



Position Statement

AAV Resolution on Keeping Birds in Captivity

The Association of Avian Veterinarians (AAV) supports the keeping of birds in captivity. By definition, "captivity" includes the keeping of domestically raised as well as wild-caught birds in cages and enclosures.

The AAV does not endorse inappropriate husbandry for those birds that are maintained in captivity.

Discussion:

Since its founding in 1980 the AAV has been a positive influence benefiting both birds and the humans with whom they interact. Through educational efforts the AAV has had a substantial role in the improvement and welfare of birds, particularly those that are maintained in captivity. The AAV does not, and has not condoned abuse, neglect or inhumane treatment of birds in any setting.

A consistent and continually evolving stance supports the improved health and welfare of birds and remains a core value of this association. Oriented to avian species, the AAV, an international veterinary association with members from all 50 states and 44 countries, is well positioned to comment professionally, scientifically, nationally and internationally on issues relating to the ethics, husbandry and medical care of birds.

The AAV does not support unscientific, emotionally based recommendations towards changing the legal, medical or husbandry standards of avian healthcare. Such recommendations can result in harm to the health of and welfare of birds.

Neglect of birds that are maintained in captivity occurs on occasion. This however, does not invalidate merit of the mission of the AAV – advancing and promoting the health of birds through improved and responsible stewardship.

The AAV continually works to elevate the standard of avian stewardship and healthcare through education, and accepts as a part of this effort a need to educate those who desire to improve the welfare of birds but are recommending action that is misguided, biased or misinformed.

Birds that are maintained in a captive setting have great value for human beings on many levels. Historically, mankind has always had a preoccupation with birds. They are represented prominently in our folklore, mythology and religion. Birds are abundantly represented in literature, music and art, and have been particularly important in the aesthetics of human life from the earliest times of which there is any record.

The modern international trade in caged birds, like the trade in skins and feathers of a hundred years ago, is an extreme distortion of what is evidently a deep-felt and almost universal human desire to have some degree of association with birds.

Economics are a factor in the trade of live birds, however there is also non-economic value in the



keeping of birds. These values encompass ethical, cultural, theological and personal values for us all. The AAV acknowledges a value of bird interaction with man, and that the keeping of birds in captivity serves this need for our species on many levels.

Outside of the pet trade, the AAV acknowledges that the keeping of birds in captivity has value in other important areas. These include many aspects of endangered species recovery and preservation efforts, captive breeding programs, re-introduction programs and conservation efforts. The ethically and medically appropriate management of some individuals in captivity, in essence, is important for the future of the wild counterparts of many avian species.

The Association of Avian Veterinarians (AAV) is a professional veterinary organization that strives to advance and promote avian medicine, stewardship, and conservation. The AAV has more than 1500 members comprised of veterinarians, veterinary technicians, veterinary students, and allied professionals that work in private practice, colleges and universities, zoos, government, and industry. Many of the AAV's members are considered global leaders in avian conservation and wild bird health. Among the key objectives for the organization, the AAV strives to preserve and protect birds in the wild and their native habitats.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our Executive Director, Dr. Robert Groskin at rgroskin@aav.org.