

Australian Legislation

Keep informed



Australian Government
Department of the Environment
and Water Resources

How is the legislation enforced?

The import of live animals — including exotic birds — into Australia is controlled by the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, administered by the Department of the Environment and Water Resources, and the *Quarantine Act 1908*, administered by the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service.

The Australian Customs Service and the Department of the Environment and Water Resources enforce exotic birdkeeping legislation at the border into Australia and, if necessary, by investigating illegal activities within Australia. Illegal live import and holding of birds or eggs without reasonable excuse is punishable by fines and/or prison sentences.

Further information

The Department's *Exotic Animal Guide* provides further information about the regulation of exotic animals in Australia and is available from the Department's web site at: www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/trade-use/exoticanimalguide

Information on improvements to exotic bird recordkeeping is available from the Department of the Environment and Water Resources:

Web: www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/trade-use/exoticbirds

While at the site, you can sign-up to receive regular updates and information, and view the latest proposals.

Email: wildlifetrade@environment.gov.au

Telephone: 1800 803 772

State and territory requirements

State and territory governments also have their own laws about keeping exotic animals. Contact your state or territory government to find out what you may need to do.

ACT: www.environment.act.gov.au
NSW: www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au
NT: www.nt.gov.au/nreta/parks
QLD: www.epa.qld.gov.au
SA: www.environment.sa.gov.au
TAS: www.dpiw.tas.gov.au
VIC: www.dse.vic.gov.au/dse
WA: www.agric.wa.gov.au

Images: External panels – Green-winged macaw (*Ara chloropterus*); Internal (left to right) – Green-checked conure (*Pyrrhura molinae*), Solomon Island Eclectus Parrot (*Eclectus roratus solomonensis*), Blue-faced parrot finch (*Erythrura trichroa*), Blue and gold macaw (*Ara ararauna*).

Keeping it legal: Exotic birdkeeping in Australia



What you need to know about Australian Government exotic bird recordkeeping requirements

The Australian Government is working with birdkeepers to minimise the risk of acquiring illegally traded birds and to promote confidence amongst aviculturists.

Legally keeping exotic birds

Keepers of exotic birds need to have adequate information to show how and where they obtained the exotic birds they hold. They should have:

- record books, receipts identifying previous owners or similar evidence that the bird (or its parents or grandparents etc) was registered under NEBRS *or*
- evidence that the bird is of a species that was exempt from NEBRS, and the bird and any progeny were imported before 11 January 2002 *or*
- an import permit indicating that the bird, or all of the birds of which it is the progeny, were lawfully imported into Australia.

The Australian Government Department of the Environment and Water Resources web site includes a list of exotic bird species known to be in Australia — the 2003 Inventory — as well as the Live Import List which outlines species that can be legally imported into Australia (see the *Keep informed* section of this brochure).

Why improve the current system?

Currently many birdkeepers do not keep adequate records to protect themselves, their birds and their businesses against threats posed by illegal importation and trade in exotic birds.

To address recordkeeping issues, the Australian Government established the Exotic Birdkeepers Advisory Group (EBAG) in early 2006 and is consulting with exotic birdkeepers.

What are the proposed improvements?

Exotic birds species known to be in Australia would be classified to show the minimum level of recordkeeping expected. The proposed classification would be based on whether a species has been, or is likely to be traded illegally, and whether the species poses a risk to the Australian environment as a pest or vector for disease. Another proposed improvement is the introduction of a standard Movement Transaction Record (MTR) to be exchanged by buyer and seller. A draft template MTR is available on the Department's web site (see the *Keep informed* section of this brochure).

Why is it important to keep records?

Keeping records will help:

- you to prove where your birds (and eggs) came from if asked by authorities.
- reduce illegal trade in exotic birds
- protect aviculture from diseases spread through illegally traded birds
- protect the Australian environment from pests and diseases *and*
- ensure market values of exotic birds are not eroded by illegal trade.

What is 'buyer beware'?

'Buyer beware' places the onus on birdkeepers to ensure any birds or eggs they keep or trade have records to show that the specimens have been legally imported or were derived from NEBRS-registered specimens. This will help minimise the risk of acquiring illegally traded birds or eggs and promote confidence amongst aviculturists.

