

Common Name: Parrotlet - Pacific
Other Common Names: Lesson's Parrotlet, Celestial Parrotlet
Scientific Name: *Forpus coelestis*
Origin or Range: Peru
Relative Size: Much Smaller Than Average
Average Lifespan: 25 year(s)
Compatibility: Relatively Aggressive

Animal Description:

With a feisty, playful nature, the brightly colored Pacific Parrotlet is sure to become a cheerful addition to any bird lover's home! Parrotlets are the smallest of the true parrots and are adorable.

Pacific Parrotlets are sweet, playful little animals. In the wild, they flock in large groups at feeding sites, where they eat cactus fruits, grass seeds and berries. In aviculture, they are extremely curious and playful. They are known for being a bit more pushy or dominating than many parrotlets, however. Simply teach your Pacific Parrotlet from the start that you are the boss and you should have no problems with it! Parrotlets should be kept alone or they can develop jealousy or aggression problems concerning everything from toys to owners- parrotlets in general do not like sharing what they consider their possessions! In order to prevent your Pacific Parrotlet from becoming bored or depressed, it should have a mate of the opposite sex and similar age. Parrotlets should be fed a pellet diet or a basic seed mix, supplemented with plenty of fresh fruits, greenfood, vegetables and of course, they need fresh water at all times. If your Parrotlet is eating seeds rather than pellets, supplement their diet with vitamins. Be careful, as seeds are high in fat and without lots of exercise, your Pacific Parrotlet can become obese. Provide a cuttlebone for your parrotlet. They will also love people-carbohydrate food like bread or pasta. Fresh broccoli tops and cooked eggs make great treats. Be careful when taking your parrotlet outside; even Pacific Parrotlets with clipped wings may be able to fly! These birds should flourish in a cage of at least 48 by 16 by 20 inches in dimension. Pacific Parrotlets need lots of toys, and adore swings and rope or anything they can chew on! They are quite strong, so be sure the toys will stand up to their hard beaks. Parrotlets bond strongly with the person who spends the most time with them, especially during the time when they are between six and 12 weeks old. Insect softfood will be fine for hand rearing them. Be sure your Pacific Parrotlet's environment remains above 50 degrees Fahrenheit and that it does not become overheated in summer temperatures!

Pacific Parrotlets grow to around 5 inches in length, and their plumage is predominantly green in color. Their irises and legs are brown, and their bills are horn-colored. Male Pacific Parrotlets have a blue line behind each eye and their forehead and faces are washed with bright yellow coloring. The necks and upper backs are a bluish-gray color, while their under-wing coverts and lower back extending to the rump are a brilliant cobalt blue. All of the wing coverts are bright blue except the undersides of the flight feathers, which are bluish-green. Males' flanks and the sides of their breasts are gray. The upper tail coverts are a bluish-green also, and the rest of the tail is green. Females have emerald green feathers where males have blue, but they may have rumps, which are turquoise and a slight blue coloration behind their eyes. Where the undercarriage of the male is gray, females have a brighter green coloring. Female Pacific Parrotlets also have less yellow coloration over their heads than do males.

Pacific Parrotlets are native to the dry tropical forests and savannahs of Peru and Ecuador. Parrotlets have not been kept as pets until recently; although there are seven subspecies, only three are popular pets. They are much loved by almost everyone who encounters them. Pacific Parrotlets, sometimes called Celestial Parrotlets, are the most popular subspecies in aviculture.

Specific Care Information:

Pacific Parrotlets will become sick if fed a vitamin supplement in addition to a pellet diet. Many parrotlets will not eat from hooded or covered dishes. Be sure to place perches in their cages in places where their birds' tail feathers will not dip into their food or water. Pacific Parrotlets love bathing in their water bowls, so be sure to keep the water fresh! They do have a tendency to become obese in small cages. It is best if you can keep a pair of parrotlets in a six foot by three foot by six foot aviary.

Breeding and Propagation:

Pacific Parrotlets who are breeding should be fed a calcium supplement and if they are on a pellet diet, should be supplemented with seeds. Immature Pacific Parrotlets have similar coloration to adults, but the blue is less bright in males. In captivity, Pacific Parrotlets need privacy to breed. They will need a nestbox, usually a budgie-sized box will do, and they will breed year round. Most breeding takes place in spring, however, and the average clutch size is four to six eggs. Incubation lasts between 20 and 22 days and the young will fledge in four or five weeks. Adults will bite young Pacific Parrotlets if they believe they are mature, so young parrotlets should be quickly removed from the cage after weaning. Although they will reach sexual maturity around ten months, they usually should not be bred until they are two years of age.

Parrotlets are one of the smallest known parrots, with attitudes of their larger counterparts. Parrotlets are amazing, intelligent, adaptable, and energetic. It has been reported that they are most closely related to the amazon parrot, with an average life-span of up to or more than 20 years.