

Daily Routine For Macaws

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MORNING

EXERCISE

Release your bird from its cage and allow supervised free flight whilst preparing the morning meal of fresh fruit and vegetables. Encourage your bird to be included in the food preparation and create learning situations, as this is a most important training time for your bird. For example, introduce clicker training as a foraging tool where your bird must work to get a click and food reward. This training stimulates the same mental behaviour required for searching, locating and remembering where food is found in wild parrots. Ideal clicker training rewards are slithers of fruits such as grape, kiwifruit and green peas that can be consumed quickly. Supplements may be mixed into a passionfruit or hot food mix.

BREAKFAST

A shared breakfast meal with the human flock is an essential daily activity. Macaws have very strong claws and should be encouraged to hold fruits of varying sizes from small grapes to larger halved carrots to advance their coordination skills, dexterity and strength. Sweet potato, pumpkin, carrots, beetroot and broad beans are the best food choices. Corn, orange, entire passionfruit, capsicum, whole plum, banana, cucumber and apple are other healthy foods they enjoy. Organic foods are best and always ensure they are fresh, clean and free from pesticides.

CAGE PREPARATION

Remove all fresh fruit after one hour and remove your Macaw to its outside aviary where large tree branches are placed for it to gnaw upon. Here a bowl of mixed parrot and pigeon seed mix and one or two nuts are provided. Swings, bells and foraging puzzles are also needed for entertainment.

BATHING

Daily bathing is ideal exercise for pet macaws and the best time of the day is after breakfast through till mid morning. Many pet Macaws will happily join others in the shower, learn to enjoy a mist spray, or bath in the water bowl. A complete soaking is not necessary but a gentle mist on the feathers will keep them clean and encourage appropriate daily grooming.

RETURN TO CAGE FOR FORAGING/REST

Day time hours are spent inside the cage or outside aviary. Hardwood tree branches are essential as a foraging activity.

This is a natural time of rest and socialisation. If at home during the day, this is an ideal time to talk to your bird and teach it new words, songs or dances.

EXERCISE & TRAINING

From mid to late afternoon, release your bird from its cage and allow supervised flight. Play games, sing, dance or talk with your bird as you prepare the evening meal as your bird will respond well to clicker training and quickly learn new tricks during this time or reinforce new behaviours learnt during the morning session.

DINNER

Remove any remaining seed treats and branches from the cage and call in for a shared evening meal. Provide a smaller but similar meal as the morning feed. Place the cage or your bird's feed station alongside the family dinner table and eat your evening meal together. A shared meal is a most important time of the day for your bird.

EVENING SOCIALISING

Following the evening meal is a good opportunity to rest and socialise with your bird and teach it to accept touching and holding. Practice holding the wings out then touching the entire body, turn him on his back, rub his stomach and massage the feet in preparation for nail trimming and harnessing.

ROOSTING/ BEDTIME

Remove all foodstuff from the cage and implement nightly bedtime routine.

What to Provide

Supervised flight

Clicker training & interaction

Morning vegetable & fruit meal (1-3cm diced)



Set up hardwood branches & seed treats for daytime foraging activity

Afternoon supervised flight

Clicker training

Games, singing & dancing exercise

Shared meal with humans

Social interaction

Remove all food from cage

Bedtime treat

DAY TIME

EVENING



Weekly Routine for Macaws

	Add to Drinking Water	Mix into Sterile Food	Ongoing Health Care
Day 1	KD Powder ¹	Turbobooster, E-Powder & F-Vite ⁴	<p>Lice & Mite Protection: S76 should be administered in the drinking water every month during summer and each three months during the cooler seasons. Add 0.5ml of S76 into 100ml drinking water and leave for two days. A lice and mite spray (AIL) should be applied on the same days.</p> <p>Worm Protection: Gentle Wormer should be administered in the drinking water each three months. Add 3ml of Gentle Wormer into 100ml drinking water and leave for two days.</p> <p>3 & 5 Moulting Support: Between December and March Quik Gel is added to drinking water for 2 days a week.</p>
Day 2	Dufoplus & Ioford ²	Turbobooster, E-Powder & F-Vite ⁴	
Day 3	Dufoplus & Ioford ²	Turbobooster, E-Powder & F-Vite ⁴	
Day 4	Fresh water	Turbobooster, E-Powder & F-Vite ⁴	
Day 5	Quik Gel ³	Turbobooster, E-Powder & F-Vite ⁴	
Day 6	Quik Gel ³	Turbobooster, E-Powder & F-Vite ⁴	
Day 7	Fresh water	Turbobooster, E-Powder & F-Vite ⁴	

¹ KD Powder is given in the drinking water for one day a week acting as a mouth and crop wash to maintain protection from environmental germs. It is made up by adding 1/4 teaspoon (1gm or a level white spoon) into a litre of water. The drinking vessel is filled from this litre and the remainder is used to clean out the cage.

² Dufoplus (5 drops) & Ioford (10 drops) are mixed together in 100ml of drinking water and safely left for two days as they are sugar free. Dufoplus and Ioford provide the vitamins and trace elements necessary for good health. These supplements can be mixed into fruit or vegetables.

³ Quik Gel provides an immediate energy boost to your bird and should be given whenever you feel your bird is tired or unwell. Quik Gel is also given for two consecutive days a week to protect health during the moult, which is a period when many birds fall ill. Quik Gel is prepared by mixing 1 drop (0.1ml) thoroughly into 100ml drinking water.

⁴ 6 drops of Turbobooster is mixed thoroughly into 100gm of seed, fruit or vegetables, then 1/4 teaspoon (1 gm or heaped white spoon) of E-Powder and F-Vite are mixed into it. These powders stick to the Turbobooster oil impregnated seed providing your bird with additional energy and together provide the required balance of protein, vitamin and minerals necessary for top health. For some birds, and during the moult Dr Marshall may recommend Turbobooster, E-Powder and F-Vite be given daily.

Macaws & Amazons Require Special Care

Macaws and Amazon parrots require special care if they are to remain happy as pets. A large outdoor aviary is recommended for visual and physical enrichment. The morning and evening meal should include organic fruit, vegetables or pulses. Vary your bird's diet according to what is fresh and in season as Macaws appreciate variety in their diet. They show an ability to distinguish subtle differences in flavour and unlike other parrots will sample a wide variety of new foods. Nuts such as walnuts, pecans, almonds and macadamia nuts are favoured above all other foods and are ideal as a treat for returning to the cage. Slivers of grape or kiwifruit or green peas are the best clicker training treats. Nuts are given whole as these large parrots enjoy the process of breaking them open. The number of nuts fed each day should be restricted, because Amazon parrots are prone to arteriosclerosis related heart disease caused by a high fat diet. One of the following foods - butternut pumpkin, sweet potato and carrot - should be included in at least one daily meal as these vegetables offer your bird of the highest food value. Macaws also enjoy boiled rice dishes and rehydrated pulses as part of their diet (see recipe below).

Pulse Mix Recipe

1. Soak dry soup mix in cold water overnight.
2. Rinse soaked pulses thoroughly and strain.
3. Boil for 45 minutes or until soft.
4. Divide into 100gm portions and freeze.
5. Prepare meal each morning as follows:

To prepare the morning feed, warm the frozen pulse mix in the microwave. Boiled rice, diced and cooked vegetables may be incorporated into the mix. To this finished meal add 6 drops Turbobooster and mix thoroughly. Then, sprinkle 1/4 tspn E-Powder & 1/4 tspn F-Vite onto the mix and provide as the morning meal. Dufoplus (5 drops) and Ioford (10 drops) can also be added here instead of in the drinking water.

Food Hygiene is Essential

All fresh food should be washed in KD Powder prior to preparation to remove surface contamination. During the warmer months uneaten food remnants must be removed from the cage within an hour of feeding in order to prevent food spoilage diseases. Foraging branches should be soaked in KD before being placed into the cage.