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List of Pet Birds as Defined by the Animal Welfare Regulations

Last Modified:

The Animal Welfare Regulations defines a pet animal as "Any animal that has commonly been kept as a pet in family households in the United States, such as dogs, cats, guinea pigs, rabbits, hamsters, and birds. This term also includes but is not limited to such birds as canaries, cockatiels, lovebirds, and budgerigar parakeets. This term excludes exotic animals and wild animals."

This list defines specifically what avian species are considered pet bird species and categorizes what pet bird species are small or large size. The designation of a pet species and size is used in determining thresholds for licensure. For Class A licenses, which are required when selling birds for use as pets or for exhibition that were hatched on your premises, if you sell more than 200 pet bird species having an average body weight of 250 grams or less, annually, or if you sell more than 8 pet bird species having an average body weight of more than 250 grams, annually, a license is required. For these purposes, body weights are those of the average adult for that species.

Additionally, a Class C license is required if you are exhibiting more than 8 pet bird species, or any non-pet bird, with the exemption of 4 or fewer raptors.

Birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) 50 CFR § 10.13 are excluded from the definition of a pet bird species as defined by the Animal Welfare

Act and Regulations.

Small Pet Bird Species

The following groups and species are considered to be **small pet bird species** (250 grams or less as determined by average adult weight of the species):

- Finches and finch-like birds from the infraorder Passerida*
- Cockatiels
- Parrotlets
- Lovebirds
- Caiques
- Senegals and other *Poicephalus* parrots
- Mini-macaws, 250 grams or less by average adult weight of species
- Conures
- Pionus
- Lories and lorikeets
- Parakeets and other parakeet-like birds, such as but not limited to ringnecks, monks, lineolated, kakarikis, and rosellas
- Doves & pigeons in the order Columbiformes 250 grams or less by average adult weight of species*
- Mynas and starlings
- Jays, magpies, and other small corvid species
- Poultry, for use as pets, that are 250 grams or less by average adult weight of species*

Large Pet Bird Species

The following groups and species are considered to be **large pet bird species** (more than 250 grams as determined by average adult weight of the species):

- Cockatoos
- African greys
- Eclectus
- Macaws

- Amazons
- Toucans
- Hornbills
- Turacos
- Kookaburras
- Doves & pigeons in the order Columbiformes more than 250 grams by average adult weight of species*
- Crows and other larger corvid species
- Poultry, for use as pets, more than 250 grams by average adult weight of species*

*MBTA species are excluded from the definition of a pet bird species

Contact Us

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