

Bird Health Notes:



CHOOSING A CONURE

General information

There are numerous species of conures (*Aratinga* and *Pyrrhura sp. and others*) but only a few are commonly kept as pets. They are native throughout Mexico, Central and South America. Members of this group of birds are considered small to medium sized birds and are characterised by their long slender bodies, long tapered tail and large beak. They are a gregarious, mischievous bird known for their sassiness and may bite if they do not get what they want. Tame conures can be very affectionate, social birds who demand a reasonable amount of attention. Conures are not well known for their capacity to speak but can often be irritatingly vocal. This bold, inquisitive bird loves to play and chew. Providing non-toxic, washed, fresh branches and pet-safe toys will afford many hours of entertainment for this curious little pet. Some commonly kept conures include the Jenday conure, Blue-crowned conure, Nanday conure, Mitred conure, Sun conure, Green-cheeked conure, and Maroon-bellied conure.

Purchasing a Conure

Conures may be purchased from a pet shop or, better, a reputable breeder. When selecting a conure, try to choose a young bird as it may be easier to tame and train. Older, wild, colony or parent raised birds may prove difficult to tame. Hand raised babies often make better pets since they have been completely socialised with humans. Young birds are easier to tame and adapt readily to new environments and situations. Importantly having a captive-bred bird also means that the wild bird population is not threatened further by catching and importing wild birds. This practice is bad both for the bird captured and

transported as well as for the dwindling population left in the wild. Your new bird should be exposed early to different events (young and old people, males and females, other pets, car trips, visits to the vet, etc.) to help promote a calm, well adjusted pet. The lively, alert bird that is not easily frightened is more likely a healthy bird. After purchasing your new bird, have it examined by your vet.

Veterinary care

Conures require regular, routine veterinary health check-ups. Your veterinary surgeon can perform a physical examination, grooming (beak, nail or feather trim) and laboratory tests as needed. During these semi-annual check-ups, health, nutritional and maintenance issues can be identified and addressed. Veterinary check-ups help prevent disease and will aid in the maintenance of a long lasting, healthy relationship between you and your bird.

Colour

Mature

- green is the predominant body colour with a broad mixture of colours including red, orange, blue, yellow, brown, black and white.

Immature

- similar to the adult

Sexing

Mature

- no external sex differences between most of the species.

Weight: average 2.5 - 7.0 ounces (70 - 200 grams)

Size: average 9 - 20 inches (23 - 51 cm) in length

Life span: 8 - 15 years (maximum 30 years)

Diet: Consult your vet or see the diet sheet in this series.

Breeding: sexual maturity at 1-3 years depending on species, prolific breeders in captivity.

Brood size: 2 - 5 eggs hatch in 23 - 35 days, young leave the nest in 6 - 8 weeks

Cage: minimum 2 ft x 2 ft x 3 ft (60 cm x 60 cm x 90 cm) depending on species