**YVCipedia AVIAN**

Lineolated Parakeet Care Sheet

## **Species Overview**

The **Lineolated Parakeet** (*Bolborhynchus lineola*), affectionately known as the “linnie,” is a small, quiet, and charming bird native to the cloud forests of Central and South America. Named for the subtle dark lines running down its plumage, the lineolated parakeet is often green but also comes in a variety of color mutations in captivity.

At YVC, we find that linnies make excellent companion birds for the right household—they’re intelligent, gentle, and significantly quieter than most parrots. They enjoy social interaction but tend to be more reserved and less destructive than other species, making them well-suited to apartment or indoor living. With proper care, they typically live 10–15 years.

## **Housing & Environment**

Although small in stature, lineolated parakeets are active and curious, and they benefit greatly from a spacious, enriching environment. We recommend cages no smaller than 24"x24"x30", with narrow bar spacing to prevent injury. Horizontal bars offer helpful climbing surfaces, and a variety of textured perches can support foot health and activity.

At YVC, we recommend providing a quiet, well-lit area that allows for household interaction without overwhelming the bird. Many linnies enjoy ambient sound and light social contact but do best when they also have access to calm, low-traffic spaces for rest. As with all birds, maintaining a consistent light-dark cycle (about 12 hours of darkness) helps support their circadian rhythm and reduces stress-related behaviors.

Access to natural light is ideal, though full-spectrum avian lighting can be used when this isn’t possible. Humidity levels between 40–60% are typically well-tolerated.

## **Diet & Nutrition**

Linnies are prone to obesity and nutritional imbalance if their diets aren't carefully managed. At YVC, we recommend a **high-quality pelleted base diet** specifically designed for small parrots, which should make up the majority of their intake. Nutri-Berries, AviCakes, and formulated options like Mazuri can be useful both nutritionally and as foraging enrichment.

Fresh vegetables—especially leafy greens, bell peppers, and carrots—should be offered daily, while fruits should be used more sparingly due to their sugar content. Cooked grains and legumes can be offered occasionally, but we advise avoiding high-fat treats like seeds or nuts unless used sparingly for training.

Clean, fresh water should be available at all times, and changed daily. We find that some linnies enjoy bathing frequently; shallow dishes or gentle misting can encourage healthy preening and feather maintenance.

## **Behavior & Handling**

Lineolated parakeets are known for their calm demeanor and affectionate, if somewhat shy, personalities. They often prefer gentle, quiet handling and do well with routine. Unlike louder, more exuberant parrots, linnies tend to bond closely with their humans and may be content to sit quietly on a shoulder or interact calmly during downtime.

At YVC, we recommend using positive reinforcement when introducing handling and avoiding overhandling or overstimulating birds, especially during adjustment periods. Linnies can learn basic tricks and target training with gentle consistency. Because they are quieter by nature, changes in vocalization may be subtle but should still be noted as possible indicators of stress or illness.

They often enjoy supervised out-of-cage time to fly or explore, which helps reduce boredom and promote healthy exercise.

## **Enrichment**

Despite their reserved nature, lineolated parakeets are highly intelligent and benefit from varied, thoughtful enrichment. We suggest rotating safe toys weekly and offering both destructible and interactive items. Foraging toys, puzzle feeders, and small hanging swings are often favorites. Some individuals are also drawn to soft cloth toys or shreddable paper.

Social enrichment is equally important. Linnies appreciate consistency in human interaction and may develop preferred routines around their owners’ schedules. While they’re not prone to screaming, they may chirp or call gently for attention or during transitions in the day.

As with all parrots, we advise monitoring for signs of boredom or stress—such as feather picking or changes in eating habits—and adjusting enrichment accordingly.

## **Health & Veterinary Care**

Routine care plays a major role in a lineolated parakeet’s long-term well-being. At YVC, we recommend **annual wellness exams**, **fecal testing**, and, when appropriate, **blood panels** to catch any underlying conditions early. Even small birds like linnies can hide signs of illness well, so preventive care is key.

Some of the more common concerns we see in lineolated parakeets include:

* Nutritional imbalances, especially from seed-based diets
* Obesity and associated hepatic (liver) issues
* Respiratory infections from drafts or poor ventilation
* Behavioral issues like feather-plucking when bored or stressed

Signs of illness may include a fluffed appearance, changes in droppings, reduced vocalization, or changes in posture or perching behavior. Any sudden change should prompt a veterinary evaluation.

## **Facts & FAQs**

* Lineolated parakeets can learn to mimic speech, though usually softly and with limited vocabulary.
* Their quiet nature makes them a good option for bird lovers with sensitive neighbors or shared living situations.
* They do best with consistency and may become nervous with frequent environmental changes.
* Although gentle, linnies can become cage-territorial if not given regular positive interaction outside the enclosure.
* With the right care and attention, many develop strong bonds with their caretakers and become affectionate, calm companions.

## **Supplies Checklist**

While we aim to minimize lists, here’s a brief reference of essentials we recommend at YVC for new linnie owners:

* Appropriately sized cage with horizontal bars and varied perches
* High-quality pellets and safe fresh foods
* Clean water dishes and a shallow bath or misting bottle
* A selection of safe toys for rotation
* Travel carrier for veterinary visits
* UVB light or access to natural sunlight
* Air purifier if air quality is poor indoors
* Powder-free gloves and towel for safe handling if needed

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