

NEVINS FARM

Fascinating Feathered Friends, Indoors or Out

Nevins Preen Programs for Birds' Specific Needs

Informed Adopters = Happy, Healthy Birds

Some of them live 80 years or more. Some of them talk, some of them squawk. Some of them like to cuddle. Some of them like to head up a flock. Birds of all types, sizes, and colors — Nevins has 'em!

Every bird, like every dog, cat, or other companion animal, is an intelligent, feeling creature with a personality and specific needs. Since so many birds are turning up at Nevins these days, our staff members are addressing the situation with their usual energy and creativity, seeking to reduce intake numbers and find good homes for the birds who already call Nevins their temporary home.

Nevins is facing two major “bird issues”: a significant increase in the number of large exotic birds surrendered, and an influx of roosters, many of whom don't fit in with people's plans for a backyard flock.

Large birds like parrots, macaws, and cockatoos attract many people who later find them challenging to live with and care for. New Nevins efforts to address the needs of these brilliant and brilliantly colored birds include:

- better bird housing;
- a network of specialized foster homes;
- a Bird Task Force for staff and volunteers;
- an enrichment plan for birds while in our care; and
- the creation of “Adopt-a-Bird Month.”



As for those proud-strutting roosters, Nevins Equine and Farm Animal Center is focusing on addressing their needs by:

- counseling those who surrender roosters about choosing pullets (where the sex of the bird is known prior to purchase) rather than purchasing chicks;
- popularizing a “Pledge Not to Hatch Campaign,” targeting schools that promote chick-hatching projects;
- offering information about basic bird care to municipalities that enact zoning to allow backyard flocks;
- offering a lecture series for those who are considering a backyard flock;
- highlighting the adoption of barnyard birds as pets (not just for egg-laying) and putting together “bachelor flocks” of roosters;
- producing a series of short educational videos on the care of farm birds; and
- new this year, offering a number of practicums, where people can get hands-on instruction in the care of birds.

We're hoping that efforts such as these will cut down on the number of birds surrendered, as well as locate responsible, loving owners for adoptable birds in our care.

For more information about birds at Nevins, please visit mspca.org/nevins or call 978 687-7453, x6101. ■