

## FACTS TO KNOW ABOUT PARROTS

Parrots are the third most popular “pet” in homes today.

Parrots are more expensive to keep than dogs or cats. Annual cost per medium size bird: \$2,100

- Food \$600
- Toys & other supplies \$700
- Vet check-ups \$300
- Misc Expenses \$500

Parrots are more likely to live with low income families because they are considered inexpensive and easy to care for, which is not true

The annual U.S. retail turnover in parrots, both imported and captive-bred, is estimated at \$300 million.

While the estimate of “pet” birds is lower than estimates for companion dogs and cats, the population of dogs and cats has remained relatively stable over time while ‘pet’ bird populations have skyrocketed in recent years.

Dog population:  
1990 – 52.1 million  
1996 - 58.2 million

Cat population:  
1990 - 60.8 million  
1996 – 66.15 million

Parrot population:  
1990 – 11.6 million  
1996 – 40 million - an increase of 244.8 percent  
2010 – 60 million  
2020 – 100 million (estimated by parrot experts at Best Friends Animal Society, based on trajectory of previous statistics from the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council, The Journal of the American Veterinarian Medical Association and Avian Welfare Coalition.)

### **Sources for parrot population in the United States**

- Breeding -- 75 percent
- Smuggling -- 20 percent
- Importing -- 5 percent

### **Breeders**

There are 170 registered breeders listed on The United States Breeders and Aviary Listings, and thousands of unregistered breeders can be found online and/or in newspapers.

### **One breeding pair of parrots:**

Can lay a clutch of 2–3 eggs

Can lay up to three clutches per year when the hatchlings are pulled for weaning

Can reproduce for at least 10-15 years

Total number of parrots produced by one breeding pair in one year -- 9

Total number of parrots produced by 1 pair after 15 years--135

### **Parrot longevity:**

#### **Cockatiel**

Average cost-- \$85-\$110

Life expectancy--15-24 years

#### **African Grey**

Average cost-- \$600-\$800

Life expectancy-- 60-80 years

#### **Cockatoo**

Average cost-- \$800-\$1,000

Life expectancy-- 60-80 years

#### **Macaw**

Average cost-- \$1,500-\$10,000

70-100 years

### **Smuggling:**

It is estimated that 250,000 parrots are smuggled into the United States every year.

Approximately 25,000 smuggled parrots die each year due to suffocation, starvation, or inhumane treatment while being transported. About \$40 million dollars flow to the black market from parrots smuggled in from the Mexican border each year.

### **Legal Importation**

Last year the United States legally imported roughly 17,000 parrots. Indonesia, the Philippines, many African countries, including the Democratic Republic of Congo is among the major exporters of wild parrots. In 1990 the U.S. imported 450,000 live birds, of which at least 150,000 were parrots.

### **Law passed**

The Wild Bird Conservation Act in 1992 closed the gates to the majority of the annual importation of 450,000 exotic birds which had been going on for decades. Of the 17,000 a year that are legally imported, the birds go to educational or research facilities and/or zoos.

### **Sources:**

Trade and Environmental Database (TED), American University, The School of International Service: <http://www1.american.edu/ted/PARROT.HTM>

World Wildlife Fund: <http://www.worldwildlife.org>

Born Free USA: <http://www.bornfreeusa.org>

Associated Content: <http://www.associatedcontent.com>  
The Avian Welfare Coalition: <http://www.avianwelfare.org>  
World Parrot Trust: <http://www.parrots.org>  
Parrot Chronicles: <http://www.parrotchronicles.com>  
Exotic Bird Services link: <http://exoticbirdservices.org/allbirdclubs.shtml>  
CKC Birds link: <http://www.ckcbirds.co.uk/>  
Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council: <http://www.pijac.org/>  
The Journal of the American Veterinarian Medical Association:  
<http://avmajournals.avma.org/loi/javma>

