



## DO BIRDS MAKE GREAT PETS?

Birds make wonderful pets for the whole family. The 2015 pet population statistics showed there are over half a million pet birds in the UK.

**In addition to being beautiful to look at, birds are inquisitive, intelligent and have a great capacity for learning. Most are highly sociable, eager to learn and can develop strong bonds with their owners.**

### DO BIRDS MAKE GOOD COMPANIONS?

There are many bird species and they are all different! Most birds are content with human companionship but others like budgies need another budgie to play with. The best points of reference for advice are responsible breeders, reputable pet retailers or specialist vets.

The enjoyment of caring for a pet bird can last a lifetime with larger birds such as the macaw living for 60 years or more. Smaller birds such as budgies live for around 15 years.

Also, because of their size and housing requirements, birds can be enjoyed by those unable to care for larger pets.

### ARE ALL EXOTIC BIRDS CAPTURED FROM THE WILD?

'Exotics' is a term commonly used to refer to all the non-domestic birds and small furry animals including rabbits, guinea pigs, reptiles and birds. All the stock that is legally available for sale in the UK are bred by breeders within Europe.

The importation of animals is closely regulated and this means that they should be transported responsibly. Unfortunately, there are some rogue traders and it is therefore important to do your

research before purchasing/adopting any pet. Reputable pet retailers will source their pets responsibly. These retailers, along with bird rescue centres, will be able to provide potential owners with background information as well as future care advice for the particular species. In the UK there are a number of responsible breeders of pet birds. With more experience of pet bird care, they are an ideal first point of call for potential owners.

### IS IT DIFFICULT TO KEEP A PET BIRD?

Keeping birds is no different from keeping rabbits, cats and dogs, and is very rewarding when done responsibly. It is imperative that all pet owners - not just those keeping birds - fully understand their different needs in order for them to be healthy and happy. Owning and caring for any pet is a big responsibility and detailed research should be carried out before adding a pet bird to your family.

We recommend all owners read about their duty of care and understand about their pet's welfare needs. These are to provide them with the right diet, a good safe home and environment in which they can demonstrate normal behaviour, suitable companionship and veterinary care.

