



Ask Jessi 4

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=====Intro and Q1: bird perching (00:00)=====

Jessi: Hi guys, we're back at Animal Wonders, I'm Jessi, and today we're gonna be doing an ask Jessi because you've asked a lot of questions and I want to answer them

(Animal Wonders intro plays)

First question is from Bradley Depippo. "Is perching a bird on your shoulder a safe method? If so, how do I do it safely?"

I don't recommend having a bird perched on your shoulder for several reasons. It's difficult for you to see what they're doing, and birds often use their body for nonverbal communication. When you turn to look at them, you're actually invading their personal space, and they can read that as an attack and react defensively.

If you think about it, parrots' eyes are on the side, so they never need to turn their mouth towards their mate. This discrepancy between humans and parrots can cause miscommunications. When your parrot is perched on your shoulder, your shoulder is perceived as the branch, which is essentially carrying your parrot and your head which is also perched on your shoulders, so your bird basically thinks this is you, not this is you.

So if your parrot is protective of you as its mate and someone they perceive as a threat comes near, they may try and drive you away from the situation to protect you, meaning they may try and bite at you to get you to fly away. Which results in a not-so-fun situation, cuz obviously your head cannot be driven away from your body.

Parrots can become territorial of high places, so if your parrot is allowed to climb up onto your shoulder, they might become territorial up there and bite your fingers if you try and take them away from their high place... or they'll just run and hide.

However, there are exceptions, like Ginger the green-cheeked conure. She's handicapped on her feet, so she can't perch on my hand, so the shoulder is the safest place for her.

So the reason I recommend not to perch your parrot on your shoulder is because so many people have been bitten in the face due to a miscommunication, and when a parrot bites their owner, they're often re-homed. I recommend that you keep your bird perched on your hand or your arm to prevent miscommunications and possible injury.

=====Question 2: Snake Handling (2:00)=====

Alright, next question comes from Mayacatfairy. "I have a corn snake about the size of Domino. I used to hold him a lot, but for the past year I've really neglected handling him, and only really interacted with him when feeding and watering him. That's because of him thinking my thumb was a frozen baby mouse, and biting and trying to swallow it. Now, I want to start holding him again, but what are good ways to build up his and my confidence?"

I love this! Way to be willing to continue your relationship with your corn snake even after such a traumatic event. I would start with learning how to be safe and prevent a bite like that from happening again. Remember, he thought you were food, not that he actually wanted to bite you.

Use hand sanitizer before every interaction so you smell nothing like food. Use a snake hook or... a spatula, like I do, to let them know that you're coming close. You can just touch him with the spatula at first, get to know each other again, get comfortable just

being around him without feeling like your fingers are vulnerable.

Once you're ready to use your hands again, block his head with the spatula so even if he did think your fingers were food, there's no way he can get to them. Begin touching his body with your fingers, and when you're ready, loop them underneath and pick him up. Lift him into your arms and get him used to being handled again. If he hasn't been handled in a while, any slight touch might make him jump a little bit. Any quick movement around his head or his tail is gonna make him nervous, so use slow deliberate movements as you keep his body supported.

Whenever you interact with him, use the same steps: sanitizer, spatula touch, block head, lift gently, and slow movements, and enjoy getting to know him again.

=====Question 3: Wild Animal Wonders (3:30)=====

Alright, next question comes from msknitsalot. "Is Rook the only animal that you have that was from the wild?"

Besides Rook the Raven, we have two other animals that came from the wild. All of our other animal ambassadors were born in captivity.

Romeo, the European starling was born in the wild. Her nest was destroyed in a roof remodel and her and her sibling were given to a rehab center.

Serpentina, or Tina for short, the rubber ball was also born in the wild. She was picked up by someone on a late night hike and put in captivity.

We don't advocate taking a health animal from the wild; they often don't habituate well to captivity. We're not going to put Tina back in the wild because her chances of surviving at this point are slim to none.

=====Question 4: How to start an Animal Wonders (4:08)=====

Alright, and the last question comes from animals and beyond. "I want to start something like your facility. Do you have any tips like how do you get animals to start off with?"

Thank you for wanting to help animals! Everyone that gets into this field does it because they love animals, and this question is the first question that I asked my advisor, too. Her advice was "the animals will come, focus first on the foundation of your organization."

The most important tip that I can give is to understand the responsibility of what you want to do. Some of the animals that you might take in can live 50 to 100 years, so you're basically committing your life to them. Think about how you're going to sustain them financially, and how you're going to provide the physical space and labor that goes into maintaining a healthy space for them.

I didn't believe her then, and you might not believe me now, but it's true, once the commitment, the space, and the finances are in order, the animals will come when you're ready.

Thanks for the great questions guys, I love answering them. If you have more questions, go ahead and leave them in the comments section below or you can find me on Twitter, Tumblr, or Facebook. If you'd like to go on an adventure with us every week, subscribe to



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our YouTube channel [Animal Wonders Montana](#). Thanks guys.

(endscreen)

(featured video) --sound that mammals do. Instead of using their larynx like humans, they use their syrinx. What make the syrinx so special is that it's located at the very bottom of the trachea where it splits into the...