



# CONVERTING “SEED JUNKIES”

Is there a secret to maintain long and healthy life of a pet bird? Bet, there isn't! However, there is a conversion method that we can share for bird parents especially with “seed junkies” parrots that have become fixated to a particular food item, normally sunflower seeds.



**Estimate the amount of seeds** eaten in a day and only present half of it; then monitor the bird's condition whilst trying the following: 'weed' the mixture, change the balance of seeds away from the sunflower seeds and gradually increase the amount of new pellets.

**Fooling their Sense of Taste.** Fresh fruits and juices are ideal in the beginning of “conversion period” as a top dressing on the seeds & pellets combo, in case your bird seems to be still reluctant to eat more pellet, crushing and grinding the pellets into a powder form has been also seen to be very effective with stubborn birds.



## Change the Photo-period

The natural photoperiod for many birds is 12 hours light, 12 hours dark. In captivity this is extended in the home by early risers and late-night television. Covering the cage from 9pm till 9am can change a bird's behavior and sometimes help with establishing new feeding patterns.



**Move the cage** by placing new food items close to their favorite toys.

**Consider Interval Feeding** Instead of leaving food in the cage all day, try introducing meal times; like 30 - 60 minutes access three times a day.

### 'Monkey see, Monkey do.'

Parrots will often take and investigate tidbits which they see the owner eating. Being able to see other birds eating a better diet may help, as well as seeing you eating and chewing their new 'good food' (or pretending so!)