

List of Pet Birds as Defined by the Animal Welfare Regulations

Last Modified December 22, 2023

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.

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
- Mynas and starlings
- Jays, magpies, and other small corvid 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
- Kookaburras
- Crows and other larger corvid species

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

If you have questions, please contact our office:

USDA Animal Care

2150 Centre Ave., Building B, Mailstop 3W11, Fort Collins, CO 80526-8117

Phone: (970) 494-7478

E-mail: animalcare@usda.gov

One of our members had a question concerning licensing and this is the reply he received from Cody Yager:

" face to face retail sales do not count in the 200/8 limit...selling directly to the end user/pet owner. Selling to a pet store or auction or shipping counts in the 200/8, and yes, you as a breeder can sell without a license if you keep at 200/8 limit for pet birds." If you have any questions concerning either of the regulations outlined on pp 1-3, do not hesitate to contact animal care or Cody Yager. Someone at Animal Care can answer your questions and end the speculation.