

Quaker Parrot Reader's Stories

Bird owners share thier quaker parrot story

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Greenjeans (Beaners)
Courtesy Beverly Lantz, Ohio

I was unpacking the trunk of my car after returning from a weekend trip in November 1998 when I heard a squawk. I thought it was a neighbors' bird I had heard during the previous summer. Then I heard it again, but it sounded closer. I turned and looked up at the roof and there, near the eaves trough, was a parrot.

I talked softly to it, and it chirped and listened to me. My boyfriend got a ladder, but the parrot kept moving out of reach and finally flew off. Later, when he was raking leaves, he saw the parrot back on the roof. This time he threw a rag over it from behind and caught it. I had an empty aquarium sitting out because our turtle out-grew it, and we just purchased her a bigger one. We put the parrot in the aquarium. Since I feed the wild birds, I had seed and water – and Murdock's (the turtle) heat lamp to warm the parrot.

She ate, drank some water and went to the heat lamp and promptly fell asleep. Two hours later, she's whistling, throwing kisses and chirping as if we had her forever. We checked around the neighborhood, watched the paper for any lost parrots and called the humane society – no one claimed her. The next door neighbor said the parrot was on the roof for three days.

The following weekend, we took her to a pet store – still in the aquarium – I was afraid to touch her. They identified her as a quaker parrot, 2 years old. They trimmed her wing feathers and trimmed her nails. I bought toys, a big cage, roll around perch and food. She was mine!

Her name is Greenjeans – I call her Beaners. She can say her name, whistle her own tune, dances to Shania Twain's "Man, I feel like a woman" and play peek-a-boo in her Happy Hut.

Nothing I have ever bought or own means as much to me as this little parrot that was lost. Of all the houses she could have landed upon, she landed on mine, and I thank God that she did.

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Nikki
Courtesy Jennifer Castellano, New York

Living with a quaker parrot is one of my life's greatest experiences (the other is living with a sun conure). My quaker parrot, Nikki, proves that bigger isn't always better. She is a small, slender gal, with a big personality. She loves to talk, and every morning I am greeted by her saying, "Hi Buddy" as I prepare fresh food and water for her and her sister, Sunny (my sun conure). She loves to mimic, and can mimic the sound of water dripping.

Nikki is also a magician. I should have named her Houdini because she is quite the little escape artist. I had to put pad locks on the cage because she kept opening the doors. She is also a thief. I can't tell how many times I have seen her take things that do not belong to her. She is fearless, confident and thinks she is the ruler of the roost.

What is it that makes Nikki special? She keeps me entertained! She is affectionate, lovable and humorous. She is the plain girl with the colorful personality and always makes her opinion heard. She is a great girl!

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Riley & Scooter
Courtesy Debbie Kirkbride, Michigan

Owning a quaker has been the joy of my life. While Riley talks, he can hardly be heard over the chatter of his cage mate Scooter (on the left in the photo). Scooter can keep you laughing for hours with her talking and singing. She sometimes gets the songs mixed up, like asking you if you want to "Twinkle, twinkle," telling you she wants a drink or telling you it's

time to go to bed.

You can't help but love these little green birds. They are such interactive birds and keep you on your toes. There is never a dull moment with two quakers in the house. I swear, sometimes, I hear Riley telling her to shut up. She yells at that poor boy for hours at a time "Riley, Step up;" "Riley, stop that," "Riley, no bite ears," "Riley, this. Riley, that," "Riley, are you OK?" and "I love you Riley." She just doesn't stop. I have to wonder what Riley thinks sometimes. Funny thing is Riley is the good bird that doesn't bite. She likes to grab my ear – not hard, just enough to get my attention. She tells me "No bite ears" then she laughs at me – silly little birds.

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Dude

Courtesy Marilyn Hanna, Oklahoma

My home is filled with lots of happy bird sounds. I have four quakers. But I have one quaker that can almost carry on a conversation with you. His name is Dude. We have had Dude over nine years. He can count and sing. My home always has a light on. So when the light goes out, my birds are very quiet.

One night it was storming, and the electricity went out. My husband and I had not gotten up to get a flashlight. We were just sitting there in the dark. And then, we heard this small voice say, "It's dark, it's dark."

We were very surprised to hear Dude's voice. He always tells us when it is dark outside or if the sun is shining, and that there is a bird in the tree, when he wants to go to bed and says "Good morning." He will ask if he can come out of his cage. He will tell us "Good-bye" when we leave, and tell us to be good.

My sister had given me her quaker, and one day he was making a lot of chatter, like he wanted something. I asked him what the matter was. But he could not tell me. So I turned to Dude and asked him what was wrong with Cody. Dude said, "Door." I asked again, and Dude kept telling me "Door." So I told my husband what dude said. I told him that I had never mentioned "Door" to Dude before, so I did not know why he was saying it. My husband said, "That is what I ask Cody if he wants his door open." So Dude was telling me Cody wanted his door open.

If Dude says a new word that I don't understand, he will repeat the word if I ask him what he said. He always surprises us with the words he says; he associates words with our actions. We feel very blessed for having our birds.

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Tonto

Courtesy Kim Burney, Michigan

Tonto is an amazing quaker parrot. There is something special about her, and she touches everyone's heart a different way. When we brought Tonto home she was nervous but very intrigued by our other bird, a green-cheeked conure named Murdock. Tonto attempted to fly over to Murdock's cage almost everyday and they got along well – so we decided to let them spend time on top of the cage together. Before you knew it, they became inseparable and wouldn't let one another out of their sights!

Tonto's bright personality touches my life in a million ways as well. Every morning when I come downstairs, I am greeted with an excited high pitched, "Hello!" I just can't help but smile and exclaim it back. "Hello" is the only word she can say clearly, but she is very fast to pick up noises and music. Sometimes when I open a door or cupboard she will imitate our squeaky front door, and if she wants some attention she'll whistle the "A-Team" theme. When I am feeling overwhelmed or sad, she always manages to cheer me up. Just something about her is so caring and innocent, like she can sense when I'm upset and wants me to feel better.

She has shown me how sweet and unique her species can be. I can't imagine what life would be like without Tonto, and I don't think I will ever have a quaker-free household.

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Sprout

Courtesy Pam Cichon, Florida

I have been owned by Sprout the quaker, for the past four years. The second photo was taken when he was only a couple months old and still had his wing feathers trimmed.

The most interesting thing about a quaker (at least mine) and what distinguishes him most from our other two birds (a pair of Eclectus) is that Sprout speaks only in context. There is never any senseless jabbering. The only time he starts going through his entire repertoire of words and phrases is when he knows he is being ignored and is trying to find the one thing that will get someone to come over and let him out. Otherwise, his speech is directly related to what is happening at the moment or to what someone has said to him.

When we laugh at something, he will laugh, too. Whenever he is eating something that he particularly likes, he will laugh in between bites. When he gets upset or is not getting his way, he says in a very high-pitched and annoyed voice, "What's the matter? What's the matter?" That's how we all know that (for him), something is indeed the matter.

My favorite thing is when he flies over and lands on my shoulder and whispers, "Hi, Cookie." I will answer, "Hi, Cookie." And then he will whisper back, "Hi, Chicken." I would often say to him, "Where's my little green chicken?" The next thing I knew, he was saying to me, "Hi, Chicken." The first thing he ever said, when he was about 4 months old, was, "Hi, Baby," but he hasn't said that in over a year. Sigh – they grow up so quickly. Since he was small, he would flutter his beak in my ear and I would laugh and say, "That tickles me." Now he does it and whispers to me, "Tickle, tickle." I was quite surprised the day I rubbed his tummy with the tip of my finger, and he whispered, "Tickle." I had never done that to him before. His associative skills can be quite surprising.

The funniest thing I ever saw him do was when I was folding laundry one day. For some reason he is attracted to my bras – he tries to remove the hooks on the back and likes to chew on the under wire. So he was busy doing that as I folded the rest of the wash. All of a sudden, he grasped a strap in his beak and took off flying back to his cage with it. Considering he is not very big, it looked as though a brassiere was flying through the air by magic.

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Pico

Courtesy Esther Caines, Ontario, Canada

I have a quaker named Pico. I got him from a parrot rescue. He is the love of my life. He is so cute. Something he does that is really funny is when he bites me he laughs and says, "Don't bite, don't bite," then he says, "So sorry, so sorry." He likes to play peek-a-boo. He says peek-a-boo when I look at him in the cage. He gives me kisses and when I kiss him he says "Thank-you." He is very polite. He is so intelligent. He picks up words really quickly. One day, when I was in the basement, he yelled, "What are you doing?" It was so clear – I couldn't believe it. When I picked him up when he was on the floor he said, "There you go." I say that when I put him in his cage. He's so cute. He was 4 when I got him and just in the time I've had him (7 months) he and I have bonded so much. He cleans my fingers and hair all the time. He took to me instantly – he jumped on my shoulder and hopped all over me talking a blue streak. It was amazing. He picked me. I knew when I went to the rescue and I saw him inside the door I was in love with him right away. I originally wanted an African grey, but Pico was the bird for me. I hope to have many years with Pico – we will grow old together.

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Shamrock

Courtesy Donna Lloyd, Maryland

In the summer of 2003, I purchased a special quaker parrot from a pet store in Norfolk, Va. I started going to this pet store to purchase crickets for my grandson's lizard. While I was there, I found a really neat quaker parrot that someone had purchase but could not keep any longer. I fell in love with this special bird. He would hang on the side of his cage and talk to me. After a few weeks I decided I just had to buy him. He learned to talk, saying "Hello" and "Come here." When he would see the mail person go by the window, he would say, "What are you doing? Shamrock would step up on a small pet ladder and talk to me. He loved being with my two grandsons. Taylor has taught him to dance and say "Come here."

In fall 2005, I got a letter from a high school friend. We had dated in high school and later went our separate ways. Bob wanted to find me to tell me his wife, Sandy, had passed away from cancer in 2003. I was the only one of the group of friends that did not know she had passed. In November we got together and started dating. In Oct of 2006 we got married in Crownsville, Md.

Bob gave me a sun conure for Christmas. She was 3 months old. I have been working with her a lot and she is special,

too. I had Ra in a cage next to Shamrock's cage. She kept going to his cage not wanting to leave. They have become great buddies. They get a long great. They do not let each other out of their sight. Shamrock still talks and she has learned to say, "Come here," "Lets go," and "Step up."

I have been working with Ra to Step up on my hand or ladder. The conure does not like me to pet her, but she will step up on my shoulder. Shamrock and Ra will sit on a ladder and interact with each other and me. Yesterday, both birds were on the door interacting with me. I was petting Shamrock and talking to both of them, and Ra leaned in close to Shamrock so he could groom her head. They both need lots of love and attention. We have lots of fun with them, and they are two special birds. While I was sitting at my computer E-mailing you Shamrock flew to my arm and then Ra joined him.
Click image to enlarge

Henry
Courtesy Kim Snow, Ohio

Meet Henry; my family's personal guide into the quirky world of quakers, and we wouldn't have it any other way. His story is not unique by definition. It is, however, special simply because he came into our lives.

Henry joined our family in April of 2007 when I spotted him at a local pet shop. His previous owners were divorcing, and 4-year-old Henry was without a home. I told him that he was a pretty bird; he bobbed his head but said nothing. So I stuck my finger in the cage. Instead of squawking, he rubbed his cheek against my finger. I guess you could say that he had me before, "Hello."

It turns out that Henry is quite the comedian! If he does something silly and we laugh, he'll laugh – which only makes us laugh harder – which makes him laugh harder. Pretty soon, everyone has belly aches because Henry won't stop laughing.

He is a music enthusiast and enjoys a wide variety of styles. He will even whistle, although he prefers to whistle at the Victoria's Secret models on TV.

Henry is an encourager. When trying to get him to Step up onto my finger, he will say, "Come on," as if he's encouraging me to keep trying to teach him tricks.

Henry really is just a kid at heart and loves to play games like peek-a-boo. If I lift the corner of a sheet, he'll dive under and giggle as he runs. When I lift the sheet again and say, "Peek-a-boo," he giggles some more as he pokes his head out.

Henry has become many things to us in a short amount of time. Most of all, he has become an irreplaceable member of our family.

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In Memory of Jake
Courtesy Betty Brutcher, Missouri

Jake, which turned out to be a girl, was my first bird. I have learned that when picking out a name and you don't know the sex of your bird, go for something that would work for both.

Jake made me fall in love with quakers and never failed to crack us up at supper time, asking "Is that good?" then adding "I'm a good bird!" Then she would laugh and laugh.

She loved to build, and I made sure there were plenty of toys at the bottom so she could make her nest. Things were always under construction in her cage. Her favorite toy was a yogurt cup, and she would put it on her head and talk. She would run around the bottom of the cage and bounce off the sides.

Although I lost Jake in surgery, she will always be my first love, and she made me fall in love with quakers, and I now have two, Crackers, and Greenbean.

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Tuki
Courtesy Ileene Morrison, Texas

The world's smartest, cutest quaker allows us to live with him. He prefers adhering to routine but humors us when change is necessary. When it's time to hit the road, he is ready to roll. He watches diligently for motorcycles as we travel. As soon as he spots one, he growls and shouts "Stop it, stop it". He is full of pride after making the cycle disappear.

On nice days, he enjoys going for walks in his pet pocket carrier. Ever alert, he looks for birds scavenging on the ground. He cheerfully calls out, "Peek-a-boo", but as yet, none have responded. Oh well, we'll play when we return home.

Tuki enjoys bathing in a large bowl on our breakfast nook table. In the process, he is considerate enough to shower everyone nearby. He probably should have elocution lessons, but we understand when he says, "Sh, sh" instead of "splash, splash."

He is a gourmand of superior taste. His pellet diet is tolerated, but it doesn't generate the excitement of his favorite fruits and vegetables.

He enjoys sitting close to me as I play my dulcimer. He calls out a resounding "beep," anticipating high notes on familiar tunes.

Our little green alarm clock announces dusk approaching. He shouts, "Night night, night night". His humble servant stops everything, sings a night song as Tuki chirps loudly all the way to the night cage in his room. He gets his last kiss of the day, hops into his cage, turns back for a last look and softly says, "Night night" as the cover goes on.

This little parrot is a wonderful companion. He is affectionate, full of curiosity and, at times, mischief. Sadly, he and his quaker cousins have been ostracized in 10 states. Forgive them, quakers, they know not what they do!
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QB
Courtesy Dana Icenhour, Florida

"Hey Dana do you want my quaker parrot?" That was the question tossed at me last year. My co-worker knew I had several birds already so I was the first she thought of when she wanted to give away her bird. When I asked why she wanted to give away the bird the following was the response I got, "Well it hollers all the time, just won't shut up". "So what's its name?" I asked. "QB," my co-worker told me. "Ok I'll take QB and hope he gets along with the other five birds in the house."

Well to say QB gets along with all the other fids wouldn't be right. The word is more like "tolerates" the others. QB came in like a bull dozer, taking me as his personal property. It doesn't matter if it's my yellow-napped Amazon, Romeo, the sun conure, Newbe, or the tiels, Sweetie and Tarra – or my husband for that matter. He will let everyone know, "Stay away from my momma."

This little bundle of green and gray feathers is a real joy. I have laughed till tears have run down my eyes over his antics. His favorite toy is his ball with the bell inside. He will stand on the edge of his cage and I can tell him, "Give me the ball." He will pick it up and drop it off the side of the cage after shaking it a couple of times. I give it back, and we go on and on like this for 15 minutes.

I have to admit, out of all my birds QB gives the best "thugar" (bird word for kiss). I can curl both my arms up around him and he sits right there letting me kiss on him as long as I like and then rubs his little beak along the side of my face. I can make a kissing sound, and he gives it back as a long kiss – just the sweetest thing coming from that little bird.

To me there is something about the face of a quaker that makes them look like they are into something they shouldn't be. It looks like there is mischief in his little beady eyes just waiting for me to look away so he can start his adventure.

This little bird is a real joy and I'm so happy that my co-worker thought of me first when she decided to give him away. He has made our fid family complete and I love him dearly! Oh yes, and he doesn't holler anymore – I guess he's happy now!
Click image to enlarge

Moochie
Courtesy Jane Branison, Missouri

My quaker, Moochie, was my first bird. I had never had a bird and didn't want one. My husband bought her when she was just an egg. He went to visit her when she was weaning and brought her home when she was 8 weeks old. He also bought her a nice cage.

We put the cage in the living room, and every time I walked past her I would say "Hello. Whatcha doin'?" The first time she said it back, she had me by the heart and hasn't let go in the six years she has owned me. She always speaks in context and carries on conversations with me.

Moochie: "Commere!"
Me: "What do you want?"
Moochie: "Moochie want kisses!"

And many others. She says "Nighty night," but refuses to say "Sleep tight" because that's my part. In the last six years, I have been given or bought six more quaker parrots. I also have three pairs of quaker breeders. Moochie made me love quakers, but there will never be another like her. She stomps back and forth on her cage top waiting for me to put my face up close so she can kiss me all over my chin. I love her more than I can say.
[Click image to enlarge](#)

In memory of Charlie
Courtesy Jack Messick, Idaho

I would like to tell you about a little old quaker that we had the privilege of babysitting for six months.

Charlie wasn't a perfect specimen of a bird. Charlie had been rescued out of the wild several years ago. He could only see out of one eye, he had arthritis in his feet. His tail feathers didn't go together – they were bent. We supposed Charlie had been in a fight in the wild. He got very deep into our hearts in a very short time. We didn't know how old he was but we figured very old for a quaker.

Charlie very quickly became attached to us as well. When we would go into our bird room, he would jump down from his 1-inch high perch (made low because he couldn't get down off of a regular-sized perch). He would shuffle as fast as his little legs would take him over to me. He wanted some love. It didn't matter who it was that came into the bird room, he would want us to pick him up. He loved to be cuddled then he would purr like a cat. We also figured he was raised around cats.

Charlie would take a ramp to the window sill and spend 90 percent of his time basking in the sun on a little 1-inch perch.

In the morning, I would always take a banana in for Charlie – he loved it. He would always come shuffling out to get his banana and some loving.

One morning, Charlie didn't come out of his cage for his banana. I got him out and found he was having trouble breathing. I held him, knowing he was dying.

I made a small casket and buried him on a hill where he would get the first rays of the sun in the morning.

I know if there are birds in heaven Charlie will be there. We have nine other birds that we love and live with us. But Charlie will not be forgotten. He had so much love to give.
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Peter
Courtesy Pat Legg, West Virginia

My quaker, Peter, is so smart, loving and so quaker, quaker! I had been gone for three days, and, when I returned I showered him with kisses and, "I missed you! I missed you so much!" This was a new phrase, so he shrieked as he does when he hears new words.

Finally, he stopped, cocked his head, looked me in the eyes, snuggled close and said, whispering, "Come here. I love you." Words he already knew. I guess my tone with the, "I missed you" allowed him to associate and choose what he felt he knew I was saying in the new words.

I cried like a baby. I was so loved, so welcomed, so hugged and so complete. I was amazed. The love of my life – and to think, for years I searched for all this in a man.

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Angel
Courtesy Yvonne Ely, North Carolina

Angel, is a 3-year-old, male quaker parrot. He became a member of our flock at 3 weeks of age when I became his mama and started his hand-feeding. He already has a vocabulary of about 40 words, and many phrases he puts together himself. In the picture he is expressing his dislike of the vacuum cleaner as you can tell by the evil eye I am getting, while yelling at me "You're a butt crack," which is his favorite expression when he's mad. Quakers' talking ability is amazing, people are always surprised when they walk in the house, and he clearly says "Shake," while waving his little claw.

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