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## **FEEDING LORIES and LORIKEETS**

### ***General Information***

Our knowledge of bird nutrition is constantly evolving. This is due to heightened awareness of the importance of nutrition plus increased research. As with all other animals, birds need a proper balance of carbohydrates, proteins, fat, vitamins, minerals and water. Lories or Lorikeets are also known as “Brush Tongued Parrots” due to their unique tongues adapted for their highly specialized dietary needs. Lories and Lorikeets have a high moisture diet and a relatively short digestive tract, which make for a very quick transit time. This means your Lory or Lorikeet will eat a LOT and likely have frequent and often very loose projectile droppings. It is NOT uncommon to have blue droppings 15-20 minutes after eating blueberries!



### ***Should I be concerned about what my Lory or Lorikeet eats?***

Nutrition is commonly neglected with pet birds. Too often owners assume they are feeding a proper diet to their Lory or Lorikeet when in fact they are not. This is a common reason for many health problems. Lories or Lorikeets have highly specialized dietary needs. It is important to continually strive to improve your bird's diet. This involves constantly educating yourself and a certain degree of **common sense**. It is not sufficient to feed a Lory or Lorikeet just to maintain life; instead, your goal should be to help it thrive and flourish. Your bird's health depends on how well it is fed.

- Discuss nutrition with your veterinarian!

### ***What does my Lory or Lorikeet naturally eat?***

Lories or Lorikeets eat nectar and pollens in the wild. They will also consume soft foods like fruits, berries, blossoms, and buds. They are not really seed eaters in the wild.

### ***What should I feed my Lory or Lorikeet?***

There are a number of excellent commercial nectar and pollen substitutes available for Lories and Lorikeets. These products should be mixed in small quantities and changed at least twice daily, as they will spoil readily. These foods will spoil if not kept fresh and in clean dishes. Do not mix up more than needed for one feeding. Some commercial foods are Nekton® Lory, Quiko® Lory, Avico® Lory Life and CeDe® Lory food. Kaytee® Exact pellets and Hagen® Tropicana pellets have been fed for many years with good success

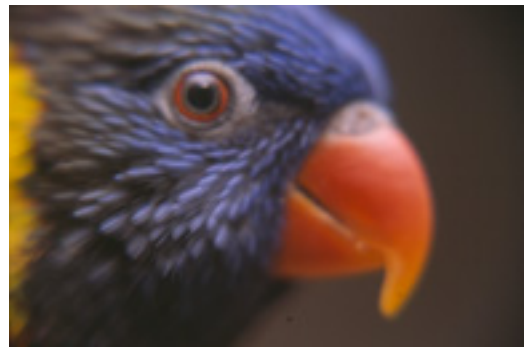
## ***Fruits and Vegetables***

A large variety of diced fruits such as those listed at the end of this handout should be offered every day and should constitute a greater portion of the diet. You may find your Lory or Lorikeet prefers softer slightly overripe fruits (ensure there is no rot on the fruits). Cut them into manageable pieces depending on the size of the bird and offer a fruit salad. Offer fruits and vegetables in a separate dish. If your bird appears to develop a particular fancy for one food item, stop feeding it temporarily to promote the eating of other foods.

Various sliced, shredded or finely diced vegetables may be offered but this should NOT be a large part of a Lories and Lorikeets diet. Pale vegetables, with a high water composition (i.e. iceberg or head lettuce, celery) offer very little nutritional value. **Avocado is reported to be potentially toxic.**

Fruits and vegetables must be washed thoroughly to remove chemicals.

- Treat your bird like a small child; offer a small piece of a variety of food items daily and never stop trying.
- A well balanced diet must be maintained at all times.
- Consult your veterinarian if encountering any problems with diet or the health of the bird.
- Remember that you train the bird, do not let it train you.



## ***Water***

Fresh clean water must be available at all times. Depending on the quality of your tap water, consider the use of bottled water. Dishes must be cleaned thoroughly every day with soap and water. With Lories and Lorikeets, the water will be used to bathe in as well. Keep it clean.

## ***What about other foods?***

As a general rule any wholesome, nutritious food that you and your family eat, your bird can eat. Follow the general guidelines discussed above and use your *common sense*. It is common sense that *junk food*, chocolate, products containing caffeine and alcoholic beverages be avoided.

## ***Do I need to use a vitamin-mineral mixture?***

Does your bird need extra vitamins, minerals or amino-acids? The powdered supplements are often regarded as more stable such as Nekton-S® (by Nekton-Produkte), Quiko® or Prime® (by Hagen). Mix these products in water or preferably apply directly onto moist food. One opinion suggests that a bird eating 75 - 80% of its diet in the form of nectar food may not need supplements. Specific vitamins or minerals may be more important at various times during a bird's life (e.g. egg laying - requires calcium supplementation). Calcium supplements are available if your Lories and Lorikeets are determined to be deficient.

- Your veterinarian can help you assess your bird's diet and its particular needs.

## ***Tips***

- Always monitor the amount of food eaten every day by each bird.
- Offer fresh water every day.

- Offer a variety of fresh foods every day.
- Offer fresh fruits and vegetables every day
- Clean all food and water dishes daily.
- **No** to a food item one day does not mean **no forever** - KEEP TRYING!

**Some suggested food items include:**

apple  
 apricots  
 asparagus  
 banana  
 beans (cooked)
 

- such as:
  - chic peas
  - kidney
  - lentils
  - lima
  - mung
  - navy
  - soy

 beet  
 blueberry  
 broccoli  
 brussel sprouts  
 cabbage  
 cantaloupe  
 carrot  
 carrot tops  
 cherries (not the pit)  
 Chinese vegetables (bok choy)

coconut  
 corn  
 cucumber  
 dandelion leaves  
 dates  
 endive  
 fig  
 grapes  
 grapefruit  
 kale  
 kiwi  
 melons  
 mango  
 nectarines  
 orange  
 papaya  
 parsnip  
 peaches  
 pear  
 peas  
 peppers (red/green & hot)  
 pineapple  
 plum  
 pomegranate  
 potato (boiled)



pumpkin  
 raisins (soaked over night)  
 raspberry  
 rice (brown)  
 romaine lettuce  
 spinach  
 sprouted seeds  
 squash  
 strawberry  
 sweet potato  
 tomato  
 watermelon  
 zucchini