

Taking your parrot outside.

There are times when you want to take your parrot outside with you. Whether this is in your yard while you're relaxing or going visiting.

The following methods are some to consider – each with their own pros and cons.



1. **Harnesses:** Taking your bird outside in a harness (even if their wings are clipped) is probably the safest way that you can offer them a bit more freedom and keep them safe.

There are various harnesses available specifically for parrots. These harnesses are designed with safety and comfort of the bird in mind.

We recommend that you use a harness with a bungee type extension that slows the bird as it reaches the end of the leash rather than a sudden stop. Harnesses are probably the safest compromise for safety and freedom for your bird. There are several reputable brands available in Australia.

2. **Free Flight Training:** This method requires extensive training resulting in your parrot flying free in open outdoor spaces and returning to you on command. Recall training forms the basis of this method.

It has a lot dangers including many things beyond your control – birds of prey, environmental factors, weather / wind, etc. Free Flight without specialist training is dangerous for a domesticated bird.

3. **Pet backpack:** These are a great option for smaller birds for outings rather than ‘more freedom’.

Disabled birds or birds that are easily spooked might prefer the safety of an enclosure on an outing.

Backpacks should be adequately ventilated and never kept in vehicles or the sun. They are not a good idea if you have parrots that are voracious chewers.

4. **Wing clipping:** taking a bird’s ability to fly is warranted in some circumstances.

Where a bird is taken outside though, clipped wings restrict but do not necessarily take away the ability of a lighter weight bird to take off, gain altitude and fly away. Even a slight breeze can assist a heavier bird to escape.

Most clipped birds are fine until they are spooked and engage the flight response.

5. **Leg Ring Tethers:** These are NOT condoned by Hervey Bay Bird Club. The legality of their use in some jurisdictions is questionable despite them being used at times with birds of prey. A frightened or “spooked” parrot can take off in panic and risks the potential for breaking a leg. The other above options are far better choices.



Make a choice that benefits your parrot as a priority over your needs. Talk to a club member, your vet, ask questions, look at examples and the experiences of others. Take the time to do training and don't just pick the option that seems like the fastest one. Set your bird (and yourself) up for the best chance at success and safe experiences.