**YVCipedia AVIAN**

Lorkieet Care Sheet

## **Species Overview**

**Lorikeets** are among the most colorful and high-energy members of the parrot family, easily recognized by their vibrant plumage and playful personalities. Native to Australasia, including parts of Australia, Papua New Guinea, and Indonesia, these birds thrive on movement, interaction, and curiosity. They’re especially known for their brush-tipped tongues, which have evolved to suit their natural nectar-based diets.

At YVC, we often describe lorikeets as the extroverts of the parrot world—bright, bold, and endlessly entertaining. They are deeply social, both with humans and other birds, and they require significant attention, environmental stimulation, and proper dietary management to thrive. Lorikeets have a lifespan of 15–25 years in captivity when provided with appropriate care.

## **Housing & Environment**

Lorikeets are highly active birds and need space that supports both flight and play. We recommend cages that allow for ample wing extension and acrobatics—typically larger than those used for similar-sized parrots. Because they tend to be messy, particularly due to their liquid-based droppings, cage location and cleaning setup should be planned accordingly.

Stainless steel or powder-coated cages are ideal, and perches should be varied in texture and diameter to support foot health. These birds love to climb, bounce, and hang upside down, so horizontal bars and ceiling-hung enrichment items go a long way.

Lorikeets benefit from living in a part of the home where there’s regular, predictable activity. While they thrive on social interaction, overstimulation or chaotic environments can lead to stress. Access to natural light or full-spectrum lighting, and a stable day-night cycle, help support both physical and emotional health. Humidity levels between 50–60% are generally well tolerated, and a room humidifier may be beneficial in dryer climates.

## **Diet & Nutrition**

Diet is arguably the most unique and important aspect of lorikeet care. Unlike seed- and pellet-eating parrots, lorikeets are **nectarivores**, meaning their primary diet in the wild consists of flower nectar, pollen, and soft fruits.

At YVC, we recommend **commercially formulated lorikeet nectar diets** from trusted brands designed to provide appropriate protein, vitamins, and minerals. These should be served fresh daily, and removed before spoiling. Alongside this, fresh fruits like papaya, melon, berries, and apple (no seeds) can be offered regularly. While vegetables aren’t typically a large part of a lorikeet’s diet, some may accept greens or cooked sweet potato in small amounts.

Pellets are not generally appropriate for lorikeets, as their digestive systems are not adapted for dry, grain-based foods. Dry "lorikeet powder" diets are available and can be offered alongside or in rotation with wet nectar formulations, depending on the bird’s preferences and consistency of droppings.

Because lorikeets produce large amounts of liquid waste, hydration is typically not an issue, but fresh water should always be available.

## **Behavior & Handling**

Lorikeets are among the most social parrots and tend to bond quickly with their people. They’re playful, interactive, and constantly seeking engagement—traits that make them delightful companions but also demand commitment from their owners.

At YVC, we often remind lorikeet owners that boredom can lead to behavioral issues such as aggression or excessive vocalization. These birds are smart and expressive and may use noise to get attention or communicate frustration. Routine, positive interaction and training using gentle reinforcement can help guide behavior in a healthy direction.

Lorikeets tend to be more physical than some other parrots, enjoying rough-and-tumble play and sometimes exhibiting territorial behavior around cages or favored objects. With early and consistent socialization, most become affectionate and outgoing companions.

## **Enrichment**

Enrichment isn’t optional for lorikeets—it’s essential. Their active brains and bodies need daily outlets to prevent stress and destructive behavior. These birds love to chew, shred, swing, bounce, and explore, and their toys should reflect that.

We recommend offering a rotating selection of safe, destructible toys, puzzle feeders, and interactive games. Items that involve movement, color, and texture are often favorites. Many lorikeets also enjoy bathing and should be offered shallow water dishes or misted gently several times per week.

Social interaction counts as enrichment, too. Many lorikeets enjoy shared mealtimes, training sessions, and even watching TV with their people. They thrive on being part of a flock—even a human one.

## **Health & Veterinary Care**

At YVC, we recommend **annual wellness exams** and **fecal testing** for all lorikeets, with **blood panels** performed periodically depending on age and health status. Because their digestive system is different from other parrots, signs of illness may include changes in the consistency or frequency of droppings, which are naturally more liquid.

Some of the more common health concerns in lorikeets include:

* **Nutritional imbalances**, especially if nectar diets are homemade or improperly stored
* **Candidiasis** and **bacterial overgrowth**, often related to unsanitary feeding equipment
* **Feather destructive behavior**, often secondary to boredom or stress
* **Iron storage disease (hemochromatosis)** in some species, especially if fed high-iron fruits or water from metal pipes

As with all birds, signs of illness can be subtle—lethargy, decreased vocalization, fluffed posture, or changes in droppings should all prompt a veterinary visit.

## **Facts & FAQs**

* Lorikeets don’t eat seeds or pellets—nectar is essential to their health
* They’re known for their “brush-tipped” tongues used to collect nectar and soft food
* Many lorikeets love water and will bathe daily if given the chance
* Vocal, social, and energetic, lorikeets may not be ideal for households needing quiet
* With the right care and routine, lorikeets can live 15–25 years or more

## **Supplies Checklist**

Here’s a brief summary of the basics we recommend at YVC for lorikeet care:

* Large, easy-to-clean cage with horizontal bars
* Stainless steel food and water dishes (replaced daily)
* Commercially formulated nectar diet
* Soft, fresh fruits as dietary enrichment
* Safe toys that encourage movement, foraging, and chewing
* Bathing dish or misting bottle
* Travel carrier for vet visits
* UVB lighting or access to natural sunlight
* Powder-free gloves and towel for safe restraint if needed
* Paper liners and cleaning supplies for frequent cage cleanup

*Yarmouth Veterinary Center*