

Conure Reader's Stories: Chapter One

Bird owners share thier conure story

Click image to enlarge

Sun conure courtesy Jennifer M. Castellano, New York

Sunny Castellano
Courtesy Jennifer M. Castellano, New York

If you are considering on adding a sun conure to your flock, get ready for lots of laughs. Those of you who have a sun know exactly what I mean. Suns are goofy and should have a career at the circus! My Sunny is such a little character. Nothing is funnier than Sunny taking a shower with her mouth open in hopes to catch the little water droplets that come down on her. Or how about when she talks? It's funny because my quaker parrot, Nikki, mimics the way Sunny speaks. It drives me nuts because I can't tell who is who! Sunny has a scratchy, little voice and it is precious to hear her utter a hello when the telephone rings. Sunny is quite the little dancer and loves to wiggle and jiggle when she is happy. She also loves to bop her head up and down. She moves better than I do!

One of Sunny's biggest "moments" was spending the day at college. She and Nikki visited Manhattanville College last month. I was visiting the college to visit some of my former professors and friends, and the girls came along for the ride! They got the red carpet treatment. They were petted, fed treats and received many words of praise. They attended a watercolor class in the Art Department where they got to be models. A few of the students in the class did water color paintings of the girls. Sunny was a popular subject of choice because of her beautiful colors.

Click image to enlarge

Patagonian conure courtesy Michelle McCarthy, New York

Rosie
Courtesy Michelle McCarthy, New York

Last year I bought a female patty (Patagonian conure) named Rosie from a pet store here in Buffalo, NY. I love her very much. I never had a funnier conure. She has a 25-word vocabulary and wolf whistles, along with some other odd sounds (e.g. trills, macaw honks). I would highly recommend a Patty to any one looking for a good first parrot!\

Click image to enlarge

Blue-crowned conure courtesy Linda Costello, Ohio

CooCoo
Courtesy Linda Costello, Ohio

CooCoo is my 15-year-old blue-crowned conure. He was 5 years old when we got him. The woman rehoming him told me she was busy traveling out of town regularly to visit her grandchildren and didn't have time to spend with CooCoo and his African grey flockmate Grazia anymore. Both birds came to live with us. I call him my little Gremlin when his head feathers stand straight up and he squawks, "I'm gonna get ya" with bright orangish eyes flashing! He's got this ornery look like I've never seen on the face of any bird. And CooCoo is a cute little conure who is as ornery as he looks! But he has a sweet side, too. He likes his share of attention. He will cuddle up under my chin for a little loving.

His name describes him to a T. He is a ham for the camera and thinks it is a game when I start snapping pictures. He will let me put his harness or flightsuit on him to go outside for a walk or a car ride to the store where he draws lots of attention. I can't believe he has been with us 10 years already. Time flies when you're having fun!

[Click image to enlarge](#)

Sun conure courtesy Diana Cicalese, New York

Schatz
Courtesy Diana Cicalese, New York

My 1-year-old sun conure's name is Schatz. Schatz means sweetheart in German and that is what he is – a sweetheart. I wouldn't trade him for anything. He is one of my three birds and, for the little guy in the bunch, he is the boss, but when he is afraid of something he looks for his best buddy, our male Eclectus. He feels protected by him. If I hand-feed them something, Schatz will not take it unless Hanzhi (male Eclectus) takes it first. He is a great bird and brings much joy to my family.

[Click image to enlarge](#)

California Sunset (Cali)
Courtesy Amy Joyce, MA

Cali, my sun conure, hatched on April 12, 2003. I got her from the breeder at just 2 weeks of age. The breeder delivered her to me personally from Florida to NH where I lived at the time. I was an over the road truck driver then and took Cali on the road with me right from the airport. I set her up in a wicker basket with shavings and kept my bunk heat on high so she would be warm enough. I stopped every two to four hours to feed her. She thrived in the truck and with me. I raised her on the road for two months then drove local and took her with me every day until she was 7 months old, when I retired from driving.

When Cali was 4 months old, I got her a playmate. A 3-month-old orange-winged Amazon named Weebles, and they are best friends still today. Both of them went with me each day in the truck. In April of 2004, my Amazon pair hatched two eggs which I named Ziggy and Tat2. When I pulled them for hand-feeding Cali would watch over them like a mother hen. She would preen them once they started getting feathers. Tat2 had a habit of rolling over on his back and I would have to turn him back over. Each time Cali was near the brooder and Tat2 would flip over on his back she would sound an alarm until I fixed him. She knew he didn't belong on his back.

In 2005 I was staying with some friends in Virginia. My friend had two baby parrotlets that we were hand-feeding. Cali, being the little mother hen she was, watched over the babies with a careful, loving eye. One day Cali started to sound her alarm and I went to check. Sure enough, one of the babies was not breathing. I took it out of the brooder and started to rub it vigorously and gave it CPR. The baby started to breath on its own again and it was fine. Cali became a hero in my eyes that day for saving that baby's life.

She is still a very loving sun conure, and this year she became mature enough to lay four eggs of her own, but has no mate. My Amazons laid three eggs again so Cali will once again be able to mother some babies.

[Click image to enlarge](#)

Dajee
Courtesy Valerie Fee, California

Dajee is a little sun conure that I rescued from a lonely life, with no attention. His absentee owner was happy for me to adopt him, and I brought him home to introduce to my flock. As you can see, my other sun conure, Huckleberry, and her

mate, Pip, a dusky conure, are too busy exploring down my shirt to be polite. They never did take to Dajee (jealousy?) and Pip would fly at him in the bird room so that poor little Dajee was always landing on the floor in bewilderment. He got along fine with my yellow-collared macaw, Chicker, but seemed to want to be with me most of the time. I started taking Dajee to work with me every day. He happily settles on a bird stand next to my desk while I work. My boss loves having him there, except when Dajee makes hooting noises when the phone rings. His way of showing affection is making clucking noises (almost like a clock ticking) and rubbing his soft face against mine.

This little bird has brought so much joy into my life. He loves to sit on my head when I take an afternoon nap and would never dream of having an "accident" on my bed. He spends a few hours in the bird room with the other birds in the afternoons, but comes racing down the rope when he sees me approaching. Dajee is the most affectionate, loving and friendly little bird I have ever had. He brings such joy into my life that I cannot imagine life without him.

Dajee was featured in the Daily Breeze for their column PETS IN THE WORKPLACE. It is amazing how much people enjoy seeing a beautiful yellow bird as they walk pass my window. He brings so much love to everyone who sees him.
[Click image to enlarge](#)

Simone
Courtesy Lisa Figiel, New York

How does one normally describe Simone? First, independent of will and mind. Second, she will express types of deep affection that amaze every time (kisses, nuzzling, etc.)

Then there was her "pregnancy," subsequent egg laying, and that amazing affection just described was also now compiled with a deep dependency on us, her human flock, to support her throughout her ordeal. But then there was the baby. And then there was, for us, her human caretakers, a constant "Watch Out!"

From when the hatchling was able to peak out of the nesting box to the point where it was finally able to inch out of the opening to its chest (but not quite out of the box), we had to be constantly "Beware of Simone."

But Simone is Simone. As the hatchling grew more independent, this unexpected behavior also coincidentally subsided. Now that the hatchling is able to fly and eat on its own at two and a half months, Simone is once again her "normal" independent yet affectionate self.
[Click image to enlarge](#)

Jazmine (Jazzi), In Memory of Kiwi
Courtesy Katherine and Andrew Weaver, Oregon

My husband fell head over heels in love with a black-capped conure about four years ago. She was a wonderful little companion for him and she went everywhere with him. He even took her with him on a road trip from Portland, Oregon to Denver, Colorado. It was comical to see a 6'2" man traveling in a Mustang with a little green co-pilot, but they had a great time! She also went to work everyday with him and called for him if she wasn't able to go. When she had to stay home, I would take her to see him later in the day and the whole way to the office she would say, "Kiwi, Papa! Kiwi, Papa!" They were bonded more than we thought possible.

We were devastated when she started chewing and destroying her feathers. Concerned it was a symptom of something greater, we took her to our favorite avian vet, Avian Medical in Lake Oswego. Unfortunately, we were right, she was having kidney failure. It was probably a birth defect made worse by a pellet diet. We kept her comfortable and made the next year with her count. When she was in too much pain, we had to take her to the vet one last time. My husband mourned for her terribly and swore never to have another one. There could never be another Kiwi and he couldn't imagine going through losing one again.

A little over a year later, I saw an ad online for a green-cheeked conure. She was about a year old and had scarcely been out of her cage. The person used the excuse of not having enough time, and justified leaving her locked in for almost a year. My heart automatically went out to this perfect little creature that desperately needed someone to love her and give her freedom to see the world beyond the bars. I convinced my husband to go meet her, we wouldn't have to get her, just go see her. When we got there, she was in a tiny little cage jam packed with toys and perches. She couldn't even stretch her wings there was so much stuff in there. I commend him for trying to give her "lots to do," but it had become a stifling prison. She was extremely hand shy, and freaked out when he reached in to try to bring her out. Her cage had become

her world and she was terrified of anything else. The man wrestled her out of the cage and we were able to hold her and talk to her. Her wing muscles had atrophied so much that she fell like a rock despite being fully flighted.

Well, we of course fell in love. My husband wanted to talk about it and think about for a little while, so we left her there and drove around for a little while. After talking about it, he decided he wanted her and we went back for her. We felt she needed us, and I know he needed her.

When we got her home, we revamped her entire cage. She still has lots to do, but she can climb and stretch and flap too. It took us several days to get her to calm down when we approached the cage. But once she figured out that the world outside the cage is huge and fun, she caught onto the step up game quickly!

We've had Jazzi with us about four months now. She starts calling to my husband when she hears his alarm go off in the morning and makes sure he knows she's ready for work! He gets her up before doing anything else and she rides on him while he showers and shaves and does his morning routine. They leave for work together and our world is right again. [Click image to enlarge](#)

Ali
Courtesy Kimberly Stortz

I have been owned by my conure, Ali, for about 6 months and I must say that she has become the love of my life! We bond quite a bit by taking trips outside and looking at our many gardens or by teaching her tricks. She knows how to wave to me and how to fetch her many balls and anything else I roll. She can also play the bank game by dropping the coins in the bank, mind you she is only 10 months old! We met each other at our local bird speciality store. The minute I walked into the room, she jumped to the front of the cage and started flapping at me while the other just sat there. I knew she was mine from that moment on. We bought a huge iron cage that has a playtop and was meant for an Amazon, but the bar spacing was perfect so I figured the bigger the better! Ali is unique in many ways. She loves to snuggle under my chin when we are hanging out and she loves to hang upside down like a bat. She also is attracted by the color pink. When I hand-make her toys I always include pink. She makes these funny chicken-like noises and purrs at me when I scratch her head. My life with my conure has been very enriching and every day I learn something new about her, like her sudden love of peek-a-boo behind the curtains. She has made my life so special by just being there and I would not trade her for any other bird. [Click image to enlarge](#)

Jimmy Bird
Courtesy Carol Shelley, New York

This is about my baby, Jimmy Bird aka Poopie Bird. Jim is a gold-capped conure and was brought into my life in 1987 and he is every part a Brazilian Boy.

Jim has been fully flighted for 20 years. Good for him but ask my friends who lovingly call him "Killer Bird." It's cage time when company arrives. He takes no prisoners.

He was in love with our female cockatiel, Freddy Bird, who passed away in 1998. Jim has proven he wants nothing to do with another bird.

At my shore home in July 1997, while carrying my Pina Colada to my deck, Jim decided he wanted a taste. Instead of landing on me, he flew out the screen door. Trying to return, a Seagull made a pass at him and he took off flying south. Realizing I might never see him again, I put an ad in our local paper, offering a cash reward that was equivalent to his Birdie College Fund.

An amateur ornithologist saw the ad and reported that he saw Jim fly down from a roof and land on a man siding a home 34 blocks south. This man brought Jim to and from work, riding on his shoulder, for five days.

After contacting the man and giving some identifying marks, I exchanged the reward money for my baby. Freddy Bird was elated to see him.

To this day, when I leave the house all I have to do is put my hand up and very firmly say, "Stay." Jim goes right into his cage. He is my baby bird and I love him so much. [Click image to enlarge](#)

Rowen
Courtesy Darian and Manny Mabunga, California

This story is about our jenday conure, Rowen. I have always been an animal lover. My husband, since we have been married nearly 3 years now, has put up with all of my animal antics. He has been a very patient and loving person when it came to my babies, even allowing a pigeon that I rescued and raised to live in our bedroom.

About six months ago, my husband came home and wanted me to come with him to see a baby jenday conure that he fell in love with during a food run to the pet store. Already having several birds, I reluctantly went with him to see the little bird that had my husband so excited.

We arrived at the store and I see these two little brown eyes peering out of a cozy tent. Then this little sweet bird sees my husband and out she comes with excitement. I watched as my husband gently placed his finger in the cage and she hopped right up on his finger. He continued to speak softly to her and called her "little baby-bob" because she bobbed her head when she was hungry.

Over the course of the next few weeks my husband went to the pet store each and every day and visited Little Baby-Bob until she was weaned and we were able to bring her home.

Since then, we learned that she is a girl so her new name is Baby Rowen. She has such a personality and has grown into quite a young lady. During our visits with Rowen at the pet store I fell in love with a Patagonian conure, and to make a long story short, "Tiko" and "Rowen" are now brother and sister. The two of them get along very well, as they were raised together, and are the joys of our lives.

The photo is a picture of daddy holding a very sleepy Baby Rowen after her bath. She loves the water and gets it everywhere as she splashes with joy. Afterwards she likes daddy to wrap her lightly in a towel for a bird-nap on daddy's chest. She is daddy's little angel for sure.

They have become, along with the rest of our flock, our pride and joy. They play and talk and squeal with joy when we come home from work. I cannot imagine life without our children of the feather.

[Click image to enlarge](#)

Soli
Courtesy Jano Mladonicky, Texas

TSoli came to live with us four years ago when he was 3 months old. From the beginning he was a little explorer. One of his first discoveries was a mirror. We have a large sliding closet door made of mirror in our bathroom. He walked over to it and hit the bird in the mirror with his beak, then again a few times, but soon realized that something was not right. He screamed in frustration and I had to take him away to calm him.

The following day we saw him pace along the door, trying to get around the bird in the mirror. He came to the end and looked behind the mirror, then returned to the center and walked slowly toward the edge while studying the mirror bird. He repeated the procedure, this time running fast to look behind the mirror; "darkness there and nothing more," a poet would say. Then he stood at the mirror's edge and moved his head to and back, alternatively looking into the mirror and behind it, while my wife and I laughed uncontrollably.

On the third day, we saw him standing in front of the mirror and posing. He moved his head to the right, then to the left, he bobbed his head, lifted his wings, stuck his tongue out, moved it to the right, moved it to the left, amusing himself for a long time. Then he lost interest.

Today he is interested only in the rubber packing around mirror's edge. He likes to chew it. (He chews up everything in our house). If scientists studied him, they would probably say that "A. Solstitialis does not recognize himself in the mirror", but we know better.

[Click image to enlarge](#)

Sunnae
Courtesy Lisa Figiel, New York

“Happy Father’s Day Sunnae!”

Who is playful yet protective, snuggly yet suspicious? Sunnae! Father to hybrid Sunday Conures (Precious, Hunter and Dactyl), Sunnae has been instrumental in his children’s development. He has taught them not only how to eat and drink from the cage dishes and “poop on the papers”, but also how to fly like acrobats and hang upside down from their perches. Yet if the neighborhood cat is in sight, or if a stranger should walk by, he has trained them that something is not quite right, and they simultaneously screech until the “danger” passes.

Sunnae has also showed his children that us humans are part of their flock. He is the first to snuggle up to us, blow kisses and affectionately say “Good Night” at days end. And Precious, Hunter and Dactyl now all do the same!

This Father’s Day will be even more special for Sunnae, as there are three eggs in his nest just waiting for his guidance.
Read the Next Chapter >>

Did you enjoy these conure stories? Meet three small and three large conures in the August 2007 issue of BIRD TALK

Read our other Featured Bird Stories
Eclectus

June 2007 Quaker Parrot

August 2007