

***Foster Parrots, Ltd. &
The New England
Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary
Life-Long Care Program***



“Providing place, peace and protection for captive parrots; working from the belief that parrots and all wild animals should be free.”

Foster Parrots, Ltd. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization

The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary Life-Long Care Program



Welcome to the NEEWS

Your commitment to the security and welfare of your parrot for the rest of his/her life is commendable, and so very important when we are talking about an animal with the potential life span of a parrot. The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary is one of the most reputable sanctuary facilities in the country. Whether birds arrive as rescues or retirees, we strive to fulfill the needs of each and every parrot. Every bird's individual experience matters. Every bird is unique and dynamic in their own way. Every bird is a person.

Our sanctuary facility is run by a dedicated and experienced staff who work directly with the resident birds every day. Additionally, over 45 well-trained, regular volunteers devote themselves to the sanctuary and are connected by their hearts to the parrots they care for. Our sanctuary veterinarian, Dr. Ann Bourke, is a board-certified avian specialist who provides an outstanding level of oversight and avian expertise. Veterinary support is also provided by the Avian & Exotics department at the Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University.

The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary is dedicated to providing quality care for all of its residents. However, it is important to understand the challenges and risks inherent in sanctuary as well as the benefits.

What Your Bird Can Expect

For birds who have been well loved in a home environment and whose primary relationships have been with humans, transition into life in sanctuary can be difficult – particularly during the mandatory, preliminary quarantine period (30 days). We strive to make this time as stress-free as possible by providing a well-lit, quiet and pleasant environment, and compassionate care delivered by an empathetic staff.

Every new parrot is unique and requires individualized care and accommodations. It is our job to learn about “who” each parrot is, and what they will require in order to achieve happiness in sanctuary. It can take many weeks, months – sometimes years – to find the social situation that truly fulfills the needs of each parrot. But this is our goal with every resident bird.

It is always our hope that a parrot can learn to bond with an avian partner and/or find happiness in a small community or flock situation. Some birds will learn to enjoy the companionship of other birds as well as that of their human care-givers. This is always our goal! There is no better companion for a bird than another bird. Some parrots, however, are unable to transfer their affections to other birds and depend on a sustained level of human support. At the NEEWS, staff and volunteers strive to provide daily social support for birds in need.



Umbrella Cockatoo pair enjoying their outdoor aviary

Retirement Options, Accommodations and Risks

Monitored Adoption



Sanctuary can be difficult for certain parrots who are highly human bonded and crave the attention of human guardians. When this is the case, people may provide Foster Parrots with written permission to enter their bird into a “monitored adoption” situation, if an optimal situation presents itself. This would be a circumstance in which your parrot chooses a volunteer, staff member or other person with close ties to the organization, and a mutually desirable relationship is evident. As with all adoptions, home-checks and pre-adoption screenings are conducted prior to approval. This is technically a “fostering” arrangement governed by Foster Parrots’ Adoption Contract, which binds new guardians to a high quality of care and prohibits the sale or transfer of the parrot to any third party. Foster Parrots retains legal rights to “adopted” parrots. If, at any time

during the life of the parrot, the guardian can no longer provide care, the parrot must be returned to Foster Parrots. Foster Parrots remains responsible for veterinary costs for these birds throughout their lives.

Once a parrot has chosen a person and moves to his or her new home, the continued success of the adoption is monitored through regular communication and updates as well as periodic post-adoption home checks. ***It can take time to match parrots with desirable guardians***, and there is no guarantee that the right situation will materialize, but having the option to place a parrot who may benefit from a home environment increases Foster Parrots’ ability to customize care for “retired” birds.

Permanent Sanctuary

Many guardians prefer the permanence and consistency of care that can be provided at the New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary. This is a particularly desirable retirement choice for pairs or small groups of birds arriving together, or for single parrots who are good candidates for integration into “avian society” or who are likely to be able to establish a bond with another parrot.



Permanent resident parrots are evaluated to establish the most suitable situation for them. True flocking birds like lovebirds, cockatiels and parakeets will be carefully integrated into existing aviaries. Other parrots may feel more comfortable in small compatible groups or paired with a single bonded partner. Integrating or pairing parrots is a process and is achieved through consistent, careful monitoring and supervision over a period of time as determined by the birds. It is our goal to transition every eligible parrot out of standard caging and into large aviaries that accommodate and encourage natural behaviors like foraging, play, chewing, exercise, and flight.

“Special needs” birds (i.e. aging birds or those with physical disabilities) may not be able to comfortably navigate a large aviary space and may require standard caging permanently. Also, some parrots lack the confidence to join aviary communities or else are highly dependent upon human interaction and support. When this is the case, our staff and volunteers strive to provide the social support and physical accommodations that each resident parrot requires.

Risks & Considerations

Entrusting the care of one’s parrot to any sanctuary facility is an important decision and should be made only after careful thought and research. We encourage people to visit The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary and a variety of other retirement options before making a decision about placement. There are only a few parrot rescue/sanctuary organizations in the country capable of providing life-long care. When researching placement options, it is vital to have confidence in an organization’s ability to deliver quality care over the long-term. Some important questions to ask are:

- Is the organization stable enough to ensure life-long care?
- What kind of permanent accommodations will be provided for my parrot?
- Is there sufficient trained staff and volunteers to ensure support for my bird’s needs?
- Is there a Board Certified Avian Veterinarian involved with the organization?
- Are there medical protocols in place to ensure the health of my parrot?
- What kind of standard diet is offered to permanent residents?



Disease Risks & Illness



Every parrot entering The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary is required to serve a mandatory quarantine period of at least 30 days, during which time a full veterinary evaluation is performed. Our standard health testing includes a physical exam, full blood work-up and disease screening for Chlamydia (psittacosis) and Pacheco's Disease (avian herpes virus). If a parrot's history or condition is suspect, testing for Avian Bornavirus or Psittacine Beak & Feather Disease may also be performed.

It is important to acknowledge the disease risk that invariably exists at The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary and at all parrot rescue and sanctuary organizations across the country. False positive or negative disease results do happen. Many parrots harbor latent (inactive) viral issues without any signs of illness. Oftentimes a virus cannot be medically detected unless a parrot is actively shedding the virus. Consequently, in any facility where large numbers of birds co-exist, including

breeding facilities, pet stores, bird fairs, parrot rescue organizations or humane societies, there is an ever-present risk of pathogens in the general environment and exposure to disease.

Sometimes illness in parrots is not viral in nature but, instead, can be due to genetic, dietary or environmental factors. Parrots sometimes suffer from illnesses such as liver and heart disease, various forms of cancer, tumors or reproductive maladies. Our staff is trained to observe and notice small changes in behavior or demeanor that can flag health issues, but birds are masters at concealing illness, and some illnesses cannot be cured.

While acknowledging that illness and disease risk does exist at the NEEWS, we maintain exemplary standards in quarantine, disease screening, and medical care. Our protocols are maintained to the highest possible degree as we strive to provide a healthy, stress-free environment for all our resident birds.

Avian Social Dynamics and Injury Risk

Whether they were bred in captivity or imported from the wild decades ago, parrots are wild animals subject to natural behaviors and directives that are not always well understood by human caregivers. Aggression and territoriality are hard-wired behaviors in parrots that can be triggered by seasonal changes, hormonal fluctuations or changes in the social structure of an avian community.



At The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary we strive to orchestrate compatible avian communities and provide quality environments that reduce stress and minimize conflict. However, avian social dynamics are complex and ever-changing. Our staff and volunteers are trained to observe and

know their birds, and to identify changes in behavior or avian relationships that may signal problems, but occasionally conflicts arise and injuries result.

Along with the joys experienced by birds who are able to live cage-free in large aviaries and establish bonds with other birds, comes the risk of injury – or even death – when compatibility issues arise.

Risk of accidental injury or death at the sanctuary could be virtually eliminated if all birds were caged individually. However, we value “quality of life”, and we strive to provide a more natural life and relative freedom for sanctuary residents. It is important that people considering placing their birds in with Foster Parrots or any other sanctuary facility carefully weigh the risks against the benefits, and feel comfortable with the level of care we offer.



Euthanasia Policy

The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary is a no-kill sanctuary facility. We neither practice nor condone euthanasia of healthy animals. We uphold every animal’s right to receive quality medical care in the event of illness or injury.

By policy, euthanasia at the NEEWS can only be approved in order to end the pain and suffering of a terminally ill or injured animal and/or when quality of life is severely compromised by injury or illness. Euthanasia can only be approved and performed by sanctuary veterinarian Dr. Ann Bourke.

Credentials and Associations

Foster Parrots, Ltd.

Foster Parrots, Ltd. is a non-profit organization dedicated to the rescue and protection of unwanted and abused companion parrots and other displaced captive exotic animals. Working on many levels to bring critical services to birds and animals in transition, we offer life-long sanctuary care for unadoptable parrots and other exotics at our permanent care sanctuary facility, The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary, and provide adoption services for well-socialized parrots who desire human companionship. Our educational initiatives seek to connect children and adults alike to animal and environmental issues, to nurture empathy, and to inspire a sense of personal responsibility and accountability toward the care of our earth and our animals. Foster Parrots' conservation work in Central and South America supports the efforts of indigenous people to protect their native animals and natural habitat, and embodies our ultimate message: Parrots are worth more in the trees than in cages; *parrots and all wild animals should be free.*



Our History

Founded in 1989 and formally incorporated in 1999, Foster Parrots, Ltd. is the largest avian rescue organization in the northeast. We are accredited by **The Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries** and are a founding member of the country's leading avian advocacy and information organization, **The Avian Welfare Coalition**. One of the most widely recognized and reputable parrot rescue organizations in the country, Foster Parrots has worked collaboratively with organizations like **The Jane Goodall Institute**, **Born Free USA** and **The World Society for the Protection of Animals** in our quest to bring assistance to captive parrots who have long suffered the consequences of pet trade exploitation and public misinformation. Our conservation work and partnerships in Central and South America have helped provide protection for wildlife and natural habitat since 2005.

In 2007 Foster Parrots established the **New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary** on 15 acres of rural land in Hope Valley, Rhode Island. Now encompassing 23 acres, this facility serves as the permanent sanctuary arm of the organization and, currently under development as a regional **Center for Humane Education** and avian/exotics services, serves as the seat for our local and national educational outreach programs, student internship programs and adoption center. Over 300 parrots, representing over 50 different parrot species, currently reside at the NEEWS.

Ann Bourke, DVM., AVPV – Avian Lead Sanctuary Veterinarian

Known throughout the region as the Traveling Bird Vet, Dr. Ann Bourke has been in veterinary practice for 30 years and has been treating avian patients exclusively for 13 years, bringing her services directly into her client's homes and growing her reputation as one of the best loved vets in New England. Ann stepped in as Foster Parrots' lead sanctuary vet in November of 2019, following the "semi-retirement" of long-time NEEWS vet, Dr. Hank Wietsma. Taking charge of the health and well-being of 400 parrots at The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary would be a daunting prospect for most, but Dr. Bourke has embraced the opportunity to work with such a diversity of avian species and feels right at home at the sanctuary. We are happy and honored to welcome Ann as a part of the Foster Parrots team.

Hank Wietsma, DVM., AVPB –Avian Secondary Sanctuary Veterinarian

Formerly the President of the Rhode Island Veterinary Medical Association, Dr. Wietsma is currently a member of the American Board of Veterinary Practitioners and the Association of Avian Veterinarians. He recently retired from his veterinary practice out of Coventry, Rhode Island. Dr. Wietsma has a national reputation in avian medicine and specializes in immunology science. He has cared for the birds and animals at New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary since 2008.

Associated Organizations and Rescues

The continuation of care for all animals at the NEEWS is safeguarded through our close affiliations with other parrot rescue and animal welfare organizations. Foster Parrots, Ltd. is accredited by **The Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries** and is a founding member of the **Avian Welfare Coalition**. Having founded **The Northeast Parrot Placement Cooperative (NEPPCO)** in 2013, we are closely affiliated with a network of regional rescue organizations, humane shelters and veterinarians including **Northeast Avian Rescue in NY**, **The Rhode Island Parrot Rescue in RI**, **The MSPCA at Nevins Farm in Methuen, MA**, and **The Center for Avian & Exotic Medicine in NY**. We also work in association with reputable parrot rescue organizations across the United States including **Project Perry** in Virginia and **Oasis** in Arizona. Foster Parrots is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of professionals in the fields of veterinary medicine, law, field science and business.



FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Donations and Bequests

The NEEWS offers a fundamental service that is only now beginning to be addressed by avian welfare and rescue organizations in the United States: ensuring permanent sanctuary and high quality lifetime care to “retiring” and unadoptable parrots in free flighted environments. **Grants, donations and bequests support the on-going efforts of Foster Parrots and ensure the future security of all sanctuary residents.** Your involvement is an investment in the success and continuation of the NEEWS.

- 95% of resident parrots at the Foster Parrots sanctuary are unadoptable rescue birds who arrived without the benefit of individual financial support.
- All donations to the Foster Parrots sanctuary are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. Contributions and are not refundable.

Life-Long Care and Estate Planning

People who wish to enroll their parrots in **The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary Life-Long Care Program** and/or include Foster Parrots in their Estate Planning ensure the future care and security of their avian family members, provide support for the rescued population, and help ensure the continuation of the mission and the facility itself.

Placement fees are payable at the time of admission and are based on the approximate expected cost of care for the remainder of your bird’s expected life span (ELS). As such, fees vary by species and age, and the complexity of the species sometimes factors in as well. The tables below are used to determine the placement fees:

“Tier One Birds (ELS 15-20 years)”

Including: Budgerigar Parakeets, Lovebirds, Canaries, Finches, Doves

Age	Fee
0-5 years	\$5,000
6-10 years	\$4,000
11-15 years	\$3,000
>15 years	\$2,000

“Tier Two Birds (ELS 30 years)”

Including: Alexandrines, Pionus, Cockatiels, Quakers

Age	Fee
0-10 years	\$15,000
11-20 years	\$10,000
>20 years	\$5,000

“Tier Three Birds (ELS 40 years)”

Including: African greys, Caiques, Indian/African Ringnecks, Conures, Mini-Macaws, Senegals, Eclectus

Age	Fee
0-10 years	\$25,000
11-20 years	\$20,000
21-30 years	\$15,000
>30 years	\$8,000

“Tier Four Birds (ELS 50-60 years)”

Including: All Cockatoo Species

Age	Fee
0-40 years	\$30,000
41-50 years	\$20,000
>50 years	\$10,000

“Tier Five Birds (ELS 60-80 years)”

Including: Large Macaws, Amazons

Age	Fee
0-40 years	\$30,000
45-50 years	\$25,000
50-55 years	\$20,000
>55 years	\$10,000

***The Life-Long Care Fee is a “fee for service” and is not tax deductible by law.**

***Unless a Trust is established, bequests and placement fees are put into the general fund of the sanctuary. A portion of placement fees may be used to construct aviaries for the retiring parrot(s) if new or customized accommodations are required.**

For further information or to discuss parrot placement options, donations or estate planning, please contact Executive Director, Karen Windsor, at Karen@fosterparrots.com

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