

Amazon Parrot Reader's Stories

Bird owners share thier experience living with an Amazon parrot

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Orange-winged Amazon parrot

Jennifer Lynn
Courtesy Charles Dallas, Illinois

Our story of love and friendship started two years ago, and I've got to say that with Jennifer Lynn and me, it was mutual love at first sight. Jenny is an orange-winged Amazon that is intelligent, talkative, sweet, gentle, loving, attentive, giving and possesses the amazing Amazon Attitude (Amazon owners know what I'm talking about). She has so many endearing characteristics, I couldn't begin to list them all. I'll tell you about some of my favorites. When the phone rings she responds with a husky, "Hello." When I'm in another room cleaning or dusting there is a constant barrage of, "Hi Chuck, I love you," along with, "What's the matter Chuck? What'cha doing, huh?" I also like her saying, "Thank you" and "Night, night." If those sweet words from Jenny don't melt your heart, you better have someone check your pulse.

I have come to know that when her eyes are pinning, or dilating as it is also called, it can be a sign of joy for her favorite treat, but it can also mean back off or you will find out what it's like to loose a chunk of flesh. Amazon owners must learn the differences.

Jennifer gives new meaning to playing with toys. She gets so engrossed in her play it seems as though she's in a world of her own. She loves to hang upside down on one of her boings and ring her bell, along with sitting on her highest perch watching every move. We are rarely more than arms length away from each other.

When I first met Jenny, I could tell she was not abused and came from a loving home. She was fully feathered, strong, perky and wanted attention, Bingo! After standing near her for just a few minutes she waddled over to me and crawled up my leg. Game over, I was smitten. I could go on and on, but must keep the word count low. Jenny and I will be together, I cannot possibly imagine life without my beloved Amazon, Jennifer. What makes Jennifer so special and unique is the simple fact that she is an orange-winged Amazon. How do you get more special than that?

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Red-lored Amazon parrot

Boo
Courtesy Joanne Adams, Wyoming

Boo, my red-lored Amazon, came from a very a sad situation. When I found him, he was in a cockatiel-size cage, with one small perch and was only eating sunflower seeds. Because he only had one perch his feet were formed into balls and he could not spread them out when walking. He is also missing a wing. But he stepped onto my hand and gave me kiss sounds and started laughing. I brought him home.

Boo is now in a huge cage with perches of all sizes. He can move around well and his feet are almost completely better. He climbs up the cage, climbs on the play toy and does very well. He sometimes loses his balance but, with all the different perches in his cage, he can grab hold with his beak and not fall. I have changed his diet to pellets, fruit, veggies and birdie bread, and he is doing so much better. Boo lets me pick him up, carry him around, give him showers, talks, sings and is a very special bird. He loves kids and shows off to them with all his antics.

He is so outgoing and fun considering the abusive life he had, and now I plan on making his life special and full of love.

Click image to enlarge

Red-lored Amazon parrot

Abercrombie
Courtesy Megan Slavin

Abercrombie came into my life when he was 4 months old. I already had a bird and was looking into purchasing another medium-sized parrot. My options were a quaker parrot, a caique, a cockatiel or a lovebird. The bird of my dreams was a friendly, cuddly female yellow-naped Amazon, but she was too expensive. None of the birds I held were very friendly and didn't seem interested in me. I wandered over to the back of the store where they have baby birds that aren't ready to be sold yet.

A beautiful Amazon caught my eye. It was a male red-lored Amazon that was currently being weaned. I held him and that was it. I had not intended to purchase an Amazon, but my heart just melted and I had to have him. This bird, plus a new cage, toys and food, was to be my birthday present. The Amazon was already DNA sexed and vaccinated, so I didn't have to worry about bringing him to the vet. The bird was still weaning, so it couldn't come home yet. I waited a couple of weeks, eagerly anticipating the day when I could bring him home. While waiting for his arrival, I looked online for bird names. I came across the name Abercrombie and it just stuck.

Abercrombie is now a healthy, happy Amazon, and we have bonded wonderfully. Abercrombie wasn't the bird of my dreams, but after appreciating his charming personality and the joy he brings me everyday, I have come to realize that he was the bird meant for me.

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Double yellow-headed Amazon parrot

Nikki
Courtesy Katie Walker

They say love at first sight isn't real. That wasn't the case with Nikki, my 11-year-old double yellow-headed Amazon.

I was about 6 years old when I first saw Nikki. We were visiting my cousin who lived a few hours away. He told me about the parrot he had gotten from a local bird breeder, and I asked if I could see her. He took me to the room that he kept her in and it really was love at first sight. I kept telling him that if he ever wanted to get rid of her, I'd take her. Hey, I was 6 years old, what can I say. That was nearly 11 years ago now, and Nikki is happily residing with me.

Owning a double yellow-headed Amazon is a wonderful experience. Like all birds, they're beautiful, intelligent and fun to be around. Nikki isn't too friendly with other people, but she'd let me do anything to her and she wouldn't even move a feather. One of her favorite things to do is to sit on my shoulder and watch TV. She absolutely loves "Sponge Bob," and anytime she hears the theme song, she goes wild. Nikki also likes to be outside when it's warm, and she has a favorite branch she likes to sit in beside me in her tree.

I suppose by now you're probably thinking that Nikki doesn't even talk. But, talk she does. So much, it'd drive you crazy if you weren't used to it. She can say, "Hello," "Bye-bye" and "Nikki's a pretty bird," along with making various sounds. Our cat was in heat once and was howling like cats do, and Nikki picked that up of course, so now we have a cat and a bird that go into heat.

Nikki also screeches like a hawk, laughs, and mimics our dog's squeaky toy. One funny story my cousin told me about Nikki was when he was living in an upstairs apartment. He was going down the steps and he fell, and as he hit every step on the way down, Nikki yelled, "Bye-Bye!"

People think birds aren't affectionate, but they've never had a kiss from Nikki. I cannot, refuse not, to imagine life without her. Owning a parrot is a life changing experience.

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Mexican red-headed Amazon parrot

Paco
Courtesy Kathy Pekarcik, Ohio

Paco, a 16-year-old, male Mexican red-headed Amazon came into my life in August 2006. I was attending a bird fair and a bird rescue center had a table there. They had several birds with them, one of which was Paco. I have a multiple-bird household and wasn't particularly looking to add to my feathered family, but one look at Paco and I wanted to take him home with me. Paco has been a joyful addition to our household. He Steps Up for everyone and is extremely social. He's also very gentle. He does have his moods where he doesn't want to be petted but, most times, he's bending his head

down for a head scratch.

When someone comes to our front door, Paco greets them with a hearty, "Well, hi!!" He's also learned the names of all my other birds and greets them every morning. Paco's cage is next to my green-cheeked conure, Corky, who is also 16 years old. One weekend, as I was cleaning the kitchen floor, I kept hearing an odd noise coming from the living room (where all the bird's cages are). I went into the living room, and Paco spoke up saying, "Corky." Corky was choking on a piece of a toy he had been chewing. Fortunately, I was able to dislodge the piece of toy from Corky's throat. If it hadn't been for Paco, I would have wasted valuable time looking for the source of the noise. Paco loves to take showers. I put the water pressure on low, set the water temperature to lukewarm and step into the shower with Paco. He has a great time, flapping his wings, singing in the shower and making a mess. I can't imagine life without Paco. [Click image to enlarge](#)

Blue-fronted Amazon parrot

Jules (a.k.a. Juli Bird)
Courtesy Steve and Jan Long, Illinois

Jules is a 2-year-old blue front who stole our hearts in an instant. The charm of this bird is her ability to capture your attention with her funny antics while playing and the use of her vocabulary. When you walk into the room she'll give you a "cat call" or say, "Hello." When she's out on her tree and needs you to hold her, she'll yell, "Up, up, up." If the phone rings she'll say, "Hello" and if you vacuum she'll whistle, "Shave and a hair cut – two bits." When this brings you to a point of laughter, she'll join in. We don't have to tell her she is a good bird because she does it for you. Put your finger out, she'll say, "Up" as she goes and then says, "Good bird." Even when you're mad at her, she'll look you straight in the eye and say, "Good bird."

Did anyone say food? Juli Bird will, and she'd be happy to have her bowl filled with apples, cherries, oranges, fresh snow and snap peas, green beans, chicken leg bones and potatoes of any form. And don't forget the snacks, seeds and any kind of nut. She'll even help you cook (especially if hand outs are provided.)

Juli Bird is particularly entertaining when she is all alone, either in her cage or out on the tree. She babbles long sentences that you can't understand but sounds like she's having a conversation, along with all her other words, sounds and whistles. She hangs upside down on her toys, tears up crumpled newspaper, chews up paper towel rolls, strings of beads and plastic caps. Playing ball with me is her favorite game. She'll toss the ball off our large glass coffee table, and I go get it. If I don't bring it back fast enough, she'll grab another one and toss that off as well. It's great fun and she gets pretty excited. Any time she wants to play ball, I hear the ball hit the floor and can't help but go play for a few minutes.

Our Amazon is the perfect bird for us, a medium-size bird that is easy to train and can learn to talk quickly. She sparkles our lives with her exceptional personality. We attribute our success with her to BIRD TALK articles we've read, online info, books and Bird is the Word, our local bird shop. [Click image to enlarge](#)

Blue-fronted Amazon parrot

Peanut
Courtesy Chris Ferguson, Kentucky

Peanut is a 9-year-old blue-fronted Amazon. In 2006, Peanut was shuffled between four homes in six weeks due to a family status change and an allergic reaction. The president of Kentuckiana Feathered Friends called me to see if I could take her. When I picked her up, she had plucked all of the feathers on her back and was in need of veterinary care. It took a month of vet visits, work, talking, reassuring her and then she finally figured out that she wasn't leaving our house (and that yes, we would share our rice with her). A month or so into her quarantine my husband, Bill, heard talking coming from the other side of the bedroom door and he, our daughter and our friend proceeded to crack up because she was talking to herself in the mirror and telling herself how pretty she was and that the bird in the mirror needed to, "Pet the birdie, pet the birdie, pet the birdie" and wolf-whistling at herself.

Peanut has been with us for almost two years, she is fully feathered, happy, bonded with Bill, laughs like crazy with my daughter, tells me to "Go over there, sit down and shut up," loves to make jokes, laughs with a funny little sigh at the end and says, "Funny nut" so that we know she was making a joke. She gets excited when we return from a trip, whether it was up to the corner store or to visit family in Illinois. Her best trick is stealing chips off of my husband's plate, which she manages to do by waiting until he is distracted by something on TV and then she grabs and runs up his arm or to the back of the sofa with the chip.

Having Peanut in our family has brought us untold joy and has brought my husband a lot of stress relief from his work in the Army. I truly believe that she worked wonders with him that no one and nothing else could have since he returned from Iraq. For our first big parrot, she has definitely made life interesting. [Click image to enlarge](#)

Blue-fronted Amazon parrot

Ollie
Courtesy Bethany King, New Hampshire

I'm owned by a 7-year-old blue-fronted Amazon. I've shared a home with him for seven months now. He came to me from a parrot rescue a couple of hours from my home. Unlike many of the other birds there, his previous owners loved him very much, but due to health and time issues, neither could keep him. A friend and I drove the two hours to the rescue hoping he would be the bird I was looking for. After arriving we took a tour to see all the birds, then it was time to meet Ollie.

He hadn't been out of his cage in a while, so I decided to let him out and see how he was. As soon as I opened the door he scrambled to the cage top high over my head. We got a stool and I tried to get him to step on my hand. I was bitten for my trouble but not bad at all. At that moment I decided to adopt him. Ollie is my first and only Amazon. I don't think I could have done better. He's a total goofball, and there is nothing quite like the, "Hey baby!" I receive everyday when I come home from work.

For a mature male blue front, he is amazingly mellow. It's taken time and a lot of work, but he is really starting to love being held and practically demands daily head scratches.

I've never met a bird that digs into his food with more gusto (a bird after my own heart) or fights with his bird toys with greater joy. His love of life, food, fun and affection will be a joy to share in for years to come. [Click image to enlarge](#)

Double yellow-headed Amazon parrot

Taco
Courtesy Debra Smith, Georgia

I have a double yellow-headed Amazon parrot that I love very much. He can call my name and sing, "Take me out to the ball game." He whistles the Andy Griffith Show tune, and he will say, "Hey sweetie" and "What's your problem?" When he really wants my attention he will holler, "Debra, help." His name is Taco. He is my life. He is so jealous of my other bird, a timneh African grey. He loves to crunch on carrots and eat red and white seedless grapes. I guess I would say Taco is the best birthday present I ever received. I just love him more and more each day. He makes me laugh on days that I feel so bad. He is really good for me. People just don't give enough credit for the smart birds out there. [Click image to enlarge](#)

Lilac-crowned Amazon parrot

Skippy
Courtesy Walter Bytnar, Illinois

One of our Amazons is a lilac crown named Skippy. We adopted her four months after our blue-fronted Amazon, Pepe, passed over the Rainbow Bridge. She was dropped off at an Eclectus parrot breeder with the comment, "I'm over it." The breeder was looking for a good home. She seemed fairly young. She fit right in with our flock. No trouble at all. We've had her for a year and a half now, and she has not shown any negative behaviors. She was insecure (understandable) at first, but is growing to be more outgoing all the time. She is now concerned and calls to me if she knows I'm home and can't see me. She is good though, as when I have to go to work, she'll get settled in her cage and just let out a little chirp of acknowledgement.

When I uncover her in the morning, she will wait for me to give her a good head scratching before she'll Step Up to come out. She's always willing/soliciting those head skritches and head and neck feather preening (when she needs it). She loves coming across her T-perch to climb on my shoulder so she can groom my hands, arms, beard, mustache and face. Then she settles in between my arm and chest to make toothpicks out of her wooden toys.

I find Amazons are very affectionate if they come to bond with you. My Skippy and I are bonding more all the time. She still can have her ornery/stubborn moments, but then we all do. She becomes jealous if I hold any of the other birds and

will scold us. Yet, she is not aggressive at all.

After having human children grow up and move on, we brought these feathered independent dependants [FIDs] into our lives, and they are almost as much family as our kids.
Click image to enlarge

Yellow-crowned Amazon parrot

Oscar Foghorn the 1st
Courtesy Walter Bytnar, Illinois

Oscar is our yellow-crowned Amazon. He's my wife's boy, although he does like me too. He has a couple of favorite toys. One is a rubber football-shaped toy with holes all over so you can put almonds and peanuts in it. He loves to fight with it to get those treats. Another is a hard-plastic green Furby. It has soft hair on top, and makes a weird sound when you turn it upside down. He gets all worked up and then tries to feed the baby.

In the morning, we look out our window together to watch the "people-a-walkin," and the cars, buses, trucks and el-trains go by. He really enjoys this and tells them, "Get goin" and "Lets go." He and I play a little tug-o-war with a white hand towel for a little bit. Before bed time, we sing and whistle a couple of songs. He has his night treat and goes in his cage. Then I play the getcha game, where he goes around in his cage, and I tickle his toes and chest. Every now and then, I'll venture to give him a kiss and ask him, "Did daddy getcha?" He'll stop, shake his head up and down while saying, "Yeah, yeah."

He has a couple of people he does not like and my son is one of them. He'll chase my son out of the room and down the hall saying, "Watch it," "Step back" or "Go away." If he hears people talking but can't see them, he tells them, "Stop it" or "Shut up." My wife and I never say shut up, so he figured that one out himself.

It's hard to describe, but the way Amazons control their eyes and feathers, you can see different expressions on them. They have the cutesy eyes look, a happy/excited look, an I'm wild and mischievous look, a I'm worried or concerned look, and a I'm not feeling well look. Fortunately I haven't seen the last one much at all.
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Yellow-shouldered Amazon parrot

In Memory of George
Courtesy Amy Joyce

I love to write about my birds. I am owned by 35 of them. A few have been in the Featured Species of the month here on the Bird Channel. I have 20 Amazons so it's rather hard to write about just one. My name online is Dedicated to Amazons for a reason. My very first Amazon, named George, was a yellow-shouldered Amazon. He was only 5 years old and I was only allowed to share my life with him for seven months. He had been abused. The abuse caused him to have a weak heart, which my vet did not pick up on. He was wonderful. He sang to me, he kissed me, he even made up his own song called "Love Me, Love me, Georgie." I fell in love with Amazons because of him, and the smell they put out is addictive. George passed away in my arms on May 10, 2002 from a heart attack. The song that came on the radio when I was holding him in my arms was Kenny Chesney's "You Had Me From Hello." It was dedicated to George from that day forward because he did have me from hello. The moment I met him in the pet shop, he said, "Hello" and I melted. It got to the point where the girl from the store called me to come down and feed him and clean his cage because he would no longer allow anyone near his cage but me. He called me Mama. I am thankful to have video tape of him and made him a promise to always protect Amazons.

This is why my online name is "Dedicated to Amazons" and why 20 of them have me wrapped around their talons. This story is not only for my George but also Charley, a yellow crown rescue; Rocky, a yellow nape rescue; Bob and Marley, red loreds; Ziggy and Tat2, red loreds (Tat2 hatched in my hand); Keebler and Chilipepper, white fronts; Gimpy, a lesser white front special-needs rescue; Aztec, a Salvin's red lored special-needs rescue; Carino, a blue front; Waddles, an orange wing; Weebles, an orange wing; Harley Davidson, an Amazon rescue; Bo, a plain-colored Mealy rescue; Chico, a 50-year-old Mexican red head; Leroya, a blue front; Matty and Maude, both 25-year-old blue crown Mealys, and Baby, a blue front rescue.
Click image to enlarge

Yellow-crowned Amazon parrot

Boogie
Courtesy Beth and Clint Verville

We are owned by a 10-year-old yellow-crowned Amazon named Boogie. Boogie came into our lives last November when a friend at work begged us to take this bird. We did not know what to expect, but it was not a bird that was 1,500 grams, had not been out of his cage in three years with a beak deformity and on his third home. The path ahead was clear but not easy. With the help of our great vet and some hobby breeders, Boogie is now 572 grams. He comes out everyday, talks all the time and his beak is much better. Don't get us wrong, it's a long road ahead, but we're baby stepping our way down it. He is a joy to our house and our flock. He's given us a soft spot for Amazons.

[Click image to enlarge](#)

Orange-winged Amazon parrot

Hank
Courtesy Leonard Spinner, Massachusetts

Hank is my orange-winged Amazon. He is 11 years old. I saw him in a pet shop when he was 5 months old. I guess someone bought him and returned him. He was a mess. He was hand shy and covered in dust and grime. Today he is a beautiful bird and has a vocabulary of over 40 words.

One time, in the summer, I had my window open and he was sitting on the sill while someone was painting the porch and a pretty girl went by. He let out a wolf whistle. She turned around and came back and cussed at the guy, who was so embarrassed he couldn't even spit out that it had been the bird. I had to go outside and rescue him. We all had a good laugh. You had to be there.

He is quite the character, especially with women. He loves to get every toy in his cage swinging at the same time then sit there and laugh and giggle. He is a flighted bird so when I take him out, it is with a harness or in his plexiglass carrier.

He loves to fly onto my shoulder while I'm working on the computer and really annoy me by pulling on my hair or moustache.

Considering his start in life, he is a beautiful and well-adjusted bird and a joy to be with. He is really fearless and loves to bother my 13-year-old cat. They are never together without my supervision, but she has been around birds for most of her life.

[Click image to enlarge](#)

Amazon parrot

Ozzy
Courtesy Owner, Felicia

We adopted Ozzy from a man who does parrot shows and rescue in Orlando, Fl., in Feb. 2006. From what we understood his family said he was a mean bird and they didn't take him out of his cage much. He was around 6 years old. I have worked in animal sheltering for over 12 years and never had a large parrot before. I emailed this man and he said he was a parrot the size I was looking for. He said he still had to work with him a bit. I e-mailed him back and said that I wanted to see him at his worst and he brought him for a visit. Well, he never left. At first we only handled him with a perch. After awhile he would Step Up onto our hands. It's been a long road and he has bonded stronger with me than with my husband. He now lets me scratch him and I can give him hugs. Of course, it is always on his terms and we give him a lot of respect. He did give me a horrid bite when my adult daughter came back home to live. I know it was my fault and I should have read the signs. I give my husband a lot of credit. He never gives up even though Ozzy only uses him for what he wants. We both love him so much.

[Click image to enlarge](#)

Yellow-naped Amazon parrot

Mo

Courtesy Cherie Price, Missouri

I've never known a bird with more wit and sarcasm than my 9-year-old yellow nape, Mo. He knows exactly when to add his own comments to conversation, laughs before sitcom audiences while watching TV, and even says, "Shh!" when the macaw is getting too loud. Mo picks on the kitties by bullying them away from their food bowl. He hides under the macaw cage and whispers to get the macaw all wound up. The best part is when this usually independent kid cuddles up to me when I'm feeling down, puts his head on my arm and says, "Awwwww." It melts my heart! I wouldn't trade Mo for the world!

[Click image to enlarge](#)

Double yellow-headed Amazon parrot

Abner
Courtesy Cheri Michael, Kansas

Abner is a 16-year-old double yellow-headed Amazon. I've had him for a year. His first mother had him from the time he was hatched until she gave him to me.

She gave him away because she had a new baby, and Abner was acting aggressive toward the baby. He came from a good home and I'm trying my best to give him one with me.

His first mother, Janice, taught him to say and sing many things including "Take me out to the ball game," "A peanut sat on the railroad track," some opera and "Hello my baby (rag time gal)."

He tells us he is a "Pretty bird," a "Good bird" and sings, "A sprinkle a day keeps the odor away" when he wants a bath. Then he'll ask, "Want to take a bath with me?"

Sometimes he says he's a trick bird and he'll poop on our shirt. When he hears someone in the other room, he yells, "Hey you, come here." He makes kiss sounds and says, "Come here, give me a kiss."

I babysat one of my daughter's birds for a few days. Her bird quacks like a duck, so now Abner has to quack once in a while. He also recites the "Hail Mary, full of grapes" (he puts grapes in the place of grace).

Abner likes to play "Throw the toy off the cage." He knocks the toy off, while laughing, and I pick it up and put it back. He runs over as fast as he can and knocks it off again. We do this for five to 10 minutes at a time. He giggles and laughs the whole time!

One of his favorite places to sit is on his open cage door. He also likes to sit on his perch in the kitchen. He watches "Wheel of Fortune" with us and yells out letters.

His favorite foods are egg, peanuts, bread and grapes. He likes to make bird soup in his water dish.

He has a cardboard box that he loves to chew and climb in and out of. His toys are in the box and he hunts around in there until he finds just the right one.

He sleeps by his favorite bell. When I put him in his cage at night he says, "Nite-nite Abe."

Any time we come or go from the house we get a "Hello" or "Good-bye" from Abner.

Abner isn't a cuddly bird, but he does let you hold him. He likes a lot of attention but prefers to be talked to oppose to petting.

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Amazon parrot

Ben
Courtesy Jessica Hagedorn, Wisconsin

I love all types of parrots, but Amazons have a special place in my heart. They are goofy and entertaining parrots who just

love life, and I couldn't imagine my life without my Amazon. One story I love sharing is about how I met Ben. I never imagined owning a parrot. I was actually a little scared of their beaks.

In college, I routinely went to the pet store to be around the animals that I love. One day at the pet store, I wandered to the back where the parrots were. Ben was not the energetic and talkative parrot looking for attention from customers. I almost passed his cage to look at another parrot, but for some reason I knelt down by Ben and talked to him for a while. He eventually let me scratch his head, which amazed the workers because he was such a shy bird. Something about Ben made me want to continue to visit him. I did all the research I could on Amazons and realized they were really not the bird for me. They were stubborn, independent, loud and not fond of cuddling. I didn't care though and decided Ben was the bird for me.

After months of visiting him and saving up money, I went into the store and saw a sign on his cage that said, "Jessica loves me, I'm sold." My mouth dropped and tears starting filling my eyes. Someone with my name bought Ben! At that moment, the worker came over and asked if I had thanked my mom. She bought Ben for me as a college graduation gift. It was my name on that sold sign. Ben has been my best friend ever since, and I truly believe that parrots choose their owners. [Click image to enlarge](#)

Yellow-naped Amazon parrot

Rocky
Courtesy Robin Young, South Carolina

I didn't know I was a bird person. While in our local pet shop, one of the workers told me that their yellow-naped Amazons loved me. I always would speak to them and pet them. I began to fall in love with them. But I knew I could never have one. The cost was too high.

It was Sunday morning, early December 2005. I was looking in our local newspaper and there was an ad for a yellow-naped Amazon with cage for \$500. I woke my sleeping husband, Kevin, and asked if he had my birthday/Christmas presents? (My birthday is three days before Christmas). He had not. The man said we could come see "Rocky" that afternoon.

I was so excited, I prayed that Rocky would love me like the Amazons at the pet store. We drove up to the man's home and as we walked to the house, I saw the cage sitting by the front door steps. It was 30 degrees and Rocky was outside in a rusty cage. The man, Bill, was almost 70 years old and met us in the yard. As we walked closer he told me not to put my hands near the cage. "That bird will take your fingers off." My husband explained, "If my wife can't touch him, we don't want him."

I kept walking toward the cage. He had plucked almost all of his beautiful green feathers out. He was basically gray. His perch was a piece of PVC pipe that was so slippery, he had to hold the side of his cage with his beak so as not to fall, or he would sit in his food bowl. There were no toys; the only thing in the cage was a cowbell that hung from the top.

I sat on the doorstep. I put my hands through the cage at the bottom and said, "Hello love, come tell Momma all about it." Rocky made a happy noise and slowly came down and put his hand on mine. It was freezing cold. I told him, "Your feet are cold," and I blew warm air on him. He continued to make happy sounds. He rubbed on my hands and allowed me to pet him and rub his head and neck.

Bill had Rocky for eight years. He had let him live inside at first, but then his wife made him move him outside. He was messy. "It's easy to keep his cage clean, you just hose it off" (with Rocky inside!). He had not been able to touch him at all for the past several years. His wife was making him get rid of him because they were scared their granddaughter would get bitten.

I heard Bill tell Kevin, "He really likes your wife. I can't believe how he's acting." Kevin said we were leaving and told Bill he would let him know. I could hardly say goodbye; I wanted to take him home. It was like my heart was breaking. Tears were streaming down my face as we drove away.

I went to work on Monday. It was about 4:30 p.m. and my phone rang. "Just wanted you to know, your bird is in our Florida room." It was the sweetest thing I had ever heard! Bill had told Kevin he had tried all Sunday afternoon to get Rocky to talk to him and that he had not made a sound since I left. I couldn't get home fast enough.

As I was running up the stairs to our house, I yelled, "Rocky, Momma is home!" He responded immediately with, "Mom!" I brought a chair over to his cage door and sat down, I was lower than him. I opened the door and continued talking to him. He came down and put his feet on my hands. He let me pet him through the door. It was about an hour before he Stepped Up and let me hold him.

I tried to research his band. The only thing they could tell me was he came into the country prior to 1987 through the port of Louisiana. I know he is an old man. I think that is why he is so wise.

It didn't take long for him to learn all of our names. He only allows me to touch him, but he talks with everyone. He is the funniest bird. I ask him, "Are you my chicken?" He laughs and says, "I'm no chicken." I tell him, "Give me that drumstick," he holds his leg out and I take it and he laughs and laughs.

At supper, he calls for me and I tell him, "Not now." Then he calls roll, starting with my oldest daughter, Carla, and ending with Kevin, his least favorite. After everyone tells him, "Not now, we are eating," he starts to lie. He will tell me, "Telephone," "Fire," "Robbers" and if all else fails he yells, "Help." I always go when I hear that, just in case.

Kevin and I built him a huge play stand that he stands on when I am home. I also have bought him the biggest cage I have ever seen. He has lots of toys. He is scared of change. He took almost a month to sit on his play stand. It was two weeks before I got him in his new cage, and toys have to be looked at for several days before he will touch them. Whenever it thunders he cries for me, "Mom! It's Bill!"

He is like no other pet I have owned. He has brought so much love and happiness to me. I believe they are the most incredible birds. They do have horrible reputations. As much as Rocky loves me, he doesn't love anyone else. He would hurt my family if they tried to touch him. But they show respect for him and he, in turn, shows them tolerance.

I just want people to know what kind of commitment it takes to have an Amazon. I spend time everyday with him. If you're not able to provide time and love, the proper cage, toys, supplies and space in your house and be willing to clean up the mess, please don't have an Amazon. I don't like to think about what life must have been for my Rocky. I know he remembers and it breaks my heart.

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