

# Moluccan Cockatoo

*Cacatua moluccensis*



## CARE SHEET

Developed with and approved by a Qualified Veterinarian

Moluccan cockatoos are one of the most affectionate and loving of all parrots. With their light peach body and bright salmon pink crest, they are also one of the most beautiful. They require a lot of attention and constant mental stimulation.



### Is a cockatoo the right companion animal for you?

Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Check "Yes" or "No" after reading the following statements:

- I have an appropriate and safe space for this bird.
- I know that choosing this bird can be a lifelong commitment.
- I will provide daily, supervised time for this bird outside a cage.
- The natural sounds of this bird will be acceptable to family members and neighbors.
- A mature person will provide responsible and primary care for this companion animal.

If you answered, "Yes" to these statements, a cockatoo may be the right choice for you! Continue reading about how to care for a cockatoo and consult with a PETCO associate to learn more. PETCO is committed to responsible companion animal care.

**Average Size** 18 to 22 inches long

**Life Span** 40+ years with proper care

**Diet** Specialized pelleted diets are highly recommended and should consist of 60–70% of the diet; use fortified seeds in moderation as they are higher in fat and less nutritious than pellets  
 Fresh fruits and vegetables, such as grapes, pineapple bits, and corn on the cob; clean, fresh, filtered and chlorine-free water changed daily  
 Do not feed birds fruit seeds, avocados, chocolate, alcohol, or caffeine as these can cause serious medical problems

**Feeding** If your bird is used to a seed diet, convert to pellets gradually; fresh pellets or seeds and fresh, clean, chlorine-free water should always be available  
 Fresh fruits and vegetables should be given daily and discarded when not eaten within 24 hours; cockatoos appreciate quality and variety in their food  
 Cockatoos tend toward obesity; carefully monitor your bird's weight and food intake

**Housing** Birds acclimate well to average household temperatures; be cautious of extreme temperature change; cage should be placed off the floor in an area that is well-lit and away from drafts  
 A cage approximately 36"W x 36"D x 48"H, with metal bars spaced no greater than 1" apart, makes a good home for your cockatoo; as with all animals, it is best to provide the largest habitat possible; a flight cage is strongly recommended  
 Perches should be at least 9" long and 1" in diameter; a variety of perch sizes to exercise feet and help prevent arthritis is recommended  
 A metal grate over the droppings tray will keep the bird away from droppings; line the droppings tray with cage paper or appropriate substrate for easier cleaning; to avoid contamination, do not place food or water containers under perches

**Bird owners should avoid non-stick cookware and appliances as they can release fumes hazardous to your birds health**

<b>Recommended Supplies</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Cage and cage cover	<input type="checkbox"/> Grooming spray	<input type="checkbox"/> Vitamin supplements
	<input type="checkbox"/> Cage paper or substrate	<input type="checkbox"/> Mineral block	<input type="checkbox"/> Variety of perches and toys
	<input type="checkbox"/> Fortified seed or pellet food	<input type="checkbox"/> Treats	<input type="checkbox"/> Nail clippers and styptic gel
	<input type="checkbox"/> Food and water dishes	<input type="checkbox"/> Play gym	<input type="checkbox"/> Book about cockatoos

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### Normal Behavior and Interaction

Highly intelligent and inquisitive, provide ample mental stimulation; keep cages well-secured; provide lots of toys for playing, chewing and shredding

Require a lot of attention; may vocalize loudly in the morning or evening which is normal and should not be overly discouraged

Often show their mood with their crest: standing straight up, moving up and down slowly, or sliding back, depending on how they are feeling emotionally

### Habitat Maintenance

Clean and disinfect the cage and perches regularly; replace substrate or cage liner weekly or more often if needed; replace food and water daily

Replace perches, dishes and toys when worn or damaged; rotate new toys into the habitat regularly

Ensure that there are no cage parts or toys with lead, zinc or lead and lead-based paints or galvanized parts as these can cause serious medical issues if ingested by your bird

### Grooming and Hygiene

Provide filtered, chlorine-free, lukewarm water regularly for bathing; remove the water when done; as an alternative, mist the bird with water or a grooming spray

Clipping flight feathers is not necessary, but when done correctly it can help prevent injury or escape; consult an avian veterinarian on what is best for your bird; nails should be trimmed by a qualified person to prevent injury to the bird

### Signs of a Healthy Bird

- Active, alert, and sociable
- Dry nostrils and bright, dry eyes
- Clean, dry vent
- Eats and drinks throughout the day
- Beak, legs, and feet appear normal
- Smooth, well-groomed feathers

### Common Health Issues

Health Issue	Symptoms or Causes	Suggested Action
Feather Plucking	Bird plucks own feathers; may be due to boredom, poor diet or other illness	Relieve boredom with attention, new toys, or space; improve diet. Seek veterinary advice
Proventricular Dilatation Disease	Depression, weight loss, passing undigested food	Seek immediate veterinary attention
Obesity	Overfeeding or poor diet	Regulate amounts and types of food
Psittacine Beak and Feather Disease Virus	Abnormal feather color, feather loss, beak deformities	Seek veterinary advice

### Red Flags

- Beak swelling or accumulations
- Wheezing or coughing
- Eye or nasal discharge
- Fluffed, plucked, or soiled feathers
- Runny or discolored stools
- Red or swollen eyes
- Sitting on floor of habitat
- Favoring one foot
- Loss of appetite

**If you notice any of these signs, please contact your avian veterinarian.**

### Sources

*Avian Medicine: Principles and Application* by Ritchie, Harrison, and Harrison  
*The ASPCA Complete Guide to Pet Care* by David L. Carroll  
*The Simple Guide to Bird Care and Training* by Julie Rach

**Note:** The information on this Care Sheet is not a substitute for veterinary care. If you need additional information, please refer to the above sources or contact your veterinarian as appropriate.