

Shopping with a Captive Audience?



Avian Rights Online / Mary Margison

Few people realize that when they shop at a store that sells birds they may be supporting cruelty. Although PETSMART and PETCO have policies against selling cats and dogs, they continue to sell parrots and other exotic birds despite allegations of inadequate care and abuse, and a growing number of unwanted birds. So what's wrong with selling birds?

- PETSMART and PETCO encourage impulse buying, especially during sales. But when buying a bird, customers are rarely informed about the potential problems (noise, biting, aggression, self-mutilation, mess, etc.). As a result, thousands of birds are purchased by people who soon find that a bird is not their ideal companion.
- Very few people are capable of meeting the special needs of exotic birds. Nor do they comprehend the seriousness of committing to the care of a bird for his or her entire life span—from 10 to 80 years, depending on species. Consequently, many birds spend their lives isolated and confined to cages, bounced from home to home, or abandoned.
- Currently, more than 90 self-described bird rescues or sanctuaries operate in the United States. Many of them have been formed in the last few years to care for the influx of displaced birds. Selling more birds exacerbates this crisis.
- Since the cost of veterinary care often exceeds the “value” of the bird, pet stores have little incentive to provide necessary care; their primary concern is the store’s profit or “bottom line.”
- Some birds languish in pet stores for years. These birds often develop behavioral problems that further reduce their chances of finding a home.
- Breeding facilities that supply birds to pet stores are in fact little more than warehouses in which birds are held in barren cages for mass production.
- Birds are highly intelligent and active animals with complex social needs; they should not be treated like mere merchandise.

Say NO to any store that treats animals like merchandise!

Please urge PETSMART (1-800-738-1385 x2518) and PETCO (1-800-571-2952) to stop selling birds!



National Bird Day
www.nationalbirdday.org
Animal Protection Institute (API)
www.api4animals.org
Avian Welfare Coalition (AWC)
www.avianwelfare.org