

Budgie:

Scientific Name: *Melopsittacus Undulatus*

Brief Description:

The Budgerigar, also nicknamed the Budgie, or in American English, the Parakeet, is the third most popular pet in the world. They are from the Parrot Family and can be trained to mimic the human voice. They are small and quite easy to care for. Budgies are nomadic flock Parakeets that have been bred in captivity since the 19th century. In both captivity and the wild, budgerigars breed opportunistically and in pairs.



Average Size: Seven inches in length.

Life Span: Ten-to-twenty years with proper care.

Feeding:

- Specialized pelleted diets are highly recommended.
 - o Should consist of sixty-to-seventy percent of total intake.
- If bird is used to a seed diet, it can be converted to pellets, gradually.
- Always keep fresh pellets, seeds and fresh, chlorine-free water available.
- Provide fresh fruit and vegetables, daily.
 - o Apple slices, grated carrots, raw broccoli, green leafy vegetables.
- Parakeets appreciate quality and variety in their food.
- Dispose of any uneaten food before it spoils.

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Housing:

- Your pet Budgie will require a cage with the following dimensions:
 - o Eight-inches in width, by eighteen inches in diameter, by eighteen inches in height, with metal bars spread no greater than three-quarter-eighths of an inch apart.
 - o Its always best to provide your Budgie with the largest possible habitat.
- Perches should be at least four inches long and half-inch in diameter.
- Provide a number of perch sizes and materials to help exercise feet.
- A metal grate over the droppings tray.
- Line the droppings tray with paper or appropriate substrate for easy cleaning.
- Do not place food or water containers under perches.



Maintenance:

- Provide filtered, chlorine-free, lukewarm water for regular bathing.
 - o Remove water when done.
 - o As an alternative, mist bird with water or a grooming spray.
- Nails should be trimmed by a qualified person to prevent injury to the bird.
- Clean and disinfect cage and perches regularly.
- Replace substrate or cage liner weekly or more often.
- Replace food and water, daily.
- Replace perches, dishes and toys when worn or damaged.
- Always wash your hands after handling your bird or cage.

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Temperatures:

- Budgies acclimate well to average household temperatures.
- Avoid extreme temperature changes.
- Cage should be placed off the floor, in an area that is well-lit and away from drafts.



Humidity:

- No special requirements.

Lighting:

- Well lit rooms.

Water and Accessories:

- Install a bird bath, food and water dishes and a variety of perches.
- Include toys for your Parakeet to play with.
- Include treats and grit as well.

Petware
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Reproductive:



- Parakeet breeding is fairly easy, given a few simple conditions.
- Keep temperatures between seventy-to-eighty °F.
- A nesting box must be available.
- Be aware that some unusual breeding behavior can arise.
- Choose a pair of Budgies where the male is at least ten months old and the female is at least one year old.
- The courting ritual is quite amusing:
 - o The male will "preen" (pick through feathers with his beak, using it like a comb).
 - o The male will feed her and dance for her, bobbing his head up and down. Birds may do this as an indication of extreme excitement and immense happiness.
- Wooden boxes are available in most pet stores and is a must have for breeding. The following box dimensions are optimal:
 - o Eight-and-a-half inches tall, by six-and-a-half inches wide, by six-and-a-half inches deep.
 - o Box can be placed in the cage, or attached to the side of the cage.
 - o Do not place the box too high, or too low, in case the babies fall out.
 - o Box should have a flip top for occasional cleaning and to check on babies.
- Nesting material is unnecessary as the female will use feathers she loses.
- Seeds and water must always be available. Male will feed female in her box.
- When female is ready to mate, she will lift her tail and pick up her head.
- If successful, she will lay an egg a couple of days later and every other day or two until she has a clutch of three to five eggs.

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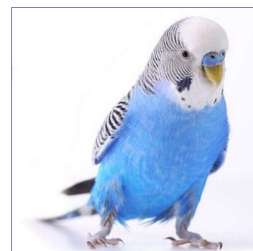
Reproductive: (con't)

- o Eggs should start to hatch every eighteen days or so.
- o Do not disturb the female or the box too much as she may abandon the nest.

- New born babies are born naked, with their eyes shut.
- New born babies grow quickly and will leave the nest in about four weeks.

Notes and Comments:

Parakeets are talkers, but their little voice can be hard to hear. They are active and need daily time out of their cage to interact with the family. They also enjoy a variety of chew toys and are social and get along well with their own kind.



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