Title: Environmental Enrichment for Avian Species

I. Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure research and teaching birds are provided with opportunities to express species typical postures and activities to enhance the birds well-being (Guide, pg 52-54).

II. Policy:

When appropriate and non-distributive to experimental procedures, health concerns or behavioral concerns, social birds should be provided with the opportunity for social interaction with the same species. When group housing is not appropriate, structural enrichment devices can be provided.

III. Procedure:

All birds should be provided with the ability to demonstrate species typical movements and behaviors.

When possible, social birds should be grouped housed.

The animal’s structural environment can include devices such as toys, nesting material, chains, foraging materials, shelves and nesting boxes to increase species typical behavior and movements. Environmental enrichment selection must be compatible with the selected species. The attending veterinarian must be consulted prior to instituting enrichment which deviates from standard procedures. Deviations from standard practices must be approved by the IACUC.

Devices used for environmental enrichment must be easily sanitized or disposable with cage changes.

Devices must be checked regularly for wear and discarded when safety hazards are present.

Refer to species specific husbandry care policies for appropriate options.