

## **AN OWNER'S GUIDE TO RECOGNISING PAIN IN THEIR COMPANION BIRD**

**\*Please note, this handout is a guide only. If you have any concerns about your bird's health or welfare we would advise booking an appointment with one of our exotics vets so that they can be assessed\***

Most pet birds are prey species, which means that they hide signs of pain and illness extremely well. In some cases, observing a bird when they do not know you are watching can be the most helpful, as they will be less likely to mask signs of pain. This can be accomplished with a video camera or your mobile phone.

Some of the most common signs of pain or illness in birds are:

1. Weight loss (we recommend weighing your birds regularly on accurate digital scales)
2. Fluffed up plumage
3. Poor feather quality
4. Reduced mobility (staying in one place, difficulty perching, lameness)
5. Change in temperament (abnormally aggressive or an aggressive bird becomes suddenly docile)
6. Guarding the area
7. Over grooming (feather plucking or chewing)
8. Not eating/ reduced food intake
9. Fast breathing or 'tail bobbing' when breathing (you can count breathing rates yourself at home - count how many breaths they take in 15 seconds then multiply by four)

If you notice any of the above behaviours in your bird, please call our reception team on 0207 387 8134 and book an appointment with a member of our exotics team.