

Squawk 'n Talk

November 2017

Big Welcome Back!



Jason Crean, Guest Speaker
"Avian Raw Whole Food Nutrition for Parrots"
November 12, 2017 (Second Sunday)
2:00 p.m.
Varietees Bird Store
Valley Park, MO

This will be Jason's third time speaking at Varietees. The information he provides is so helpful to all of us in planning our avian diets. Jason is a biologist, educator, avid aviculturist, and zoo consultant specializing in avian nutrition. He is President of The Aviculture Society of Chicagoland, Vice President of the American Federation of Aviculture (AFA) and moderator of the Facebook groups "Avian Raw Whole Food Nutrition" and "Holistic Avian Care"



Come join the Gateway Parrot Club for a fun afternoon:
Speaker
Food
Fellowship
Raffle
Meeting



Chirps from the President's Perch

Another reminder that the November 12th meeting is on the **SECOND SUNDAY** of the month. Please be sure to mark the date in your calendar.

Joanna Berger M.Sc., Animal Behaviorist shared her experiences and research information with us about African Greys last month. There was a great deal of very interesting data that she brought to us. Our thanks for joining us.

The special raffle for the Free registration to the Parrot Festival held in Houston the end of January 2018 will be drawn at our November 12th meeting. Parrot Festival is a three-day educational seminar with speakers from across the nation. The dates are January 26, 27, and 28, 2018. It's truly a very worthwhile event that you should consider attending. The Raffle will be for a Free Registration to Parrot Festival, a \$150 value. Don't miss your opportunity to win this fabulous prize. A list of speakers will be published very soon. The Hilton Doubletree Hotel rooms are \$98 a night and reservations are now open for booking.

**For more information go to: <http://www.parrutfestival.org/when-where-is-it>
All funds generated in this special raffle will be dedicated to the AFA Disaster Fund.**

Dr. Jason Crean will be providing us with a very special opportunity to be updated in the newest information regarding Avian Nutrition at our November 12th meeting. Jason's focus is on feeding fresh foods that can offer an excellent diet for hookbills and softbills. Dr. Crean dedicates himself to educating Aviculturists toward providing the best for our birds. Please join us in welcoming him on the 12th

The following is a list of the current club positions that will be up for nominations during the November meeting. All positions are for a two (2) year term beginning on January 1, 2018. Voting on these positions will be at the December meeting. The positions are as follows with the person who currently holds them in parenthesis: Secretary (Dave Kincade); Treasurer (Cathy Timma); Membership Secretary (Renee Davis); and 3 Board members (Christine Kincade, Rick Ruderer, and Heidi Hellmuth). In order to run for office or board position, you must have attended four or more meetings during the calendar year. If interested, come to the meeting and tell us if you would like to run.

See you soon, Georgia

Gateway Parrot Club



Meeting Dates 2017:

November 12, 2017, Jason Crean, Guest Speaker

December 10, 2017, Christmas Party

Meeting Dates 2018:

January 21

February 18

March 18

April 15

May 20

June 10

*** Meeting will be on 2nd Sunday**

General Meeting Information:

Come and enjoy the fun and bring a bird (as long as it is clipped). It's so enjoyable seeing all the different species of parrots and talking to other parrot owners.

You don't have to be a member to attend, but we would love to have you join. Meeting starts at 2:00 and it will be a full afternoon of meeting, socializing, eating, program, and raffle. For members who have not renewed their membership or who would like to join, please see Renee Davis, our membership chair person. She will be at the meeting to sign you up. An annual membership fee of \$20.00 includes your family (two voting members) and brings you our monthly newsletter by email. Thank you for joining and helping support the parrot community in St. Louis.

We meet at Varietees Bird Store, 60 Meramec Valley Plaza, Valley Park, MO. Varietees will be open in the afternoon so you can purchase bird food, supplies, toys, cages, play stands, etc.

We do have a raffle most months so if you would like to donate item(s), they are always welcome. They do not have to be bird related. We sell raffle tickets for \$1.00 each or 6 for \$5.00.

Chef Christine will be preparing pulled pork sandwiches, slaw, potato salad, pasta salad and chips. For dessert she will be making pumpkin pies and pumpkin cake with whipped cream. There will also be bottles of water and a variety of soda. Feel free to bring something to add to the buffet (snacks, salad, dessert, etc.).

Membership Report (Renee Davis):

Welcome new member:

Don Thompson

GPC September Meeting Attendees:

Georgia Fletcher	Julie Morgan
Dick Grommet	Barbara Peach
David Kincade	Beth Poll
Cathy Timma	Lisa Rose
Renee Davis	Pat Seiler
Carole Grommet	Perry Sigwerth
Bryan Gilchrist	Sandy Warren
Heidi Hellmuth	Jean Allen
Christine Kincade	Ruth Anderson
Tracy Schwarztrauber	Judy Baughman
Barbara Agathen	Michael Cross
Paul Agathen	Miriam Hannibal
Joerg Augustin	Carolynne Kieffer
Megan Augustin	Adeline May
Dixie Danzeisen	Abigail May
Janet Draper	Christopher May
Dan Fogarty	Stacy Minden
Dave Guiot	Dorene Olson
Elizabeth Guiot	Don Petri
Esther Herman	Grace Sanders
Steve Johnson	Tammy Shatsu
Al Marks	Oscar Snow
Janet Marks	Larry Sondag
Nancy Marron	Sandy Sondag
Jim Berk	Don Thompson



**Association of
Avian Veterinarians**

Advancing & Promoting Avian Medicine and Stewardship

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Foraging Opportunities (Part 2 of a Series on Enrichment)

By: Kenneth R. Welle, DVM, Dipl ABVP (Avian), University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine Adapted from: "Extreme Enrichment for the Modern Macaw," Session #137, ExoticsCon 2016

The importance of foraging has become clear over the past decade. The difference in the time budget for this activity in wild birds vs. pet birds may be the greatest of any activity. This may be a significant reason for the frequency of displacement behaviors. Some research has shown foraging to reduce feather damaging behaviors in parrots. For these reasons, foraging should be considered the most important enrichment activity that can be provided. It is important that clients be guided on how to institute an effective foraging program. Simply telling owners to give foraging toys will not be effective. There are many types of foraging activities. These need to be matched to the feeding behavior of the species and the individual. For instance, many popular psittacids (e.g., budgerigars, cockatiels) are primarily ground feeding birds. They eat a lot of grass seeds and other items they find on the ground. These birds have not evolved extensive skills with holding food in the feet or opening complicated nuts. They do have keen eyes for spotting food particles on the ground. These birds will work best with a foraging tray, a flat pan filled with shredded paper or paper litter. Food can be sprinkled into this tray, allowing the bird to walk about and find the food particles. Tree feeding birds, by contrast may collect food from the ground but would bring it to a branch to eat it, or may find food items in the trees themselves. They will have greater dexterity with the foot and beak. They will have to open nuts, or sometimes solve other problems to retrieve their food. These birds are more adapted to commercial foraging toys. Foraging should also be introduced as a graduated program. A novice forager should not be given a complex foraging toy. Their inability to achieve rapid success will frustrate them and cause them to give up. The following is an excerpt from one of the author's client education handouts.

“Techniques for encouraging foraging

Wait until your bird is mastering one step before moving to a more challenging step.

Step 1: Reduce the total amount of food to just what your bird finishes in a day. Measure the food before putting it in the dish. Then in 24 hours measure what is left. If there is no food after 24 hours, give a little more the next day. If there is some food remaining reduce the food.

Step 2: Divide the food. Get 5-10 smaller dishes (preferably ones that fit in a ring holder). Initially put most in the original dish, and just a sprinkle in each of the others. Once your bird is eating from all of the dishes, start to divide the food more evenly between them.

Step 3: Mix in some non-edible materials as distracters. Some choices would be wooden beads, paper litter (i.e. CareFresh or Yesterday's News) or paper scraps. Initially just put a few in each dish. Gradually add more so your bird has to carefully sort through to separate food from debris.

Step 4: Cover the dishes. Take a paper towel and put it over the dish and tuck into the ring holder. If there is no ring, a rubber band can be used. Now your bird has to chew open the dish, then sort through the distracters to find the food.

Step 5: Wrap individual food items. Take a few food items and put in a small piece of paper and twist the ends. Place these in the dish with the other food items and the distracters.

Other ideas:

- Try hiding a few of your bird's favorite foods on or in other toys. This can encourage play and a more inquisitive nature.
- Put a food nugget in a paper cup and then roll the top of the cup around a cage bar.
- For a big challenge, hang a food item at the end of a string or rope so the bird has to pull it up

(or snip the string to let it drop)

- There are lots of "puzzle toys" available for sale. After your bird masters the above steps, try a few of them to see what works best.

- Try a foraging tree. Set up a stand or tree with lots of little spots to hide a food nugget. Put food in some but not all of the spots. This keeps the bird guessing, and looking.”

Once a bird gets proficient with foraging, the original food dish can be eliminated and all of the food can be offered via foraging opportunities. There are unlimited ways to present the food. Sometimes the food can be hidden in other toys, in holes drilled in perches, in the bedding, and other places that the bird can explore. Some spots will not have any food, others will. Foraging should always continue to challenge the bird. Ideally, finding and consuming the food should take up a large part of the day. Although it would be difficult to achieve the six hours of foraging wild birds may get, even 2-3 hours would be a huge benefit.

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