



## Budgies! What, Where, How

What, Where, and How

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=JvQXdtdfxp0o>

<https://nerdfighteria.info/v/JvQXdtdfxp0o>

===== (00:00) to (02:00) =====

Humans have many species of animals that live with them as companions. Dogs and cats rule the top tier of most common pets, but there are other species that are quite common, too. I love sharing more information about those so-called common animals, so today, let's examine an animal that's often overlooked and most people don't even know what it is, where it came from, or how to take care of it properly. Let's do a What, Where, How on budgerigars.

(Intro)

Budgerigars, nicknamed "budgies" and sometimes referred to as "undulated grass parakeets" are extremely popular as pets and are the most common parrot type bird kept in captivity. They're often seen as a starter pet or a pet for children since they are readily available and relatively cheap, but what are they exactly?

This is Agent Perry. Most Americans would say it's a parakeet, and they're right, but let's define them in terms of classification. They are in the kingdom animalia, and phylum chordata, class aves, which is characterized by being covered in feathers, having a toothless beaked jaw, laying hard shelled eggs, and having a four-chambered heart, better known as birds. Order psittaciformes, also known as (?-1:15) or better known as parrots, characterized by having a hard curved bill, an upright stance, and (?-1:22) feet, which just means two toes in the front and two toes in the back. Order psittaculidae, which groups parrots from Australia, most Asian and African parrots, and lorries and lorikeets. Genus and species melopsittacus undulatus.

So now we know they're pretty unique parakeet. The only species in the genus melopsittacus, but where did this social little bird come from and how did it become such a common household pet? In the wild, they can be found surviving the drier parts of inland Australia living in large flocks and eating a variety of small seeds. They've been bred in captivity since the 1850s, but before that, they were part of the indigenous peoples' lives, either being hunted and eaten or being followed for their migratory pattern and leading the tribes to sources of water and other game.

===== (02:00) to (04:00) =====

Once bred in captivity, humans quickly began selecting for unusual physical characteristics, mostly focused on color mutations. Aviculture is delighted in new mutations, since a well kept pair can produce several clutches a year of 6-8 eggs each and it only takes 18-21 days to hatch. Any new color mutation was easy to reproduce. Within 30 years, there was a wide variety of color morphs, blues, greens, greys, whites, and the undulating pattern of black on their wings was often bred out, and interestingly, captive red budgies are larger than their wild counterparts and there's an English variety that's much larger than the more common American variety.

Budgerigars are now widely recognized and because of their small size, social nature, and readiness to breed in captivity, they are relatively inexpensive to purchase and care for. So that's where they came from, and now it's time to talk about how to care for them properly in captivity.

First off, they need a safe place to rest and relax, eat their food, and sleep in at night. The absolute minimum size of their enclosure should be 18x18x18 inches for one budgie. If there are two budgies, it needs to be 30x18x18 inches and continue to increase the size if there are more. Since budgies are highly social, you should consider that two will be happier than one on their own. Even with lots of interaction from their human, nothing compares

with bird to bird companionship.

Budgerigars are active and curious and they can easily get their heads stuck between widely spaced bars, so make sure the maximum space is 1/2 inch. Place the enclosure away from drafts, like vents or windows, so they don't get too cold. Budgies enjoy seeing what's going on around them, but they also like to have a place that they feel secure. I recommend putting their enclosure in the living room against a wall. That way, they have at least one side of solid barrier but they can also see what's going on in the house.

They need plenty of places to perch. I love offering natural branches with twigs and leaves still attached, but make sure it's from a non-toxic plant. There's a list of non-toxic woods in the description below. You'll want a wide variety of perch textures and sizes. Make sure at least one perch is large enough that their nails touch it while they're grasping it.

===== (04:00) to (06:00) =====

This will help keep their nails naturally trim. Avoid very smooth perches like factory-made dowels. These can cause pressure sores on the bottoms of their feet because they lack variation.

Next, provide a dish for food and a dish for water and make sure the perches aren't positioned right above their food dishes, because they'll perch and then poop directly into their water or food. Provide plenty of interactive toys for them to investigate and play with. In the wild, they would naturally be encountering many experiences every day, so we should try and mimic that kind of stimulation. Budgies love to chew on paper, raffia, twigs, and leaves. Bells and mirrors are also often favored and I haven't met a budgie yet who doesn't enjoy a swing perch.

One of the most important aspects of caring for a budgie in captivity is their diet. Unlike tropical parrot species, budgerigars thrive on a variety of small seeds from a harsh, dry environment. Replicating this diet in captivity is actually not that difficult. You can purchase a budgie seed mix at most pet stores, or if you'd like to mix your own, you can buy bulk from a health food store. 40% canary seeds, 50% millet, 5% whole oats, and 5% whole wheat. This will be the base of their diet. Offer a tablespoon of seed mix daily in a clean bowl. Toss any leftovers at the end of the day.

In addition to this, offer a variety of fresh vegetables, sprouted seeds, and a small amount of fresh fruit. If your seeds won't sprout, it means that they're poor quality or too old. You'll need to purchase fresher seeds that still retain all the nutrients needed. If your budgie is reluctant to eat fresh produce, try chopping it up into teeny tiny little pieces and then mixing it into the seeds. I recommend starting with broccoli florets because they resemble small millet seeds and they're easiest to transition to.

Once they're eating their broccoli bits regularly, you can start increasing the size and then introduce little bits of cauliflower, carrot, or zucchini. Offer the vegetables among the seed mix in the morning when they're most likely to eat the majority of their food for the day. Give them a second feeding in the afternoon. Offer bits of fresh fruit and/or sprouted seeds. The reason that you don't offer the fruit or the sprouted seeds in the morning is because they'll most likely fill up on these favorites and avoid the vegetables all together.

===== (06:00) to (06:58) =====

A varied diet is the healthiest diet, so offer a wide variety of fruits and vegetables throughout the week.



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Budgies are really good at hiding illness, so annual exam with a specialized avian vet is necessary and you should probably know the signs of a sick bird, so here's a video for that, and here's a video on how to interact with a brand new bird friend and another video on the proper way to get a bird to step up and sit on your finger.

I hope you enjoyed learning about budgerigars today. Even though they're quite common, they're fascinating little guys and they deserve a lot more time and attention than most people give them. Thanks for watching and if you'd like to go on an adventure with us every week, subscribe to our YouTube channel AnimalWondersMontana. If you have any questions for me, leave them in the comments below and we'll see you next week.

(Endscreen/Credits)

Alright, here we go.