

*The email below is heartbreaking, and by this person's tone, she is thankful that she has those of you on this list to lean on and get proper information from.*

I cease to be amazed at how some people/groups categorize owners of parrots with PDD and criticize them, put them down; they are made to be ashamed of themselves, and yet still must suffer the heartbreak of this horrible disease. This disease should not be reflected on the bird owner as he/she being an inadequate provider for their bird(s). Rather, this is a horrible virus that can be contracted by any bird at any time. Who YOU are is no exception. Neither is ANY bird exempt.

For example; my brother-in-law went on a missionary trip to South America to help build a small community church. While there, he contracted Hepatitis C. He has liver damage and was very sick for a long time. Now, he didn't do anything deliberate, foolish or ignorant to contract this disease. He was simply, somehow, exposed to it.

The same goes for PDD and the owners of these poor infected birds.

To all who have lost birds to PDD, you have my sincere condolences. It is a horrible way for a bird to die, and for an owner to watch. Because diagnosis is so sketchy, and a Histopathology Test (UPON DEATH OF SICK BIRD) is considered the only firm diagnosis, it's a shame that it can't be confirmed until AFTER DEATH.

Once again, my heart goes out to all of you who have had birds suffer and die from this disease. All any of us can do is hang in there and hope a test/cure comes soon.

Mary Bradford

P.S. Letter in response to someone on PDD list, 10/29/03

Felicia,

I am increasingly concerned about the entire pet bird industry. People have said that for the last 16+ years or so I've been like "Chicken Little" crying, "The Sky is Falling, The Sky is Falling." But it's true. There are so many parrots in captivity in this country alone, not to mention worldwide. They are being inbred, cross-bred, having DNA and genealogy tampered with to get new colors and strains of the same species whereby the entire population of captive parrots are at great risk.

The more birds we have in captivity, the greater risk for disease. Most of the diseases our birds contract in captivity originated in THE WILD, and were imported/smuggled here.

I simply don't know what the answer is. I lament over this daily, and my heart breaks to see those birds of ours that are still in cages. Even the dome isn't sufficient enough flying space, as NO enclosure is big enough for ANY bird!

My hope and prayer is that more people will wake up and see the seriousness of the situation and take action. I have been criticized in private and in public about my stand on these concerns, but that won't make them go away. We have ZERO tolerance for captive breeding, even of ENDANGERED SPECIES. IF there were conservatives for these endangered species and birds could be shuffled from one site to another to keep the blood lines clean, then and ONLY THEN would we agree to this type of breeding. As it stands now, the ONLY reason breeders are breeding these endangered birds is to INCREASE THEIR POCKETBOOK. Yes, they say they are saving the endangered birds, but are simply breeding to sell to the public where they end up oftentimes in need of a place to go when the owner doesn't want the bird(s) anymore.

We simply don't have enough refuges/sanctuaries/adoption facilities to handle the enormous growth population of unwanted birds. There has to be other answers and we need to take our lead from NO KILL shelters for other "pet" animals (even dogs/cats).

This is a very heavy burden on my heart. One I cannot seem to shake. I envision with disgust the mass killing of captive parrots in the US and worldwide because there isn't enough money, time, people, funding and resources to tackle this enormous job.

Mary Bradford