

You see a Teflon pan. Your bird sees Hannibal Lecter.

Puddytats aren't the only source of danger for pet birds; even a window can prove dangerous if a bird is let out of his cage unsupervised. Wing-clipping deprives birds of their natural instincts, and can cause frustration that leads to troublesome neurotic behaviors. Bird owners who make the humane choice to let their pet birds keep their soaring abilities need to provide a safe, secure environment, and supervise playtime to keep birds from getting hurt.

Here are some common household dangers for birds. Deal with these, and your feathered friend will stay safe and happy.

Hazardous hobbies: You may be a master craftsperson, but some of the glues used in craft projects produce fumes that are bad for birds. Model glue from your child's "Build a B-52 Bomber" project may cause your bird to wheeze like an old accordion.

Paint: If your house is an older model, the paint on the walls may contain lead. Be aware of where your bird's cage is; if he's too close to a wall, he may lean out and try to treat himself to a nibble of paint flakes.

Killer cookware: A pot of boiling water on the stove can hurt a free-flying bird, but the main cooking danger is Teflon. If you use it (or other non-stick cookware), beware: The fumes

from a sizzling pan can kill birds within seconds. If you're grilling, move Tweety out of the kitchen and far away, and it can't hurt to crack a window.

Power tools: Take a look at your TV, computer, and other electronics. Unless your bird is addicted to eBay, it's not the objects themselves that pose the danger, but the electric cords that power them. Invest in a cord safety device; a plastic hose that encloses the wires can shield your bird from the shocking repercussions of her prying beak.

Your biggest fan: Moving objects overhead make birds nervous anyway, but the overhead fan is like a giant, slicing turbine to a roaming pet bird. Keep the fan off when your bird is out of her cage.

The innocent-looking puddytat (or pooch!): She has no interest in the cage whatsoever. She would never *dream* of hurting that bird. How could you even *think* she would? Duh. She notices. Even if your kitty has never been the drag-a-small-half-dead-animal-into-your-bed type, maybe it's because there's never been such a tasty morsel around before. Don't hang the cage where Fluffy may succumb to her baser instincts. And even if you crate other pets while your bird is out playing, supervise! If she lands on the cage wire, one little nip from a curious pomeranian could take off a toe.

Mean greenery: Some of your plants may be poisonous to birds. Check with your vet about which plants you can safely allow Beaky to play "jungle bird" in.

The cosmetic industry: Well, not *directly*. But perfumes and hairsprays can irritate birds' sensitive lungs; so can scented candles and incense.

That cool birdcage you found in the attic: Some older birdcages have lead components; beware the seed-guard mesh in these decorative old behemoths. Your grandmother's Victorian birdcage may complement your decor, but a dead bird won't.

The lurking toilet: Yes, believe it or not, every year a few pet birds are lost to the evil mouth of the potty. Birds are curious about what their people are up to, and some bird lovers have discovered—a moment too late—that this interest extends to bathroom activities. Bob flushes, and two seconds later Beaky is in the bowl, swirling around, terrified, on his way to join those legendary sewer alligators. The moral of these terrible tales? Shut the bathroom door, cook when your feathery friend is safely in her cage and not peering over your shoulder—and keep an eye on your bird.