

## **Budgies Fact Sheet**

### **General Info:**

- Average lifespan is 8-15+ years
- As pets, the gender of a Budgie has little to do with their personality
- No Budgie is guaranteed to talk, however both males and females are capable of learning
- Males are considered better mimickers and often pick up things faster
- Very social birds so if you don't have a lot of them, get more than one
- Depending on the size of your cage/aviary it is recommended to keep a male and female or 2 males over 2 females as they are more territorial
- There are larger Budgies available called Show Budgies. They have larger heads and are up to 5cm longer
- Green is the only "natural" colour for Budgies – all other colours have been bred in captivity
- Budgies need more than seed in their diet
- Toys keep Budgies happy and entertained; some toys even help to keep their beak and nails healthy

### **Sexing**

To determine the gender of your Budgie, the first thing to consider is their age. Most Budgie varieties, as chicks, have the barring (marking on their heads) from its cere (a waxy fleshy covering at the base of the upper beak) up to near their forehead.

Sexing adults is much easier. Males have a bright blue cere, Females cere are whitish blue to brown.

### **Breeding:**

In general, Budgies are opportunistic breeders. This means they breed when they have reliable access to food and nesting material. In South/West Australia, they tend to breed between August and June.

Budgies are monogamous, sticking with one partner for life. A female can lay an egg without a male, but it will be unfertilised and won't hatch. When a female is ready to lay eggs, her cere becomes crusty and brown. Eggs need to be incubated for 18-21 days and the difference between the first and last hatchlings can range up to 16 days. While incubating her eggs the female rarely leaves the nest and often the male will bring her food and feed her.

Breeding issues with Budgies are rare but can happen. Often issues are related to females fighting over nesting boxes. It's important each pair of Budgies have their own box and they are not all in a clump together.

### **Hand Rearing:**

While growing, Budgies require an ambient temperature of 36.6 degrees Celsius until their feathers grow in. Don't clean a nesting box while there are babies in it, wait until after they've fledged.

Choose a formula that will have the right amount of nutrition to raise a healthy and happy Budgie. Most of the formulas are powdered and you mix them with warm water. The formula to water ratio often depends on the age of the chick. Discard any formula left after a feed.

For feeding babies a needleless syringe or dropper is easiest. Hold the chick in your hand, supporting the head and drop the formula into the back corner of the beak. Always clean the beak after feeding.

Follow feeding directions for feeding schedule. Allow the crop to empty between feeds. For young chicks feed every 1-2 hours day and night. Start weaning at 4 weeks but continue to offer formula until 6 weeks.