Rainbow Lorikeet

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

The most distinguishing feature of the Rainbow Lorikeet is diet. This Psittacidae family member feeds mainly on nectar and pollen in the wild, unlike its seed and nut-eating cousins.

Because their long, slim tongues have unique, hair-like projections useful for soaking up nectar, the Rainbow Lorikeet is commonly referred to as "brushtongued." A common misconception people have about this lorikeet is that it has a weak beak because it doesn't have to rely on it to crack open seeds and nuts. However, just the opposite is true. A lorikeet has a strong beak, capable of breaking skin with its bite.

Rainbow Lorikeets grow to about 10" long, and like many parrots, are beautifully colored, social, and vocal. This species plays almost non-stop, and loves to interact with and be handled by humans. They communicate in the form of whistles, calls, and even words.

A Rainbow Lorikeet makes an excellent pet. However, you should prepare for some challenges. Due to its social nature, this bird requires a great deal of attention. They also require daily cleanup because their nectar-based diet produces liquid droppings that often end up on floors and walls next to the cage. Using floor and wall protection around the cage will help reduce these messes and cleanup time.

Pollen and flowers make droppings more solidified in the wild, but many owners opt for adding moistened pellets or powdered diets to supplement these foods in the cage environment. A Rainbow Lorikeet will provide years of companionship and entertainment, requiring a long-term commitment.

Lorikeets also love to bathe frequently, and often get their surroundings just as wet as their own bodies, so be sure to provide plenty of room to enjoy the water. Nonetheless, most who have witnessed a bathing lorikeet agree it's one of their most endearing and entertaining activities.

Interesting Facts:	
Genus:	*Trichoglossus*
Species:	haematodus
Habitat:	Common in forests, woodlands, and parklands of Australia and New Zealand
Behavior:	Social, vocal, and good natured
Family:	Psittacidae
Size:	About 10" long
Diet:	Nectar-based; in captivity can eat moistened pellets
Special Needs:	Requires a mostly liquid diet, which produces messy droppings

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Owner Challenges:	Rainbow Lorikeets are very social and require a lot of attention; can be messy.
Life Span:	20 year average
Average Cost:	$250

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