

## Lorikeet Reader's Stories

### Bird owners share thier Lorikeet story

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Rainbow Lorikeet

Skittles

Courtesy Alica Propst, North Carolina

My 7-year-old rainbow lorikeet, Skittles, is a riot. She is a very good talker using words and phrases in context. If I drop something I am trying to put into her cage I hear, "Uh oh." When one of my dogs comes into the same room with Skittles, she tells him to "Get outta here." She is very polite and always says "Thank you" when I feed and water her. Sometimes I think Skittles should be named Pogo because she bounces around so much. She bounces from me to the playgym, to the bed and back onto me. Life with Skittles is never dull and always entertaining.

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Rainbow Lorikeet

Elbee

Courtesy Rachel Shaw, Virginia

My rainbow lorikeet's name is Elbee. She is a 6-month-old female. She is also a class pet at Dunbar Middle School in Virginia. Elbee goes to school with me everyday. She does not bite the students when they handle her. She loves to come out of her cage and play. She is never shy about being handled, but does have her favorite students (usually those who give her the most dried papaya!). Elbee talks and whistles for the students. I keep a binder near her cage that has information about rainbow lorikeets in it. The students love to learn about lorikeets and what makes them so different from other species of birds. They really like feeding her liquid nectar and watching her unique tongue!

Owning a rainbow lorikeet is a wonderful experience. She is not as loud as most species of conures and small parrots, nor does she have the strength in her beak to really bite hard, like species of birds that eat seeds and nuts. She is a perfect asset to the classroom because of those two important factors. Also, the contrast of her brilliant colors is striking! I am an art teacher and I use her to teach the basics of the color wheel, too.

Elbee bonds with dozens of students all day long. When a student is having a stressful day, they know that just spending a few minutes playing with Elbee will help them to forget their worries. The same works for me as well. Teaching middle school can be a stressful job and having Elbee in the classroom with me is great!

Elbees favorite toys are the students! Second to them, she loves anything she can hang upsidedown on and ring a bell. Also, she especially loves cat toys. Her favorites are the balls with the bells inside, she'll throw them around her cage or roll them across students' desks.

Elbee has been a wonderful asset to my life and the lives of countless middle school students every day.

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Red Lory

Summer

Courtesy Bonnie Dugan, Ohio

Ever since I was a young girl, I was in love with red lories. I had given up ever being owned by one when, one day, I heard the red lory call. I stopped dead in my tracks and said to the lady in the parrot store, where is the lory? There she was, a 5-year-old red lory in need of a home. I told my fiance's brother to go get her, as my man told me "One more bird – I go." I played with her every day that I had time and fell in love. The lady at the store told me that she was the bird for me and that my man would just "get over it." So I bought her. I have never been sorry. Summer is such a joy to me and is always so full of love. She loves to be cuddled and to play with bling! She loves the bright, shiny toys that I buy.

I bake her birdie bread often, and she so loves my cooking! Her favorite treat is corn. She would do anything for corn. She was enamored with my fiance, but he did not return her advances, so she hates him with a passion now. Never a dull moment with my Summer. She is the most beautiful lory of all time! She absolutely loves baths and showers. Once, she took a bath in her nectar, that's a long story, but she never did that again. She talks quite well and has the sweetest voice. Being owned by a lory is one of the greatest joys ever to behold. Every day, I am so grateful that I listened to Anita and bought her anyway, calling my fiance's bluff.

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Rainbow Lorikeet

In Memory of Skittles  
Courtesy Cindy Jones, Texas

My experience with my rainbow lorikeet is one I will never forget. Her name was Skittles and she was one of a kind. I got her when she was 5 months old, and I lost her to heart disease a few months ago at 5 ½ years old. That species is not only beautiful, but smart and affectionate. I have numerous stories about her, but will only tell a few. Skittles loved to give kisses. She would tell me and other people she knew "Give me a kiss," and then would tell them "Good kiss." Whenever Skittles would see me with my purse in hand, she would say "Wanna go bye-bye. Come on. Let's go." She loved to go whether it be to my mom's or just around the block. When she started having to take medicine for her heart, I would put her on the island counter in the kitchen so I could towel her and medicate her. She was such clown because when I would try to towel her, she would roll over on her back and actually holler "What are you doing?" Needless to say, I would start laughing and she would start laughing. No doubt about it, Skittles was a unique bird. I enjoyed every minute I had with her and would do it all over again.

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Goldie's Lorikeets

Mitch & Mickey  
Courtesy Jean Gauthier, Washington

I became interested in lories after reading numerous articles about parrot species after getting my first two birds, both *Poicephalus* parrots. I was trying to decide if my third bird would be a smaller parrot or a larger parrot and came down to trying to decide between getting a Goldie's lorikeet or a male Eclectus. Though I did adopt an Eclectus, I wound up additionally seeking out a pair of Goldie's a year later. I felt that with such social birds, it would be important for them to have each other for companions. They are incredibly smart, beautiful and interesting birds, and I found living with a bonded pair in a house was possible! They are comfortable with me handling them yet enjoy each other's company most of all. They call excitedly when I come home from work along with my other birds.

I would recommend to anyone thinking of owning Goldie's to consider several things: providing a large cage like a budgie flight cage that can be cleaned (e.g., wheeled into the shower and hosed down) weekly, to give your birds daily out-of-cage time completely separate from all other parrots in the house (such as in their own closed room. For a while mine shared space with the others, but I have found my little pair just too aggressive), and to avoid feeding any foods with a high-iron content. My Goldie's love many fresh vegetables and fruits, such as okra, snap peas, raw yams, carrot greens, apples, corn, mangoes, papaya, prickly pear fruits and pluots. One of their favorite treats is red Monarda blossoms from the garden. The basis of their diet is a powdered commercial lory nectar, which they get in the morning, then the vegetables can stay in the cage all day. In the evening I give them a skewer of fruit. By putting washable throw rugs on the floor and a spare bed sheet around the cage or on the wall behind them and laundered regularly, their squirts can be contained! They enjoy having many toys and perches to leap from inside the cage. I make their home a bright jungle gym of plastic and launderable toys. They do enjoy preening fleece and cloth as well as toys like bells and swings. Anything that looks like fun to explore with those long curious tongues!

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Rainbow Lorikeet

Spectra  
Courtesy Amy Joyce, Massachusetts

My name is Amy Joyce. I am owned by 37 parrots and one happens to be a rainbow lory named Spectra. He is 4 1/2 years old. I got Specci from a friend who used to breed three species of lory. Specci was one of two babies that hatched in this clutch, but the first baby died. My friend was afraid that Spectra would also die, so he pulled him from the nest much earlier than he normally would. I bought Specci from him while he was still an egg, taking a chance that he may never hatch. My gut feeling was good with this egg and I was right. I was able to visit him starting when he was about a week old and was able to hand-feed him as well. At 3 months old, I was able to bring him home.

At first he was a bit nippy, being a young lory. He was full of himself. As the months went by he became very loving and learned to talk at a very early age. He is now one of my best talkers. He loves to take a bath in either a water bowl or sprayed along with the rest of the flock.

Spectra's favorite flock member is a blue-fronted Amazon named Carino. She is the only one who will put up with how rough he likes to play. Sometimes it sounds as though they are killing each other, but they always manage to stop and back off before anyone gets hurt. Spectra likes to sleep under Carino's wing at night as well.

One of my favorite things that Specci says is "Kiss Kiss, I love you." He will also make the kissing sound and say it. He actually taught our African grey to say "I love you." She sounds just like him.

Spectra likes to rollover like a dog and play dead, too. If I tell him "Dead bird" he will roll over on his back and put his feet in the air and lay perfectly still until I say "OK." He also likes to hop around and sing "Deet deet deet" as he bounces around the floor or bobs his head while on my shoulder.

Spectra has been just a joy to have and is bonded to me alone. If I ask my boyfriend to hold him while I do something a few feet away, he will fly right to me. I have always said I should have named him boomerang.

Spectra enjoys his nectar and his lory powder as well as his fresh foods. He really loves to eat. I am really happy that I decided to share my life with a lory. People think that they are messy birds because of their poops being watery. Well, I have one lorry, and believe me, he is no where near as messy as the Amazons and conures.

Spectra is very good when he eats and does not throw his food where my Amazons, conures, African grey and blue and gold will. His poops are easier to clean up as well. They do not stick to things as bad as the others will. They are easy to wash off of things as well. Spectra is also potty trained not to poop on me. If he has to go he will tell me "Do your poops." I then hold him over the trash or a cage and he goes.

When he wants to take a bath he will ask, "Did you take a bath?" When he wants to play, he will either say "Deet deet deet," or ask me, "Where's the toys?" Or he will make a noise like I am tickling his belly that sounds like "Digga digga."

Spectra is one of only four lories that I know of who actually have a human-like personality. I have seen many lories over the years. Some are very good talkers others just like to make their screaming noises. I pray he will be with me for many more years to come.

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Rainbow Lorikeet

Gracie  
Courtesy Brenda & Dale Hegwood, Michigan

Our green-naped rainbow lorikeet's name is Gracie. She is a great little bird.

She is a hand-raised bird and is very happy to be picked up and cuddled under my chin. When I was going to the pet store to visit her, as she was being weaned, I would kiss her on the back with a loud smooching noise. When she would see me come in she would make that smooching noise to me.

Gracie is very talkative. Some days she will talk all day saying different words and phrases she has learned. She calls for Alexander (our African grey parrot) and Phoebe (our Goffin's cockatoo). She will say, "Daddy, it's very scary. I am very

scared,” when she sees or hears something that scares her. She also calls me Mommy.

She also says things like, “Alexander has to pee pee, hurry, he’s got to pee.” Our African grey, in response, will say, “I have to pee.”

One day I was on the phone and Gracie said, “It’s very scary, I am very scared,” and the lady on the line said it sounds like your little girl is scared, and I explained to her that it was my lorikeet. She thought that was pretty interesting.

She is a loving little bird and a little acrobat. She likes to lie on her back and play with a toy ball on her stomach. She also loves to hang upside down and squeal in her highly energetic voice. She jumps around and swings from her toys. Her favorite toys are those that have bells on them. She will say, “Eeeeeee” when she plays with her bell toys.

Gracie is very entertaining and a great joy to have in our family.

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