

# GUIDE TO TOXIC & NON-TOXIC BRANCHES AND PLANTS FOR PET BIRDS

## 1. Non-Toxic, Safe Branches

The following materials are safe IF NO CHEMICAL PESTICIDES OR OTHER CHEMICALS have been sprayed on them. Remember, birds will not only stand on perches, they take great delight from chewing them to pieces. Any toxins on the branch will end up in the bird. Before installing in any cage:

- Scrub the branches with detergent (dish soap) and clean water.
- Soak the branches in a dilute chlorine bleach solution (2oz bleach to 1 gallon of water) for 20 minutes. For large branches (too large to be soaked) put the solution in a misting bottle and spray the entire branch well.
- Rinse them with plenty of water.
- Let them dry completely before use.

Non-Toxic Branches			
Apple (Crab Apple)	Ash	Almond	Apricot
Peach	Plum	Prune	Citrus (Any)
Dogwood	Elm	Guava	Papaya
Pear	Magnolia	Nut (NOT Chestnut)	Vine Maple
Willow	ThurLOW		

The above woods can all be used to make toys, swings or perches. For variation in your bird's environment, strip the bark from some of the branch, leaving the rest natural. The bird will pick its favorite spot to stand and will have fun tearing away the rest of the bark. Use branches of varying thickness: this provides exercise for the bird's feet and helps prevent pressure sores.

## 2. Non-Toxic, Safe Foliage Plants

**We do not recommend putting plants in your bird's cage:** they do nothing directly to improve your pet's life and are difficult to maintain and keep clean. However, free-roaming birds in the house (always a dangerous idea if unattended) may come into contact with and chew on houseplants. Some bird owners enjoy providing a "wild" environment outside and near their bird's cage, creating a natural barrier to noise and increasing privacy for the bird. In this case, the bird may be able to reach the plants while perching outside (on top of) the cage or even through the bars. **Safe plants are a must.**

Non-Toxic Foliage Plants			
Acacia	Aloe	African Violet	Baby's Tears
Bamboo	Begonia	Bougainvillea	Coffee Arabica
Christmas Cactus	Cissus (Kangaroo Vine)	Coleus	Corn Plant
Dandelion	Dracaena Varieties	Ferns (Most)	Figs
Grape Ivy	Jade Plant	Kalachoe	Marigolds
Mother-in-Law	Natal Plum	Norfolk Pine	Perpperomia
Petunia	Pittosporum	Pothos	Prayer Plant
Purple Passion	Spider Plant	Schefflerra	Mimosa
Swedish Ivy	Thistle	Wandering Jew	Clover
Zebra Plant			

### 3. Toxic Woods

Under no circumstances should the woods listed be introduced to your birds enclosure, nor should they be kept anywhere within chewing distance from their cage.

Toxic Woods			
Black Locust	Cherry	Chestnut	Locust
Oak	Red Maple	Cedar	Camphor
Walnut			

### 4. Toxic Plants and Plant Parts

Few of these plants are commonly grown indoors. However, patio and garden plants are often cut for flower arrangements and brought into the home. Some bird owners take their parrots into the garden or allow them limited freedom outdoors where they can be exposed to plants not generally seen indoors. Beans, seed pods and berries are especially attractive to curious birds.

We are frequently asked about Cacti. While you will not find cactus on either list, most are non-toxic. However, the spines are a source of mechanical injury to the face and feet of birds. The bird's feathers are good defense against damage to the other parts of the body.

Toxic Plants and Plant Parts			
Arum Lily	Autumn Crocus	Avocado	Azalea
Yews	Baneberry	Bird of Paradise	Bleeding Heart
Beans	<i>Castor, Horse, Fava, Broad, Scarlet Runner, Mescal, Pregatory, Navy</i>		
Bulb Flowers	<i>Amaryllis, Daffodil, Iris, Hyacinth, Narcissus</i>		
Bloodroot	Blue Bonnet	Bracken Fern	Yellow Jasmine
Burdock	Bittercup	Cacao	Caladium
Cana Lily	Clematis	Cardinal Flower	Chalice
China Berry	Christmas Candle	Cocklebur	Coffee Senna
Coral Plant	Coriander	Cowslip	Philodendrons
Daphne	Death Camus	Delphinium	Devil's Ivy
Dieffenbachia	Elderberry	Elephant Ear	Eucalyptus (in dried arrangements)
Fire Thorne	Foxglove	Golden Chain	Grass (most)
Heaths (most)	Heliotrope	Hemlocks	Henbane
Holly	Honeysuckle	Horse Tail	Hydrangea
Ivy (English & others)	Jack-in-the-Pulpit	Jasmine	Jimsonweed
Lantana	Lily of the Valley	Locoweed	Lupine
Mayapple	Mexican Breadfruit	Mexican Poppy	Milkweed
Mistletoe	Mock Orange	Monkshood	Morning Glory
Mushrooms	Nettles	Nightshades	Bittersweet
Eggplant	Oleander	Parsley	Periwinkle
Pigweed	Poinciana	Poinsettia	Poison Ivy
Poison Oak	Pokeweed	Potato Shoots	Privet
Pyracantha	Rain Tree	Buttercup	Rape
Rhubarb Leaves	Rhododendrons	Skunk Cabbage	Sorrel
Snow Drop	Spurges	Sweet Pea	Tansy Ragwort
Tobacco	Virginia Creeper	Wattle	Wisteria

# COMMON HOUSEHOLD TOXINS

## 1. Heavy Metal

Heavy Metal poisoning occurs when birds eat an item containing a toxic metal. Signs of toxicosis include death, vomiting, diarrhea, low-grade chronic illness, and feather picking.

Heavy Metal Sources			
Costume Jewelry	Linoleum	Mirror Backs	Hardware Cloth
Galvanized Wire & Metal	Welds on Cages	Poorly Made Cages	Old Cages
Spray Paint	Toys with Lead Weights	Some Bell Clappers	Coins
Staples	Monopoly Game Pieces	Stained Glass	Tiffany Lamps
Fishing Weights	Curtain Weights	Lead Plaster/Paint	Putty/Solder
Lead Shot	Foil from Alcohol Bottles	Some Glazed Ceramics	

## 2. Airborne Toxins

Since birds are adapted for flight, they are much more efficient at pulling oxygen out of the air than mammals. This also means that they are more efficient at pulling toxins out of the air. Scents of fumes that are not at all toxic to people can actually kill birds.

Airborne Toxic Sources			
Cooking Fumes	Scented Candles	Plug-in Air Fresheners	Carpet Fresheners
Non-Stick or Teflon Items	Reynolds Oven Wrap	Cigarette Smoke	Potpourri
Insecticide Sprays	Aerosol Sprays	Perfume/Cologne	Mite Protectors
Bleach	Ammonia	Other Cleaning Agents	