



Bad Eggs

I think eggs are beautiful, love their symbolism, love Easter. I love new-hatched parrot chicks. But an egg bound parrot is something I hate to see walk in the door, because some die.

I could write a lot about this, but I'm going to try and keep it to some high points.

- Small birds (budgies, cockatiels, conures) are more likely to get egg bound.
- Small birds are more likely to lay at anytime of the year.
- Birds usually start laying, as the daylight gets longer.
- The more eggs a bird lays, the more likely the later eggs will give the bird problems.
- All seed diets can cause reproductive problems, including egg binding.
- Smaller birds have larger clutches. Large birds (Amazons, cockatoos, macaws) usually lay two eggs.
- Eggs are laid 2 (occasionally 3) days apart.

How does an egg bound bird look?

- It can be paralyzed, either its' left leg or both legs (seldom just the right)
- It can be weak and sitting/laying on the bottom of the cage.
- It can look like it is having problems breathing.
- If you turn them over, the vent will often look enlarged and be caked with feces.
- Sometimes you can see a swelling in the abdomen.
- It may just look a little tired and fluffy!

Egg binding is an EMERGENCY, the sooner the bird gets to the vet, the better its chances. In the meantime give her supplemental heat, supplemental humidity and accessible food and water.

How to minimize egg binding/laying

Think of a wild bird; they fly (exercise), eat right (change diet according to season), are in natural light and live to mate.

Think of a companion bird; most get limited exercise, they can only eat what is offered, and they get sexually frustrated.

- Don't try and be the birds' mate--minimize handling, don't play with her tail
- Take any items the bird can perceive as a nest out of the cage.
- Don't let her go in cabinets, drawers or dryers.
- If you notice her getting hormonal -- give the bird more 'dark' time. (Birds do not go in heat like dogs do.)
- For birds to utilize calcium they need a full spectrum light or sunlight.
- And basic stuff, convert your bird to a mostly pellet diet and feed fresh vegetables (especially those rich in Calcium and vitamin A.)

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