

Household Dangers

There are a host of potential household dangers that may confront our winged companions.

The kitchen is generally not a good place for parrots to hang out.

- There is the obvious danger of the stove with boiling pots of water and frying pans of food.
- There is also the risk of leaks from gas appliances for leaks. Consider purchasing a gas leak and/or carbon monoxide detector.

The efficient respiratory tract of the bird means they are extremely susceptible to the irritating, toxic, and potentially fatal effects of inhaling **strong fumes and/or vapors**. The most well known problem is the potentially fatal release of toxic Teflon gas from superheated nonstick cookware. Other non-stick items include stove drip pans, irons, ironing board covers, bread makers, and other household appliances.

Always keep your parrot out of the room when using spray product of any kind. Problems have been reported with a wide variety of products including:

Air freshener	Hair spray	Plug-in freshener
Ammonia	Heaters, new	Potpourri
Bleach	Insecticides	Scented candle
Carpet freshener	Incense	Self-cleaning oven
Cologne	Nail polish	Smoke of any kind
Fertilizer	Oil-based paint	Spray-on deodorant
Flea bomb	Oven cleaner	Stain remover
Furniture polish	Perfume	Tub & tile cleaner

Problems have also been described with some woods burned in the fireplace, particularly if the fireplace is poorly vented.

The **bathroom** is another potentially dangerous room. Keep toilet seats down to prevent a bird from landing in the toilet bowl. Do not leave open containers of water out anywhere through the house.

Hazards for birds in flight or merely gliding include ceiling fans and large mirrors. Of course there is also a danger that a bird may fly through an open window or into a closed

window. Drafty windows are also a potential source of temperature extremes. Also make sure the bird cage is not placed in an area where sun beats down through the window.

Additional sources of potentially stressful **temperature extremes** include exterior doors, air vents, and fireplaces. Do not place cage in areas where temperature extremes

Also beware of **household items on which your bird may chew:**

- Electrical cords
- Toxic household plants
- Soft plastic rubber items
- Pressure-treated wood
- Paper with lots of colored inks
- Heavy metals may be found in a variety of household items including leaded stained glass decoration, some mini blinds, old paint on woodwork, costume jewelry, and curtain weights.

Finally, beware of **creatures that may chew on your bird**. Other household pets, such as potential predator species like cats and dogs, should always be supervised no matter how long or how well they get along.

References

Blanchard S. *Companion Parrot Handbook*. PBIC, Inc.; Alameda, CA., 1999. Pp. 66, 131.

Stoltz JH, Galey F, Johnson B. Sudden death in ten psittacine birds associated with the operation of a self-cleaning oven. *Veterinary and Human Toxicology* 34(5): 420-421, 1992.