

Popular Eclectus

Meet the Solomon Islands Eclectus

By Elise Kaplan

The Solomon Islands Eclectus (*Eclectus roratus solomonensis*) is one of the most commonly kept Eclectus subspecies in the United States, along with red-sided (*E. r. polychloros*) and vosmaeri (*E. r. vosmaeri*) Eclectus. What accounts for its popularity?

“They’re easier. They’re a little more mellow,” said Katy McElroy, author of *Eclectus Parrots*. Dean Moser of the Shades of Red and Green Eclectus, who breeds both Solomon Islands and red-sided Eclectus, agreed. “[It’s] because their size and their demeanor is so easy going,” Moser shared. “If someone with a family asked me [for an Eclectus parrot],” he continued, “I would send them a baby Solomon Islands male in a heartbeat, as long as they can handle the diet.” (Many Eclectus enthusiasts recommend a diet consisting of an abundance of vegetables and fruits, along with grains, beans, birdie bread, sprouts and some seed, with pellets playing a limited role. – Ed.)

Is that a Solomon Islands Eclectus?

At about 13 inches (33 centimeters) in length and roughly 400 grams, the Solomon Islands Eclectus is one of the smaller Eclectus subspecies. Even experts can have trouble distinguishing among the different subspecies when looking at male Eclectus parrots. The female Solomon Islands Eclectus is a little easier to identify, based on the combination of the smaller size, solid-red tail, vibrant blue bib and blue eye-rings.

Moser stressed that, despite their easygoing nature, Solomon Islands Eclectus parrots require owners who are anything but relaxed when it comes to providing a healthy, Eclectus-appropriate diet. Comparing the subspecies with other Eclectus varieties, according to Moser, “The Solomon Islands Eclectus is a little more resilient; however, if there is going to be an issue with diet, the Solomon Islands shows it much more quickly.”

Solomon Islands Eclectus owners who don’t mind making the commitment to proper diet and care reap the rewards of this subspecies’ company.

Lee Cole of Washington state has found a delightful companion in her female Solomon Islands Eclectus, Valentina. “She loves to be played with and held and carried around,” Cole reported. “She really likes to keep us company when we watch TV. She seems to like to watch shows with a lot of car chases and lots of action.” Lee and her husband don’t seem to mind indulging Valentina’s viewing preferences.

Jesse Garduno of San Francisco reported being similarly enamored of his female Solomon Islands Eclectus, Leela, and male, Laszlo. “They’re very thoughtful,” he said, “They’re not afraid of new things in the environment at all. They’re curious.”

Although no parrot is guaranteed to talk, the Solomon Islands Eclectus seems to learn to speak when very young, and possess charming, little-girl voices. Both Cole and Garduno reported that their birds began speaking at about 5 months of age. “She uses lots of phrases appropriately,” said Cole about Valentina. “She says ‘Big kiss!’ when she wants to be picked up and cuddled, or ‘Peek a boo!’ when I leave the room.”