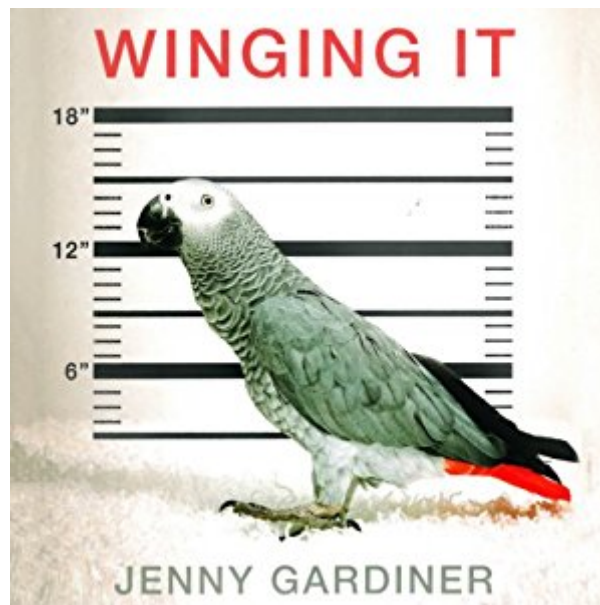


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# Winging It: A Memoir Of Caring For A Vengeful Parrot Who's Determined To Kill Me



## Synopsis

A gift from an overseas relative, Graycie, an African Gray parrot, arrives in the Gardiner home not long after the birth of their first child, adding the responsibilities of parrot-hood to their newfound parenthood. Jenny Gardiner and her husband were hoping for a docile, beautifully plumed, Polly-want-a-cracker type of companion - but patchily feathered, scrawny, ill-tempered Graycie was the furthest thing from what they envisioned. In *Winging It*, Gardiner shares in vivid and hilarious detail the many hazards of parrot ownership, from endless avian latrine duty to discovering the multiple ways a beak can pierce human flesh. Whether she's swearing at the dog, mimicking the sound of the smoke alarm, or bobbing to the beat of the kids clapping for her amusement, she brings the family joy, laughter, and, sometimes, tears. So why would the Gardiners subject themselves to the crazy behavior of this parrot for so long? Well, because, as the Gardiners realize, Graycie is a part of the family, and just like in any relationship between living creatures, things do not always go according to plan. A mix of hilarious pet hijinks and a poignant story of family commitment, *Winging It* is a reminder of the importance of patience, loyalty, and humor when it comes to dealing with even the most temperamental members of the family.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I read this as research about adopting a parrot, and I have to say--surprisingly--that it became one of the most useful resources on my shelf. Everything already posted about this being a memoir more about a mother and her family than a parrot owner is true, but I found it a refreshingly honest

middle-ground to the condescending "you-can't-handle-this" bird care experts and the rose-colored pet narratives that make it sound like your life will be complete. It's an honest debriefing about what the average person can expect if they bring an animal with the intelligence of a 3 year-old into their house: the good and the bad of it. If you are considering bringing a feathered friend home, I urge you to read this. If nothing else, Gardiner really brings home the reality that you'll have that independently-spirited, pint-sized hell-raiser stuck with you for most of your life: it's the most important part of considering a parrot.

The book was more about the family than the parrot. As far as memoirs go, it's not bad but it's not really about the parrot. In the author's defense, she does not have a lot of parrot experience and therefore I think that could be why she keeps a parrot who she has no idea how to handle. Greys are one of the most difficult to parrots to re-train (an opinion from a local parrot trainer I know). But that's not necessarily an excuse to not try to find a trainer to help. But at least Graycie isn't being passed from home to home on Craigslist, which is usually the case for a parrot with 'issues'. So, you could say I have mixed feelings about this book, especially given that I have three parrots of my own.

I found "Winging It" to be a most interesting and well-written book. Having raised a husband, 3 children, and numerous pets, the story rang true. We had a neighbor across from us who had a parrot. We had no idea of the complexity of raising such birds until Jenny Gardiner's real-life experience. It is a "must read" for anyone considering getting a parrot as there is much that goes into the care and management of such a unique bird. Having such a bird while having to raise a family is not a good combination as I learned previously from our neighbor's sketchy expressions of dislike and now I understand where she was coming from having to tend her children and her husband's parrot as he was away much of the time. Rather than being an "incidental" addition to the family experience, the story revolves around Gracyie the Parrot. And, from Jenny's description, the title of the book is accurate as it is logical to assume that the assaults on her by Graycie could be interpreted as being vengeful. Perhaps Graycie, being a most intelligent representative of her species, saw Jenny as being primarily responsible for her caged life as Jenny was the one who took care of all her needs. Jenny's love of animals comes through loud and clear. What was quite interesting, also, was how the raising of her children, especially Kendall, who had sudden seizures, so mirrored our family's as the children grew. Jenny is a really good writer and her humorous take on life is refreshing. How she retained her sense of humor while doing yeoman duty with tending

Graycie's many needs each day with all her other duties is amazing. Self-sacrifice isn't too popular these days and Jenny does not hold herself up as a martyr in any way. But, as one who has nearly been in her shoes, she deserves nothing but praise for all she has been through and accomplished and put down so well in print. I did pay \$15.99 for her Kindle book and will not pay that again for anyone else's book or for subsequent books by Jenny as it's too exorbitant a price. Are you listening, ?

Bird people have always got a special love in their hearts for their pet birds. No matter how cantankerous they get, no matter how much meat they gouge out our fingers, lips (and even bared toes) , we cry , threaten , but we keep right on loving them through the pain. I know. Been there and done that.

This a great book for anyone who love parrots or for someone who wants to learn what it's like to own a parrot. It was really interesting to read on how she raise, especially a wild, parrot along with her children and other animals. I owned a blue and gold macaw for 6 years but then got married last year. Being young, working 8-5 daily and wanting to start a family one day, we had to make a decision to let my bird go to an aviary so he could be with other birds like himself all day long. So reading this story, it was really great to see her raise her bird with her children and learn their story.

This is the best parrot book I have ever read. It kept me laughing and it sounded just like my parrot

Given as a gift, but was asked for

The book recommendation was from family since my house is also occupied by a Gray! Mine was hand-raised so the experience, for me, at least, is vastly different than the Gardiner household. Gizmo is sweet and only chases some guests and those who she thinks could be intimidated to a lower place in the household flock than she holds. This book was a lot of fun to read but I must be honest and say there was a lot of "Boy, I'm glad MY parrot doesn't do that" There is a Dave Barry-esque or "Marley and Me" (without the sad ending...) feel in this book so the hard-core parrot people might be a little disappointed. It is a great story for any pet oriented household, though. I would recommend it especially to all prospective parrot owners. I loved the author's commitment to her parrot - and her statements about disposable parrots in our society. To adopt one of these intelligent animals and then to sell them, give them away or the like is similar to sending a child back

to the orphanage if they are too loud, messy or just don't fit your lifestyle, after all. One difference between a parrot and a child is the parrot doesn't go off to college and then move out - they are hopefully with you forever. That actually makes me happy and so did this book!

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