

AVIAN FAS (FEAR, ANXIETY & STRESS) SCALE

HIGH FAS

Level 5

Profuse immediate feather loss (Columbiformes, turacos); Seizures (most common in small birds); Collapse; Cardiac arrest.

Level 4

Lunging toward people 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).

MODERATE FAS

Level 3

Flying away from people; 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.

Level 2

Leaning away from people; Walking away from people (as fear escalates); Increased respiratory rate; Chewing toes (seen commonly in African grey parrots); Alarm vocalization; Eye pinning; Stress defecation/elimination; Clacking beak (owls).

LOW FAS

Level 1

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.

Level 0

Relaxed behavior (preening, social interactions); Calmly interacts with people; Accepts positive reinforcers offered by people; Explores surrounding environment; Relaxed body posture; Feathers fluffed around beak (cockatoos); Soft eye expression (almond shaped if parrot).

STOP

CAUTION

GO

NOTE: The body language described above is primarily shown by parrots, unless otherwise noted. There is a large amount of species variation.