



Lories & Lorikeets



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Lories & Lorikeets

Lories and lorikeets are members of the parrot family, “Psittacidae”, under the sub-family “Lorinae”. There are 53 different species in the “Lorinae” group, which come in all colours of the rainbow. They are known for their beauty and intelligence.

Origin

Lories and lorikeets are native to the tropical island chains located in the South Pacific Ocean and can be found throughout Bali, Indonesia, French Polynesia, New Guinea, Australia, and Tasmania. This family of parrots therefore inhabits some of the most remote areas of the world. The majority of lorikeets and lories dwell in the canopy and upper-story of forests. However, lorikeets and lories as a species occupy some of the most diverse habitats. For example, the Varied Lorikeet is found in Australia's semi-desert terrain and therefore lives in a very hot, dry climate by day which can see below freezing temperatures at night in winter months. Lories and lorikeets vary in size from 15 cm in length for the Purple-Crowned Lorikeet to 30 cm in length for a Rainbow Lorikeet. The name lorikeet is used to describe those species with a long, tapered tail. Whereas the name lory is used to name species with short, rounded tails. The most popular lories and lorikeets kept as pets are: The Red Lory, Rainbow Lory, Green-Naped Lorikeet (pictured), Chattering Lory, Dusky Lory, Goldie's Lorikeet, Duyvenbode's Lory, Black Lory and Black-Capped Lory.

General Personality

Some of the species have extremely loud voices. **This family as a whole cannot be recommended for first-time bird owners.** Lories and lorikeets are very playful, curious, acrobatic and affectionate. These birds have a high energy level and are extremely intelligent. Their talking ability varies from species to species. Overall they are not the best talkers. However, lories and lorikeets are excellent mimics. They love to imitate phones, microwaves, coughing, laughing and sneezing!

Food

Lories and lorikeets can make fabulous pets, however, their reputation for messiness is well-deserved as the Lorinae family has a poorly developed gizzard (part of their digestive system) and eat plenty of fruit,

nectar and water, making their droppings loose and messy! They have a high caloric requirement. Grit and gravel are not necessary and should be avoided for most caged birds.

Housing

Your lories and lorikeets' cage should be as large as possible providing enough room for the bird to flap its wings comfortably. Make sure the bar spacing does not let its head fit through. Natural branches that vary in thickness make good perches inside the cage. These branches relieve stress on your bird's feet and provide great chewing entertainment. To prevent boredom, make sure you have suitable toys for your bird to play with and change them often. Clean droppings from the cage bottom and perches daily.

Health Care

Wing trimming is essential for your bird's safety. The loss of a pet bird flying out an open door is devastating. Nail trimming is also necessary for proper grip on perches and a comfortable grip on arms and fingers. Most birds love to bathe whether it be in a dish of warm water, spritzed with a pump sprayer, under a dripping faucet or in the shower with its owner. Lories and lorikeets should have a bath or shower at least weekly.

THE PARROT CLUB OF MANITOBA meets the 3rd Friday of each month at 7:30 pm at St. Alban's Anglican Church, basement level, 486 Rathgar (off Osborne). Check community announcements or contact the club in case of changes. Some members of the Parrot Club of Manitoba have lories and lorikeets as pets and would be able to tell you how these birds are in the home environment.

Winnipeg veterinarians with an interest in avian medicine are:

- Dr. Heather McDonald of Centennial Animal Hospital
- Dr. Nancy McQuade of Winrose Animal Hospital
- Dr. Carolyn Eickhorn of Winrose Animal Hospital
- Dr. Birte Klug of Winrose Animal Hospital
- Dr. Andrew Davidson of Corydon Animal Hospital
- Dr. C. Skavinsky of Anderson Animal Hospital
- Dr. Lisa Sawka of Charleswood Veterinary Clinic