

Help! My Parrot Laid an Egg by Barbara Heidenreich

A veterinarian once said to me there are two times in birds life when it looks like it is dying. When it is dying and when it is laying an egg. It is no wonder I sometimes get emails from panicked parrot owners when they see their feathered friends "give birth" to an object that seems to be as big as their bird.

Egg laying can be problematic. Therefore if you would prefer your parrot be a companion bird and not a breeder, first be sure to avoid doing things that lead to reproductive behaviors. There is a great article about this in the free sample of the digital publication [Good Bird Magazine](#).

But what do you do if your bird does lay an egg and you have no intentions of adding more parrots to the household? Here are a few tips to help you out.

If your parrot lays an egg, leave it alone for a few days. Watch your bird to see if she shows any interest in the egg. She may ignore it as first. Parrots often take a few days to lay a full clutch of eggs. This can be as many as three to four eggs. Leaving the egg alone for awhile gives your bird time to lay more if she is going to, and then wait and see if she decides to sit on them. Many parrots will simply ignore the eggs as times passes. If this is the case, go ahead and remove the eggs and throw them away.

However if your bird does show interest in the eggs, you will want to try another strategy. Parrots often show strong aggressive behavior when they have eggs. Wait for a moment when your parrot is not attending her eggs. Remove the eggs and addle them. This means to shake them vigorously. The goal is to break the yolk inside the egg. This will prevent the eggs from hatching if they are fertile. Then put the eggs back. Handling the eggs will not cause your parrot to abandon them. If you know the eggs are not fertile (for example there is no male around) addling is not necessary. Just let your parrot sit on the eggs.

During this time your parrot may stay tight to her eggs most of the time. She may eat and poop infrequently. And when she does eliminate it is usually in large amounts and sometimes smelly (from holding it for long periods of time.)

The reason you do not want to pull the eggs is that this can stimulate your parrot to lay even more eggs. To make the shell of the egg your parrot must pull calcium from other parts of the body. Too much egg laying can cause your parrot to be calcium deficient which can be life threatening for your bird.

Eventually when the eggs do not hatch your parrot will abandon them. Once this happens you are free to pull them and throw them away. It may take several weeks for your bird to give up.

Remember your first line of defense is to prevent egg laying by avoiding doing things that encourage reproductive behavior. Do this and you won't ever have to worry about your parrot laying an egg. Of course if your parrot is a boy and he lays an egg, you might want to get your money back on your DNA sexing test.