

# Squawk 'n Talk

August 2019



**GATEWAY PARROT CLUB**  
**32<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL ALL-AMERICAN HOOKBILL**  
**BIRD FAIR** SAT AUG 24  
10AM - 5PM

What Polly wants, Polly gets.  
It's time to spoil Polly! Enjoy 10,000 square feet  
of parrots, toys, food, cages, play stands,  
handmade items *and more!*

|                     |                |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Parrot Meet + Greet | Raffle Items   |
| Concession Stand    | Silent Auction |
| Birdie Bake Sale    | Seminars       |

*2019 Guest Speakers*  
Dr. David Kersting  
Heidi Hellmuth

**when?** 10AM - 5PM  
AUGUST 24, 2019

**where?** MACHINISTS' HALL  
12365 St. Charles Rock Rd.  
St. Louis, MO 63044

## VENDOR SPACE AVAILABLE!

Contact Fair Coordinator, Dick Grommet  
(636) 529-0026 | [rwgrommet@att.net](mailto:rwgrommet@att.net)



Ⓜ [www.GatewayParrotClub.org](http://www.GatewayParrotClub.org)  
f [facebook.com/groups/GatewayParrotClub](https://facebook.com/groups/GatewayParrotClub)





Hey you,  
your bird  
wants new  
stuff!

32<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL ALL-AMERICAN HOOKBILL  
**BIRD FAIR**  
SAT AUG 24 10AM - 5PM

**NOTE:**

WE WILL NOT HAVE A GENERAL MEETING IN AUGUST. INSTEAD, COME TO THE FAIR ON AUGUST 24TH AND ENJOY THE DAY BUYING YOUR BIRD SOME NEW TOYS, PURCHASE BEAUTIFUL PARROT ARTWORK FROM ARTISTS, PLAYING WITH PARROTS AND SOME SMALL ANIMALS, LEARNING ABOUT PARROTS, EATING A HOT DOG OR BRATWURST, GETTING IDEAS OF HOW TO ENRICH YOUR PETS' LIVES, VISITING AND SHARING STORIES WITH OTHER ANIMAL LOVERS.

## Fair Update (Dick Grommet)

We look forward to seeing you at our annual fair. The fair is fast approaching and we want to remind you that if you have any items for our raffle or silent auction tables, please bring them to the fair or email us and we can pick them up. The contact email address is: [rwgrommet@att.net](mailto:rwgrommet@att.net). Use this email address for any questions you have regarding the fair.

While at the fair, be sure to check out both the raffle and silent auction tables. We always have some wonderful items on them.

As we approach the fair date, more vendors are requesting space, but if you know of anyone who has a bird product that would be of interest to our attendees, let us know so we can contact them about becoming a vendor. If you would like to be a vendor, we would love to have you.

Our speakers this year are Dr. David Kersting (Bird Medicine and Surgery) and Heidi Hellmuth, Curator of Primates at the St. Louis Zoo and Secretary of Gateway Parrot Club.

Dr. Kersting will be presenting at 11:00. His topic is "UV Lighting and Interesting Cases." We all look forward to hearing him talk about interesting cases that he sees at the clinic. Proper lighting for birds is also an excellent topic for all of us to hear.

Heidi will have an interactive seminar entitled "Action Planning for Enrichment" at 1:00 p.m. Join this session to learn a great technique for continuing to improve enrichment options for your birds. Starting with looking at the birds' natural history and identifying natural behaviors that they can/can't do now and that you want to encourage. The action planning tool gives you a new way to set goals for your bird's enrichment, and you can see it in action as the group works together to determine some enrichment priorities and ideas for two or three parrot species as examples.

Both Dr. Kersting and Heidi's presentations are going to be educational and very interesting. There is lots to learn about parrots and they are both wonderful teachers.

Adeline and Abbie will again have the popular special exhibit called “Meet the Parrots.” It has always drawn a lot of attention and positive feedback from fair attendees. There will be parrot owners there to talk about their parrots and what is unique about each species. The parrots in this area are not for sale. They are all personal pets.

Christine and Dave Kinkade are doing the concession stand and planning to serve hot dogs, chili dogs, brats, nachos with cheese, popcorn, chips, soda, and water, all at a very reasonable price.

Reminder that individuals may not bring their personal birds into the fair unless they are participating in a special event. The birds must stay in the special event area and owners may not walk around the vendor area with them.

If you are on Facebook, we will have posts updating fair news in the Gateway Parrot Club group page and also the Gateway Parrot Club Event page.

**See You At The Fair!**

## **Volunteers Needed for the Fair (Heidi Hellmuth)**

Please sign up to volunteer at this year’s bird fair, Saturday August 24. There are time slots available and numerous areas that need help. Heidi Hellmuth would LOVE to hear from you anytime with your availability. Email [Heidi.hellmuth@yahoo.com](mailto:Heidi.hellmuth@yahoo.com) or call/text 301-431-0181.

See below for time slots and work areas. Please note that your choice of work area will be given if possible, but if the slots are full you might be asked to help in another section.

Areas: Set Up (8-10 a.m. slot) – Admissions – Raffle – Concessions – Membership – Silent Auction - Floaters

Time Slots: 10 a.m.-12 p.m., 12-2 p.m., 2-4 p.m., 4-6 p.m. (last slot helps with breakdown)

## Pictures from our July Meeting

We had another fun toy making party. The 30 toys that were made for small, medium, and large parrots, will be on the raffle tables. Below are pictures of the toys that were made.



## General Meeting Information

**NOTE: No Meeting in August. Come to the fair on August 24th**

You don't have to be a member to attend, but we would love to have you join. Meeting starts at 1:00 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, and helps us to provide special speakers and to support not for profit organizations. 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.

Did you know that the Gateway Parrot Club has a Facebook group page? If you would like to join this group, search for "Gateway Parrot Club" in Facebook and request membership. We have over 600 members! Also check out our website at [gatewayparrotclub.org](http://gatewayparrotclub.org)

# **Gateway Parrot Club**



## **Meeting Dates 2019:**

- \* June 9, Stephen Johnson, Part 2, 2018 AAV Conference Rpt.
- July 21, Toymaking Party
- August 24 (Saturday) All American Hookbill Fair
- September 15
- October 20
- November 17 Randy Morgan, Honey of a Bee Presentation
- \* December 8, Holiday Party

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



# Association of Avian Veterinarians

## **July 2019 AAV Bird Club News Release**

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### **What Parrots Want?!? Avian Foraging and Environmental Enrichment (Part 1 of 2)**

*(Adapted from ExoticsCon 2018 Proceedings, Session #2297)*

*By: Yvonne van Zeeland, DVM, MVR, PhD, DipECZM (Avian), DipECZM (Small Mammal), CPBC; Division of Zoological Medicine, Department of Clinical Sciences of Companion Animals, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Utrecht University, The Netherlands*

#### **Introduction**

Parrots comprise one of the more popular avian species kept as pets. For the greater part, this popularity can be attributed to their high cognitive abilities as well as their ability to form strong bonds with their caregiver. At the same time, these characteristics also make that they require a complex environment that provides a lot of stimulation, both physical and mental; however, this may be easier said than done. Many caregivers purchase parrots unaware of their special needs. In addition, captive settings often provide limited opportunities for the birds to express their species-typical behaviors. In species such as parrots, which are not yet domesticated and thus share many similarities to their wild conspecifics, the inability to express their wild instincts and behaviors may contribute to the onset of abnormal or undesirable behaviors

such as biting, excessive vocalization, and self-injurious behaviors, including feather-damaging behavior.

To alleviate these problem behaviors and encourage species-specific behaviors, provision of environmental enrichment to captive parrots is highly recommended. According to Newberry (1995), environmental enrichment comprises “an improvement in the biological functioning of captive animals resulting from modifications to their environment.” Aside from providing the animal with opportunities to perform species-appropriate behaviors, enrichment also provides the animal with opportunities to solve challenges (ie, mental stimulation), make choices, and exert control on the environment, which are all beneficial to the animal’s wellbeing. In essence, five partially overlapping categories of enrichment can be distinguished:

- 1) Social enrichment (ie, contact with conspecifics or explicit interaction with humans, other birds or animals),
- 2) Cognitive or occupational enrichment (ie, enrichment that provides a mental or physical challenge),
- 3) Physical or habitat-related enrichment (ie, change to the bird’s habitat in terms of size, complexity and/or furnishings),
- 4) Sensory enrichment (ie, enrichment targeting one of the five senses: vision, audition, touch, taste and olfaction), and
- 5) Nutritional and foraging enrichment (ie, enrichment aimed at stimulating food-related activities).

## **Social Enrichment**

For flock birds such as parrots, companionship is vital and can be provided by humans, parrots, and other animals. Visual, vocal, and physical contact with humans, parrots, other birds and/or other animals are all considered important. Lack of social contact can result in problem behaviors such as excessive screaming to attract attention, anxiety, and feather-damaging behavior. Petting, cuddling, kissing, and allowing birds to climb onto the shoulder are generally discouraged as these may encourage inappropriate bond formation. In contrast, activities such as training, verbal games, dancing, and exercise are activities that are considered to promote a healthy bond. Radios or televisions or other types of background noises may provide the single pet parrot with vocal stimulation while the owner is away.

The company of other birds may also be valued by parrots, especially by those that have been reared by their parents and/or with other birds. Contact may vary from limited vocal and/or visual contact (eg, when birds are placed in the same or an adjacent room or aviary) to more intense contact (eg, when the cages are placed side by side, the birds are physically housed together or are allowed to interact with each other outside of their cages). In particular mutual preening is considered important to promote social bonds. Although social contact with conspecifics has been shown to positively affect the welfare of parrots, parrots that have been imprinted on humans, may become aggressive or frightened when confronted with another bird. Thus, the parrot's previous experiences and rearing history need to be taken into account when weighing the risks and benefits of the addition of a new bird to the household, and shaping may be required to introduce birds to one another.

### **Cognitive or Occupational Enrichment**

Cognitive enrichment addresses the cognitive abilities of an animal by providing mental stimulation. Through cognitive interaction with the environment, the animal will regain a certain control over its environment, whereby resources such as food or water may act as a reward for successful coping. This process is assumed to have important implications for animal welfare, especially in highly intelligent animals such as parrots. Cognitive enrichment can include activities such as training, playing games or offering puzzle feeders which the animal has to manipulate to obtain food. Moreover,

novel objects such as unusual foods, novel toys and unusual scents can be used to stimulate exploration behaviors.

Aside from mental stimulation, physical stimulation is also important. This can be promoted by providing the animal with opportunities to exercise (ie, flying, climbing, swinging, and swaying).

### **Physical Enrichment**

Physical enrichment relates to the position, type, and size of enclosure (cage, aviary, play area or play stand), including the furniture provided in or on these. Cages should at least be big enough to allow a parrot to spread its wings, climb and move around comfortably without damaging the feathers from their wings or tail. In addition, the cage should be equipped with elements such as perches, swings and climbing structures of different materials, textures and diameters; substrate materials and vegetation; hiding places and nest boxes to provide protection and a visual barrier from people and other animals; bathing opportunities; and a variety of different toys (eg, foot toys, puzzles and games) and chewing materials. In addition, taking the parrot outside for a change of scenery and exposure to natural sunlight and climate changes (eg, wind, temperature, humidity) is another way to provide physical enrichment.

(Continued Next Month)