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Dipl Emeritus ABVP (Avian),  
Dip ECZM (Avian, retired)

Many committed and well-meaning persons join bird rescue organizations because they are concerned about the welfare of abandoned pet birds and want to make a difference. I understand that a basic frustration occurs due to the constant struggle for financing and the vast number of birds in their care. Of course, well-adjusted, socially acceptable, reasonably-sized, family-friendly birds are not usually among these. In most cases the shelter birds have been “donated” or abandoned due to some buying impulse/misjudgment on the part of the owners or chronic behavioral

## As I See It What's the Solution for Abandoned Pet Birds?



Cockatoos are among the most commonly abandoned pet birds.

problems — screaming, biting, other aggression — on the part of the bird.

A resolution for this situation must start with educating potential bird owners. What is their motivation to own a blue and gold macaw, for

example, which tends to favor a single person and shows aggression toward other family members? Or why choose a cockatoo that expresses its natural chewing tendencies by destroying the kitchen chairs? Some of these birds can be

“saved” and adopted out to an appropriate household. But many become totally unwanted and end up occupying cramped space in a rescue facility.

### Ideas for Solutions?

While we applaud the effort of kind volunteers who donate their personal time to clean cages and prepare meals, we also recognize that overcrowding scenarios in some rescue facilities do not spare some birds from enduring a life of misery. Preventive, educational measures are the keys to addressing this issue moving forward. We look to you for suggestions on how to incorporate such measures. Please submit your ideas to Dr. Harrison at [birddoc@harrisonspetproducts.com](mailto:birddoc@harrisonspetproducts.com).



### Contents

As I See It .....	1
Clinical Tips	
Feeding Captive Canaries .....	2
Self Insurance for Pet Birds .....	3
Avian Diagnostic Resource .....	3
Recovery for Reptiles, Mammals ..	3
Conversion to Pellets .....	3
A Closer Look - Roundup .....	4
Home Remedies for Birds .....	5
We Get Mail .....	6
Harrison's Distributor in Spain ..	6
From the Home Office .....	7
The Results Speak for Themselves .....	8

# Feeding Captive Canaries



Brian Stockdale, BVM&S, MRCVS  
Meadow Lane Veterinary Centre  
Loughborough, Leicestershire, UK

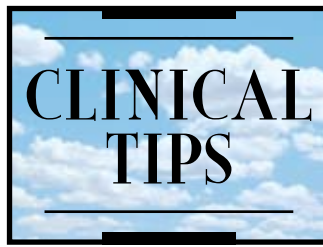
Canaries are some of the most commonly kept pet birds, and their captive diet is generally based on that of their wild ancestors, *Serinus canaria*: a mixture of wild and cultivated seeds.

Single pet birds can be maintained quite healthily for many years on a diet based on canary seed (75%) with the inclusion of “oil seeds,” such as rape, linseed, hemp and millet to make up the remaining 25%. Mixtures including too many oily seeds will lead to over consumption and obesity. The deficiencies of an all-seed diet need to be addressed, and the use of a vitamin and mineral supplement and a source of calcium, either as soluble grit or cuttlefish, is recommended. The

twice weekly provision of small amounts of sweet apple, carrots, greens or dandelion leaves is usually

appreciated. Too much green food can, however, induce diarrhea. Pet canaries will readily take to formulated diets, such as Harrison’s High Potency® Superfine (HPSF), with the addition of a little green food and a small amount of seed, which helps to maintain beak quality.

For the serious canary breeder, diet manipulation plays an important part of stud management. Whilst fanciers will all have their personal preferences for feeding their birds, a basic pattern is generally used. Following the end of the show season where the birds have been fed a reasonably austere bland seed diet, the level of the oil and conditioning seeds is increased to start to promote breeding condition. This is often accompanied by an artificial increase in light levels. Towards the time of pairing up, the fancier will often provide each bird with a teaspoon of “egg food” 2-3 times a week. Egg food is a commercially



manufactured, dry, egg-based biscuit crumb fortified with additional vitamins and minerals (although

some breeders still prefer to make their own). This food is high in protein and helps stimulate reproductive activity by mimicking the increase in dietary protein and fat levels naturally occurring in wild birds eating an increased level of invertebrates. Also, because egg food is used as a rearing egg food, it is used to familiarize the parents prior to having chicks.

Once eggs have hatched, the amount of egg food is steadily increased, and small amounts are fed several times a day. In addition to the general seed mix, some breeders also feed rapidly germinating seed that is soaked over a few days to encourage sprouting. The sprouts are then washed clean and fed to both parents feeding chicks and to newly weaned birds. The process of germinating seed, while not increasing the nutritive quality of the seeds (as is often reported), does improve the digestibility of the seeds and makes it easier

for young soft beaks to cope with. Feeding soaked seeds is not without some potential risks. Wet seed in a warm environment encourages both bacterial and fungal contamination, and this risks causing enteritis.

High quality formulated diets (e.g., HPSF) with high palatability and digestibility can be introduced to newly weaned birds at this time. In my experience, young birds readily take to a formulated diet and grow and feather well.

Not all canaries make the best parents. Dedicated breeders will often practice “topping up” of their chicks where parent birds are seen to be a little slow to feed. This is a form of supplementary feeding (usually last thing at night) that involves individually feeding the chicks with a suitable hand-rearing formula. The breeder will check the nests and, using a small syringe, feed 0.1 to 0.5 ml (depending on age) of formula directly into the mouth of the gaping chick. This ensures the chick has food in its system overnight and helps ensure good growth. Harrison’s Neonate formula is commonly used for this purpose by top breeders in the UK and Europe.



Peter Coufteeel, DVM



Peter Coufteeel, DVM



Peter Coufteeel, DVM

Canaries require some soft foods in order to satisfy their chicks.

## Self Insurance for Pet Birds

Pet insurance for birds has been available in the United States since 1994. However, the insurance companies have not updated their benefit list since the beginning, so it is outdated and doesn't represent current avian medicine.

The insurance company fees are about \$250 per year per bird for coverage (which at best covers about 50% of my fees). And, in many cases, because the benefit schedule is so outdated (e.g., "feather pickers" maximum reimbursement is \$110), I find it is not in the best interest of the clients. Therefore, I developed a preventive health program that includes a self-insurance program for clients.

The basics of the program consist of the client setting up a "pet account" at a bank and depositing \$25 (or more) per month into it. In Southern California this amount is very small, as bird owners often spend that much or more on toys in a week. At the end of the year they would have \$300 in the account. My annual checkup, with blood work, Gram's stains, physical examination, and trimming if necessary (wanted) is about \$250, so there is



Larry Nemetz, DVM  
The BIRD Clinic Veterinary  
Corporation, Orange, California

\$50 or more left in the account after the check up. The visit is fully covered by their own insurance, whereas the commercial insurance costing \$250 for the year would reimburse the client only approximately \$50-110.

If the client listens to information on how to feed and care for their pet, avoid toxins, etc (we have several handouts on our website), I find that most birds have minimal issues (unless they are reproductively active females) until about 8-10 years of age; at this point I recommend full blood panels and radiographs. By then they have saved \$400-500 and have fully covered their pet's care over the years. This amount will cover about

50% of the cost of the "older bird" work up, where again the commercial insurance policy would cover only about \$200 of that amount.

Obviously there is no perfect "insurance" program but I have found this has worked out very well for disciplined clients (of which I have many).



## Avian Diagnostic Resource

Dr. Leigh Semilof  
Williamson Animal Hospital  
Williamson, New York

Cornell's University College of Veterinary Medicine has a poultry examination and diagnostic multimedia resource available at [www.partnersah.vet.cornell.edu/vet](http://www.partnersah.vet.cornell.edu/vet). The interactive Atlas of Avian Diseases may be searched for images demonstrating a variety of avian diseases. The image sets may be accessed by clinical sign, gross lesion or histopathology, and one can visually build a differential based on clinical findings. The program includes up-to-date information on diagnostic testing, prevention and control.



small reptiles. We mix it as directed: 1 part dry to 3 parts water. Chameleons and small lizards are usually fed orally via a syringe at a daily dose of 1 ml to 10 ml.

We also use Recovery<sup>®</sup> for hamsters and other small rodents, such as mice, gerbils and rats. Small rodents usually can take around 2 ml a day if they are sick and 1 ml as a supplement if they are healthy.

Small reptiles and rodents seem to respond much better to Recovery<sup>®</sup> than with other diets. Plus it seems to be very palatable, and we can administer other products, such as HEALx Booster<sup>®</sup> or HEALx Sunshine Factor<sup>®</sup>, with the Recovery<sup>®</sup>. We even have clients who come in to buy it for their hamster and make a small mini bowl for them every day.

## Harrison's Recovery<sup>®</sup> Formula for Reptiles and Small Mammals

Sergio Sarmiento Valiente, DVM  
Palma de Mallorca, Spain

We use Harrison's Recovery<sup>®</sup> formula as the main tube-feeding diet for chameleons, bearded dragons and other



## Conversion to Pellets in the Hospital

Dr. Kevin Turner  
Auckland, New Zealand

Harrison's "Bird Bread" is a fairly new product, but it is helpful for some birds who like eating human food. It is basically Harrison's Bird Food with some extra (ingredients) added and baked into bread or muffins. This is a neat, novel idea that really works well in some cases.





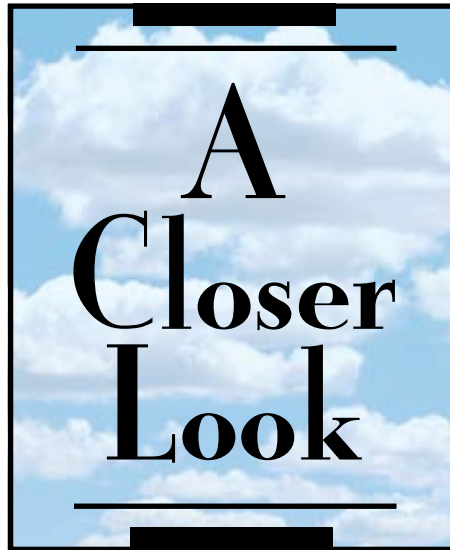
# And Roundup Remains...

Adapted from *HuffingtonPost.com*  
June 8, 2011

Industry regulators have known for years that Roundup, the world's best-selling herbicide produced by U.S. company Monsanto, causes birth defects. The active chemical in Roundup is glyphosate.

**“It is well-documented that glyphosate (active ingredient in Roundup) promotes soil pathogens and is already implicated with the increase of more than 40 plant diseases.”**

Researchers found that genetically-modified crops used in conjunction with Roundup contain a pathogen that may cause animal miscarriages. After observing the newly discovered organism back in February, Dr. Don Huber, an emeritus professor at Purdue University, wrote an open



letter to the Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack requesting a moratorium on deregulating crops genetically altered (GMO) to be immune to Roundup, which are commonly called Roundup Ready crops.



But despite such warnings, and although the European Commission has known that glyphosate causes malformations since at least 2002, the information was not made public. Instead regulators misled the public about glyphosate's safety, according to the report, and as recently as last year, the German Federal Office for Consumer Protection and Food Safety, the German government body dealing with the glyphosate review, told the European Commission that there was no evidence glyphosate causes birth defects.

## Dr. Huber's Letter

The report comes months after Dr. Huber's letter, in which he also commented on the herbicide itself, saying: “It is well-documented that glyphosate promotes soil pathogens and is already implicated with the increase of more than 40 plant diseases; it dismantles plant defenses by chelating vital nutrients; and it reduces the bioavailability of nutrients in feed, which in turn can cause animal disorders.”

Although glyphosate was originally due to be reviewed in 2012, the Commission decided late last year not to bring the review forward, instead delaying it until 2015. The chemical will not be reviewed under more stringent, up-to-date standards until 2030.



USDA-certified organic ingredients, like those used in Harrison's Bird Foods, do not use glyphosate or Roundup chemicals to treat weeds.



Soybean rust is one disease that is claimed by Dr. Huber to be increasing in crops grown on Roundup Ready soil.

University of Wisconsin-Madison, Departments of Agronomy, Entomology, and Plant Pathology, at [www.plantpath.wisc.edu/soyhealth](http://www.plantpath.wisc.edu/soyhealth)



The chronic use of Roundup and genetically modified seeds results in hard, dry, unhealthy soil.



Because Roundup Ready corn was planted the previous year, volunteer stalks show up in a soybean field treated with Roundup, making expensive hand removal necessary.

# Home Remedies for Birds

REMEDY	DOSE	INDICATION
<b>Apple cider vinegar</b> (non-pasteurized, non-filtered, organic)	One tablespoon per quart of water	Helps restore normal intestinal flora. Controls many gram-negative bacteria and yeast problems without medications in asymptomatic birds. Is one of most effective probiotics for parrots. Works as a safe nontoxic vegetable/fruit wash and cage wash as well.
<b>Complex carbohydrate</b> (glucose, fructose, citric acid)	Mix 2 g with 10 ml water and use as a tube-feeding formula for 3 feedings before adding in Recovery® or Juvenile® formula - Harrison's Pet Products)	Use in critically ill birds that have liver disease and/or GI stasis (and are responding to therapy); excellent for intensive care of birds with liver failure; reduces work load of liver.
<b>Dandelion root</b> (alcohol-free)	Mix 5 drops in 1/2 oz (15 ml) lactulose: 1 drop per 100 g body weight PO q12h	Benefits may include gentle and safe stimulation of the liver into an increased state of efficiency, resulting in improved digestion and better elimination of waste from the blood and body. Short-term use (2-3 weeks maximum) is recommended.
<b>Echinacea</b> (alcohol-free) alone or in lactulose	Mix 5 drops in 1/2 oz (15 ml) lactulose: 1 drop per 100 g body weight PO q12h	Benefits may include immune stimulation and antiviral/anti-bacterial effects.
<b>Enzymatic supplement</b> (HBD Avian Enzyme®)	One pinch per day over food	For birds that are thin, wasting, young, sick, passing whole seeds, have slow-emptying crops and those with suspected pancreatitis.
<b>Goldenseal</b> (alcohol-free) alone or in lactulose	Mix 5 drops in 1/2 oz (15 ml) lactulose: 1 drop per 100 g body weight PO q12h	Benefits may include immune stimulation and antiviral/anti-bacterial effects. Short-term use only (less than 5 days).
<b>Heparin</b>	1000 IU/1 oz aloe for topical application; add 0.1 ml heparin to 6.5 ml Normasol® for nebulization.	Topical, respiratory distress (aspergillosis, PTFE toxicity)
<b>Lactulose</b>	0.3 ml/kg PO or over food	For birds with liver disease, low gram-positive bacteria counts or overgrowth of gram-negative bacteria; excellent as vehicle for medications or herbs.
<b>Milk thistle</b> (alcohol-free)	Mix 5 drops in 1/2 oz (15 ml) lactulose: 1 drop per 100 g body weight PO q12h	Benefits may include detoxification and stimulation of the liver, improved circulation and restoration of gastric balance after vomiting; may be safely used for months.
<b>Probiotic</b> (cloned lactobacillus)	Mix 1/3-1/2* packet with Harrison's Bird Foods, fruits or any other soft food; PO q24h for 30 days. <i>*1/3 packet for birds under 0.5 kg body weight</i>	For birds with low gram-positive bacteria in feces
<b>AVIx Bird Builder®</b> Dietary Supplement	Add 1 oz (30 ml) Bird Builder® to 1 gallon (approx. 4 L) bottled drinking water; use as the bird's only source of drinking water.	Recommended for use in all birds prior to and during conversion to a formulated diet. Supplements 52 naturally occurring trace minerals and iodine missing from a seed diet; may enhance feather strength and appearance and may help reduce incidences of fatty liver disease and obesity. Discontinue after conversion.
<b>HEALx/AVIx Rain®</b> Topical Spray	Hold spray several inches from the animal and apply mist as needed.	Soothes and hydrates skin or feathers that have lost normal moisture due to dry, indoor environments.
<b>HEALx/AVIx Soother® Spray</b>	Hold several inches from the affected area and apply a mist several times a day; for best results use in conjunction with HEALx Booster®.	May provide soothing topical relief for skin inflammation, itching and soreness; promotes healing of sensitive skin and superficial lesions often noted in early self-mutilation cases.
<b>HEALx/AVIx Soother Plus®</b> Topical Cream	Apply a thin layer topically and gently massage into the affected area several times per day to manage discomfort and/or pain and promote healing. For best results, use with HEALx Booster®.	For presumed allergic, bacterial, viral, fungal and/or yeast dermatological conditions; to provide relief for animals exhibiting inflammation, abscesses, lesions, wounds, burns, blood feathers, bumblefoot, self-mutilation lesions and prolapse.
<b>HEALx/AVIx Sunshine Factor®</b> Certified organic red palm fruit oil	Apply 1 teaspoon (5 ml) to 1 pound Harrison's Bird Food; store in original bag and feed normally.	A non-synthetic whole food source of precursors to vitamin A and 6 forms of vitamin E; has high antioxidant content for immune system support; may benefit the animal's skin, eyes, heart and immune system by strengthening the overall nutritional status.
<b>HEALx/AVIx Booster®</b> Antimicrobial Dietary Supplement	Mix 1 teaspoon (5 ml) liquefied Booster® with 1 lb (455 g) of the animal's consumable food and return to original bag for storage; feed normally.	A whole food nontoxic vitamin supplement with benefits that may include positive responses in animals that are sick, weak or immune-compromised or have clinical signs of upper respiratory infections, bacterial sepsis, allergies and skin disorders.
<b>HEALx/AVIx Booster® Concentrate</b> Concentrated Antimicrobial Dietary Supplement	1 pellet per 500-1500 g body weight (1-3 lb); initial dose should not exceed 3 pellets, regardless of body weight and dose increased gradually.	Shown in laboratories worldwide to inactivate some bacteria, viruses and fungi/yeast; helps support the immune system; does not destroy the body's friendly bacteria or form resistant organisms

## WE GET MAIL



A female eclectus exhibits normal feathering.

### Harrison's Bird Foods Corrects Feather Abnormality

A female eclectus was presented with feather abnormalities consisting of emerging feathers with curled tips. The bird had been fed a commercial parrot pellet and soft foods. Each molt saw progressive deterioration of

feather shape and coloration. The bird was changed to Harrison's brand of pellets (in addition to the same fruits and veggies). Over the course of the next molt the curled feathers were replaced with normal ones. Obviously, I have no science behind the changes (nor do I have vested interest in mentioned company)!"

*Dr. Melinda Cowan  
Brisbane Bird and Exotics  
Veterinary Service, Australia*

### Thank You

Thank you EVER so much for your bird food products!!! I thought I was a BAD bird owner until I got your food recommended!! Thank you ever SO MUCH for your

research and caring! A VERY HAPPY customer!!!! Thank you! :))"

*Edena Ralph  
United Kingdom*

### Harrison's a Win-Win Situation

I just wanted to take a moment to tell you how happy I am with your company. We moved from Southern California to the Mississippi Gulf Coast 5 months ago. There are zero bird stores or pet stores that carry bird supplies. The local vets didn't carry the fine grade food. I was amazed at how fast my order gets here. The service from Harrison's Bird Foods is superb. I switched my four lovebirds to

your food after we moved because I could no longer get their seed medley. They absolutely love the pellets. It was definitely a win-win for us. Thanks so much."

*Kristy Parker  
Gulfport, Mississippi*

### A Boarding Conversion

I was boarding my Meyers parrot at a friend's while I had back surgery. She started my parrot on Harrison's, and when I picked her up on Monday, I thought she was a different bird. Her color had increased 10 fold. Thanks for such a great product that can back up its claims."

*Carolyn Cohen*



## Distributor of Harrison's Bird Foods in Spain\*

Mascotasana Worldwide is based in Spain and has served Spain, Portugal and other countries in Europe since 2008. The company was founded by Sergio Sarmiento Valiente, DVM.

Dr. Sarmiento received his degree in veterinary medicine from the Complutense University of Madrid, Spain in 1996 and his doctorate degree the following year. In 2002, Dr. Sarmiento founded Exoticos Vet Clinic, the first veterinary clinic in Palma de Mallorca, Spain devoted exclusively to the care of exotic animals. Currently, Dr. Sarmiento provides care to over 5500 clients and conducts clinical trials with HEALx and AVIx products in his practice. He also lectures throughout Spain about the benefits of these products as well as general exotic animal medicine topics.

At its inception, Mascotasana Worldwide chose only the best international brands

with the intention of setting up a new innovative way of distributing products to both wholesalers and pet owners. Today, Mascotasana represents some of the best manufacturers of pet products and diets and supplies veterinary clinics, zoos, pet stores and thousands of individual pet owners. The goal is to provide all clients with the best service, 24-hour shipping and a team of experts from the veterinary field who can answer any question retailers or pet owner clients might have. The staff strongly believes in education to prevent animal illness, zoonotic diseases and cases of abuse and abandonment.

According to Dr. Sarmiento, "Birds eating Harrison's Bird Foods have better health, better skin and feather condition. Their intestinal flora looks very close to that of a wild bird. We hardly ever see sick birds that are being fed Harrison's diets. The

quality of the ingredients, their balance and the care and effort that has been put into making these products are unique. No other bird diet available could keep a bird as healthy as Harrison's Bird Foods."

Dr. Sarmiento works may be accessed at [www.exoticosvet.com](http://www.exoticosvet.com), [www.exovet.com](http://www.exovet.com), [www.mascotasana.es](http://www.mascotasana.es), [www.healthypet.es](http://www.healthypet.es).



**mascotasana**  
Productos naturales para mascotas



\*Each of the next several issues of the Avian Examiner will focus on a distributor of Harrison's Pet Products in Europe.





Tanya Harrison Coffinberry

# FROM THE HOME OFFICE



## Bird Lover's Transparent Vinyl Sticker

An attractive sticker will identify you as a pet bird lover. The 3" x 3" square all-weather vinyl material is perfect for clinic windows or car windows and bumpers. A free sticker is included in each food order; additional copies are available for 25 cents each (800-346-0269).

## What's New!



### New Packaging

Take a look at the new packaging for Harrison's Bird Foods:

- Lower carbon footprint
- Same freshness barrier materials with improved locking zipper (resealing)
- Easier-to-read labels
- Includes UPC bar codes

**Penny Postlewait** has been part of the Harrison's Bird Foods team for 6 years. Her primary responsibility is to handle customer service calls and receive and process telephone orders. As Assistant Office Manager, she is also responsible for working with international distributors to make sure all shipments are accurate and properly documented. Penny is married and lives with her husband, Dwight, and 2 cats. Her family also consists of two grown children and a 2-year-old granddaughter.



When she is not working, she enjoys home projects, painting and crafts. Penny said, "I love my job and enjoy being able to assist our customers in the most friendly and efficient way possible."

## Harrison's as a Foraging Reward

"Foraging" techniques can enrich a bird's environment. Harrison's nuggets are perfect to "hide" in various vehicles that provide some complexity in their reaching the food goal.

## Diet Conversion Kit for Birds

The nutritional status of a pet bird is the single most important factor that influences: 1) the prevention of disease in a healthy bird; and 2) response to treatment in a sick bird. Although a certified organic, nutritionally complete formulated food is best for pet birds, it is sometimes challenging to change the habits of a bird that is accustomed to eating a high-fat, nutritionally deficient (but familiar) seed diet.

To assist in this conversion process, Harrison's Pet Products has developed a convenient "Conversion Kit for Small Birds" and a "Conversion Kit for Large Birds."

### Each kit includes:

- A 1-oz bottle of AVIX Bird Builder® (to supply trace minerals missing from seeds)
- A bag of Harrison's Bird Bread Mix®—Millet & Flax flavor for small birds; Original flavor for large birds (to attract a hesitant bird to try something new)
- A 1-oz bottle of HEALx Sunshine Factor® (for overall nutritional support)
- A 1-lb bag Harrison's Bird Foods High Potency® Formula—Fine or Superfine size for small birds; Coarse size for large birds (to maintain the diet conversion)
- A copy of the "11 Quick Tips for Conversion" educational handout.

Practitioners have found these kits convenient for the owners and effective in obtaining diet conversion results.



Conversion Kit for Small Birds

## Avian Examiners in Digital Format Only

In order to be consistent with our commitment to making an environmental difference by consuming (paper) wisely, HBD's Avian Examiner is available only in digital format. You may access the latest copy (as well as all past issues) on the web site: [www.avianexaminer.com](http://www.avianexaminer.com). If we have your email address on file, we will send you an update as each new issue becomes available online. Please contact [customerservice@harrisonsbirdfoods.com](mailto:customerservice@harrisonsbirdfoods.com).

## The Results Speak for Themselves



**Before:** Ringo, a hawk-headed parrot (*Deroytus accipitrinus*) had been fed an inadequate diet and was thin and scruffy-looking.

**After:** After only a month of eating Harrison's Bird Bread™ with Sunshine Factor,® fresh veggies and fruits, nuts and some seed, Ringo's appearance and body condition have vastly improved; the bird has almost reached its ideal weight, and the feathers are much more attractive.

Submitted by Jill from Avian Avenue



### Come See Us....

Harrisons' Pet Products will be exhibiting at the following upcoming conferences:

- Wild West Veterinary Conference - Reno, Nevada, October 14-16, 2011
- International Wildlife Rehabilitators Council - Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, November 8-12, 2011
- North American Veterinary Conference - Orlando, Florida, January 15-18, 2012



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The Avian Examiner is brought to you as a service of HBD International, the manufacturer and distributor of Harrison's Bird Foods. This publication is part of HBD's commitment to building avian practice through education and nutritionally sound diets. Although every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information presented herein (particularly drug doses), it is the responsibility of the clinician to critically evaluate the contents, to stay informed of pharmacokinetic information and to observe recommendations provided in the manufacturers' inserts. Reader responses, comments and suggestions are encouraged. Please mail to Avian Examiner, 7108 Crossroads Blvd., Suite 325, Brentwood, TN 37027 or fax to 800-279-5984.