

## Addison - Congo African Grey

Addison has been adopted on January 25, 2009!

We wish him and his new family all the best and hope to hear all about his transition soon.

Here is some information on Addison, who is a good natured, affectionate African Gray. He lived with us for slightly over 4 years. He was last bonded to me (a middle-aged man with a beard and glasses), but was willing to be handled by others. He does not seem to dislike any particular type of person. I trusted him to ride on my shoulders for extended stretches of time at home, which he seemed to like. He would sometimes play with my ear or glasses in an effort to get my attention. If he wasn't on the shoulder, he was comfortable sitting on a rolling stand so that he could be wherever I was and watches any activity.

For most of the last 4 years, Addison lived with a variety of dogs, cats, other birds, and people. He was comfortable with all of them, and was willing to be gently sniffed by the dogs and cats, although he was appropriately wary of the cats, and never left unsupervised. He was neither overly social nor overly aggressive with the other birds. He would sometimes fly down onto the floor and walk around. He is able to climb stairs, and was occasionally interested in exploring, walking up stairs and down hallways, looking for the people he wanted to find.

Addison likes to be scratched gently on his neck and head, when he presents them. He likes to either make, or hear from me, a soft bird whistle sound as a signal for doing this, and will also respond if I say "Scratch your head"; Addison was not comfortable being touched on his body or wings, at least by me. Recently, Addison seemed to like playing an imitation game, where I would immediately imitate whatever sound he made. When he was left alone we sometimes left a radio turned on. For most of the last four years, we had other birds, and his cage would be placed next to theirs, so that the birds could walk across and enter each other's cage for entertainment. However, he never seemed to bond with any other bird, and never had a "cage mate".

**Foods:** Addison is willing to eat, or at least try, a variety of foods. He has been fed a commercial food mix, supplemented with seed balls, fruits and vegetables. He especially likes slices of bananas and grapes.

**Language:** Addison's phrases and sounds include: Hello; Hi big guy; Ok big guy; Are you a pirate? ; Are you a good girl/boy? Would you like a shower? [Imitations of wild birds heard outside, including a piercing chirp that can be irritating], "Meow" in response to "What does the cat say?"; "Woof" in response to "What does the dog say?"; I love you; Night &ndash; Night in response to "What time is it?"; He likes music, and would respond to the man's singing voice by imitating short snatches of melody. He also knows fragments of "Old McDonald Had a Farm" and will sing "Old McBarn...Ee-I-Ee-I-Oh". "It's okay, it's all right" in response to the distress of himself, other animals, or people; "Goodbye" in response to the sound of keys jingling, or coats zipping; "Whew" in response to people carrying objects, or exerting themselves.

Addison's balance is decent, although he is not an acrobatic climber in his cage or elsewhere. He will step up on command from his family members, from any location where he is perched, and with either leg, onto either a left or right hand. Early in his time with us he was very willing to fly, and would fly across the room to me and land on my shoulder, if I turned it toward him to present it. He is determined enough to fly with his wings clipped, and will do so if startled. Addison's feathers have never been as glossy as other African Grey parrots. In the last several months, during a time of increasing stress in the family and less time with me, he has been picking or biting his feathers.

Addison is a great bird, and I hope that he can find a new home with someone who will care for him and spend time with him.

By Tracy Beggs