

LoveBird

Lovebirds are small, active, happy birds. They can also be loud and nippy. A single Lovebird can be a great pet, while a pair of Lovebirds will often bond to each other and not care to spend time with you. A Lovebird will not sing, and few Lovebirds will learn human speech. But they are a lot of personality packed into a tiny and relatively inexpensive bird. If you are looking for a small buddy, who will be thrilled to play with you and snuggle with you, a Lovebird may be exactly right for you. But be prepared for some shrill chirps, a few nips on the finger, and very inquisitive shadow.

Hand-Fed? Or Parent Raise?

A young hand-fed Lovebird is the best bet for an inexperienced bird-owner. Parent-raised lovebirds are tamable, but it requires a lot of love, patience, and tolerance to bites.

Diet

A pelleted diet, supplemented with fresh fruits, vegetables, boiled eggs, cereals, pasta, rice, and lentils will produce a healthy, beautifully feathered Lovebird. Many Lovebird breeders also feed a seed-based diet, with most of the other foods as supplements. A seed-based diet must consist of a mixture of seeds and grains. Canary seed, millet, rice, oats, safflower and a small amount of sunflower are the most popular parts of these seed mixes. Corn is often a big hit with Lovebirds, as is sprouted seed. Lovebirds also tend to drink a lot of water, and must have fresh water available at all times.

Cage

The minimum cage size for a single pair of Lovebirds is 30 X 30 X 18. As with all birds, the bigger the cage the better. Bar spacing is also important, and should be no more than 3/4 inch.

Vocalization

Lovebirds do have the ability to talk, but very few do. Lovebirds have a variety of peeps, cheeps, chirps, and squeaks. Lovebirds can have very shrill voices however, and should not be expected to be quiet at all times.

Breeding

Breeding Lovebirds require a healthy diet consisting of a lot of greens as well their regular diet. A bird on a seed-only diet will not be in top condition for breeding. The area that the breeding birds live in should be about 60F with the humidity at 60%. A nestbox is also required, and the standard parakeet size boxes sold in stores are fine for Lovebirds as well. Provide the Lovebirds with newspaper, palm fronds, branches of willow and fruit trees, or pine shaving for nesting materials. Determined Lovebirds can build their nest in 4 or 5 days. The first egg is laid about 10 days after mating, and another egg is laid every other day until the clutch is 4 to 6 eggs. After 6 or 7 days, you should be able to tell if the eggs are fertile by "candling" them. Hold the eggs gently near a bright light. If you can clearly see a dark spot surrounded by blood vessels, the egg is fertile. The incubation period for Lovebirds is 21 to 26 days. Once the chicks hatch, make sure to provide a lot of good foods for the parents. They will be feeding the chicks, and should have corn, egg, greens, fruit and other foods available at all times. Fresh water is very important also, so be sure to replace their water often. Occasionally, you may have to handfeed a baby immediately. The male Lovebird helps teach his chicks to eat regular foods. Hand-feeding can be done with a syringe or a spoon, although a syringe is the most popular choice. Hand-feeding formulas must be kept at the proper temperature, or the babies will either not eat, or develop crop problems. Provide your babies with a lot of different foods, including soft food, small pieces of fruit and vegetables, seed, pellets and millet.

More Info

African Lovebird Society: <http://www.africanlovebirdsociety.com>

We love bird: <http://www.welovebirds.org>