

# Veterinary Viewpoints

edited by Amy Worell, D.V.M.  
Woodland Hills, California

side effects of this latter medication include increase in food consumption with the resulting effect of increased body weight.

If none of these methods prove to be successful, a careful review of the diet is necessary to insure adequate nutrition for the increased demands of egg laying on the body. In addition to a varied diet composed of several categories of foodstuffs, vitamin D3 and calcium supplementation should be evaluated.

Amy Worell, DVM  
Woodland Hills, CA

**Question:** One of my parakeets has intermittent respiratory infections. He will occasionally sneeze and often the area around his eye will swell. My veterinarian places him on antibiotics but it eventually seems to come back. He says the bird has a sinusitis. What is the sinusitis caused by?

C. Dawson, Alabama

**Answer:** Sinusitis has many causes, including allergies, viruses, bacteria, tumors, and parasites to name a few. Reoccurrence is common even with treatment as sinuses are somewhat isolated structures. It is important to ascertain the cause and treat specifically as well as providing good nursing care and a well-balanced diet.

James M. Harris, DVM  
Oakland, CA

**Answer:** Sinusitis by definition is an inflammation of the sinuses. There are many causes of this condition including bacterial, viral, mycoplasmal and chlamydial. It is often secondary to other disease. The bird has a very intricate sinus system with the sinuses communicating with each other. An infection starting in the nasal sinus can extend to the infraorbital sinus and cause swelling either as the result of exudate (pus) filling the sinus or from an inflammatory process causing tissue swelling. The eyelids or areas around the eye lids will swell causing the eyes to close. Conjunctivitis is often associated with sinusitis. The treatment depends upon the causative agent and, therefore, requires laboratory investigation. Some infections are chronic and reoccur. In these chronic cases, surgical exploration is often necessary.

Robert B. Altman, DVM  
Franklin Square, NY ●

*If there is anything you'd like to know about avian medicine, nutrition, even husbandry or anything else, please send your questions to:*

**Veterinary Viewpoints**  
P.O. Box 56218, Phoenix, AZ 85079-6218

**Question:** I have a pet African grey parrot that has recently become broody. Even though she is a pet, she continually lays eggs, and then sits on the eggs. I have removed the eggs, but then she will tear up paper and sit on the bottom of the cage as if in a nest. I also breed birds but I would like to keep this bird as a pet. What would you suggest?

J. Cable, California

**Answer:** As many birds reach sexual maturity, the hormonal changes that occur often take precedent in a bird's life. A once loveable pet may become aggressive during that species' normal breeding season and display signs of territorialism or, occasionally, severe biting. Other birds, such as with your pet African grey, may remain good tempered but produce eggs or display nest building behavior. One option would be the placement of the bird into a breeding situation. You should realize, though, that in a large percentage of situations where a beloved pet bird is offered a compatible mate, the former pet may no longer be handleable as many will revert to a more "wild" personality.

If you would prefer keeping your bird as a pet, then several ideas could be tried to attempt halting the bird's egg laying. As African greys tend to be year around egg producers rather than seasonal egg layers, some of these options may be more difficult to carry out.

Often, the movement of the bird's cage into a *dark* environment such as a closet, at the beginning of the egg laying or nesting behavior, may halt the cycle. The bird may need to be kept in darkness for several days, with intermittent periods of light to allow for eating and drinking sessions.

Another method of producing the cessation of egg production is through the use of hormonal manipulation. Aqueous testosterone, placed in the bird's water, can often be used with success. An injectable medication, which is a long acting progesterone, frequently will halt egg production for periods of up to six months. Potential



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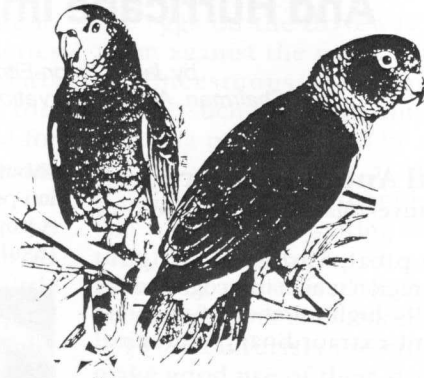
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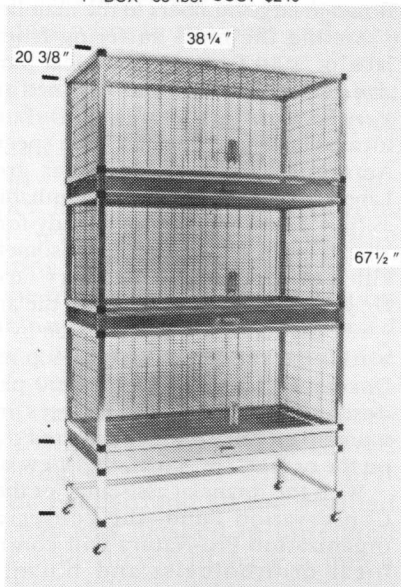
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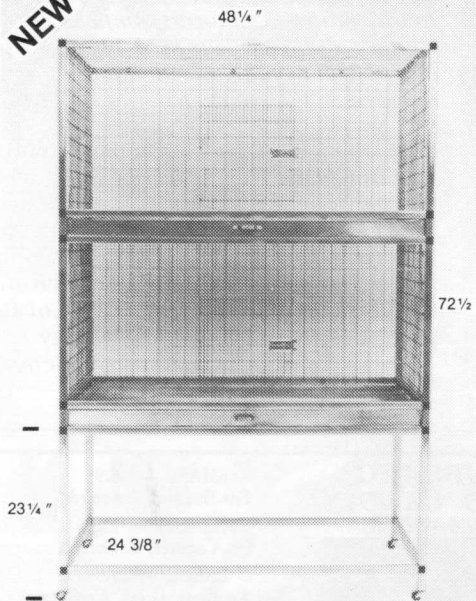
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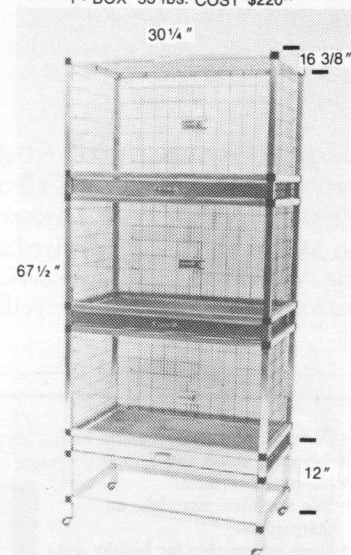
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