

Hyper Female Green-rumped Parrotlet

How do I introduce my hyper, female bird to a calmer, male bird?

Q: I recently adopted a 1-year-old supposedly green-rumped parrotlet. She is supposed to be a female. She came from a home with toddlers and seems hyper all the time, especially if you get close to her cage.

I let her out after a few days of rehoming, and everything was going smoothly for days – I thought. I let her walk out of her cage, but she is very quick. She flew past me, landed on a chair then flew into my hair. I put my finger up for her to climb on like she had done before, but she bit me. I took my hand down but she followed down my shirt and really latched on to my finger. She won't step up on a stick now either. She seems quite hyper and hangs upside down a lot I have noticed. I have a male green rump that is so much different. I don't want to force her to do anything, but I do need to feed her and clean her cage. Any suggestions?

Sandee Molenda explains:

If your bird is a green rump, first it should be the same size as your male. Green rumps are smaller, more streamlined and have much smaller petite beaks than Pacific parrotlets. They are also a brighter, more apple green coloration than Pacifics and have no eye streaks. Female green rumps have yellow feathers on the face between the eyes, above the cere (nostrils).

The behavior you describe in this bird sounds completely normal for a bird that is adjusting to a new home, especially when the previous home was stressful. She will be a bit anxious when people come around the cage; and this may last for a few weeks until she adjusts and becomes used to the new environment. Be patient, and try talking softly to her as you approach the cage so she won't be startled. Hanging upside is normal for a parrotlet, so do not worry about that. They seem to enjoy it and often will play with their toys while upside down or even eat upside down.

To help train her to Step up and not fly around when she is out of the cage, make sure her wing feathers are trimmed. Remove her from the cage and bring her to an unfamiliar room with a bed or couch in it. Let her perch on your finger, and hold her over the bed/couch. Place your finger of the opposite hand in front of her and ask her to "Step up". Gently roll the finger she is perched on away from the finger and, as her center of gravity switches, she will automatically step onto the offered finger. If she flies off, just let her land, pick her up, and start over. Be patient, and talk softly and gently to her. Do this every day for at least 10 minutes twice a day. She should come around and start stepping up on command after a few days or so.