

THE TROPICS

EXOTIC BIRD REFUGE

P.O. Box 686

Kannapolis, NC 28081

A 501 (c) 3 Non-Profit Organization

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WHAT IT TAKES TO RUN ANY ANIMAL RESCUE

First, please accept my sincere apologies for not keeping in touch with you. Money has been a great issue, but if you've read our website, you'd know that I suffered for 1 ½ years with a brain tumor and its removal. I am back up to speed now and would like to catch you up on things. Second, the birds are fine, but the large birds are being cared for by our partner as due to my recent health issues and our age (we've been doing this for over 23 years) we have had to offload the hands on work and delegate it to her. Until now I have been unable to keep in touch with you as I should have and tried to update the website, but not very often. It still needs extensive revision and I am getting to it as I can. Now on to the rest of this message;

Advisors in the field of bird care have told me that people do not care about what us humans go through in order to operate an animal sanctuary day after day. We know that everyone wants to know about the animals, but what about the people who work 14 hr days, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. I speak for all rescuers, not just us when I say that we work sick, well, hurt, depressed, didn't sleep well the night before, have to get up at dawn start the feeding, then the cleaning, then the never ending fundraising. It never stops, especially if you don't have enough or adequate volunteerism. Rescuers have to be prepared to work whether their help shows up or not, even when their time has been promised and sworn that they will be there. It's like running a business; if you're the business owner and your employee(s) doesn't show up, who is the one who takes that employee's place.....you!

The animals don't know if you are well, tired, discouraged or not, whether you have enough donations for them, etc. All they know is that it is you who supplies all their needs. Many times we are tempted to just throw some seed and nuts at the birds and forego to a later time of day or the next day, the food they really need; the veggies and fruits. Guilt is a big emotion we fight with when it comes to that. Of course, there will always be times when you have no choice but to do just that, give them a junk food meal, get over it, and make the next meal, the right one.

The animals also expect to get their attention; hugs, kisses, exercise, play time, new toys, and time out. With over 400 birds this makes it an almost impossible task. We no longer have that many in permanent residence, but when we did, we knew the names of every bird and what their likes and

dislikes were regarding food, touch, and their emotional feelings at any given time. Us bird people tend to think that it's easier with dogs and cats; that everyone knows how to care for them. If so, then why are the Dog Whisperer and the woman who rescues the misunderstood pit bull dogs such popular TV shows?

All animals are born with a wild instinct whether we want to admit it or not for instance, dogs, when they get loose, they sometimes find other loose dogs and then form a pack, and after all they are related to wolves who roam in packs. Then our so-called pet dogs begin to operate on their naturally inbred instincts to hunt, kill and eat their kill.

It works the same with cats. Today we have "designer" cats that never go outside of the home. If/when they should happen to get out they immediately hunker down in a hunting stance to attack anything that moves. So, our pet cats are not that far from feral cats that run wild, hunt in dumpsters and trash cans to exist or kill birds, squirrels and other animals that roam.

When deciding on a pet, please take into consideration the responsibility of it all. Be sure you can afford the animal including food, toys, and especially vet care. Don't treat your animal like a human, that's not to say you can't pet and love them, but allow them to realize that they are not like you. If these considerations are taken in to account it will cut down on the load us rescues take on.

When it comes to parrots, NO parrot is a pet. They are wild animals with deep seated wild instincts. We wonder why they bite and we try to psychoanalyze them, give them meds to control their unwanted behaviors and finally give up when they turn away, or worst yet bite us, especially when it's a dangerous bite. I personally faced the amputation of my left arm at the elbow from just a pin prick of a nip in my finger. The infection turned out to be MRSA. At the last moment, the CDC in Atlanta told my doctors to hang a cocktail of antibiotics and IT WORKED! There are many other injuries, some involving surgeries that have happened to me, especially when I was changing dressings on birds that MUTILATED THEIR FLESH because of their distress of the physical pain caused by being in captivity rather than being able to FLY FREE "LIKE A BIRD". Please don't misunderstand. I am NOT chastising pet bird owners as a whole, but there are some who are just not qualified to own a bird.

Those of you who have supported us in the past, we urge you to support us again, as we are operating on AIR! We desperately need your help. If there is any way you can donate, either a one time or a small monthly amount it would be MORE THAN APPRECIATED. We are DESPERATE, to say the least. Thanking you in advance.....

Founder/President

Mary Bradford (and John)

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