

Mega Care Sheet

Travel Info

	Leaving	Returning
Trip 1 (James)	Thursday July 24 ~9am (we will do morning care, you can start with evening)	Monday July 28 ~9pm (you will need to do evening care)
Trip 2 (Lyndsie)	Friday Aug 8 ~9am (we will do morning care, you can start with evening)	Tuesday Aug 12 ~9pm (you will need to do evening care)

Daily Checklist

Morning

between 7am - 10am

- ☐ Feed birds
- ☐ Feed cat
- ☐ In bird room, open curtains, close windows
- ☐ Top off cat fountain (upstairs bathroom)

Once per Day

The suggested time to do these is with the evening visit, but if it works better for your schedule, you can do the hour-long visit in the morning instead of evening. They're just more used to being out later in the day.

- ☐ clean litter boxes
- ☐ top off cat fountain (upstairs bathroom)
- ☐ fill bird bath fountain
- ☐ run dishwasher
- ☐ water tree
- ☐ check mail

Out of Cage Time

- ☐ Dump Yahoo's previous foraging bowl into the tan tray outside the cages
- ☐ Give Yahoo a fresh foraging bag (located in the top drawer of the white floating shelf unit)

Evening

between 4pm - 7pm.

- ☐ Feed birds
 - ☐ fresh water for birds
 - ☐ Feed cat
 - ☐ open windows, close curtains
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Cat Sitting Details

Food

½ can wet food, store opened cans in fridge

Top off dry food

I use yogurt lids because Baloo pushes his food around. Scape off old food and put the lid in the dishwasher, and put the next canned food meal on a fresh lid. Extra lids can be found in the pantry.

Wash out empty cans and put them in the recycling (any of the 3 smaller bins below the counter).

Cycle through all 4 flavors

Wet food located in the pantry, bottom shelf.

Dry food located in the pantry, white bin on the floor.

Attention

Baloo will probably want to sit on your lap and get pets.

- Put a blanket on your lap first, his nails tend to get sharp and it hurts on a bare lap.

- Baloo is allowed in bird room while supervised, but if he's being predatory then kick him out.

Litter boxes

1. Downstairs bathroom (he uses this one most of the time)
2. Upstairs make up room, next to bathroom

You really only need to clean the downstairs litter while I'm gone, unless the upstairs one stinks. Clean it every day/every other day. Small bags are near the cat food in the pantry. Throw it away in the trash bin outside the front door.

Totally Optional: clean up

If he puked on the couch, you can clean it if you want, but it's not required. He is old and throws up all the time, and I want to keep the couch covered and protected. I will clean up any mess when I return.

- Enzyme cleaner is in the downstairs bathroom.
- Trash bags are above the fridge, small bags are near the cat food in the pantry

Bird Sitting Details

Bird Feeding

between 7am - 10am, between 4pm - 7pm

Breakfast/Dinner

Chop (the mix of veggies & pellets) is located in the fridge.

Once the provided chop runs low, take the next prepared container from the kitchen freezer and let it thaw in the fridge. It will need some mixing up once it's thawed.

Dump the previous meals into the compost bin (metal bin on the counter) and put the dirty dishes in the dishwasher.

Spicy & Floof

6 tupperware lids (extra lids are located in the pantry with all the other containers)

6-8g chop per lid (the mix of veggies & pellets in the fridge)

1 pinch of shredded paper

Shredded paper is located in a little labeled cardboard box on the floor of the pantry.

Precise Feeding:

<https://youtube.com/shorts/CYlesFg3pl0>

Yahoo

Yahoo uses yogurt containers. I will prepare his food in advance and leave it in the fridge.

In case that food goes bad, here's the recipe:

- 8g chop
- 8g grains

Water

Fresh filtered water for dinner (water filter is next to sink, Spicy broke the bottom spout so position that over the sink in case of leakage)

Spicy and Floof use the plastic bowls, Yahoo uses the metal bowl. Put previous days bowls in the dishwasher.

Mixing Chop

There should be enough chop provided, but in case it runs out or goes bad, here's how to mix more

1. 1 Container frozen veggies (in the garage freezer, second shelf from the bottom, it should look colorful and not the one with rice and grains)
 2. 15g course Harrison's pellets
 3. 15g fine Harrison's pellets
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Out of Cage Time

~1 hour per day

You'll Need

- Hearing protection, they can get loud. There is a spare construction headset that I'll leave on the futon, in case you need it.
- Shoes/Crocs. It's messy in there, and Spicy has a thing about bare toes.

Precautions

- BE VERY CAREFUL AND SLOW WHILE OPENING AND CLOSING ANY DOORS. They are fast flyers and can quickly fly through doors.
- Supervise them if Baloo is present. The birds don't understand their own frailty and like to harass the cat.
- Be very careful where you step, they might be on the floor.
- Wear the bird shawl (gray shawl with a big W on the back) if concerned about them landing on your shoulders. Useful for protecting clothing and getting them off (by removing the shawl)
- Don't touch the curtains if Floof is out, she will try to maul you.
- Floof is sometimes scared of new things, and she tries to attack the scary thing but often misses and bites humans instead. So just be slow picking things up when she's out, and check that she's not going to dive bomb. (The broom is the classic example of this, though she has gotten much better around it with exposure, she might revert while I'm gone.)
- If Spicy and Floof land on you, I advise trying to coax them off by either doing a little hop or by pushing them next to a branch to coax them off. Most of the time they just want to hang out, but they can get nippy around ears and I don't want to risk you getting bitten if I can help it.

Yahoo's Foraging Bowl

When it's time to go back in the cage, dump the previous day's contents in the big tan tray in the bird room. That is usually enough to motivate him to go to bed.

If the bowl is dirty, replace with a clean one (located below Yahoo's cage) and run the dirty one through the dishwasher.

<https://youtube.com/shorts/4BGWhzAed38>

Water Fountain

Demonstration:

<https://youtube.com/shorts/lg-bCxSFJtU>

Set it up on the tall chair in the bird room, with a towel under it. Unplug it when you put the birds to bed.

Normal Things They Do While Out

Yahoo

- he'll climb to the floor and tap your foot if he wants attention
- he's pretty safe to pet on the head and neck. He especially loves gentle rubs on the orange feathers behind his head and the shoulder feathers.
- open and close his cage door
- the corner behind the door (there will probably be stuff there waiting for him to move around)
- stare out the window on the tree branch
- bouncing up and down to music (he likes Freebird). Sometimes this gets him really excited so don't try to handle him while he's dancing.
- He will imitate tapping, sniffing sounds, laughing, and engage in quiet "conversation" sounds if you talk to him
- He likes to wrestle but I wouldn't recommend it until you know his body language
- "Surfing", a natural behavior of his species where he vigorously rubs his face on paper towels, blankets, shoes, etc. It's like a little dry bath routine.

Floof

- Foraging trays
- Tossing things to the floor
- Chewing up the stuff in the white shelves (if she gets into one, pull it out a bit so that it's not an enticing cavern. She can chew but not nest.)

- She likes it if you look at her and tell her she's pretty (no joke, I'm not sure how she knows)
- Traveling up and down the curtains (sometimes she falls but she'll be fine)
- Stare at you while screaming
- Combo of digging+shredding+sitting on cardboard, wood, cork, etc
- Stealing Yahoo's food out of his cage (fine as long as you didn't just deliver a fresh meal to his cage)
- Floof's tricks: "spin", "bow"

Spicy

- Sitting above the bird bath
- Watching Floof while she gets up to her shenanigans
- Engaging in "conversations" where you imitate what he says
- Tossing a prescription bottle. He'll play this with people just be careful of your fingers.
- Foraging in the trays, specifically for red pellets
- If you say "hi spicy" and raise your forefinger in a little wave, he might wave back
- Other tricks he might do: "knock knock" if you tap your finger twice near him, "fetch" with the colorful paper "bagels"
- Stealing Yahoo's food out of his cage (fine as long as you didn't just deliver a fresh meal to his cage)

Bird Crimes

the crime	the solution
chewing baseboards, door, or door frame	Distract with the foraging tray or some wood blocks
Yahoo trying to attack Spicy	Use the hand perch to get between them. If they keep fighting, use whatever is nearby (cardboard, grassmat, blanket, etc) to create a barrier.
chewing on wires (e.g. the nanny cam wires)	Pick up the criminal with the hand perch and place them somewhere else. They'll likely forget about the cable.
Floof spending more than a minute investigating the blankets on the couch (she's trying to dig out a nest)	Carefully remove the blanket (she might get defensive) and distract with wood blocks

Putting Birds Back

Floof & Spicy

Floof will actually station (put herself in the cage and stand on a specific perch) when she sees you open the papaya container. However, Spicy is not so motivated.

Floof & Spicy will fly to the perch with a hand-guard, just be careful because Floof is fast and angry.

Once Floof & Spicy are in their cages, give them a dried papaya (pink cubes in the container below their cage).

Mayo method:

<https://youtube.com/shorts/s1oL0S1L3IE>

Perch method:

https://youtube.com/shorts/M_Dfcu00QrM

Yahoo

If you fill up his foraging bowl when it's time to go inside, he'll usually want to go grab a snack out of it on his own. He might need help seeing the fresh treats, so you can pick him up and let him see it, usually he'll step off your finger and into the cage as long as a perch is close enough.

Foraging bowl method:

<https://youtube.com/shorts/4BGWhzAed38>

If Yahoo is being stubborn, show him an almond and offer the perch. He'll step right up, and then once you put him in his cage you can give him the almond.

That works 90% of the time, but in the rare occasion where he is absolutely refuses to move and he growls at you. Walk out of the room for a few minutes (while listening for angry bird sounds that mean he might be climbing onto Spicy's cage). Yahoo will get lonely and make some sad solitary beeeeps. That's a sign he's ready to listen.

Understanding Bird Behavior

Overstimulation

Like many animals, both high excitement and high fear can look the same in birds, and both excitement and fear can result in some nasty bites.

Here is Yahoo getting a little too excited by the offered bath:

<https://youtube.com/shorts/BqjVfBDji-w>

Here is Floof getting too excited for her nest:

https://youtube.com/shorts/d4EWqP_QQuo

Signs of Overstimulation

- Eye pinning (pupils quickly grow and shrink)
- Fanned tail
- Slow movement with head down and wings out ("the cobra")
- Fast bouncing or dancing (dancing to a normal "beat" is fine)
- Fluffed head lowered while "talking" -- Spicy does this the most
- Fluffed head while squawking -- Floof does this usually while replacing food bowls. She looks mad but for her it's just an exciting game

If Yahoo does any of these behaviors with you, he's probably very excited to see you. BUT DO NOT OFFER HIM YOUR HAND. If he's sitting close to exposed skin and starts showing signs of overstimulation, put a blanket between you and him. It usually only takes him a few seconds to calm down.

If you're not sure whether he's over excited, be on the safe side and pick him up with the protected perch. If you want to try it with your hand, do a test by slowly reaching for his beak. If he lets you pet his beak (birds enjoy this), then he's fine to pick up barehanded. But if he lunges or makes any sounds, let him have his space.

I generally don't recommend offering Spicy or Floof your hand unless you've got a treat for them. They don't really care for pets or physical affection in the same way Yahoo does.

Bites

I'm hoping it doesn't happen to you, but the truth is that bites are just part of caring for birds. They aren't domesticated like dogs and cats, so they are going to use their wild instincts.

The good news is that they don't have bacteria or much saliva in their mouths, so there's no risk of infection like there is with cat/dog bites.

If Yahoo bites

He tends to hold on and it can be painful. To get him off, grab a towel or blanket (there should be several within reach in the bird room), gently wrap it around him and use that to pull him off. The darkness from being wrapped is enough to disorient him, and it keeps the rest of you safe from secondary bites. Once he's off, step away and let him stand back up from the towel. He might still lunge if he's really revved up, but you're faster than him.

If Spicy or Floof bites

These two are really good flyers, so in most cases I do a little hop or fling of the hand and they let go and recover in the air. If for some reason they're really holding on, do the towel maneuver. But be especially careful to not apply pressure while they're wrapped in a towel. They're very delicate creatures and it's surprisingly easy to damage them internally. Luckily, their bites are shallow.

Screaming

Spicy and Yahoo both scream/sing during dusk/dawn (or what they perceive as dusk/dawn). And sometimes they get into a fit of screamies that lasts for a few minutes. They're both pretty tolerable.

Floof is different. She screams to convey she is having some big uncomfortable emotions that she doesn't know how to manage, including:

Fear

(there's an object nearby that she doesn't understand, or she saw signs of a predator outside)

What to do: Remove the object if you can identify what it is. If it was a predator, she stops once she calms down. Sometimes it can help to turn off the lights for a few minutes to signal to her brain that the danger has passed.

Anger

(this is unfortunately likely to be why she screams while I'm gone)

What to do: Put on headphones and ignore her as best you can. I'm pretty sure she's figured out that she gets less attention when headphones are on, so sometimes that's enough for her to stop screaming. But sometimes not. If she just will not stop and it's more than you can bear, I give permission to put the birds back in their cages and leave.

Bored

Offer her something to do, my go-to is to offer her a blanket or my bird shawl to play attack. Watch your fingers though.

You can also offer some toys, like any of the woven wicker items.

Needs Attention

This happens when Spicy is neglecting his duties as a loving partner. Sometimes the best bet is to get Spicy to stop whatever he's doing and pay attention to her.

Yelling at Spicy

Spicy can be a little asshole and nip at Floof, especially when he's being playful.

Hungry

Unlikely to happen since she'll be in her cage most of the time.

On Floof and her Biological Imperative

Floof had an emergency in 2024 when an egg got stuck in her reproductive tract. After a few weeks of basically being in birdy labor, all the pieces of egg finally came out. This ordeal probably scarred her reproductive tract and makes it even more likely to happen again should she start producing eggs. To reduce the chances of this happening again, I've implemented a few caretaking steps that might seem odd or overkill at first.

Diet

You may have noticed that Spicy & Floof have different meals than Yahoo's, and this is because they are on a limited calorie diet. They still get some treats, but they have to forage for it. I've set up foraging in their cage that should last them for about a week, and they sometimes choose to forage instead of eating all their veggies, and that's fine.

This is also why I weigh their chop and give it a sprinkle of shredded paper -- to make them work a little bit to find their favorite bits.

Lighting

The lights in the bird room are on a timer from 7:30am to 7:30pm. However, the natural daylight in summer can extend their waking hours longer than I'd like. Longer daylight can signal to their bird brains that it's baby-making time. So that's why I include opening/closing the curtains. I want them open during the day so the birds can look outside, but closed at night so that they don't wake up early.

Cavern Seeking

In the [Out of Cage Time](#) section, I talk about intervening should Spicy & Floof get into a drawer or fixate on the crack under the door. This is because their brains are wired to find cavernous spots to build a nest. A little bit of investigation of cavernous spaces is fine, but once they start trying to dig or chew, it's time to intervene.

Yahoo also seeks out caverns and gets very interested in the cracks below the doors, but he's not at risk of laying eggs so I only stop him if he's being destructive. There's even a postage tube that he sometimes likes to crawl inside and make funny sounds, and that's ok.

In Emergencies

First, call me.

If a vet visit is necessary, I will compensate for any time spent taking them there. Colorado Exotic Animal Hospital (COEAH) should have my credit card on file, so use that first. If that doesn't work or you can't get my cc number by calling, I will compensate you for any money spent immediately.

Emergency Contacts

Cats

There are fabric cat carriers in the laundry room. If a cat gets sick you'll have to load them into one of those and drive them to the vet.

Normal vet:

Arapahoe Animal Hospital
5585 Arapahoe Avenue, Boulder, CO 80303
303-442-7033

Emergency vet:

Colorado Animal Specialty & Emergency
2972 Iris Ave, Boulder, CO 80301
(303)-545-2273

Birds

The bird carriers are located in the walk-in closet next to the bird room. There's two canvas carriers, which I use for Spicy and Floof, and 1 metal carrier, which I use for Yahoo. Give them treats to go inside and buckle the carrier in the car seat.

Best vet, though longer drive:

Colorado Exotic Animal Hospital
<https://coloradoexoticanimalhospital.com/>
720-856-2324
7120 E. Hampden Ave. St 101
Denver, CO 80224

Not as good but fine in a pinch:

Arapahoe Animal Hospital
5585 Arapahoe Avenue
Boulder, CO 80303
303-442-7033

House

How to Run the Dishwasher

Feel free to run it every day, even if it's not full. There are so many dishes generated by the animals that I find it less stressful to let the dishwasher take care of them instead of washing them by hand.

Extra clean "dishes" for the animals are all in the pantry, including the various container lids.

Instructions

1. Put the pod (located under the kitchen sink) in the door container and close it.
 2. Push "On/Off"
 3. Push "Half Load"
 4. Push "Start"
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Plants

The only plant you'll have to worry about over a 5 day period is the little lime tree on the back patio. Fill up the watering can (above the sink) and water it every other day.

Mail

The mailbox for this house is at the bottom left side of the mailbox array. Please check it every few days. There might be a box of bird toys in there at some point.

Bring in any other packages on the doorstep.