

## PERCHES:

Offer as many different types as you can! Find correct sizes for your species and then also offer a few which are 1/2" smaller and 1/2" larger for variety and change of grip. Perches with a rough outer coating offer great beak and nail grooming assistance. Rope perches offer a great "soft" perch especially in that favorite sleeping corner! (Please trim all rope perches weekly so that toes will not get caught and material won't be ingested). When you first bring your young bird home, place perches low in the cage until you are sure the bird is able to climb and roam freely. Even large breeds such as Greys can be awkward when young and if they fall it is safer to have the bottom closer! Make sure you use large enough washers to hold the weight of the perch especially with concrete type perches. Diversity!! One of the most important features you can add to your birds' habitat. Imagine what it must be like to always be on your feet! You can give your bird many ways to find fun, comfort and even beak and nail correction. Remember the wooden dowels which came in about three sizes? (and some of us used "gravel perch covers" - thank goodness we know better today!)... We have come a long way birdy!!!!

The variety of available sizes, types and materials for perches today is wonderful...the following is a partial list of some of the favorites!

Rope: Booda(tm), sisal

Plastic: PVC, Polyurethane, acrylic, orthopedic perch(tm)

Wood: Manzanita, guava, soft/hard pine, dragonwood, asst.. others

Cactus: Cholla plain (hollow), cholla-cement filled, cholla -manu mineral filled

Cement: Polly's Pastels'(tm), Pedicure(tm)

Leather: Leather wrapped

NEW: Sandy Perch (tm)

tm=Trade mark

When you prepare your birds habitat...buy several or one of each of all the types readily available..you will want to switch and trade them off and also have enough so that when you pull all for a cleaning, you have a fresh set waiting... I usually put in one of each type. Typically I offer:

A Booda perch as a sleeping perch; I put it in a position they are known to like to sleep in. Booda is a tightly wound rope perch in varying sizes. Buy a long one and stretch it the length of the cage about 1/3" of the way down and hang toys all along the way from above...they love running the rope and playing as they go! I use a tiny one for the sleeping perch and put it off in a corner for privacy. Wash the Boodas in the dishwasher or soak for five minutes in soapy solution and rinse well...If you have a chewer, trim off any fray which has developed from chewing..The Booda has cage bar ends and their own caps!! A snap to use and great for the birds.

An acrylic corner perch! Great way to use unused space!. PVC perches and ladders are

lightweight and easy to put anywhere in the cage. Polyurethane perches are wonderful...they are a wood dowel coated with a "soft" feeling polyurethane...non-chewable for most and a great break from wood and cement. The orthopedic perch (tm) is made of PVC type material and is varying density and sizes throughout the length of the perch to give your birds' feet a great workout! It also has a cage bar end and a cap to affix easily.

Wood...Look for multi branch Manzanita and guava perches...they bring the forest to your cage and offer other places to hang some of your shorter length toys...Manzanita, guava and dragonwood also offer a great chewing experience. Some guava and manzanita are very slippery; just score with a knife or file with nail file to give them rough areas to grasp.

Cactus: another great alternative...lightweight, great grip and the hollow ones offer not only a softer place to perch but holes which can be filled with treat and seeds to give them an experience with "foraging"! The manu perches offer manu minerals jam- packed in the openings and mine love to chew at these!! Nature zone (tm) makes a cholla perch which is cement filled and offers a grooming tool for the birds. Wash them with a stiff brush for a thorough clean.

Cement: A great groomer! (Please be sure to set all of your heavier cement perches close to the bottom of the cage; imagine what might happen if one fell from a higher spot.) Polly's pastels offer a smooth, cool to the touch cement perch...great for beaks! Pedicure perches offer a more raised, coarse surface, which is great for nails and beaks! These are lighter weight than the classic cement type. They should be scrubbed weekly with brush since particles may be trapped in porous areas on the surface.

Leather...Have you seen them? Advertised as leather couches! Great change for the birds and a great chew... Wrap tightly with leather strips to add to the fun...These should be soaked in fresh water for at least 20 minutes after washing in mild, soapy solution or cleaning product and reshaped, then lay flat to dry...leather will retain soap if not rinsed properly. (All toys containing leather should be cleaned in this manner.)...

Sandy Perch! Fairly new to the market and I love them! They offer beak and foot care properties but are lightweight and not cool or cold like cement. I spoke to the owner regarding toxicity since they are made with a resin and then the grit is applied...They are proven non-toxic and my birds give them wings up!

Use varying size perches and thickness' to give them the variety they would find in the wild...Mix perches so that there is a soft, orthopedic, wood and pedicure type for them to choose from daily. Also, now available are acrylic cage saver washers! Throw out the old metal (are they loaded with zinc or what?) washers and buy these clear acrylic type...They are available in thin or thick widths so that they will hold the heaviest of perches to the lightest with great ease! Also, be careful where you locate your perches, if above water and food dishes...poop stew may be the end result. Think about how they will navigate the cage and have fun setting them up so that they are offered a climbing challenge. Anything which can be microwaved easily can be disinfected in this way however, most of our items contain some type of non-microwavable products and must be washed in some way; dry in the sunlight where you can..it's a great way to

disinfect cages, toys, wood and leather!