

# AROMATHERAPY FOR PARROTS



USING ANCIENT HEALING METHODS  
IN TODAY'S COMPANION BIRDS

ANGELA NELSON

# Aromatherapy for Parrots

Angela Nelson

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## DEDICATION

To Huey, my first love. You started my passion for everything with feathers and taught me how much love can come from someone so small. And to Chelsie, my beautiful blue angel. I learned so much from you in your short time on this earth, but what sticks with me the most is that no matter what hand we are dealt in life, approach each day with love, joy, strength and dignity.  
Fly free my beautiful ones. I will see you soon.



Disclaimer:

The information contained in this book is for educational purposes only and is not intended to diagnose, prescribe for or cure any diseases. If you or your animals have any health concerns, please see a qualified medical professional of your choosing.

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, to Gary Young, the world leader in therapeutic essential oils.

Aromatherapy in animals would not have had the ‘miraculous’ results that we have seen without your passion and dedication to the purest essential oils in the world. Your essential oils have healed me and have in turn helped heal countless others. Thank you will never be enough.

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And to Paul. Thank you for always believing in me, even when I didn’t believe in myself. You have always encouraged my passions even when you didn’t understand them, and you have put up with this “crazy bird lady” with nothing but love, acceptance and understanding. I would not be the woman that I am today without you by my side. I love you with all my heart.

## AROMATHERAPY? FOR PARROTS!?!

I have been in the parrot world long enough to know that if you talk about using anything scented in a bird home, people will either think you are crazy or they will grab their parrots and run in the other direction. So I thank you for picking up this book and I ask that you have patience to hear me out so that you can learn how this ancient healing modality, so very new to the world of parrots, can change your life and the way you view avian diseases.

Webster's Dictionary defines aromatherapy as: "a therapy using essential oils...extracted from plant materials to promote physical, emotional, and spiritual health and balance." So what does that make an essential oil? Again, Webster's defines essential oil as: "any of a class of volatile oils that give plants their characteristic odors and are used especially in perfumes and flavorings, and for aromatherapy." As you can see, you cannot define one without the other. I promise that I will get into how we can make this work for our parrots, but please bear with me as I appease my left brain in explaining some of the science of essential oils and aromatherapy first to give us all a better understanding of how it works.

Essential oil to a plant is much like blood to us. It is "essential" for life. In fact, many times this essential oil is called the 'life blood' of the plant, and much like our blood, it carries out many different life sustaining processes within the plant. It fights off bacteria, viruses and other invaders, aids in wound healing and so much more. Have you ever broken a part of a leaf off of



one of your houseplants? Did you notice the liquid that beaded up there at the source of the ‘wound’? That is the essential oil rushing to the site to flush away any potential infection and to start the healing and repairing process. The role that an essential oil plays in the plant can be utilized for ourselves and our animals as well; from infection and disease fighting, to wound healing and tissue repair and so much more. Are you excited yet?

Essential oils are complex mosaics of hundreds of different chemicals. A common essential oil such as lavender can have 300 or more different chemical constituents, and many of these constituents occurring in minute quantities, but nonetheless adding to the oils overall therapeutic effect to some degree. Pure essential oils are so complex that there is not one single oil that has had every constituent analyzed. It takes years of study to understand these constituents and how they function.

There are three distinct types or “models” of aromatherapy and each has a very different view of how we can use essential oils. These are the German Model, the British model and the French model. The German model of aromatherapy focuses mostly on the inhalation of essential oils for healing and spiritual uses. The British model believes in diluting a small amount of essential oil into a carrier oil and then rubbed onto the body. The British model is mainly used in massage and relaxation practices. The French model focuses on the use of neat (undiluted) therapeutic grade essential oils topically and by inhalation and ingestion for medical purposes. Using these three models together, you can see just how powerful and versatile essential oils can be. There are multiple application methods that we can use with our parrots including diffusion, misting, topically (usually on their feet) and orally. I will cover each one of these methods in greater detail in a moment.

The most important thing to know and understand is the quality of essential oils that you are using. Did you know that only 2% of essential oils on the market today are considered therapeutic grade? That means that just about every single essential oil that you can get your hands on could harm your bird. Do I have your attention yet? Over 98% of ‘essential oils’ could potentially kill your bird. Here is another statistic for you: there is over 1,000%, yes, one *thousand* percent more lavender essential oil sold on the

market as “pure” than there is lavender plants in the world! One reason it has taken me so long to write this book is the intense fear that I have of something going wrong. Someone reads just a part of it and sees that Lavender oil can be very calming. They get all excited and go down to the corner drug store to buy a bottle of lavender and the next day their beloved parrot is dead. I do not want that blood on my hands nor that weight on my shoulders, so I am going to be very honest with you throughout this entire book, and I beg you to listen closely and understand that I have nothing but the health, longevity and well being of your avian companion in my heart.

I know of a veterinarian that has personally had over thirty different essential oil brands tested and to this day, only one company has shown the purity, safety and consistency that we need to safely use in our animals. That company is Young Living Essential Oils. Now this is not to say that there are not other good essential oils out there, I have heard of a few, but I know I can be confident in stating that you can use ANY Young Living product safely with your animals. That is the only company I can say that about with confidence. This is not a sales pitch and no, Young Living does not pay me to promote their products; this is truly for the health and safety of you and your birds only. I have been approached by people asking about other essential oil brands and if I have used them and my answer is, at this time I have no reason to venture out of the realm that I know to be safe and effective. Young Living carries everything that I have ever needed to use, so why would I want to risk the health and safety of my birds just to see if another brand is safe and effective? No thank you!!

So now the question is, what makes an essential oil safe? Well, one of the things that determines the level of purity of an oil is the chemical make up within that oil, otherwise known as the chemical constituents. There is a large number of factors that can affect the constituents including the soil condition in which the plant was grown, the fertilizer that was used in the soil, the specific parts of the plant that are distilled, the weather the plant was subject to in that growing season, the altitude it was grown at, the way it was harvested and the process in which it was distilled. It requires a immense amount of research, time and dedication to not only understand the



*Distillation chambers at the YL Lavender Farm in Mona, UT*

process of distillation, but also to know when the most beneficial harvesting time would be for the plant. Depending on what stage of its growth cycle will determine what constituents show up in the oil. Harvest too early or too late and you can miss a great deal of therapeutic properties. The amount of time the plant is distilled and the temperature and pressure at which it was distilled at also makes a huge impact on the quality of the final product. The higher the heat and the pressure, the faster you can get essential oil, but the molecular structure of the compounds within the oil are extremely delicate and are easily damaged by heat and pressure. So, even if you have a company that has great plants that are harvested properly, if you turn up the heat and pressure to get more oil in a shorter amount of time, thus a higher profit margin, you will lose much of molecules that carry the therapeutic benefits we are looking for.

Another area of great concern is that some oils are adulterated with synthetic chemicals, also known as “extending” an oil. For example, frankincense is often extended with solvents such as diethylphthalate or dipropylene glycol. The only way to know if an oil has been adulterated like this is to subject it to a multitude of different tests using state-of-the-art equipment in a lab, and even then, these tests cannot differentiate a natural chemical from a synthetic one. That is why it is so easy to engineer oils in a

lab or to add “extenders” to poor quality oils. So you see, it is extremely important that you trust the integrity of the company of the essential oils that you will be using. At Young Living, you are able to visit their farms and even participate in the planting, harvesting and distillation of the oils!

Remember now, anything that has been used in the soil or on the plant can be found in the essential oil, so any chemical fertilizer, pesticide or herbicide will be present in the final product. It is extremely important to make sure that the oil of your choosing is not just ‘organic’ but actually wild crafted. Much of Europe laughs at the United States definition of “organic”. Here in the US, land that is going to be used for organic agriculture has only to be chemical free for three years. That means just a few years ago they could have been saturating the field with anhydrous ammonia and a host of other chemicals which is undoubtedly going to still be in the ground. Not to mention the fact that there are no regulations on what may be going on in neighboring fields. If the neighboring farmer is spraying his crops and you are downwind, oh well. That is not regulated on organic fields.

On the other hand, wild crafted farms mean that there has never been any chemical use at all in the recorded history of the land. Fields that are deemed for wild crafted crops also leaves a radius of a specific amount of miles all the way around the field where no chemicals can be used. A lot more research and a lot more money go into raising wild crafted plants, but the benefits significantly outweigh the cost involved.

### *How Do Essential Oils Work?*

Much of the following section is taken directly from the book “Essential Oils Integrative Medical Guide” by D. Gary Young as he can explain it much better in his own words than I could ever hope to! You can purchase this wonderful book online at [www.abundanthealth4u.com](http://www.abundanthealth4u.com)

Essential oils and blood share several common properties: they fight infection, contain hormone-like compounds, and initiate regeneration. Working as the chemical defense mechanism of the plant, essential oils possess potent antibacterial, antifungal and antiviral properties. They also ward off attacks

by insects and animals. The ability of some essential oils to work as hormones helps them bring balance to many physiological systems. This similarity goes even deeper as essential oils have a chemical structure that is similar to that found in cells and tissues, it makes them readily identified and accepted by the body.

Essential oils have a unique ability to penetrate cell membranes and diffuse throughout the blood and tissues. The unique structure of essential oils is very similar to the makeup of cell membranes. The molecules of essential oils are also relatively small, which enhances their ability to penetrate into cells. When applied topically, essential oils can travel throughout the body in a matter of minutes.

Essential oils stimulate the secretion of antibodies, neurotransmitters, endorphins, hormones and enzymes. They increase the uptake of oxygen and adenosine triphosphate which is fuel for every cell.

European scientists have studied the ability of essential oils to work as natural chelators, binding with toxic heavy metals and petrochemicals and carrying them harmlessly out of the body. Because of their complexity, essential oils do not disturb the body's natural balance or homeostasis: if one constituent exerts too strong an effect, another constituent may block or counteract it. Synthetic chemicals in contrast usually have only one action and often disrupt the body's homeostasis.

Okay, Angela here again on my own. Doesn't that just amaze you?! The amazing intelligence of an essential oil to not only work at fixing problems and imbalances in the body, but also be complex enough to fix itself before it gets "out of hand" and puts the body out of balance. WOW! Even as a scientist myself, I know that we will never be able to even come close to creating in a lab what is already all around us in nature. The more "pure nature" I bring into my life, the more health, energy and vitality I have and I want to bring that to the parrots too!

### *Why Aromatherapy for Birds?*

The thought process to using essential oils in parrots is a logical one. Just think of all of the wild birds and how much “aromatherapy” they are getting on a daily basis! Since essential



*A wild Rainbow Lorikeet in fragrant trees*

oils can be found in the roots, stems, bark, leaves, wood, fruit, flowers, rinds and berries of plants, is there ever a time where a wild parrot is NOT being exposed to essential oils? Even when they are just perching on a branch, the essential oil within that branch is being absorbed through their feet. We’ve all peeled an orange, right? That fabulous citrus smell that fills the air as you are peeling is the essential oil from the rind. Imagine a parrot chewing through an orange in the wild. Those oils are being sprayed into their eyes, mouth and all over their face, not to mention being inhaled and ingested.



*A wild Australian parrot enjoying an almond*

Could essential oils be part of what is missing in the lives of our beloved parrots today? We focus on diet and nutrition, enrichment, light exposure and many other things which have greatly enhanced the lives of companion birds, but what if we added in the oils? In my mind, this is a huge missing link. Wild birds are exposed to essential oils before they are even hatched, as the oils from the plant material that makes up the nest are absorbed through the egg shell. Even the tiniest, fragile chick is in a virtual aromatherapy hot house! What does that do for their developing immune systems? I have yet to find any data on this particular subject, but it does lead one to wonder how



different life would be if we were given a heavy dose of Nature and her healing abilities with our very first breath.

*Baby robins in their “aromatherapy” nest*



## METHODS OF APPLICATION

### *Diffusion*

One of the best ways to start using oils around birds is by diffusion. This keeps the exposure mild and yet yields very positive results. Remember, if 1-3 drops of an essential oil can treat an adult human, we need VERY LITTLE to properly treat a small bird! I always recommend using an ultrasonic, cold water-based diffuser. An ultrasonic diffuser has a disk that vibrates at a very rapid rate. These vibrations break down the essential oil into micro particles that are then dispersed with the water as a superfine mist. One great advantage to using an ultrasonic diffuser is that it helps add humidity to the air as well as the essential oil, which we all know our birds can benefit from. Make sure that the diffuser only uses cold water, as heating an essential oil can alter the chemical constituents and make the oil less effective.



When I start to

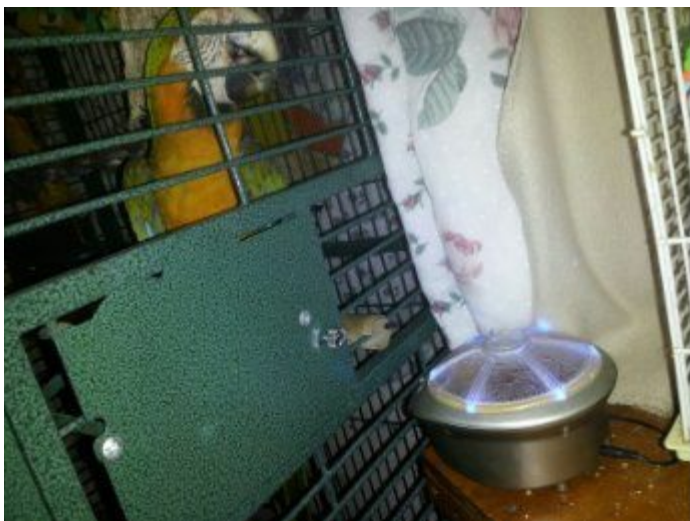


diffuse essential oils for a bird for the first time, I will add only about 3 to 4 drops into the diffuser and make sure that it is set up in a larger room. Make sure you are going to be home the entire time you are diffusing for the first few times and then every time you start a new oil. I recommend being in the same room for at least the first five minutes of diffusion of any new oil. Most birds seem to gravitate toward the diffuser, but in the case of a detoxification reaction, you want to be there to turn off the diffuser if necessary. Start with just twenty minutes of diffusing and then evaluate the birds in the room. If they appear to be enjoying

*Merlin loves his essential oils!*

the diffusion you can certainly continue. In my home, like many other bird homes, I have at least one or two diffusers running 24 hours a day!

You may see other diffusers on the market such as the air diffuser or a nebulizing diffuser. Although these can be wonderful diffusers and do have their place, I don't recommend using them for birds as these types diffuse pure essential oils into the air. This can be very overwhelming and certainly unnecessary on a small bird. Often times we use these types of diffusers for horses in an open barn, so you can imagine the intensity of the oils being diffused!



*Pierce will reach through her*

*cage to turn her diffuser back on!*

When I want a more “intense” version of diffusion for a particular situation, such as a severe respiratory infection, I use a method referred to as “tenting”. Tenting is where a bird is placed in a small enclosure such as a small cage or carrier and a diffuser is placed directly in front and the whole ensemble is covered with a towel or a blanket. This keeps the vapors in close quarters with the bird and can be a very effective form of treatment. But remember to never leave a bird that is being tented unattended and don’t tent for more than 30 minutes at any one time.

I am often times asked what oils can be safely diffused for birds and the answer is a simple one. If you can stick your face, with your eyes open, directly into the mist of the diffuser and it does not irritate your eyes, nose or throat, then you are safe to assume that it will be just fine for your bird as well. I would not normally tent with oils like Oregano, Thyme or Cinnamon Bark as they can be rather intense and could potentially bother the eyes, but often times in a diffuser in an open room, these oils can be used just fine.

**\*\*IMPORTANT!!!** Young Living carries a single oil called Western Red Cedar that I do NOT recommend using with ANY birds!! Western Red Cedar has a very high amount of the chemical constituent thujone, which many believe is the cause of the toxic reaction parrots have to cedar and I believe it is best not to risk it. I have not used it in my home at all, nor have I heard any reports of others using it around their birds, but it is better to be safe than sorry! Now, Young Living’s Cedarwood essential oil contains no thujone and has been used safely around birds.\*\*

*Misting*



Misting is one of my favorite ways to apply oils. This requires having some glass spray bottles on hand. You never want to use essential oils in anything plastic because the oils can denature the plastic and can ultimately end up ruining your plastic things and adding plastic molecules into our spray...something we definitely don't want! So please make it a habit that whenever you are using essential oils, to always use glass or ceramic. Stainless steel also works but avoid any plastics including PVC. Then basically misting is all about adding a few drops of oils into distilled water and using it as you would a preening spray for your bird. Of course you are going to want to stay away from oils that could potentially bother the eyes and I will be sure to list those oils later on.

Misting is a great way to apply oils to a bird that may not tolerate being handled well. Essential oils are readily absorbed through the skin and once inside the body they can travel to wherever they are needed in a very short amount of time. We all know that once our bird is damp, they will preen their feathers, so it's a great way to get oils into our birds orally as well! I typically like to start by spraying up into the air so that the mist falls onto the bird like rain. Once they are used to the spray bottle and the mist, then you can take a more direct approach and mist them down. A few squirts is all it takes to be effective, or you can completely soak them down as if they were getting a shower. Most birds seem to tolerate this quite well and many really enjoy their daily oil spray sessions!

There are many oils that can be used in a spray and some of the more common ones are: Lavender, Frankincense, Lemon, Orange Copaiba, Melissa, Idaho Balsam Fir, Purification, Harmony, Joy and many others.

One of my favorite recipes to use as a daily spray for my birds is the following:

### Daily Preening Spray

20 drops Lavender essential oil  
20 drops Orange essential oil  
20 drops Lemon essential oil  
4 ounces distilled water

Simply mix the above oils and water in a 4 oz glass spray bottle and you are good to go! Just remember to shake it each time before misting your bird. My Congo African Grey will actually make the spray bottle noise when she wants her oils!

\*Please note that citrus oils such as Orange and Lemon are photosensitive, so if your bird is missing feathers or has bald face patches such as macaws, it is a good idea to wait 12 to 24 hours after topical exposure to these oils before being exposed to direct sunlight. So far it appears that using UV bulbs does not have the same risks, but caution should still be used until you are sure your birds do not get sunburned! The photosensitivity risk is only for topically applied oils and has no affect on citrus oils that have been ingested.

### *Topically*

Now when we talk about topical application, most of the time we are referring to actually applying oils directly to the body in some way or another, often times diluted. The most common way of doing this is applying oils directly to their feet. Depending on the bird, this can be done in several ways. If your bird readily steps up for you, then one of the easiest ways is to just apply oils to the part of your hand or arm where they will be stepping up to. Easy as that! Now many birds will let you actually apply the oils directly to their feet. Young Living now carries roller balls that you can attach to the



*Nola loves her Valor Roll-On!*

top of any oil bottle to turn it into a roll on which can make this task even easier for you. If all else fails and you can't handle your bird and don't want to stress them out by toweling them, then just rubbing some oils on a favorite perch will still have a therapeutic effect.

When applying oils topically, it is important to remember, when in doubt, dilute your essential oil!! Typically an essential oil is diluted using a fatty type oil such as olive, coconut or flaxseed oil. Young Living also carries a carrier oil called V-6 which also works very nicely. Now, an essential oil is not "fatty" like vegetable oil and it is not greasy. This is why it is okay to mist some onto the feathers with the water. When we are diluting our oil with a carrier oil, we don't want to get that greasy stuff all over their feathers, so it is important to either apply it just to the feet or to make sure and part the feathers and get it all on the skin. If a bird's feathers get greasy, they have a difficult time maintaining their body temperature, so please be very aware of this when applying your oils.

### *Orally*

One of the easiest ways to get your bird to ingest essential oils is via the misting method. They will preen the spray off of their feathers and ingest it that way. Another common way is via their drinking water. Again make sure that you are using a ceramic or a stainless steel bowl and not plastic...I have

completely shattered heavy plastic crocks by just misting some essential oil spray into them! The dilution is usually 1 to 2 drops of essential oil per liter of water. Get a liter glass bottle (mason jars work great!) and add your oil and use this as their drinking water, but make sure you shake it before pouring it into their bowl. At first, have a second source of plain water available. Though most birds readily accept this oil infused water, we never want them to stop drinking, so until you know for sure that they are drinking their “oily water” please be sure to leave the plain water in their cage as well.

Many birds will also accept oil added to their food. As was stated before, often times one drop is enough to treat an adult human, so adding an entire drop to one serving can be quite a lot! But how do you add less than one drop? Simple! Take a toothpick, dip it in your oil and then stir it around in your bird food! This very simple technique, called the “toothpick method”, adds enough essential oil to be therapeutic without overdoing it.

### *Detoxification...What Is It Anyway?*

If you have done any looking into the field of aromatherapy, you will see the word “detox” or “detoxification” thrown around a lot, but what exactly is it?

First off, let me clear up something that is often misunderstood. Pure, steam distilled essential oils cannot cause an allergic reaction. It is impossible. An allergic reaction is the body’s response to an offending protein and/or polypeptide. For instance, if you are allergic to peanuts, it is, on a molecular level, the proteins within that peanut that are causing your system to go haywire. A pure, steam distilled essential oil does not have any proteins or polypeptides, thus making an actual histamine reaction from the body impossible. If you are noticing symptoms that look like an allergic reaction, you are actually experiencing a detoxification. Essential oils help cleanse the body of foreign and toxic substances. As the oils bind with these toxins and pull them from where the body has “hidden” them, they essentially put them back in the main stream of the body so they can be eliminated. See, when a

foreign substance is introduced to the body, the body does not know what to do with it, so instead of dealing with it, it will tuck it away somewhere safe (often times in fat deposits. This is why people who lose a large amount of weight very rapidly can end up quite ill.) So here our toxin sits. Over the years, vast amounts of toxins build up in our bodies...everything from environmental toxins to the crap that is in all the processed foods, to all the pharmaceuticals we've taken and so much more. The body keeps hiding it away, not knowing how to deal with it. When the essential oils pull them out of hiding to get rid of them, we are all of a sudden feeling the effects of these toxins that are no longer hidden. This is a good thing!! We are finally getting rid of all of those toxins that are preventing us from living lives of vitality, wellness and longevity and are likely a large part of the cause of many debilitating diseases and cancer. This can be an uncomfortable process, but the good news is that it doesn't have to be! Back off, go slower, dilute the oils, use gentler oils and we can get through this process quite easily.

The good news is, parrots don't seem to be nearly as prone to the big detox reactions that we see in other animals. It is my personal theory that the reason for this is because often time, as a parrot, we are spastic about the toxins in our homes. Most bird people I know have absolutely no cleaning chemicals in their home, no candles, no air fresheners, no Teflon, no perfumes, no nuthin'! We try and feed fresh, wholesome food and steer clear of processed, preservative laden "food" (at least for our birds anyway!) so our birds are exposed to many fewer toxins than most pets. Think about dogs that walk across a freshly mopped Pine-Sol floor...they are absorbing all of those toxins right through the pads of their feet! Many are exposed to air fresheners and their dog beds are sprayed with the odor eliminating sprays. Not to mention all of the recommended vaccines that they have been exposed too. Thankfully, our parrots are spared a lot of that. If you experience a detox reaction in your household it is likely that YOU are the one feeling it!

So what does a detoxification reaction look like in a bird? Well, often times you will first see them simply trying to get away from the diffuser. It can also involve itching, irritability, screaming, aggression, holding the wings away from body and breathing with their mouth open. As I stated before, this is uncommon with parrots, but it's always better to be aware of the

possibility because we want their experience with essential oils to be pleasant and uplifting. A far more common experience with parrots is that they try and get as close as they can to the oils by sticking their face right in the diffuser, trying to lick the top of the bottle or even licking it off the bars of the cage after they have been misted!

If you do experience a detox reaction with one of your birds here is what you do. First of all, don't panic! This is not a dangerous situation, but simply an uncomfortable one. If you are using a diffuser, turn it off and turn on a fan or open a window for a little while to help clear the air. If it is something you have applied topically, dilute it down with a fatty oil such as coconut, olive or safflower oil. Let them rest oil free for a little while, usually about 24 hours, and then start with a different oil. So if your bird had a reaction to you diffusing Thieves oil right next to his cage then the next oil I would diffuse would be something lighter like Lavender or Lemon and I would probably set the diffuser on the other side of the room. Remember, this is not an allergy! Just because we had a reaction to the Thieves oil does not mean that we need to avoid it from now on. Thieves is a powerful oil and can do a lot of detoxing in a short amount of time. Over time the gentler oils will gradually detox the body and as the body gets cleaner, you will have no trouble using the Thieves in the future.

As I said before, you are far more likely to have a detox reaction to the oils than your birds will! But have no fear...it will pass for you too! A typical detox reaction in humans can range from headaches, joint or muscle stiffness, rashes, nausea, dizziness or lightheadedness. These do pass, I promise. Just follow the same recommendations I listed for the birds and you'll start getting healthier too!



## SOME COMMON YL OILS FOR PARROTS

Young Living carries over 120 different essential oils and blends and each one has tremendous value and wonderful properties. There are several fabulous books already printed that list every one of them and what they do, and you can find information on these in the reference section in the back of the book. I am however going to list some of those oils that are pertinent in the parrot world and how to use them. The information regarding the essential oil properties is taken from the Essential Oils Desk Reference 4<sup>th</sup> Edition by Essential Science Publishing.

### Single Oils

Balsam Fir (Idaho):

Properties: anticoagulant, anti-inflammatory, bone  
regeneration

Uses: arthritis, bone/joint/muscle issues, respiratory infections, scoliosis, stressful situations. Can be very grounding and emotionally relaxing.

Techniques: IBF can be used in a water based diffuser up to 5 drops, via the tenting method with 2-3 drops at max 15 minute intervals and can be diluted (V-6 Oil, coconut oil, olive oil, Animal Scents Ointment, etc.) and applied topically on location.

Basil:

Properties: powerful antispasmodic, antiviral, antibacterial, anti-inflammatory, antihistamine, muscle relaxant

Uses: allergies, crop infections

Techniques: Basil can be used in a water based diffuser up to 5 drops, can be given orally via drinking water (start with 1 drop per liter of water) or food (start with “toothpick method”) or can be diluted and applied topically.

#### Bergamot:

Properties: calming, hormonal support, antiviral, antibacterial, antidepressant

Uses: Agitation, depression, anxiety, viral infections

Techniques: Bergamot can be used in a water based diffuser up to 5 drops, can be given orally via drinking water or food, or can be used in a spray bottle

#### Chamomile (German)

Properties: Powerful antioxidant, antitumoral, anti inflammatory, relaxant. Promotes liver and digestive health

Uses: Fatty liver disease, nervousness, anxiety, arthritis

Techniques: German Chamomile can be used in a water based diffuser up to 5 drops, given orally via drinking water or food, diluted and applied topically or can be used in a spray bottle

#### Chamomile (Roman)

Properties: Relaxant, antispasmodic, anti-inflammatory, nerve

regenerative, detoxification of blood and liver

Uses: Restlessness, anxiety, depression, insomnia, skin conditions

Techniques: Roman Chamomile can be used in a water based diffuser up to 5 drops, used via tenting, given orally via drinking water or food, diluted and applied topically or can be used in a spray bottle.

### Cinnamon Bark

Properties: Powerful antibacterial and antiviral, antifungal

Uses: We have recently seen very positive results when diffusing Cinnamon Bark with birds diagnosed with Avian Bornavirus (ABV)

Techniques: Please take great care if giving Cinnamon Bark orally and it is recommended to only use orally for a short time if necessary. Cinnamon Bark is a circulatory stimulant and has been known to cause some bleeding from the nares after prolonged ingestion. It can be diffused in a water based diffuser up to 5 drops.

### Cistus

Properties: antihemorrhagic, anti-inflammatory

Uses: A wonderful replacement for Styptic Powder for bleeding toenails or broken blood feathers. Can also be used to help stop major bleeding from injuries or self mutilation wounds

Techniques: Cistus can be used topically neat (undiluted) to help stop minor bleeding or diluted to help control major bleeding. Can also be given orally to aid in bleeding control

### Clary Sage

Properties: estrogen-like, relaxant

Uses: hormone “regulation”, especially in the cases of overly hormonal, sexually stimulated birds as well as for chronic egg layers

Techniques: We have just recently started using Clary Sage in very hormonal birds with very promising results. Clary Sage can be either diffused in a water based diffuser up to 5 drops, via tenting, or can be used in a daily misting.

## Copaiba

Properties: Powerful anti-inflammatory, stomach protectant

Uses: pain relief, arthritis, skin inflammation, stomach distress, feather destructive behavior, Psittacine Beak and Feather Disease, Proventricular Dilatation Disease

Techniques: Copaiba is one of my favorite oils and one that I will never be without. It has a very mild scent and flavor and is so incredibly powerful. Great for any kind of pain relief. Can be given orally via food or water, used in a daily misting, diffused via water diffuser or via tenting.

## Frankincense

Properties: Antitumoral, immune stimulant, antidepressant, muscle relaxing.

Uses: There has been tremendous success around the world for treating cancer and tumors with Frankincense, and we are already seeing the same success in birds. Frankincense is one of my first “go to” oils in nearly any situation including unknown illnesses. Cancer, tumors, depression, injuries, all types of illness, feather cysts, trauma

Techniques: Frankincense can be used orally, both via water and/or food, diffused via water diffusion, tenting, and can be used topically.

## Grapefruit

Properties: Antitumoral, antiseptic, detoxifying, antidepressant, fat dissolving, cleansing for kidneys, liver, lymphatic and vascular systems

Uses: Depression, obesity, anxiety, fatty liver disease, cancer, tumors

Techniques: Grapefruit can be used orally via food and/or water, diffused with a water based diffuser, or added to a daily misting.

## Helichrysum

Properties: antispasmodic, anticoagulant, antiviral, liver protectant/detoxifier/stimulant, nerve regenerator, chelator, healing

Uses: Helichrysum is another oil that I will not be without. It is one of the first oils I will reach for in an injury situation, especially one with an open wound or bruising. Excellent for neurologic conditions, nerve pain relief, amputations, wounds, liver support/diseases, trauma, hearing loss, Psittacine Beak and Feather Disease (PBFD), Proventricular Dilatation Disease (PDD)

Techniques: Helichrysum can be diffused via a water based diffuser, tenting, given orally via food and/or water, directly orally (diluted), topically or as a daily misting.

## Idaho Blue Spruce

Properties: Idaho Blue Spruce is a new oil, but one that is showing lots of success in many ways! It is antiviral, antibacterial, decongesting, antispasmodic, and cleansing/protecting of liver and

kidneys, aids in releasing emotional trauma, relaxant, uplifting

Uses: Again, Idaho Blue Spruce is a newer essential oil, so many of its uses are yet to be discovered. I have personally had tremendous success with using it for a very “snotty” CAG. Excellent for respiratory infections, past abuse, emotional trauma, depression, PBFD, PDD, ABV, psittacosis

Techniques: At this time, Idaho Blue Spruce has only been diffused via a water based diffuser, tented and applied topically.

## Lavender

Properties: Antiseptic, antifungal, analgesic, antitumoral, anticonvulsant, relaxant, anti-inflammatory, calmative

Uses: Respiratory infections, skin inflammation, feather destructive behavior, PBFD, burns, scars, wounds, nervousness, anxiety

Techniques: Lavender can be diffused via a water based diffuser, tented, applied topically and used in a mister. Lavender is one of the three ingredients in the Daily Feather Spray recipe.

## Lemon

Properties: Antiseptic, antitumoral, immune stimulant, antiparasitic, antidepressant, antibacterial, detoxifying

Uses: Circulatory problems, anxiety, depression, psittacosis, immune stimulation, air purifier, bacterial infections

Techniques: Lemon is one of the three oils in the Daily Preening Spray recipe and can also be diffused using a water based diffuser, tented, and given orally in food and/or water.

## Marjoram

Properties: Antibacterial, antifungal, promotes peristalsis (the muscle contractions in the crop and intestines that move food and waste through the digestive tract), expectorant, relieves muscle and joint discomfort

Uses: Crop infections, PDD (especially where crop stasis is a factor), psittacosis, arthritis, respiratory infections, fungal infections, muscle/nerve pain. Has been very helpful with hormonal issues such as excessive egg laying or overly hormonal, sexually stimulated birds.

Techniques: Marjoram can be diffused with a water based diffuser, tented, applied topically or given orally via food and/or water. Because of the possibility of causing eye discomfort, it is not recommended to use Marjoram in a mister.

## Melissa

Properties: Highly antiviral, anti-inflammatory, relaxant

Uses: Proventricular Dilatation Disease, Avian Bornavirus, Psittacine Beak and Feather Disease, viral infections, papillomas

Techniques: Melissa can be diffused with a water based diffuser, tented, given orally via food and/or water, used topically and in a mister

## Myrrh

Properties: Powerful antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, antitumoral, antiviral, antiparasitic, analgesic, skin regenerator

Uses: Cancer, diabetes, fungal infections, pain control, wounds

**Techniques:** The most common way to use Myrrh in birds is either in a mister or orally. Myrrh can be diluted and given directly in cases where good pain control is needed. It can also be diluted and used topically on wounds.

## Ocotea

**Properties:** Regulates blood sugar, anti-histamine like, antifungal, anti-inflammatory and anti-anxiety

**Uses:** Ocotea has shown tremendous success in regulating diabetic symptoms and lessening the need for insulin and other blood sugar regulating medications. Because of this, it is highly recommended that if your bird is on any kind of medication for diabetes control that you inform your veterinarian you are using oils and ask them to help you regulate the changes. Ocotea can also be used as an anti-histamine for allergies as well as for crop infections, parasites, anxiety and aspergillosis

**Techniques:** Diffusion via a water based diffuser, orally via food and/or water.

## Orange

**Properties:** Antitumoral, relaxant, antidepressant

**Uses:** Orange is one of the three oils used in the Daily Feather Spray recipe and can be used for cancer, depression, insomnia, tumors

**Techniques:** Orange can be diffused via a water based diffuser, tented, given orally via food and/or water and added to misters

## Oregano

**Properties:** Powerful antiviral and antibacterial, antifungal,



antiparasitic, anti-inflammatory, immune stimulant

Uses: Arthritis, respiratory infections, infectious diseases, PDD/ABV, PBFD, psittacosis papillomas, crop infections, yeast infections

Techniques: Oregano is considered a “hot” oil (it makes the skin feel as if it is getting warm) so it is important to take care when using this powerful oil. It is NOT recommended to use in a spray because getting it in the eyes can be quite painful. If topical application is needed, make sure it is very dilute first. The most common way to use Oregano oil with birds is orally and can be given in either water and/or food. It can also be diffused in a water based diffuser, but only in very small amounts (start with just 1 drop in the diffuser).

## Peppermint

Properties: Anti-inflammatory, antitumoral, antiparasitic, antiviral, antifungal, antibacterial, digestive stimulant

Uses: Arthritis, respiratory infections, PDD/ABV, crop stasis, nausea, vomiting, motion sickness, fungal infections

Techniques: Peppermint is not often used topically except on the feet. I personally have a macaw that gets very car sick on long rides, and a little bit of peppermint on the bottom of her feet does wonders for her! (Not to mention me when I get car sick!) It can be diffused via a water based diffuser, tented, and added to food and/or water. Take caution if you are wanting to use this oil in a mister as it can be painful if it gets in the eyes.

## Thyme

Thyme is a very powerful and a very hot oil and is usually reserved for severe cases.

Properties: Highly antimicrobial, antifungal, antiparasitic, antiviral, antibacterial, immune stimulating

Uses: Infectious disease control, air purifier, Psittacine Beak and Feather Disease, Proventricular Dilatation Disease, Avian Bornavirus, Psittacosis, resistant bacterial/viral infections, fungal infections

Techniques: It is important to NOT use Thyme in topical applications including misting unless it is extremely dilute (1 drop per 30mL of carrier oil). It can be given orally in small amounts and ONLY in the food. It can also be diffused, but it is recommended to not do any tenting as the vapors from the diffuser can be painful to the eyes.

## Essential Oil Blends

In my opinion, one of the most exciting things about essential oils is their ability to help heal emotions. Think about all of the birds out there in rescues. Many of them have been neglected, abused or just plain ignored. Most parrot species develop a lifelong bond to their mate in the wild, and that life can be eighty or more years! Imagine the emotional trauma of all of these birds that go from one home to another, forming a bond with a family and then having to leave again. I associate it with a young child in the foster care system...going from one home to another, not knowing where they belong, not knowing who to trust, afraid to become close to someone again for fear of being abandoned. There are many, many parrots out there with some serious emotional baggage. How exciting is it that we have the tools to help them let go of that baggage and live life to the fullest again?!? It is my goal to bring Young Living Essential Oils to every single parrot rescue in the world. A daunting task to be certain, but one that I am so excited to partake...will you join me?

This next section covers some of the essential oil blends that are formulated by Young Living. I am only going to give you a brief description of the ones that we use often in the bird world. As I said before, there are fantastic books out

there that cover every Young Living product in great detail, so I will not repeat what has already been done. You can find more information on these books and where they are available in the final pages of this book.

Many of these essential oil blends are for emotional support while others have more physical properties, but each one is absolutely invaluable. Often times the best way to use emotional oils is by diffusion via a water based diffuser. If there are other ways to use them, I will list them with the individual oil. Again, much of the following information is taken from the Essential Oil Desk Reference 4<sup>th</sup> Edition from Life Science Publishing

## Acceptance

Stimulates the mind, compelling us to open and accept new things, people or relationships in life, allowing one to reach a higher potential.

Ingredients: Neroli, Sandalwood, Blue Tansy, Rosewood, Geranium, Frankincense

## Believe

Helps to release the unlimited potential everyone possesses, making it possible to more fully experience health, happiness and vitality. Restores feelings of hope.

Ingredients: Idaho Balsam Fir, Rosewood, Frankincense

## Christmas Spirit

A purifying blend of evergreen, citrus and spice that brings joy, peace, happiness and security

Ingredients: Orange, Cinnamon Bark, Spruce

## Citrus Fresh

Can be used daily for overall health, wellness and detoxification. Great to use daily in drinking water (1 drop per liter of water) to support the immune system. When diffused, it purifies the air and is very antidepressant and calming.

Ingredients: Orange, Tangerine, Lemon, Mandarin, Grapefruit, Spearmint

## DiGize

Can be used for all types of digestive concerns including crop infections, nausea, vomiting, Proventricular Dilatation Disease, Candida infections, and parasite infestations.

Ingredients: Tarragon, Ginger, Peppermint, Juniper, Fennel, Lemongrass, Anise, Patchouli

## Forgiveness

Helps release negative memories, allowing one to move past emotional barriers and assists them to forgive and let go

Ingredients: Rose, Melissa, Helichrysum, Angelica, Frankincense, Sandalwood, Lavender, Bergamot, Geranium, Jasmine, Lemon, Palmarosa, Roman Chamomile, Rosewood, Ylang Ylang

## Harmony

Brings us into harmony with all things, people and life cycles. It helps reduce stress and amplify well-being. A wonderful blend for those with discord in the flock.

Ingredients: Geranium, Rosewood, Lavender, Sandalwood,

Frankincense, Orange, Lemon, Angelica, Hyssop, Spanish Sage, Jasmine, Roman Chamomile, Bergamot, Ylang Ylang, Palmarosa, Rose, Spruce

## Hope

Helps reconnect with a feeling of strength and grounding, restoring hope for tomorrow.

Ingredients: Melissa, Spruce, Juniper, Myrrh

## Into the Future

Helps leave the past behind in order to progress with vision and excitement.

Ingredients: Frankincense, Clary Sage, Jasmine, Juniper, White Fir, Orange, Cedarwood, Ylang Ylang, Idaho Tansy, White Lotus

## Joy

Produces a magnetic energy to bring joy to the heart, mind and soul. It helps overcome deep seated grief and depression

Ingredients: Rose, Bergamot, Mandarin, Ylang Ylang, Lemon Geranium, Jasmine, Palmarosa, Roman Chamomile, Rosewood

## Juva Cleanse

A very powerful liver cleanser and detoxifier indicated for all types of liver disease. Can be given orally via water (1 drop per liter of water) or food.

Ingredients: Helichrysum, Celery Seed, Ledum

### Peace & Calming

Promotes relaxation and a deep sense of peace and emotional well-being, helping to dampen tensions and uplift spirits. Reduces depression, anxiety and stress.

### Ingredients: Blue Tansy, Patchouli, Tangerine, Orange, Ylang Ylang Purification

Cleanses and disinfects the air and gets rid of mildew, cigarette smoke and other bad odors. One of my favorites to use on a daily basis...I often get comments on how nice my house smells...even with all these birds!

Ingredients: Citronella, Lemongrass, Lavandin, Rosemary, Melaleuca Alternifolia, Myrtle

### R.C.

Stands for “Respiratory Congestion” or “Respiratory Conditions” and is a wonderful oil to diffuse or tent a bird with chronic respiratory issues including allergies and aspergillosis.

Ingredients: Eucalyptus globules, Eucalyptus radiata, Eucalyptus citridora, Myrtle, Pine, Spruce, Marjoram, Lavender, Cypress, Peppermint

### Release

Helps release anger and memory trauma in order to create emotional well-being, letting go of negative emotions.

Ingredients: Ylang Ylang, Lavandin, Geranium, Sandalwood, Blue Tansy

## Ruta VaLa

Promotes relaxation and counters stressed nerves. A valuable oil to have on hand during stressful situations such as a vet visit or a move. Can be diffused or applied topically to the feet.

Ingredients: Lavender, Valerian, Ruta

## SARA

Helps to facilitate the release of trauma associated with Sexual and/or Ritual Abuse (think of all those breeder birds!!). It also helps unlock traumatic experiences such as physical or emotional abuse.

Ingredients: Geranium, Lavender, Rose, Blue Tansy, Orange, Cedarwood, Ylang Ylang, White Lotus

## Thieves

A blend of highly antiviral, antibacterial, anti-infectious, antimicrobial and antifungal oils. A fabulous oil to diffuse on a daily basis to help stop the transmission of illness and disease...invaluable in rescue and foster situations!

Ingredients: Clove, Lemon, Cinnamon Bark, Eucalyptus radiata, Rosemary

## Trauma Life

Releases buried emotional trauma and combats stress. An important thing to remember with this oil is that it is not just emotional experiences that cause trauma, but also physical ones. Some examples of when this oil would be used is after a hard crash into a window, a broken bone, a serious wound, death of a flock mate, etc. You would never be wrong to diffuse this oil in any situation that can cause stress either emotionally or physically.

Ingredients: Valerian, Lavender, Frankincense, Sandalwood, Rose, Helichrysum, Spruce, Geranium, Davana, Citrus hystrix

## Valor

Balances energies to instill courage, confidence and self-esteem. This is my greenwing macaw's favorite oil! It can be applied topically to the feet or other non-feathered areas of the body as well as diffused. A great way to use this oil is just before and/or after a stressful event such as a vet visit or a nail and wing clip.

Ingredients: Rosewood, Blue Tansy, Frankincense, Spruce

As you can see, the possibilities are absolutely limitless when we have an arsenal of essential oils! I have yet to meet one life, human, parrot or otherwise, that was not affected in a positive way when Young Living came into their life.





And a quick note for those of you wondering about your chickens, ducks, geese, peacocks, crows, starlings or other birds...everything that is recommended in this book for parrots can also be used on other birds. Chickens, ducks and geese especially tend to be hardier than parrots and can often times tolerate a little bit stronger concentration of oils, especially in misting and diffusion.





## ESSENTIAL OILS FOR COMMON HEALTH CONCERNS

Now that you know a bunch of the basics, I want to go over with you how I approach a health or emotional concern with the parrots in my care. I know I have said it before, but this is very important so I am going to say it again...I am NOT a veterinarian, so it is very important for you to find a qualified veterinarian if you have any concerns with your parrot. There are some wonderful veterinarians that are embracing the use of Young Living in their practice, and many others that are very eager to learn more. If you would like your vet to work with you on using essential oils with your birds, I highly recommend bringing them a copy of this book as well as Dr Melissa Shelton DVM's book "Essential Oils for Natural Pet Care" and ask them if they would be interested in learning and working with you on the care of your birds.

### *Aspergillosis*

Aspergillosis is a non-contagious fungal infection caused by the mold spore *Aspergillus*. It can cause both acute and chronic symptoms in varying degrees. It is the most frequent cause of respiratory disease in parrots and is also the most commonly diagnosed fungal infection. Symptoms include trouble breathing, respiratory distress, "clicking" while breathing, lethargy, tail bobbing and general signs of illness.

Here is my thought process when I have a bird with aspergillosis. First of all, I want to try and deduce where the mold spores came from and

eliminate them. As with any disease or illness, good nutrition is always of utmost importance, so I will always evaluate the diet and make changes as necessary. Now, we know that aspergillosis is caused by mold spores, which is a fungus. So I am going to go through my list of oils and find my strongest antifungal oils which for this case would probably be Thieves and Oregano. So, how do we use it? Well, most often in aspergillosis cases it is the respiratory system that is most affected, so I would go with diffusion as the best delivery system and I would also consider the severity of the particular case in determining how much oil to use and how often. Typically a safe start would be 2-4 drops of Thieves or Oregano in an ultrasonic water based diffuser. If this is the first time that the bird has been exposed to oils, observe them closely for signs of distress or detoxification. If you see any, immediately turn off the diffuser. This can be repeated multiple times throughout the day and different antifungal oils can be rotated in the diffuser. Tenting can also be done to achieve greater exposure of the respiratory system to the healing properties of the oils.

Of course, in any situation, it is always good to add immunosupportive oils if possible. The easiest way to do this is by misting with the Daily Preening Spray and adding an oil such as Citrus Fresh to the water (1 drop per liter) or Oregano to the food (start with a toothpick and slowly work up).

### *Bleeding*

When we have parrots, there is bound to be blood at some point in time, whether it be theirs or ours! Bleeding can be from something as simple as a toenail clipped too short or a broken blood feather, or it can be from a severe injury or mutilation. Always seek medical attention if there is a traumatic injury or any excessive bleeding.

Cistus is a natural hemostat, meaning that it stops bleeding. It can be applied neat (undiluted) directly to the site of the bleeding, such as the toenail. In cases of suspected internal bleeding it can also be given orally.

## *Crop Issues*

A parrot's crop is essentially part of the esophagus and the overall digestive system. It is a muscular, expandable pouch where food is temporarily stored. A couple of the more common issues associated with the crop is a crop infection and crop stasis.

A crop infection should always be addressed by a veterinarian. Common symptoms of a crop infection include regurgitation/vomiting, sour smelling emesis, lack of appetite and general symptoms of illness. A crop infection can be caused by a number of things including bacteria, fungus and viruses. I would initially start out with Di-Gize and/or Peppermint to help relieve nausea. Either one of these oils can be given orally either in water or food, though I tend to avoid using Peppermint in water simply because if a bird were to bathe in it, the oil could bother their eyes.

Now depending on what is causing the infection, I would choose an appropriately corresponding oil. Thieves and Oregano are always good ones to default to because they both have antibacterial, antiviral and antifungal properties, so it will often times cover the gamut of possibilities. There are other choices as well, such as Citrus Fresh, Lemon and Thyme, so don't ever feel like you are limited to just one choice. Often times I will rotate through several different oils over the course of a treatment, just to get a broader spectrum of properties.

Since we are dealing with a crop infection, chances are, we are going to want our bird to ingest the oil, right? The easiest way to accomplish this is either in food or water. Again, make sure to be aware of which oils may cause pain if they get in the eyes and try to avoid using these in their water.

Crop stasis is basically the impairment of the movement of the crop. This is most commonly seen in handfed babies and is presented with regurgitation and delayed crop emptying. Peppermint essential oil is known to increase peristalsis which is the wavelike contractions of the muscles that move food and waste through the digestive tract. The underlying cause of crop stasis should always be addressed by a veterinarian, but giving diluted peppermint orally can help move the food through the crop.

## *Fatty Liver Syndrome*

Also known as Fatty Liver Disease, Fatty Liver Syndrome is usually caused by a poor quality, high fat diet and not enough exercise. Often seen in older birds that have been fed a mostly seed diet throughout their lifetime, a bird with Fatty Liver Syndrome will have excess fat deposits around the abdomen and the liver.

Since, in this case, we are dealing with excessive fatty deposits, we are going to want to reach for oils that dissolve fat, right? My top picks for fat dissolving are Grapefruit and Citrus Fresh. Both can easily be given orally in the water. Also, I would use the preening spray recipe, as the citrus oils in it would also help in dissolving the fat, but I would usually add another oil or two. A drop of Ledum or Juva Cleanse would be my first choices because both are extremely beneficial to the liver and will help support it through the cleansing as well as help to heal any damage that may have been caused.

## *Pain Control*

Pain control is often forgotten about except in the most drastic of accidents or surgeries, but we need to remember that all animals experience pain. Even though they cannot verbally communicate this to us, we need to keep it on the forefront of our minds when dealing with our birds. Even something as simple as a macaw that was playing too hard on the top of her cage and tumbled off the top (that has happened in this house!) can cause them to be quite uncomfortable.

For chronic pain such as arthritis, a daily drop of Copaiba is certainly not out of the question. Copaiba can be put in water or in food, and can also be used topically (avoiding feathers as much as possible). So if I had a cockatiel with arthritic feet, I would rub some Copaiba and Lavender right on his feet every day, as well as make sure he gets some Copaiba in his daily food or water. Another great way to apply pain relieving oils daily is via a spray. One of my favorite sprays to use in many situations is as follows:

## Pain Relief Spray

10 drops Frankincense  
5 drops Helichrysum  
5 drops Copaiba

Mix with 4 ounces (120 mL) of water in a glass spray bottle and mist bird up to several times daily. This is wonderful for chronic conditions such as arthritis or even for a broken bone. It is also wonderful to use on wounds and with the addition of 3-5 drops of Myrrh, it is amazing at healing without scarring.

For more serious pain control, such as with a broken bone, a combination of 1 drop each of Copaiba, Helichrysum, Frankincense and Myrrh diluted in approximately 2 mL of a carrier oil such as olive or almond oil might be needed. This mixture should be given orally at about 0.05mL (about 1 drop) at a time. I had a little lovebird, Bella, who broke her wing, and though I had buprenorphine available from the vet (an opioid pain killer), on her recommendation I tried giving Bella this pain



*Little Bella with her broken wing*

mixture. She got 0.05mL orally and in about 20 minutes she was actually trying to fly in the incubator! Sometimes your pain control can be a little TOO good!



I had to repeat this about every 2-3 hours the first day, and every day after that she needed less and less until on the sixth day she vomited when I gave it to her. I stopped giving it orally and switched to misting her with a mixture of 5 drops Frankincense, 5 drops Myrrh, 3 drops Helichrysum and 5 drops Copaiba in 4 ounces (120mL) of water. This was all the pain control that she needed from that point on until she healed.

Now obviously a larger bird could initially start with a larger dose. I would start out my greys at 0.1mL or so and give them 15-30 minutes and reevaluate...and if more was warranted, I would give more.

### *Papillomatosis*

Papillomatosis is a virus that causes wart like lesions in the mouth and around the cloaca. In severe cases it has also been found in the esophagus as well as throughout the digestive system. Traditional medicine sometimes calls for surgical removal of the growths, but often times the lesions will reappear in a short time.

Papillomatosis is often painful, so some method of pain control is recommended. Since Papillomatosis is caused by a virus, obviously my first thing to use would be an antiviral oil. In this case, Melissa essential oil is imperative, and since the lesions mainly affect the digestive tract, oral administration would be the best route. Melissa oil is readily accepted in both food and water and is encouraged in both. Clove oil can also be added to food, not only for its analgesic affect, but it is also been used to remove warts in many different kinds of animals. I would also do a rotational diffusion of Melissa, Thieves and Eucalyptus Blue.

Papillomatosis was one of the first successful cases recorded on medical uses of essential oils in parrots and since that time, multiple parrots have been successfully treated for this frustrating condition.

### *Proventricular Dilatation Disease*

Very scary words for those of us in the bird world, Proventricular

Dilatation Disease, or PDD, is suspected to be caused by a virus (Avian Bornavirus). A terrifying disease that causes many neurological and gastrointestinal symptoms and may also affect the heart, adrenal glands and the spinal cord.

Clinical signs of PDD are vast and range from progressive weight loss, crop impaction, regurgitation, finding undigested food in stools as well as a wide array of neurological symptoms including seizures.

It has been said that many birds die from this disease, usually within a 12 month time period, but don't let a death sentence scare you. In the past couple of years, we have seen some amazing turn arounds in the world of PDD and I am confident that the answer to this catastrophic disease lies in the world of essential oils. How exciting is that?!

So, how would you approach a bird diagnosed with PDD? Well I would take into consideration what a veterinarian uses for the disease as well as what symptoms are being experienced by the individual. Often times a PDD patient is give Celebrex which is a Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drug (NSAID), since no matter what the symptoms, inflammation is always a factor. Remember what our best anti-inflammatory oil is? Copaiba! Fabulous to use in misting sprays, water, food and by diffusion. However you can use it, do it! And since we are likely dealing with a virus, our number one antiviral is Melissa which is imperative to use in any suspected PDD case. I would definitely put it in the water, but would likely add it to a spray and diffuse it as well. I would also be sure to look at what symptoms are being experienced and would use the oils as I saw fit. If we are dealing with lots of regurgitation, DiGize and Peppermint are very good to use. I have seen, on several occasions, Frankincense given orally helps stimulate appetite, so if they are not interested in eating, this would be a good one to turn to. Other oils that have been used successfully are RutaVaLa, Helichrysum and Roman Chamomile. These can be diffused, given orally or use topically as needed. Emotional support is also important to take into account, so it wouldn't be a bad idea to go through some of the emotional essential oil blends. Some good ones to use would be Believe, Valor, Into The Future or Hope.

Proventricular Dilatation Disease is a very complicated disease and I

recommend you follow your avian veterinarian very closely.

### *Psittacine Beak and Feather Disease*

Psittacine Beak and Feather Disease (PBFD) is caused by a circovirus and presents with abnormal feather growth and often results in death. As with PDD, I really believe that the answer to Beak and Feather Disease lies with essential oils.

Again, with a virus I will always reach for Melissa and give it orally in the water and/or food. Diffusion of Melissa, Thieves and/or Eucalyptus Blue (another strong antiviral oil) is highly recommended as well. Daily use of the Preening Spray with a drop or two Melissa, Sandalwood or Hyssop can help with keeping the skin healthy as well as preventing scar tissue in the feather follicles. In rescue/sanctuary situations, diffusion of Thieves, Melissa, Eucalyptus Blue, Lemon, Lavender and Thyme in rotation is highly recommended.

### *Scaly Face Mites*

Scaly face mites are a parasite that is most commonly found in budgies, finches and canaries. In severe cases, a thick overgrowth of keratin is formed over the cere (nostrils) and can even move to around the eyes, on the legs, feet and toes. Often times abnormal beak and toenail growth is present and loss of digits has been known to occur.

The best defense for a bird with scaly face mites is Purification. In many cases it can be applied neat (undiluted) to the affected area, being careful of the eyes. An easy way to do this is by brushing it on with a cotton swab. I have had a couple of cases where the Purification used neat was too intense, so be sure to carefully observe them and if it appears to be making them uncomfortable, dilute the Purification in olive oil before topical application. Diffusion is another great way to treat the mites and tenting is very effective. You can also mix a spray of 4 ounces of water with 10 drops of Purification and mist several times daily.



## Feather Destructive Behavior

I felt as if Feather Destructive Behavior and Self Mutilation needed its own section. It is often one of the first questions I am asked when someone learns I use essential oil and there is not one simple, straight answer for it. It requires some serious investigation and thought process on the part of the owner. I wanted to dedicate a little extra time and energy into explaining this very frustrating behavior.

First of all, it is very important to have a thorough examination done by a qualified avian veterinarian, especially if your bird suddenly starts picking or mutilating. There are many times that a veterinarian will do a full work up and still not have any answers as to why. The reasons that a parrot decides to start mutilating their feathers or skin are vast and range from emotional issues to a medical condition. It is important to rule out any medical issues with your veterinarian first before proceeding. You don't want to find out the hard way that the cause of your birds plucking was due to liver disease or heart disease when there was something you could have done. Or if there is a bacterial infection on the skin or mites present, this can often be an easy fix, but if you don't address it with your vet you won't have the answers necessary for the questions I'm going to ask. Now of course, if there was a bacterial infection of the skin, you are logically going to want to use an antibacterial oil such as Lavender to help along with what the vet prescribed.

So, I have taken my bird to the vet and she has a clean bill of health, but she is still pulling feathers. Now what? First, take a look at your bird's environment. Is there something "scary" in the room? Do you have a shy, quiet bird that is in the hustle and bustle of the family's daily activities? Are they not getting enough sleep at night or is it frequently interrupted? Sometimes something as simple as moving the cage or removing an offensive object from view can have a huge effect. Have they lost a family member (human or animal) through such things as divorce, death or a child leaving for college? Is someone in the family under a lot of stress or dealing with other emotions (grief over the loss of a parent/friend)? As I'm sure you know, our birds are extremely sensitive and in tune with us and when we are out of sync, they can be too. Obviously, these situations cannot be helped nor can they be changed,

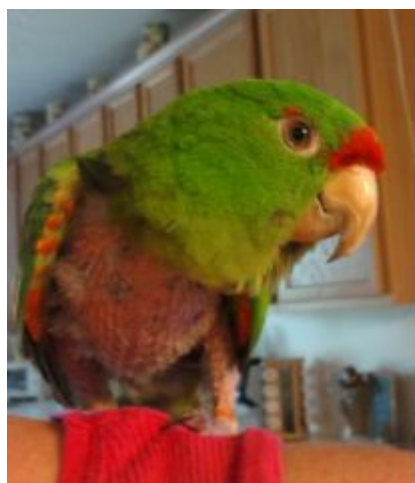
so emotional support is essential. I have found that often times, if an owner just reads through some of the emotional essential oil blends, they will intuitively pick out the oil or oils that will work best for their family and situation at the time. Some common ones that are very effective are: Believe, Release, Joy, Valor, Trauma Life, Acceptance, Harmony, Forgiveness, Hope and White Angelica. The most effective method of using an emotional blend for emotional purposes is via diffusion. You can rotate through as many different oils as you think you need, but it is not recommended to mix them together in the diffuser. Many of the emotional blends are made with a very specific frequency and adding other oils changes the frequency. It doesn't make the oil dangerous or toxic, but it may render it less effective.

Diet often has a big role to play as well, so a healthy varied diet with lots of fresh foods is highly recommended. There are many wonderful avian nutritionists out there that can help you develop a diet tailored to your bird's specific needs. There is also a lot to be said for relieving boredom, enrichment, adequate light, vitamins and minerals as well that should also be addressed, but that is not what this book is for.

So, what if you adopted a naked bird and have no idea of their history? First off, of course, is a trip to the vet. If we get a clean bill of health, then I start making some assumptions assuming no one is around that can answer my questions. It is possible that he was abused or neglected, didn't have a proper diet, was left covered for days on end or many other horrible situations that we have all heard about. So, emotional support is a must. But I don't want you to forget the wonderful benefits of the Preening Spray that not only have immune stimulating, antiviral, antibacterial, anti-inflammatory and antiseptic properties, but also have amazing antidepressant, anti-anxiety and calming properties as well. I have used this spray in multiple rescue and sanctuary situations with the birds perking up within minutes after being sprayed. What if they just have really dry, itchy skin? The Lavender oil in the Preening Spray is very soothing to the skin and helps this tremendously. Is it possible that they have allergies? Again, the Lavender oil in the Preening Spray can be very helpful for this, but I would also give some Basil or Ocotea orally for the high antihistamine properties.

As you can see, there are so many different ways to approach the

problem, and none of them are wrong. I once heard a speaker say something that I believe applies to the use of essential oils: “You can be right, or you can be more right.” Basically this means that, if you decide to use Lavender oil (in a safe and proper way of course) and perhaps a better choice would have been Valor, you will still get benefits and still see results with the Lavender. So don’t be afraid to grab an oil and try it! If you use it safely in the ways described in this book, you WILL have benefits from it. There is no wrong choice.



*This is Tiko/Kiwi. The first picture was when he had first arrived at his new home and the second was taken about 10 months later after using the Preening Spray daily.*

I have just recently discovered some new feathers coming in on my very naked macaw, Ellie, where we assumed there was scarring in the feather follicle that prevented the feather regrowth. It is very possible that with the daily Preening Spray as well as occasional use of Helichrysum in a spray, that these oils are actually removing some of the scar tissue! How exciting!

## Not Just For The Birds!



Now, if you have birds, chances are very good that you have had a good bite or two. Not to fear! You can use these essential oils for yourself and the rest of your family too!!



I like to tease that I have been bitten so many times that it doesn't even hurt anymore. Doing behavior work with rescues tends to put you in that position! But in all seriousness, I have had some pretty nasty infections from bird bites. I know that I used to think that because a bird has no saliva that it's not likely to get infected. I failed to take into account all of the stuff that is always caked onto their beaks! That can get pretty gnarly if you think about it. Then, if they bite you and break the skin, they are basically "injecting" you with whatever happens to be there at the time. A beautiful start to a fabulous infection. So, whenever I get bit, I immediately put Thieves directly on it. Sometimes it can burn a little, but ever since I have started doing this, I have not had one bite get infected. Now, some people can be sensitive to Thieves



as it is a very powerful oil, and I don't recommend using it in sensitive areas or around your eyes, but there are many other alternatives that can be used as well. Melrose is a blend and is wonderful for preventing bacterial infections. And, just like the Thieves, it has Clove oil which is a topical analgesic, so you have the benefit of pain relief as well!



Another thing to take into consideration is scarring. Using Helichrysum, Myrrh and Lavender can go a long way in preventing the formation of scar tissue on wounds.



Getting a headache from your significant other complaining that the screaming birds are giving them a headache? Rub some Peppermint on the back of your neck, head and on your temples. Avoid your eyes though!!

Congested sinuses from cockatoo dust? Again, Peppermint on the back of your neck, but this time, also put a drop on your thumb and stick it to the roof of your mouth. You'll be clear in no time.

Guests complaining that your house smells like birds? (Umm... DUH!) Diffusing Purification will completely eliminate those odors. I have had people walk into my tiny apartment with 7 birds and barely enough room for me and they say "Oh! It smells so good in here!" or "It smells like a spa!" Oh yeah. I do enjoy hearing that.

How about those pesky fruit flies and seed moths that seem to be ever present no matter what you do? Honestly, this is a tough one, especially with regards to the fruit flies, but I have found that heavy diffusion of Purification, Thieves, Peppermint, Black Pepper and/or Citronella (rotated through) have definitely had a positive impact. I have also heard that mice, ants and spiders have an aversion to peppermint as well.

Someone coming over that is allergic to birds? Diffuse Basil. This

natural antihistamine works wonders! I have known people that were severely allergic to cats that went to a home where they had 5 cats but were diffusing Basil and they did not have any kind of allergic reaction!

There is no end to what you can use these oils for. Take a look at the different properties...everything that applies to birds also applies to humans, so play away! You will be nothing but advantageous when you use essential oils in any capacity.

## A FEW OTHER PRODUCTS

Young Living carries much more than just essential oils, and I am going to just briefly touch on a few of them that I find most important in the care of our birds.

### *Thieves Household Cleaner*



\_\_\_\_\_First and foremost, one of my favorite products ever is the Thieves Household Cleaner. As someone that was owned by parrots before Young Living came into our lives, I understand the frustration of trying to find a cleaner that works well, is effective at killing off the nasties that we encounter, while being safe to use around our birds. So my discovery of Thieves Household Cleaner was a gold mine. Not only is it antibacterial, antiviral, antimicrobial and antiseptic, it is literally safe enough to drink (I've done it many times!!). Then top it off with the fact that it is a wonderful degreaser and works wonders on organic material (read "bird poop"), it is a must have for every bird household. I use it to wash food and water bowls, cage grates and trays, perches, toys, walls, floors, stovetop, counters, toilets....you name it,

I've used it!

### *NingXia Red Juice*

NingXia Red Juice is Young Living's "superfood" supplement made with essential oils and whole fruits such as the NingXia Wolfberry (you might recognize it by its other name, the Gogi berry), blueberries, pomegranate and strawberries. It is full of vital phytonutrients and antioxidants and is an incredible immune system support. Honestly, there is not a condition that I *wouldn't* recommend using NingXia Red. Most birds take to it very quickly and it can be added to food or offered right out of a dish. Do remember to treat it as you would other fresh foods and don't leave it in a cage all day long. My birds get it several times a week just to keep them healthy...and they love it too!



*Ollie loves his NingXia Red!*

### *Essentialzymes-4 and Detoxzyme*

Digestive Enzymes are a very important part of overall health and wellness. If food is not digested properly, then the vitamins and nutrients that it carries cannot get to the cells that need them. On the flip side, if we are detoxifying our bodies, we want to "digest" those toxins as quickly as we can

so that our body can eliminate them. Enzymes are found in fresh, live foods such as raw vegetables and sprouts, but chances are, even vegetarians are lacking in digestive enzymes. Young Living has two wonderful ways to introduce digestive enzymes back into our parrots. Both Essentialzymes-4 and Detoxzyme can be used. Just pull apart the capsule and sprinkle a little bit over wet food (so that it sticks). Only ¼ of a capsule maximum is usually needed. This can be used daily for overall wellness maintenance and is especially important for birds suffering with Proventricular Dilatation Disease or other digestive and gastrointestinal difficulties.



### *Life 5*

Just as important as digestive enzymes for intestinal health is probiotics. Probiotics are the good bacteria that live in the digestive tract and help aid in digestion and prevent Candida and other yeast infections. When antibiotics are given, the good bacteria are eliminated along with the bad, so it is important to replenish these vital microorganisms. Life 5 is Young Living's probiotic supplement and is readily accepted by birds. It can be used for daily maintenance, and should always be used after a course of antibiotics or strong antibacterial essential oils given orally such as Oregano or Thieves. Also wonderful for PDD symptoms and other digestive issues and great to use for birds with yeast problems.

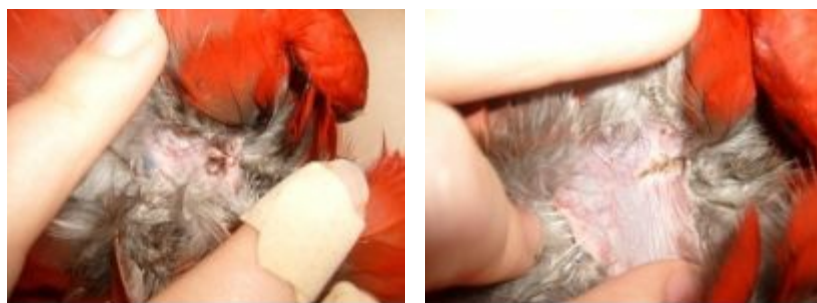
### *MultiGreens*

I like to say that MultiGreens are a cheaper way to get Melissa essential oil. The MultiGreens supplement is made up of super green foods such as spirulina, bee pollen and choline along with essential oils of Lemon, Rosemary and Melissa. A fabulous supplement for everyday maintenance. The essential oils in the MultiGreens supplement helps with the assimilation and absorption of the nutrients by the cells. Especially beneficial for birds

with PDD, Psittacine Beak and Feather Disease or other viral conditions.

## LavaDerm

A wonderful spray for skin and feathers, LavaDerm contains the soothing Lavender oil with aloe. Another excellent spray for those suffering with Feather Destructive behavior or other skin and feather conditions. Also wonderful to use on wounds.



*The first picture is of a puncture wound on Nola, a greenwing macaw that was open to the airsac. The second picture was 18 hours later after the use of LavaDerm as well as essential oils of Lavender and Myrrh.*

## Animal Scents Ointment



Animal Scents Ointment has been a lifesaver on many occasions. With its base of mink oil along with a blend of several healing essential oils, this makes for a wonderful way to get oils applied to tricky places. Care does need to be taken to not get the ointment all over the feathers, but it is an amazing way to treat wounds, dry skin and even used to apply to dry, cracking feet. Another reason why I love this ointment so much is because it is a great way to “dilute” some of your oils that you want to apply topically and yet will “stick” to the area where you want it and basically give a constant, gentle infusion of essential oils to that area. For instance, I had a

case with a client who had a cockatoo with a broken toe. Now of course she did go to the vet, but she wanted to know if there was anything else she could use to help it heal. Now, in a broken bone situation, I would reach for Copaiba for its anti-inflammatory properties and Idaho Balsam Fir to help with bone repair. We could drip these oils directly on the toe, and that certainly would not be a wrong way to do it, but having the ointment on hand makes it so much easier to mix a couple drops of each oil into a small glob and apply the ointment mix a couple times a day. It was amazing how quickly the toe healed, and with very little pain during the healing process!

### *Bath and Shower Gel Base*

Another life saver has been the bath and shower gel base. Great to have on hand, especially for those in rescue. I brought in two budgies and a lovebird once that someone had abandoned in an apartment. They were literally just left to fly around. I got a call because a friend of a friend heard I had parrots and asked if I could help. When I got these three, they absolutely reeked of cigarette and marijuana smoke. I used the Bath and Show Gel Base to bathe them daily for probably nearly a week, but I was comfortable knowing that what I was using wasn't harming them in any way. It's not something that I use terribly often, but it's great to have around for those birds that need a good shampooing! Essential oils can be added to the base as well, so if you are dealing with a bacterial skin infection, feather mites or a skin yeast infection, choosing an oil that is indicated to use in these situations would be very helpful. Just remember to keep it out of their eyes and rinse very well!



I hope I have given you a lot of information to muse over and I especially hope that you are feeling some excitement build up as you start to consider the possibilities of what can change in the world of parrots when we implement the power of nature. The more I work with Young Living and aromatherapy, the more I am convinced that we will continue to see improvements and ‘miracles’ in some of the frustrating and even terrifying conditions in our birds. We have already seen major improvements in areas such as Aspergillosis, Proventricular Dilatation Disease and Papillomatosis and, with your help, I am anticipating even more miracles as time goes on.

For more information on using essential oils with your birds, please visit my website at:

**[www.aromatherapyforparrots.com](http://www.aromatherapyforparrots.com)**

or our Facebook group at:

**[www.facebook.com/groups/aromatherapyforparrots](https://www.facebook.com/groups/aromatherapyforparrots)**

For more information on Young Living or to order products, please visit:

**[www.youngliving.org/nels2985](http://www.youngliving.org/nels2985)**

## Recommended Reading

*The Chemistry of Essential Oils Made Simple* by David Stewart, PhD, D.N.M.

*The Reference Guide for Essential Oils* by Connie and Alan Higley

*Essential Oils Integrative Medical Guide* by Gary Young

*Animal Desk Reference* by Dr Melissa Shelton, DVM

All of the above books and many other educational materials and essential oil tools can be found at Abundant Health via:

[www.abundanthealth4u.com](http://www.abundanthealth4u.com)

## About the Author



Angela Nelson lives in a small town in central Minnesota with her parrots: Ellie, a 14 year old Harlequin macaw, Nola, a 3 year old Greenwing macaw, Dakotah, 14 and Jethro 1, both Congo African Greys, Babe, a 10 year old Solomon Island Eclectus, Kiwi, an 8 year old blue crowned conure and Zebers, a 21 year old Indian Ringneck. A full house, but she wouldn't have it any other way

A worldwide authority on the use of essential oils with parrots, she has clients in many countries that have witnessed for themselves the miracles that aromatherapy can bring.

Her dream is to bring essential oils to every bird home and her main focus right now is educating the proper uses of aromatherapy to parrot rescues and sanctuaries.

To book an educational class or speaking engagement, please contact Angela via her website at [www.aromatherapyforparrots.com](http://www.aromatherapyforparrots.com) or by e-mail at [aromatherapyforparrots@gmail.com](mailto:aromatherapyforparrots@gmail.com)

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