

Freedom is Not Equal for All Birds!



“Free as a bird” is an expression often used to describe the state of being free to do the things we enjoy and live as we choose. Our national symbol, the bald eagle, with its seven-foot wingspan in full flight, embodies that freedom. We admire our own native birds flying freely outside our windows every day, and millions of people flock to our parks, shores, grasslands, mountains, deserts, and forests to watch our wild birds in their natural habitats. A life of confinement in a cage would never be considered acceptable for the free spirits that rule our skies.

While we have enacted laws to protect our native birds—such as blue jays, cardinals, robins, warblers, and hawks—from commercial exploitation, we fail to recognize the inconsistency in allowing the U.S. pet industry to continue to market the wild birds of other countries—such as parrots and finches—as “cage birds.” Whether wild-caught or captive-bred, parrots and other exotic birds commonly kept as “pets” are not domesticated animals; they are the offspring of other countries’ native species that were taken from the wild.

For more than 130 million years, birds have evolved to fly and live in flocks of their own kind. By nature, all birds are wild; their inherent behavioral and physical needs remain intact, even when bred in captivity. In their native habitats, birds fly many miles per day, foraging for food and socializing with others. But the average captive exotic bird living in a home is often confined to a cage for long period of time; many never know the companionship of other birds or the joy of free flight.

Isn't it time that we start extending the same respect we have for our own native birds to those of other countries? Make compassion for the natural heritage of all birds your guide.

**Say NO to pet stores that promote and sell
the wild birds of any country as “pets”!**



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