



## Loving your lorikeet - a guide to lorikeet care!

Lorikeets are loud, demanding and fascinating birds that can make fantastic pets in the right environment. Commonly seen lorikeet species available in Perth include the rainbow lorikeet and scaly-breasted lorikeet.

### Diet:

Lorikeets are nectar and blossom eaters. Their tongues are very different to other parrot species and have bristles on them that allow them to feed in this way.

In general we recommend the following for most lorikeets:

- 30-70% premium commercial lorikeet diet – wet, dry or combination of both.
- 20-30% vegetables (recommended vegetables include: capsicum, broccoli, chili, corn, carrot, zucchini, squash, spinach, pumpkin, sweet potato, beans and peas) and sprouted seed
- 20-50% native vegetation (most Australian blossoms are okay to feed – ensure these are free of wild bird droppings contact) and fruits (i.e. melons, strawberries, banana, blue berries, grapes, peaches, pear, apple). Please ensure that all stone fruits and apples are free of their seeds.
- 1-2% snacks for training and as treats (unsalted nuts (i.e. macadamia, cashew and walnut), pasta, eggs and brown rice.)

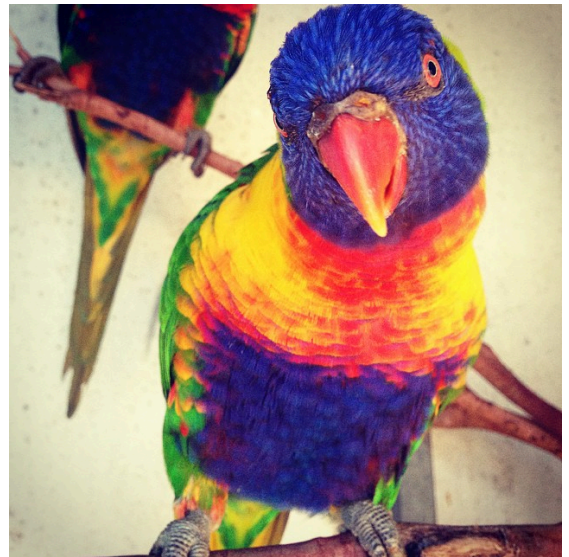
*\*These ranges are guidelines, each bird will require slightly different dietary requirements - please contact us for more information on what to feed your bird.*

### Housing:

Lorikeets are colony birds and generally do well with cage mates as they are often very playful. It is important to introduce any new cage mates slowly as not all birds will get along well.

Due to their nectar-based diet lorikeets are generally messy birds so please ensure that their cage is regularly cleaned, particularly around their food and water bowls.

We advise a good quality powder coated or stainless steel cage of an appropriate size. Some painted cages can contain lead elements, which can be toxic to your bird so please take care





when selecting your cage. Cages that have been galvanized with a zinc coating can also cause problems so please select carefully.

Stainless steel or ceramic bowls should generally be used. These materials are generally not porous so cannot harvest bacteria as easily as more porous materials. Plastic bowls can become porous after a while and can cause problems if bacteria build up in these areas so if you choose to use them make sure they are replaced regularly.

Perches of various sizes are important for exercise of their toes and feet health. Natural perches from native trees are ideal as they generally vary in size anyway. We generally advise against calcium perches as they can dry out the bottom of the feet and can easily harvest bacteria and other pathogens. We generally advise against sand paper covered perches as they can harm the skin on the feet due to their abrasive surfaces. Please do not provide string or rope toys, they fray over time and can cause obstruction if swallowed. If you are feeding a balanced diet then cuttlefish and other supplements are not needed.

Environmental enrichment is highly recommended and encouraged. Simple things like utilizing cardboard toilet rolls to hide food can provide hours of entertainment for many birds.

It is important that your bird gets enough sleep as long-day light exposure can stimulate excessive moulting and increased reproductive activity. We recommend you keep to the natural day length. If your bird is kept inside in a well-lit area, then you can cover the cage when the sun goes down and place them in a dark room to ensure that their day length is not too long.

### **Common diseases:**

One of the most common diseases that we see in lorikeets is an upset gastrointestinal tract. They will often present for regurgitation, vomiting or diarrhoea. If you see any of these signs we recommend a consultation as there are many different causes and if left untreated you may be putting your bird's life at risk.

Upper respiratory tract infection is characterized by sneezing or ocular discharge and is common in young birds. Once again it is highly advised to bring them in for an appointment as there are a range of different causes of upper respiratory tract disease. Chlamydia infection is common in young birds, this is a serious disease that can be transferred to other birds AND humans.





Lorikeets are generally very curious and sometimes get themselves into trouble with foreign objects. It is quite common for them to eat or chew on items that they shouldn't (jewelry, plastic toys, rope toys, electrical cords etc.). If you are concerned that your bird may have eaten or chewed on something that they shouldn't have, then please get in touch with us.

Reproductive diseases and behavioural problems are also quite common in lorikeets.

If you are at all concerned about your bird please get in touch with us.

### **Veterinary care:**

Regular check-ups every 6-12 months are important, as birds are very good at hiding any illnesses that they have. These check-ups allow problems to be detected early before they worsen.

Microchipping is also highly recommended as we see many birds that escape each year. Microchipping allows your contact details to be easily found if your bird is handed in to any veterinary clinic or good rescue facility. We use a specialized small microchip that is inserted into your bird's pectoral muscle; this is a quick, simple procedure that can be performed in a consultation time slot.

If you have any further questions about your lorikeet please don't hesitate to contact us.

