



FAS Scale for Birds

NOTE: The body language described in these scales is primarily shown by parrots, unless otherwise noted. There is a large amount of species variation that cannot be quickly distilled into a single chart.

FAS Levels 0 and 1

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relaxed behavior (preening, normal social interactions) • Willingly and calmly interacts with both the owner and veterinary team • Willingly accepts positive reinforcers offered by veterinary team • Explores surrounding environment • Relaxed body posture • Feathers fluffed around beak (cockatoos) • Soft eye expression (almond shaped if parrot) 	FAS Level 0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absence of behaviors indicating comfort (preening, willingness to eat, social interactions) • Freezing in place • Beak slightly open • Eyes open wide • Feathers slicked tight to the body • Standing tall • Darting looks – seeking an escape path 	FAS Level 1

FAS Levels 2 and 3

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaning away from veterinary staff • Walking away from veterinary staff (as fear escalates) • Increased respiratory rate • Chewing toes (seen commonly in African grey parrots) • Alarm vocalization • Eye pinning • Stress defecation/elimination • Clacking beak (owls) 	FAS Level 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flying away from veterinary staff • Crouching and quivering wings in anticipation to fly somewhere- typically seen in clipped or previously clipped birds • Attempting to launch into flight even when non-flighted 	FAS Level 3



FAS Levels 4 and 5

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lunging toward veterinary staff with beak when threatened• Biting when unable to escape• Rolling onto back as a last defense• Bleeding from the eyes for African Grey Parrots• Panic vocalization – this call is typically made when the animal is restrained, cornered, on its back or otherwise cannot escape.• Hitting or beating with wings (poultry)• Kicking or spurring with legs and feet (poultry)• Grabbing tightly with feet (raptors)	FAS Level 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Profuse immediate feather loss (Columbiformes, turacos)• Seizures (most common in small birds)• Collapse• Cardiac arrest	FAS Level 5



FAS Signs in Poultry

Poultry

- More likely to open-mouth breathe rapidly as a primary indicator of FAS
- Will strike at a perceived threat with one or both wings when unable to escape
- May jump and kick with feet and/or spurs

FAS Signs in Raptors and Columbiforms

Raptors

- FAS response varies widely based on species and level of comfort with people.
- May try to flip over backward off of perch or glove in response to sudden movement
- More likely to use feet as defense – crucial to safely restrain feet to avoid serious injury to veterinary team
- May clack beak (owls) or try to bite
- Commonly open mouth breathe if not hooded

Columbiforms (pigeons and doves)

- May lose copious amounts of feathers as a distraction/escape mechanism
- Commonly open-mouth breathe
- Very rarely exhibit an elevated heart rate in response to stress

FAS Signs in Passerines

Passerines

- Small passerines may have seizures or sudden collapse/death in response to severe stress (usually seen in birds with concurrent underlying disease)
- May fly around the cage frantically trying to escape
- Commonly open-mouth breathe