GROWTH CURVES AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS IN HAND-REARING MONK PARROTS (MYIOPSITTA MONACHUS)

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ABSTRACT

Monk parrots (*Myiopsitta monachus*) were hand-reared over two chick seasons spanning from 2010-2011. Information on the growth curve of chicks hand-raised in 2010 was used to develop a feeding protocol for the 2011 season. This protocol was focused to address the problem areas of delayed growth and then excessive growth experienced by the baby parrots hand-reared in 2010. The 2011 Monk parrots that were hand-reared following the protocol began experiencing delayed growth after 20 days of age. The baby parrots fed in excess of the protocol did not experience a major delay in growth. The energy requirement equations used to construct the protocol used in 2011 were found to be low when compared to adult Monk parrot maintenance energy requirements. The data suggests that growing birds likely require approximately twice the adult maintenance energy requirements, similar to growing dogs. More research on the energy requirements of growing Monk parrots, especially around the time of fledging and weaning is needed to improve hand-rearing methods and potentially the adult health of hand-reared birds.

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