

# THE BULLETIN BIRD

JANUARY 2026

HARRISON'S BIRD FOODS NEWSLETTER

## You May Not Know...

By Dr. Bob Dahlhausen

Psittacine adenovirus is a DNA virus that infects psittacine birds. It has been described in a variety of species including budgerigars, macaws, Amazon parrots, cockatoos, Senegal parrots, and ring-necked parakeets. It can cause a range of clinical signs, including depression, diarrhea, and sudden death. Adenovirus outbreaks have been described as having a clinical progression similar to that of psittacine herpes virus-1 (Panchevo's disease) in which normal-appearing birds are found dead in their enclosures. The virus is stable in the environment and can easily be transmitted in psittacine nurseries and during the hand-feeding process.



(Katoh H, Ogawa H, Ohya K, Fukushi H. A review of DNA viral infections in psittacine birds. *J Vet Med Sci*. 2010; 17: 101-106.)

## A BRIEF FOCUS

By Dr. Jan Hooimeijer

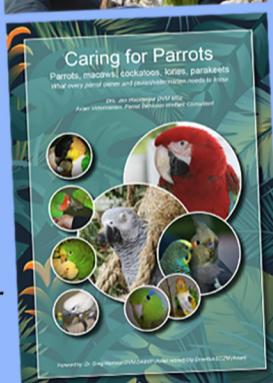
Displacement behavior occurs when an animal experiences motivational conflict and performs seemingly irrelevant activities—like excessive preening—as a coping mechanism. In captive parrots, chronic stressors such as

- malnutrition,
- inadequate environmental enrichment,
- insufficient light exposure
- problematic human-bird relationships

can trigger these behaviors.



When underlying stressors go unaddressed, normal displacement preening can escalate into feather-damaging behavior, a significant welfare concern in psittacines.



My book, **Caring for Parrots**, is about preventing health, behavior, and welfare problems. It includes a protocol on how to approach, prevent, and solve behavior problems in parrots (as well as other animals and children).

More information is available at: [www.janhooimeijer.nl](http://www.janhooimeijer.nl)

## TOXIN ALERT: DICAMBA

The drift-prone weed killer dicamba, which has been approved by the Environmental Protection Agency, has already destroyed millions of dollars' worth of non-genetically modified soybeans and specialty crops, such as tomatoes and wine grapes.

And now it appears to be a major factor in large die-offs of bees, resulting in financial losses for beekeepers as well as loss of pollination of more than \$15 billion worth of fruits, nuts and vegetables a year, largely in California.

Bohnenblust et al. (2016)



## From The Doctor's Desk

By Bianca Murphy, DVM, Dipl ABVP (Avian)

Fatty liver disease (hepatic lipidosis) is a serious and often preventable condition in parrots that can manifest through subtle signs, including lethargy, difficulty breathing, abdominal distension, and overgrown beaks, although many birds show no obvious symptoms until the disease is advanced.



Overweight birds are at significantly higher risk, making regular weight monitoring an essential part of responsible parrot care that can catch problems before they become life-threatening. To prevent over-conditioning and maintain optimal liver health, it's crucial to weigh your bird regularly and feed the appropriate volume as indicated on the Harrison's Bird Foods bag, rather than free-feeding or guessing at portion sizes. Proper portion control combined with a balanced diet like Harrison's formulations can dramatically reduce the risk of fatty liver disease and support long-term hepatic function in your parrot.

## An Interesting Tidbit

Even if you offer organic fruits and vegetables to your birds, they may contain some level of pesticides, because of drift in the agriculture area where they are grown.

A recommendation for washing all produce is:



- Start with a large bowl or basin and add 1 teaspoon of baking soda for each cup of water or mix 1 part distilled white vinegar to 3 parts water.

- Soak produce for 5-10 minutes.
- Take the produce out of the soaking water rather than pour it out, so any dirt can settle to the bottom.
- Rinse under running water to remove any remaining residue of baking soda or vinegar on the surface.

