Regulations for Importing Exotic Birds into Vietnam: Permits, Documents and Quarantine Requirements

Introduction

Importing exotic birds into Vietnam requires careful preparation. Each bird species may be subject to different wildlife protection, import licensing and veterinary requirements. Some species can be imported with standard veterinary documents. Others require additional permits under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

Whether you are importing parrots, macaws, cockatoos, finches or other ornamental birds, understanding the applicable regulations is essential. Missing documents or incorrect declarations may cause delays at customs. In some cases, the shipment may be refused entry or returned to the country of origin.

This guide explains the main requirements for importing exotic birds into Vietnam and the important steps to prepare before international transportation.

1. Identify the Bird Species Before Importation

The first step is to identify the exact species being imported. The term "exotic birds" covers many different species. Their legal status can vary significantly.

Importers should prepare the following information:

- Common name of the bird.
- Scientific name and species classification.
- Number of birds in the shipment.
- Country of origin and country of export.
- Purpose of importation.
- Whether the birds are captive-bred or wild-caught.

The scientific name is particularly important. Two birds may have similar common names but different legal classifications.

Importers should also check whether the species is listed under the CITES Appendices or Vietnam's wildlife protection regulations. This step helps determine which permits and supporting documents are required.

2. Understand CITES Regulations for Exotic Birds

CITES is an international agreement designed to regulate trade in endangered wild animals and plants. Many parrot species and other exotic birds are included in its Appendices.

The level of control depends on the species and its CITES classification.

CITES Appendix I

Appendix I includes species threatened with extinction. International commercial trade in these species is generally prohibited or highly restricted.

Importation may only be considered under specific legal conditions and permitted purposes. The importer must obtain the necessary approvals from the relevant CITES authorities.

CITES Appendix II

Appendix II includes species that may be traded internationally under controlled conditions. Export or re-export permits are generally required from the exporting country's CITES Management Authority.

Depending on the species, origin and purpose of importation, the importer may also need a Vietnamese CITES import permit.

CITES Appendix III

Appendix III covers species protected in at least one country that requests international cooperation to control trade.

The required documents depend on the country of origin and the circumstances of the shipment. Relevant export permits or certificates of origin may be necessary.

Importers should never assume that a bird can be imported freely simply because it is commonly sold as a pet overseas.

3. CITES Import Permits and Supporting Documents

If the bird species is listed in the CITES Appendices, the importer must check the applicable permit requirements before shipping.

Under Vietnam's current CITES management framework, Circular No. 85/2025/TT-BNNMT provides regulations on the management of protected wildlife and the implementation of CITES.

Depending on the species and import purpose, the application may require:

- An application for a Vietnamese CITES import permit.
- A copy of the CITES export or re-export permit issued by the exporting country.
- Documents proving the legal origin of the birds.
- Information about the breeding facility, where applicable.
- Documents explaining the purpose of importation.
- Additional supporting documents required by the competent authority.

For certain live specimens, information about the breeding facility or conservation facility may also be required.

The requirements are not identical for every bird species. Appendix classification, breeding status and import purpose can affect the application.

Importers should obtain confirmation from the Vietnam CITES Management Authority before arranging transportation.

4. Veterinary Quarantine Requirements

CITES approval does not replace veterinary quarantine requirements.

Live birds entering Vietnam may be subject to animal quarantine procedures. These procedures are intended to prevent the introduction and spread of infectious animal diseases.

Vietnam's veterinary quarantine framework includes Circular No. 01/2026/TT-BNNMT, which regulates the quarantine of terrestrial animals and animal products.

Depending on the shipment and applicable veterinary requirements, importers may need to prepare:

- An import quarantine registration dossier.
- Written approval and quarantine instructions from the competent Vietnamese authority.
- A veterinary health certificate issued by the competent authority in the exporting country.
- Bird identification and shipment information.
- Supporting disease-control or testing documents, when required.

The competent authority may review the exporting country's animal disease situation. Certain imports may also be subject to risk analysis before approval.

Importers should confirm the quarantine requirements for the exact species and exporting country before booking a flight.

5. Health Certificates and Disease Control

A veterinary health certificate is an important document for international bird transportation.

It provides information about the health condition of the birds and confirms that the shipment meets applicable veterinary requirements.

Depending on the importing requirements, the certificate may include:

- Identification of the bird species.
- Number of birds being transported.
- Country and establishment of origin.
- Results of required veterinary examinations.
- Relevant disease testing information.
- Confirmation of compliance with applicable health conditions.

Some countries may require additional testing or health declarations before allowing birds to leave their territory.

The importer should check the requirements with both the exporting country's veterinary authority and Vietnam's competent veterinary authority.

A certificate issued overseas does not automatically guarantee approval for entry into Vietnam. The document must meet the requirements applicable to the shipment.

6. Prepare the Required Import Documents

Document preparation should begin before the birds are booked for transportation.

The exact document list depends on the species, origin, purpose and applicable regulations. A typical shipment may require the following documents:

6.1. CITES Export or Re-export Permit

This document is required when applicable under CITES. It confirms that the export or re-export has been authorized by the competent authority.

6.2. Vietnamese CITES Import Permit

This permit may be required for birds listed in the CITES Appendices. The importer should confirm the relevant requirements before shipment.

6.3. Veterinary Health Certificate

The certificate provides information about the birds' health status and compliance with veterinary conditions.

6.4. Import Quarantine Approval

The importer may need written approval and quarantine instructions before the shipment arrives in Vietnam.

6.5. Commercial Invoice

For commercial shipments, the invoice should accurately describe the birds, quantity, declared value and transaction details.

6.6. Packing List

The packing list should show the number of birds, containers and other relevant shipment information.

6.7. Air Waybill

The Air Waybill records the transportation details, including the shipper, consignee, origin, destination and flight information.

All documents should contain consistent information. Differences in species names, quantities or identification details may lead to additional checks.

7. Import Procedures for Exotic Birds into Vietnam

A well-planned import process helps reduce the risk of delays and unexpected costs.

The general process includes the following stages:

Step 1: Confirm the bird species

Identify the scientific name and check its CITES classification and legal status in Vietnam.

Step 2: Check import conditions

Confirm whether the shipment requires a CITES import permit, veterinary approval, quarantine registration or other authorization.

Step 3: Prepare export documents

The exporter should obtain the necessary permits and health certificates from the competent authorities in the country of origin.

Step 4: Apply for Vietnamese permits

The importer submits the required applications and supporting documents to the relevant Vietnamese authorities.

Step 5: Arrange air transportation

Choose an appropriate airline and transportation plan. Confirm that the airline accepts the bird species and the proposed live-animal container.

Step 6: Complete arrival procedures

When the shipment arrives, the importer or authorized representative coordinates customs procedures and veterinary inspections.

Step 7: Complete quarantine requirements

The birds may need to be transferred to an approved quarantine isolation facility. The competent authority will conduct the required inspections and monitoring.

Step 8: Receive the birds

After the applicable customs and veterinary requirements are satisfied, the birds can be released to the importer.

The actual procedure may vary depending on the species, shipment purpose and current import conditions.

8. Requirements for Live Bird Transportation by Air

Live birds require special care during international air transportation. Their containers must protect them from injury, stress and unsuitable environmental conditions.

Before booking, importers should consider the following factors.

8.1. Suitable Transport Containers

Birds should be transported in containers designed for live-animal transportation.

The container should provide:

- Sufficient space for the bird to stand and move naturally.
- Adequate ventilation.
- Secure doors and locking systems.
- A stable structure that prevents injuries.
- Suitable flooring to reduce slipping.

- Protection against external disturbances.

Container specifications should follow the applicable airline requirements and relevant IATA Live Animals Regulations.

8.2. Temperature and Ventilation

Birds can be sensitive to extreme temperatures and poor ventilation.

Importers should select a transportation route that minimizes unnecessary waiting time. Long periods in unsuitable environments can increase stress and affect the birds' health.

The airline should be informed that the shipment contains live birds before the booking is confirmed.

8.3. Food and Water Preparation

Food and water arrangements should be suitable for the species and expected transportation duration.

Some birds may require special feeding arrangements. Importers should follow veterinary advice and airline instructions.

8.4. Flight Route and Transit Time

Direct flights may reduce handling and waiting time. However, direct transportation is not always available.

If a connecting flight is necessary, the importer should confirm whether the transit airport can handle live-animal shipments. Transit requirements may also apply in the connecting country.

9. Common Problems When Importing Exotic Birds

Importers may encounter several difficulties if the shipment is not properly prepared.

Missing CITES Documents

A bird may be subject to CITES controls even if it is legally sold in the exporting country. Without the required permits, the shipment may not be accepted for import.

Incorrect Species Information

Using only a common name can create confusion during document verification. The scientific name should be clearly stated.

Incomplete Veterinary Documents

Missing health certificates or quarantine approvals may prevent the shipment from proceeding through the required inspection process.

Unapproved Transportation Arrangements

Not every airline accepts every type of live bird. Some routes may also have restrictions on live-animal handling.

Poor Container Preparation

An unsuitable container can increase the risk of injury, escape or stress during transportation.

To avoid these problems, importers should verify the legal and transportation requirements before confirming the shipment.

10. How AsiapaTa Supports International Bird Transportation

Importing exotic birds involves more than arranging an international flight. It requires coordination between the exporter, importer, airline and relevant authorities.

AsiapaTa provides support for customers who need assistance with international pet and animal transportation.

Depending on the species and destination requirements, the service may include:

- Consulting on international animal transportation procedures.
- Reviewing preliminary shipment information.
- Advising on suitable transportation options.
- Coordinating flight bookings with airlines that accept live-animal shipments.
- Providing guidance on transport containers.
- Supporting communication between the parties involved in the shipment.

Each bird shipment should be assessed individually. The availability of transportation depends on the species, airline acceptance, route and required permits.

Customers should provide the bird's scientific name, quantity, country of origin and intended import purpose for an initial assessment.

11. Frequently Asked Questions

Can I import exotic parrots into Vietnam?

Some parrot species may be imported if they meet applicable wildlife protection, CITES, veterinary and customs requirements. The exact conditions depend on the species and its legal classification.

Do all exotic birds require a CITES permit?

No. CITES permits apply to species listed in the CITES Appendices. However, birds not listed under CITES may still be subject to other import and veterinary requirements.

Can I import captive-bred exotic birds?

Captive-bred status may affect the applicable CITES documentation. However, it does not automatically exempt the birds from import controls. Supporting documents proving legal breeding origin may be required.

Do imported birds need veterinary quarantine?

Live birds may be subject to veterinary quarantine depending on the applicable regulations and shipment conditions. Importers should confirm the requirements before transportation.

Can exotic birds be transported by air?

Yes, if the airline accepts the species and the shipment meets its live-animal transportation requirements. The container, documents and flight arrangements must be approved before booking.

How early should I prepare the import documents?

Preparation should begin as early as possible. CITES permits, veterinary approvals and other documents may require review by different authorities. Importers should not wait until the planned departure date to begin the process.

Conclusion

Importing exotic birds into Vietnam requires careful attention to wildlife protection regulations, CITES permits and veterinary quarantine procedures. Each species may have different legal and transportation conditions.

Preparing the documents in advance can help reduce delays and avoid unexpected complications. Importers should verify the requirements with the relevant authorities before arranging international transportation.

With proper planning and suitable airline arrangements, live bird transportation can be managed more safely and efficiently. AsiapaTa can assist customers with preliminary consultation and international animal transportation arrangements, subject to applicable regulations and airline acceptance.