 pm - Social Time
8:00 pm - Meeting Starts**

**Visitors must join at their second visit.*

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Bird Pictures Needed for Covers

Send me pictures of your birds and one of them may be the next newsletter cover star.

Let's see how many different species we can get for the 2014 newsletters.

Email pictures to – RealMacawParrotClub@earthlink.net

***Call a Board member if there is inclement weather and you are not sure if there is a meeting.**

**Cover picture is the Wilson flock.
Courtesy of club members Sarita & Ted Wilson.**

The Real Macaw Parrot Club

Meets the second Thursday of each month

**Place: Paramus VFW Hall
6 Winslow Place
Paramus, NJ**

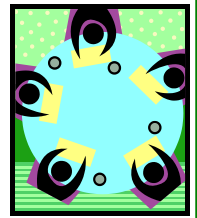
**Time: 7:30 pm Social Time
8:00 PM Meeting Starts**

**All birds are welcome with club members only
(when allowed).**

Visitors must join on their 2nd visit.

BOARD MEMBERS

President - Rose Agrusti
VP- Diane Weiner
VP- Cathy Gruberman
Treasurers- Sarita & Ted Wilson
Secretary - Pat Pasechnik



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Membership, -Rose Agrusti

Newsletter – Rose Agrusti

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Website – Rose Agrusti



Membership

Membership dues are \$45.00 per year for one family at the same address. Outside NJ and NY, it is \$25. For membership information:

RealMacawParrotClub@earthlink.net

See our website for an application:

<http://realmacaw.com>

Rules of Order

1. BIRDS AT MEETINGS: Only club members are allowed to bring birds. Birds brought to the meetings should have clipped wings or should remain in their cage or carrier. Do not bring your bird if you have it for less than 3 months and it has not been vet-checked, or if your bird may have been exposed to a sick bird.

Disclaimer: Applies to all birds and their owners. The Real Macaw Parrot Club is not responsible or liable for you, your bird, or anything that happens to you or your bird.

2. NO ANIMALS OTHER THAN HEALTHY EXOTIC BIRDS (except for guide dogs or programmed entertainment) are allowed. This is for the safety of the birds that share our meetings. Only members may bring birds.

3. NO SMOKING in the meeting room.

4. QUIET must be maintained during meetings. There is ample social time before and after meetings for talking.

5. CHILDREN must be seated with their parents during the meeting. Children who run freely are a distraction, and may also be responsible for a startled bird injuring itself.

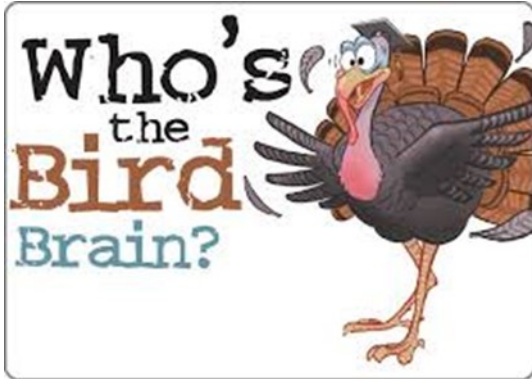
7. Birds are not allowed near any food areas or the bar area.



Bird Permit-If you own a parrot, you must, by NJ law, obtain a permit to legally keep the bird. For more information, write or call: Dept. of Environmental Protection, NJ Division of Fish & Wildlife Office of Permit Management CN400, Trenton, NJ 08625 609-292-9591



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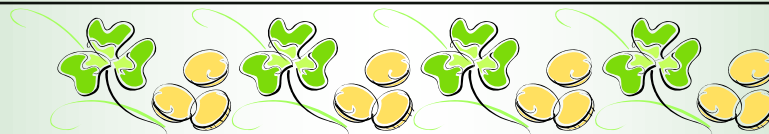
Are you a birdbrain - do you REALLY know everything about your bird(s)?

Would you like to LEARN MORE about your birds?

What are their characteristics and specific behavior patterns?

We'll ask you what species of parrots you have at the next club meeting. Then at the July meeting, we will provide a special slideshow to raise awareness of our own club members' various parrot species. There will be an exciting Birdbrain Contest following the presentation with prizes for winners!

So mark your calendar for the July meeting date, and join us for an educational and fun evening!



Future Meetings

April 10, 2014 - Captain Hugh Carola, program director of the Hackensack Riverkeeper, Inc

May 8, 2014 - Dr. Marc Valitutto, the Staten Island Zoo Veterinarian

June 12, 2014 - Lanette Raymond, former president of LIPS

July 10, 2014 - "Who's the BirdBrain?" Contest

August 14, 2014 - Club Picnic & Tricky Tray

September 11, 2014 - Don Torino from *Wildbirds Unlimited*



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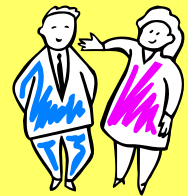
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How Birds Fly in V Formation



Photo via Mark Unsöld

A new study says birds precisely time when they flap their wings, and position themselves to capture upwash (“good air”) and avoid downwash or (“bad air”).

Birds flying in a distinctive V formation strategically position themselves in aerodynamically optimum positions, and experience positive aerodynamic interactions that maximize upwash (“good air”) capture, according to a study the journal *Nature* by researchers at Royal Veterinary College, University of London.

The data, captured from free-flying migrating birds using specially developed GPS technology, reveals the mechanisms by which birds flying in V formation can both use areas of beneficial upwash while avoiding regions of detrimental downwash (“bad air”).

These aerodynamic accomplishments were previously not thought possible for birds because of the complex flight dynamics and sensory feedback that would be required to perform such a feat.

Dr. Steven Portugal is lead researcher at the Royal Veterinary College. He said:

The intricate mechanisms involved in V formation flight indicate remarkable awareness and ability of birds to respond to the wingpath of nearby flock-mates. Birds in V formation seem to have developed complex phasing strategies to cope with the dynamic wakes produced by flapping wings.

Dr. Portugal and his team studied a free-flying flock of northern bald ibises (*Geronticus eremita*), a critically endangered species. They equipped 14 juvenile birds with back-mounted synchronised GPS and inertial measurement devices. The team recorded the position and every wing flap of all individuals within the V during 43 min of migratory flight. The precision of these measurements allowed the relative positioning of individuals in a V to be tracked, and the potential aerodynamic interactions to be investigated at a level and complexity not previously feasible.

[Read more from the Royal Veterinary College](#)

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The Potoo Bird

by Rose Agrusti



The Potoo is a nocturnal bird which breeds in tropical Central and South America from Nicaragua to northern Argentina and northern Uruguay. There are seven species of this solitary bird all of them having plumage that is grey, black, and brown resembling tree branches.

During the day the Potoo

perches upright on tree stumps camouflaged to look like part of the stump. When in danger it slowly assumes a “freeze” position which resembles a broken branch. It never flies during the day.



The Potoo feeds at night from a perch like a flycatcher using its large eyes to spot flying insects. Beetles form a large part of their diet, but they also eat moths, grasshoppers and termites.

The single spotted egg is laid directly in the depression of a rotten stump with the male primarily incubating it during the day and then duties are shared during the night.

[Click here for a video on the Potoo.](#)

**Pictures*

Courtesy of Wikipedia.com and Pinterest.com



The Potoo always looks like it just was horrified by something.,



Psittacine Beak and Feather Disease – An Incurable Parrot Virus Spreads

Hello, Frank Indiviglio here. Thanks very much for your interest. I'm recently retired from a career of over 20 years with the Bronx Zoo, and have participated in field research efforts with a variety of birds in several countries. I currently write and manage ThatBird-Blog <http://blogs.thatpetplace.com/thatbirdblog/>, which is sponsored by ThatFishPlace/ThatPetPlace <http://www.thatpetplace.com/pet/index.web>. I address the conservation, natural history and care of parrots and other birds, and answer readers' questions pertaining thereto. New articles are posted 2-3 times weekly.

The pet trade is being blamed for an emerging epidemic that is threatening captive and wild parrots worldwide. Psittacine Beak and Feather Disease (PBFD) is caused by a Circovirus that evolves quickly, spreads easily, and survives for years in nests and roosting areas. African Gray and Eclectus Parrots, Macaws, Cockatoos, Love Birds and Ring-Necked Parakeets are especially susceptible, but over 60 species have been infected. Included among these are wild populations of several endangered species, such as Swift, Orange-Bellied and Norfolk Island Green Parrots. First identified in 1987, PBFD has recently reared its ugly head on New Zealand's South Island, where it is killing rare Yellow-Crowned Parakeets.

An Emerging, Untreatable Parrot Disease

The virus that causes PBFD seems to have evolved in Australia, and for a time was endemic to that continent. The threatened Orange-Bellied Parrot was the first species in which it was identified. It has now been found in wild and pet parrot populations throughout the world.

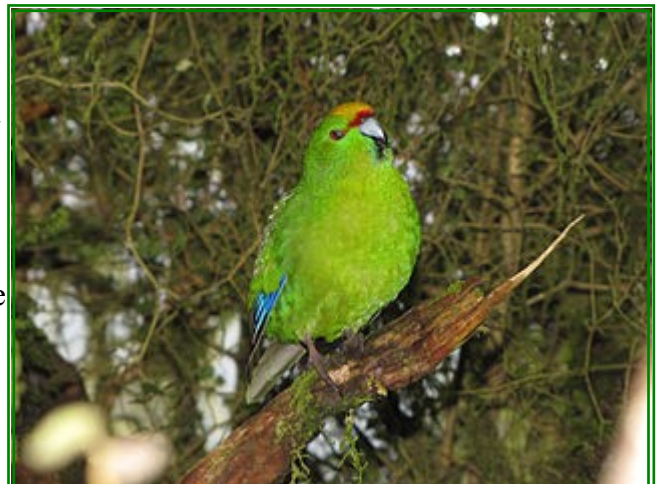
Unfortunately, ongoing research has not yielded a cure. Three forms of the disease are known. Peracute and Acute PBFD afflict hatchlings and nestlings, and quickly lead to death. Adult parrots infected with Chronic PBFD can be assisted a bit by strengthening the immune system, but they generally succumb as well.

A proper diet, exposure to sunlight or a UVA/UVB

bulb, and the establishment of a natural day/night cycle has been useful in some cases. Please see this article for more on testing, diagnosis, and treatments that may lessen the symptoms of PBFD.

The Psittacine Beak and Feather Disease Strikes New Zealand

In 2012, University of Canterbury researchers announced that a new strain of PBFD had been found on South Island, New Zealand, which until then had been free of the virus. The island's threatened Yellow-Crowned Parakeets were stricken. The existence of a new strain is especially troubling, and illustrates the difficulties involved in studying and eliminating rapidly-evolving Circoviruses.



The disease was previously identified in the already-rare Red-Fronted Parakeets on Little Barrier Island, off New Zealand's North Island (site of a Kakapo rescue operation).

The Pet Trade Connection

New Zealand is home to several of the world's most unusual parrots, such as the alpine-dwelling, meat-eating Kea and the nocturnal Kakapo. Despite decades of protection and study, the much-loved Kakapo is on the brink of extinction.



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Escaped and released non-native parrots, products of the legal and illegal pet trade, are considered to be the source of the PBFD outbreak on New Zealand. Eastern Rosellas, which are native to Australia but feral on New Zealand, were found to be infected with the

virus. Other Australian parrots that are or may be breeding in New Zealand include the Rainbow Lorikeet, Crimson Rosella, Galah, and Sulphur-Crested Cockatoo.

To determine the extent of the PBFD problem in New Zealand, researchers are monitoring native and introduced parrots. In recent years, nearly 800 individuals representing 7 endemic parrot species were tested for PBFD. Genetic analysis of the PBFD virus is also being undertaken.

Please check out my posts on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#). Each day, I highlight breaking research, conservation news and interesting stories concerning just about every type of animal imaginable. I look forward to hearing about your interests and experiences as well, and will use them in articles when possible.

Please also post your questions and comments below... I'll be sure to respond quickly.

Thanks, until next time, Frank.

Further Reading

[Psittacine Beak and Feather Disease in Pet Parrots](#)

[Saving the Kakapo](#)

[Kea Intelligence Shocks Researchers](#)



*Submitted by club member
Fran Pavelchak*

THE MOVE ACCORDING TO WILLIE



A reflection by Cindy Regino

Now I've been watching what goes on here for twenty plus years. I just know that when I see those smaller cages I am getting stuffed into one. Usually I end up at the birdie motel and I get to see lots of my African Grey cousins. I don't really mind it because there is always something to see and there are new toys each time for me. Of course, my brothers go too. We are always giving each other shout outs.

Something this time was peculiar. Not only was mom putting everything into boxes, there was not much fun stuff for me to look at anymore. Well, at least I still had my brothers and those pesky dogs to keep me occupied, but it wasn't the same. Things were missing that maybe I would have liked to knock over or even sneak a chew on if the mood suited me. My climbing curtains already had been gone for quite a while. Mom said something about them looking like swiss cheese.

It was sunset and those small cages appeared. Mom and dad were fussing way too much with them. I saw them put some of those cool toys she gets from Lisa at the birdie club meetings and they put food in there too.

At sunrise I had forgotten the cages were there. Birds outside were having a ball in the late summer sunshine. I sang and whistled with them. While happily snacking, mom and dad came towards me with that familiar "COMING TO GET YOU" stare. The feathers stood up on the back of my neck, and I tightened my hold on the bars. I know I am going to be put in THAT cage. Before you could say "shake your tail feathers", I found myself looking out of a tiny cage. Ok, so there was food, treats and a cool toy for me. (not so bad). Binky the Senegal had the same fate. Precious the parakeet was singing and snickering at us, as he was still in his cage and did not become an avian pimento!

The next sunrise, I found myself and my brothers being put into the car. Ok, here we go again, but the fish came with us plus one of the dogs too. I kept

telling mom, "good job", and whistling until the car moved! I shut right up. From time to time she would reach her hand out for each of us. It was very comforting to nuzzle up to her hand. Binky, Precious, and I gave each other shout outs. I just loved listening to the music with mom too. When I felt unbalanced, it was a bit scary. Mom must have known because her hand would be there to nuzzle and she sang to us. At one point we stopped. Mom and the dog left the car. When I saw dad's face in the window my heart did a pitter patter. It was so exciting! He hung out with us. When mom returned, dad was gone. We had a few more stop overs like this. The last one was a sunset ferry ride. On the ferry I could see some weird looking birds perched high and they were looking at me too. They seemed to enjoy the loud noises from the ferry. So we all made our own noise too and gave shout outs to those weird birds. Mom and dad gave us snacks and lots of fresh water. It wasn't so bad, but I was missing my cage.

In the darkness we were brought into another place that echoed. It looked and smelled different, but at the same time was familiar. We sat on top of our small cages. It felt great to get out, but I did not feel ready to explore at all. Binky and Precious were very quiet. I broke the silence with a grand burp, one of my famous chuckles and a cough.

I woke up at sunrise still in this small cage and echoey house. Soon the hustle and bustle began again. I saw lots of people, boxes, and notice some familiar smells. Lo and behold my grand cage is constructed before my eyes and Binky's cage reappeared. I am so happy to have my space back. I tell mom, "good Job", when she comes to put food in my bowls and give her clicky kissy noises. I enjoy the rest of the day with my new friend the echo. Soon I will explore and sneak a chew on some of this cool new place and maybe get to pull the dog's ear!

**This article is property of Cindy Regino*

Our club member, Cindy Regino recently moved to Delaware with her family and flock. Cindy was a very involved member at our different meetings and events. You'll probably remember her snapping away pictures with her camera or selling raffle tickets. She is very special and she will be sorely missed!

Cindy, we wish you the best!

BIRD ADOPTIONS

- ☺ Please note that our club does not provide a "Rescue" for birds, but only tries to facilitate the rehoming of birds when we are contacted.
- ☺ In order to keep this going, we only ask any member who adopts to please give a donation to the club for such a service. This will be used towards the club's rising expenses. In the past, members have donated \$50 for small birds and \$100 for larger ones.
- ☺ If a bird is adopted or relinquished through the club, a contract must be signed. If the bird is then not wanted, the club must be notified and the club will rehome it.



I am not loud.
I just come equipped with a randomly activated internal amplifier for the hearing impaired so every one can enjoy my beautiful voice!

DragonsCrazyBird-ecards 2012



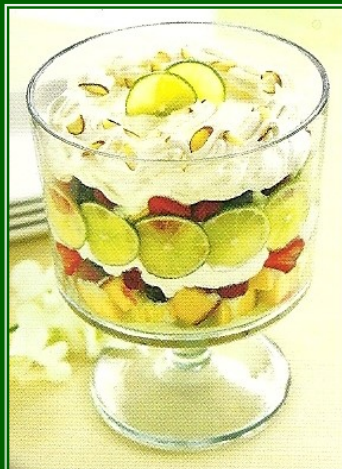
Submitted by club member Fran Pavelchak



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Understanding Molting in Birds

By Diane Burroughs



Understanding the molting process will help you care for your bird.

What is Molting?

Is your bird losing its feathers? It may be molting. Understanding molting is important. Pet birds molt at least once, but possibly twice a year; usually right after breeding season. Different species molt at different times based on the season, breeding season, migrations and nutritional needs. The length of time it takes to complete a molt is variable from species to species, too. And then, our pet birds, that aren't exposed to natural sunlight may molt at odd times.

Molting is the process of shedding old and tattered feathers for new ones. Birds have an internal clock in their brains that is set by natural sunlight! Molting is actually triggered by UVA and UVB lights existing in natural daylight or present high quality artificial full-spectrum bird lights. If your bird only sees light from modern windows or is outside at your convenience, its molt will be unusual. Modern windows filter out light spectrums to conserve energy and prevent your furniture from fading. Realistically, the majority of U.S. based households can't replicate the natural sunlight needs of a tropical parrot.

Feathers are generally shed after breeding season to take a bird through harsh weather before the

next breeding season. Molts occur over a period of a few weeks. Against popular thought, birds don't get bald patches with a molt. Bald patches leave an individual feather vulnerable to breakage. Mature feathers surround baby pin feathers to protect each feather from blood loss. Plus, a bird sheds feathers symmetrically and a few at a time so as to not disturb flight. In other words, the same feather on the right side of the body is lost on the left side of the body in order for a bird to maintain its balance and flight.

How will I know if my bird is molting?

Generally, you'll see intact feathers lying on the bottom of the cage. By intact, we mean a feather containing the entire shaft. You can see the actual tip of the feather. If the shaft is chewed up or splintered, it may indicate that your bird is engaging in feather destructive behavior. What you, as a bird parent, will notice is several intact, shed feathers on the floor or bottom of the cage over the course of several weeks. Keep in mind that a molt takes place over a few weeks or longer. The small, downy feathers that are used for insulation tend to be shed year round.

Why do birds molt?

Feathers are a bird's prized possession. When older feathers wear out, a bird needs healthy, renewed feathers for both flight and insulation purposes. Feathers are architectural in nature. From the architecture of individual feathers to the way each feather works in conjunction with those surrounding it together to procure flight and insulation.

Stressful? Yeah!

Feathers are almost pure protein so molting is incredibly stressful on the body. You may not understand depleting your body of essential proteins and nutrients unless you run 26 mile marathons. But a bird's body is built around flying 50 miles a day to its food source and back

to its nest. Your bird needs to be in tip top shape each and every day, just like a marathon runner. Or even more, because it can't store nutrients like mammals do.

During a molt, your bird must replace about 25% of its protein. New feather growth greatly taxes a bird's system, especially if it doesn't receive adequate protein, vitamins and minerals during feather regeneration. Birds don't store vitamins and minerals like mammals, so they seek out the nutrients they need daily in the wild. You guessed it. Molting coincides with new plants sprouting. Wild birds seek out these nutrient rich "baby" tropical plants to supplement new feather growth. If a bird doesn't receive appropriate nutritional intake, its feathers will suffer greatly. And, without healthy feathers, a wild bird will be lunch. Literally.

Feathers are made from 90% Keratin, a protein with an amino acid foundation. As a captive parrot parent, you must anticipate molting and offer your bird a well-balanced diet at all times, but especially so during a molt. If your bird doesn't receive appropriate nutritional intake, it will feel weak, ill and grumpy during a molt and new feather growth will be inferior. Curly, sparse and unhealthy feathers will cause your bird to chill but worse, the nutritional deprivation will slowly kill your bird. Proper nutritional and environmental support during a molt is a big thing.

New Pin Feathers

Undeveloped or baby feathers are called "pin feathers." At this stage, feathers are actually living tissue each with their own blood source. Pin feathers look like little quills that are transparent shade of purple as they are filled with blood. The blood transports essential nutrients for optimum feather growth.

These fragile pin feathers can bleed profusely if they get damaged, and the blood loss from a broken pin feather can kill a bird. That's why nature doesn't make a bird molt in patches but in a calculated fashion. Your bird needs protective adult feathers surrounding the new feather growth.

Never the less, our caged, wing-clipped birds get their baby pin feathers caught in cage bars. You'll want to make sure to keep some styptic gel on hand just in case. Wing feathers growing in around clipped feathers are most at risk for breakage. If a growing feather

gets damaged, you'll want to stop the bleeding straightaway. Use styptic gel, flour or cornstarch and apply pressure at the source for 1-2 minutes. Place the bird in a hospital cage and observe to insure the bleeding has indeed stopped. If it hasn't stopped, you'll want to transport the bird to a vet as soon as possible. Worst case scenario, learn how to pull a blood feather. This is incredibly painful and traumatic for a bird, but on rare occasions, it may be necessary. We strongly recommend that decision be made by an experienced avian vet.



by Guilherme Labarene

How can I help my bird thrive during a molt?

- *Always have a well-balanced diet available for your bird. Your bird may eat up to 25% more than usual. Your bird will be stressed and it will require excellent nutrition to grow healthy, new, colorful feathers.

- *Supplement with super nutritional fruits and vegetables. Make sure to provide plenty of green and yellow – orange vegetables.

- *Expose your bird to natural sunlight or purchase full-spectrum lights and set them in sync with actual daylight hours.

- *Consider offering your bird molting supplements such as Featheriffic, Nekton or Feather Fast.

- *Keep the environment warm and protect your bird from drafts as missing even a few feathers will leave your bird vulnerable to getting chilled.

*Mist or bathe your bird regularly. Consider blowing it dry to prevent chilling or offering it a heat lamp or heated perch.



Misting your parrot may ease the compulsion for feather plucking

*Anxiety – understand that your bird, an animal of prey, will feel significantly more vulnerable during this time simply due to the stress of molting. Offer your bird a quiet, warm and dark place to rest. You may want to cover the cage or offer your bird a Snuggly.

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About Diane Burroughs

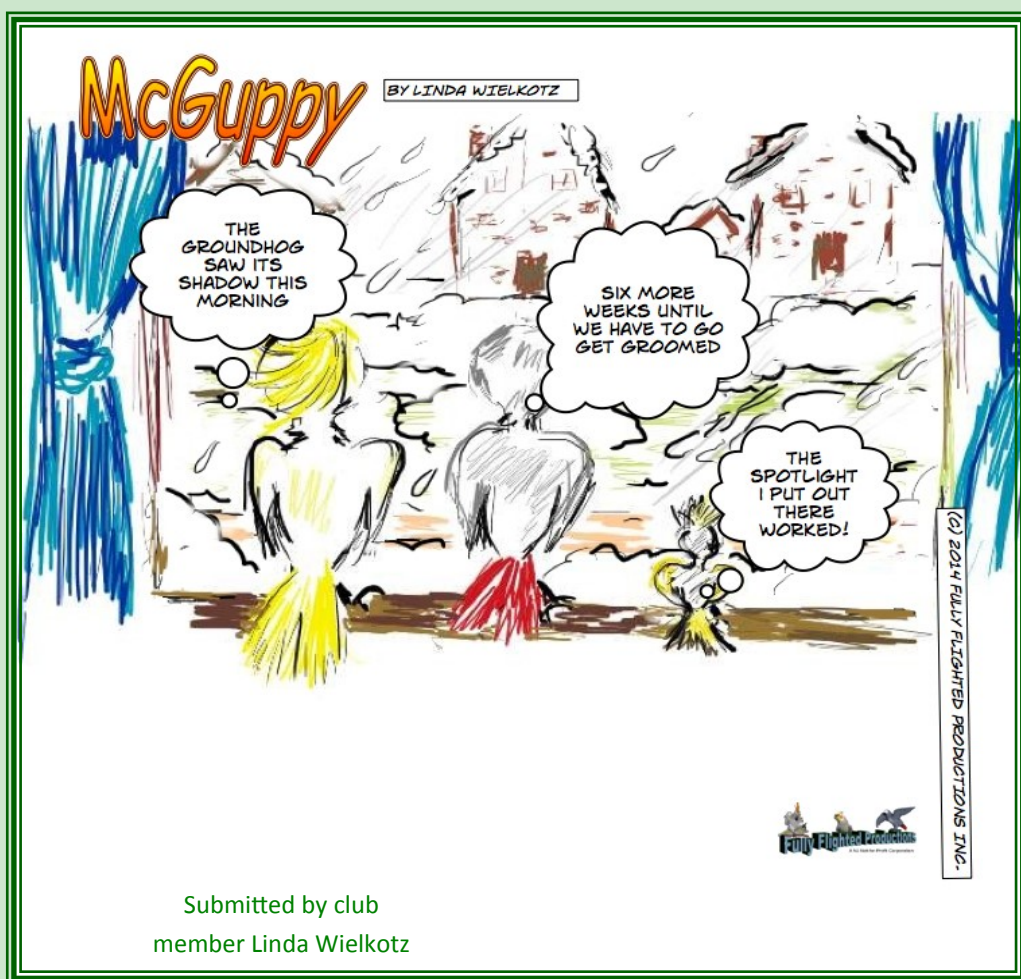
Diane Burroughs, founded BirdSupplies.com in 1998. A bird lover who is owned by African Greys, a Moluccan, a Parrotlet, and a Red-Bellied Parrot. Diane is dedicated to improving the lives of pet birds with vet-approved, parrot tested supplies, and expert bird care articles.

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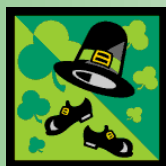
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Submitted by club member Linda Wielkottz



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*1 yr. \$150

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