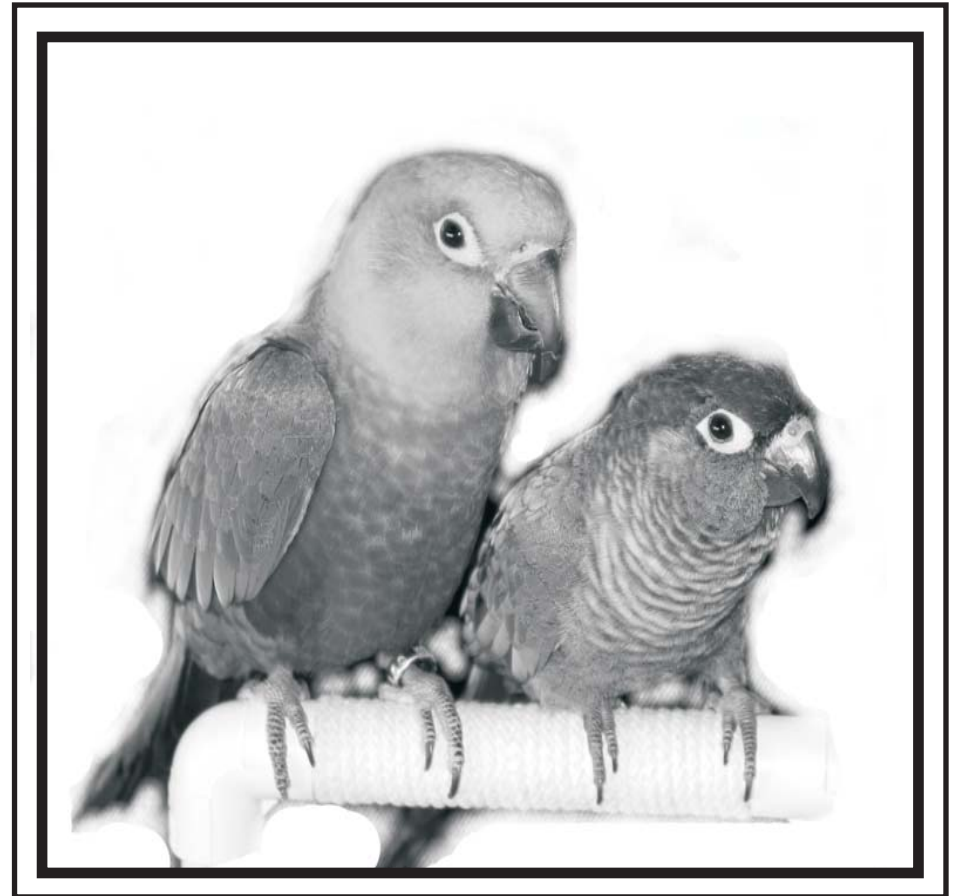




Conure



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Conure

Conures are pint-sized parrots that come in a variety of colours, noise levels and sizes. Depending on the species, most are highly desirable pets due to their practical size and engaging personalities. They are affordable, widely available and fit nicely into homes of any size.

Origin

Conures are native to most of South and Central America. Although the exact number of species and sub species is not known, somewhere between 60 and 100 varieties exist. These birds vary in size from the smallest of the species at 5 inches in length to the largest at 19 inches in length. Depending on the species, they have an average lifespan of 15 to 30 years. It is difficult to visually distinguish the sexes of most conures.

General Personality

These birds have a never-ending source of energy. They are fun to watch because of their vibrant colours and acrobatic natures. They are pleasant and peaceful birds. Unfortunately, the voice of many conures is not always pleasant often consisting of bouts of loud screaming. With proper training these outbursts may be controlled. Although not known for their talking abilities, many handfed birds can develop good vocabularies.

Food

Their primary food source should be a quality parrot pellet which is available at pet stores. This should be offered daily along with clean water, fruits, vegetables and occasionally a mix of seeds. Sunflower seeds are high in fat and should be offered only as a treat. Grit or gravel is not necessary for most caged birds.

Housing

Conures need a spacious cage with plenty of room for play. Their cages should have a bar spacing that will not allow their heads to fit through. Natural tree branches that vary in thickness make good perches inside the cage. They provide exercise for their feet and hours of chewing entertainment. Toys are an important part of a bird's life as they provide

entertainment while inside their cage. Make sure you give your bird a variety of safe toys suited for its size. To prevent boredom don't give your bird all of the toys at once. Rotate them and make sure you give your bird plenty of time outside of its cage. Conures love to burrow under blankets and pillows so be extra careful when your bird is out playing. Clean droppings from the cage bottom and perches daily.

Health Care

Wing trimming is essential for your bird's safety. The loss of a pet bird flying out an open door is devastating. Nail trimming is also necessary for proper grip on perches and a comfortable grip on arms and fingers. Conures love to bathe whether it is in a dish of warm water, spritzed with a pump sprayer, under lightly running tap or in the shower with its owner. Parrots should have a bath or shower at least weekly.

THE PARROT CLUB OF MANITOBA meets the 3rd Friday of each month at 7:30 pm at St. Alban's Anglican Church, basement level, 486 Rathgar (off Osborne). Check community announcements or contact the club in case of changes. Several members of the Parrot Club of Manitoba have conures as pets and would be able to tell you how these birds are in the home environment.

Winnipeg veterinarians with an interest in avian medicine are:

Dr. Heather McDonald of Centennial Animal Hospital
Dr. Nancy McQuade of Winrose Animal Hospital
Dr. Carolyn Eickhorn of Winrose Animal Hospital
Dr. Birte Klug of Winrose Animal Hospital
Dr. Andrew Davidson of Corydon Animal Hospital
Dr. C. Skavinsky of Anderson Animal Hospital
Dr. Lisa Sawka of Charleswood Veterinary Clinic