

## MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

Melbourne, May 2017

### **Stop selling birds and adopt them instead, says campaigner**

#### **Avian behaviourist calls for ban on bird sales and breeding, ahead of major event in May.**

It's not only dogs who suffer by being confined in cramped spaces such as in puppy farms. According to Melbourne-based bird behaviourist **Paris Yves Read** of **Let Companion Birds Fly**, our feathered friends also experience physical and emotional trauma from being bred and kept in small cages and boxes by backyard breeders, commercial bird breeders, pet shops, markets and, particularly at bird expos such as the upcoming **Skye Bird Expo** in Melbourne's South East, on 28 May 2017.

"Terrified and neglected birds are forced into tiny, dirty boxes in these noisy, crowded places. Their welfare is low priority," says Yves Read. "The sellers and breeders are only interested in "money"."

Yves Read, who has rescued and cared for a large number of birds including budgies, canaries, cockatiels, lorikeets, ringnecks, quakers, conures, alexandrines, galahs, cockatoos, for at least 20 years, lambasted the lack of both bird welfare laws and education in Australia, and called for a ban on all bird sales and breeding.

Instead, Yves Read urges people to adopt existing birds that need loving, caring homes – but only after becoming educated about how to care for them properly.

Yves Read is looking for new homes and foster homes for the constant number of abused and/or surrendered birds that need a new human family.

"Birds are extremely intelligent with high-level psychological and physical requirements. Parrots, for example, suffer complex PTSD and emotional trauma from being kept in captivity. They must be treated respectfully and with empathy by their carers" says Yves Read.

The campaigner rails against small cages, closed cage doors, wing clipping and forced bird training. "Birds do not need to be trained, blackmailed or coerced. They can actually think for themselves and have great logic, common sense and intuition," she asserts.

She has called for the following minimum selection criteria to be implemented nationally for anyone considering adopting a bird:

- Birds are never to be wing-clipped as this causes major emotional and physiological damage to the bird;
- Private, safe and secure property: no cats or dogs on property that are prone to harm and scare birds;
- Nature-similar, ethical, aesthetic and clean aviaries with access to fresh, clean branches as perches;

- Open-door cages and aviaries should be wider than 2m square for smaller birds e.g. budgerigars, canaries and minimum 6m x 3m wide for larger parrots such as cockatoos;
- Birds are not to be kept indoors in the home all day as this is unhealthy and unsafe for them; they require fresh air, sunlight (vitamin D) and to interact with nature and wild birds;
- Birds are not to be kept in closed cages of any size at all e.g. small cages or even 1.5m wide cages; doors should always be open to allow the bird to come and go as they please;
- Owners must have the resources including money, time and effort to care for the birds and seek medical tests and attention when necessary;
- Owners must prepare fresh meals daily for birds such as organic fruits and vegetables, fresh water throughout the day with vitamins, organic pastas and other foods;
- All birds to undertake initial thorough blood tests (on the foot, never on the body or under anaesthetic), for example for chlamydia or psittacosis, at the new owner's expense or the previous owner's where possible;
- Bird owners should not have serious emotional problems such as major grieving, depression or mental health problems as the birds are not their therapist and the birds suffer by not living in a healthy home environment; birds also 'take on' the emotional stresses of the human family;
- Homes and aviary environments are to be free of physical and mental abuse, smoke, drug and alcohol addictions;

“Birds have wings to fly. They must be allowed the freedom and choice to do so,” says Yves Read. “We must stop treating them as commodities or playthings and consider their wellbeing. It's not just a matter of acquiring a bird, leaving the bird in a cage and feeding him or her seeds/powders and cheap commercial foods that have saturated the Australian bird pet food industry. Caring for a bird is similar to caring for a human.”

### **About Paris Yves Read**

Paris is a Holistic Counsellor, Film Maker, Bird/Parrot Behaviourist and a Companion Bird Welfare Campaigner. She lives with her supportive husband and feathered family, both caring for them 24/7. In this environment, Paris is constantly studying the behaviours of birds in addition to her continuous bird behaviour research and findings from literature and within her worldwide avian education network. An experienced media commentator, Yves Read is the voice of welfare and legal rights for companion birds in Australia.

### **About Let Companion Birds Fly**

Let Companion Birds Fly provides Bird Behaviour Counselling advice and holistic therapy for birds: [www.letcompanionbirdsfly.com.au](http://www.letcompanionbirdsfly.com.au)

### **Media Contact:**

Paris Yves Read

Mobile: 0413 530 419

Email: [paris@letcompanionbirdsfly.com.au](mailto:paris@letcompanionbirdsfly.com.au)

Images of abused/neglected birds can be viewed at

<http://www.letcompanionbirdsfly.com.au/campaign/>