

WELL IT'S JUST A BIRD . . . . .  
A perspective, by Julie Mitchell

How many times after you've lost a bird have you heard that? Many of us that raise birds live among people who don't understand what we do or why we do what we do.

Even with the vast numbers of birds that we have and raise, death is a very serious thing in our household. It is not something taken very lightly. Our vet understands this all too well and knows that a death in our household now means work for her. Death is the beginning of a long trip. The trip from our home to the vet's office for the necropsy process, and then the final reports. It is this trip that helps protect the status of the rest of our flock.

Our non-bird family and friends look at us in disbelief and this is when you hear the dreaded: **"Well, it's just a bird . . . . . Why be so over-dramatic?"** My reaction to this ranges from total shock of how anyone can be so crass to the realization of the fact that this is just simple ignorance of the person making the statement. Many people don't realize that our birds socialize intimately with us and bond very deeply with us, every bit as much as a beloved cat or dog. Regardless of the reason, to lose one's pet is to lose one's pet!

We will continue to educate folks to help understand that birds are just not simply "pretty things" sitting in a cage to be admired and enjoyed from a distance, but real pets with personalities and needs like dogs and cats. They can't curl up in your lap, but they can certainly snuggle under your chin or cuddle up next to your ear. Many of them can tell you Good Morning or say Nightie, Night. How many dogs or cats can do that?