

# Magpie Jay General Information and Care:

Black Throated Magpie Jays (*Calocitta colliei*) and White Throated Magpie Jay (*Calocitta formosa*) are the only two species in their genus. Black Throated Magpie Jays are endemic to Northwestern Mexico. The range of White Throated Magpie Jays lies to the south, overlapping with Black Throats slightly in the Mexican states of Jalisco and Colima, and running into Costa Rica. Both of these birds are members of the family Corvidae.

Magpie Jays are energetic, highly intelligent animals and need to be kept in a large planted aviary - not just a cage. These birds are highly social and are commonly found in the wild as cooperative nesters. They are omnivores and favor a great variety of fruits, insects, small rodents, and nuts. A captive diet that works well in my aviaries is a basic pellet low iron softbill diet such as Kaytee's Exact Original Low Iron Maintenance Formula for Toucans, Mynas and other Softbills. A bowl of this is in the cage at all times and is supplemented with nuts, fruits and veggies like apples, papaya, grapes, oranges, peas and carrots and the occasional treat of small mice and insects like meal worms, crickets, megaworms, and waxworms are relished by the birds. Extra protein is essential if you want these birds to breed. Fresh water should always be provided. I use a shallow three to four inch deep, twelve inch wide crock the birds can drink from and bath in.

The birds you are receiving from my aviaries are hand fed and closed banded. How recently they were weaned will affect how tame they are at first. All these birds will become quite comfortable with their caretaker with a little time and patience. Many of the breeding pairs I own will solicit and take treats and nesting material from my hand. Many Magpie Jays from my aviaries have been trained by animal trainers and used in films. A word of warning: the intelligence of these birds makes them excellent escape artists so make sure latches to aviaries are very secure.

Please feel free to contact me with questions as I want the best for the birds I raised. If you are interested in having a mixed aviary, contact me for suggestions of compatible bird species as Magpie Jays can be aggressive and territorial.

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