**YVCipedia AVIAN**

Amazon Parrot Care Sheet

## **Species Overview**

Amazon Parrots are vibrant, social, and full of personality. Known for their boisterous voices and expressive body language, these medium to large parrots hail from Central and South America and the Caribbean. There are more than 30 species of Amazon parrots, with popular pet varieties including the **Yellow-naped**, **Blue-fronted**, and **Double Yellow-headed** Amazons.

At YVC, we often describe Amazons as both playful and willful—natural performers with a bold streak. With proper care and socialization, they can live **40–50 years** or more, making them a deeply rewarding long-term companion for the right household.

## **Housing & Environment**

Amazon parrots are active, intelligent birds that need both space and stimulation. A well-designed home setup helps prevent boredom and the behavioral issues that can follow.

### **Enclosure Guidelines**

We typically recommend a cage no smaller than **36"x24"x48"** with **¾" to 1" bar spacing**, depending on the species. These birds love to climb and hang, so horizontal bars are ideal. Choose **stainless steel or powder-coated metal** for durability and safety.

Inside the cage, include **multiple perches** made from natural branches, rope, or textured materials. Ensure there’s plenty of room to spread their wings without obstruction. Toys should be rotated frequently to keep them curious and engaged—but not overwhelmed.

Amazons are social and should be placed where they can observe and participate in family life. However, they also need a quiet, dark area for **10–12 hours of uninterrupted sleep**, preferably on a regular schedule.

## **Diet & Nutrition**

Amazon parrots are notorious for their love of food—and their tendency to become overweight. At YVC, we strongly emphasize dietary discipline, as Amazons are highly prone to **obesity**, **lipomas**, and **fatty liver disease** when fed improperly.

### **What We Recommend**

The foundation of their diet should be a **high-quality formulated pellet**, such as **Mazuri, Roudybush, or Harrison’s**. We also regularly recommend **Lafeber Nutri-Berries and AviCakes**, which are excellent for training and enrichment but should not be the bulk of the diet.

We aim for pellets to make up **60–70%** of their daily intake, with the remainder consisting of:

* **Fresh vegetables**, especially leafy greens, squash, and carrots
* **Fruits** in moderation (due to sugar content)—berries, papaya, apples
* **Cooked grains and legumes**, like quinoa, brown rice, and lentils

We strongly discourage seed-heavy diets, as they’re high in fat and low in essential nutrients. Clean, fresh water should always be available and changed daily.

## **Behavior & Handling**

Amazons are clever, confident, and often clownish. Many love to talk, whistle, and show off. However, they also have strong opinions and can be territorial, especially during hormonal phases or if overstimulated.

At YVC, we find these birds do best in homes where they’re **treated as intelligent companions**, not background pets. Positive reinforcement training, a predictable routine, and gentle handling go a long way toward developing trust.

Many Amazons can become **one-person birds** if not socialized broadly, so early and ongoing exposure to different people is helpful. They thrive on interaction, but also benefit from having a consistent daily structure.

## **Enrichment**

These birds need a “job” to stay balanced. Whether it's solving puzzles, shredding toys, or mimicking sounds, mental stimulation is vital. Without it, Amazon parrots may become loud, aggressive, or begin **feather plucking** or other destructive behaviors.

Some of the enrichment tools we often recommend at YVC include:

* **Foraging toys** that require problem-solving to access treats
* **Training sessions**, including speech mimicry or simple tricks
* **Musical play**, including dancing or rhythmic call-and-response
* **DIY items** like paper rolls, cardboard, and safe wood for shredding
* **Social time**, both physical (perching on you) and conversational

Keep in mind that overstimulation—especially loud, chaotic environments—can be just as harmful as boredom for these sensitive but bold birds.

## **Health & Veterinary Care**

Regular veterinary care is essential for maintaining the long-term health of an Amazon parrot. At YVC, we recommend **annual wellness exams**, including weight monitoring, and occasionally bloodwork and gram stains, to catch early signs of disease.

### **Common Health Concerns**

* **Obesity**, often from overfeeding or lack of activity
* **Fatty liver disease**, particularly in birds fed seed-heavy or sugary diets
* **Respiratory infections**, sometimes linked to dusty or poorly ventilated housing
* **Feather destructive behaviors (FDB)** due to boredom or stress
* **Vitamin A deficiency**, if not given enough fresh vegetables

Amazons may hide symptoms of illness until they’re seriously unwell. If your bird becomes lethargic, fluffs up, vocalizes less, or shows changes in droppings or appetite, prompt evaluation is critical.

## **Facts & FAQs**

* Amazons are among the most **vocal and animated** parrots—some can develop a vocabulary of 100+ words
* They often **bob, strut, or fan their tails** when excited
* Hormonal shifts in adulthood can make them **moody or territorial** at times
* Many Amazons form **strong bonds with one household member**
* With good care, these birds can remain active and alert well into their 50s

## **Supplies Checklist**

* Large cage (36"x24"x48" minimum) with appropriate bar spacing
* Perches of varied textures and sizes
* High-quality pellets (Mazuri, Harrison’s, Roudybush)
* Fresh vegetables and occasional fruit
* Lafeber Nutri-Berries or AviCakes for enrichment
* Full-spectrum lighting or access to natural light
* Travel carrier for safe transport
* Rotating toys and shreddable materials
* Avian-safe food and water dishes
* Air filtration if dust or cooking fumes are a concern

*Yarmouth Veterinary Center*