

Interactive Lorikeet Display at the Fort Wayne, Indiana Children's Zoo

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and
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We have displayed Rainbow Lorikeets as part of our Australian Adventure Exhibit since 1987. The display concept was patterned after other lory experiences at Currumbin Sanctuary in Queensland, Australia, and the Wildlife World Zoo in Arizona. Both feature public feeding sessions with the birds, a central concept for our exhibit.

Twice daily during the April through October season, a zookeeper shepherds a dozen visitors into the lory cage, first warning them to remove dangling earrings and shiny jewelry. Birds perch on heads and shoulders of the people, much to the delight of both. The keeper answers questions and volunteers information on birds in general and lories in particular, touching on subjects such as habitat, brush tongues, diet and captive breeding.

Ours is a mixed flock, composed of 19 *Trichoglossus haematodus moluccanus* and eight *T. haematodus haematodus*. All 27 birds were captive born, nine at our zoo. We usually let the parents raise the chicks, although we have handraised a couple.

The outdoor exhibit is part of a larger Australian species aviary, built of timbers and 1 in. x 1 in. wire. The wire on top of the entire aviary is covered with wooden snow fence to create partial shade. On hot summer days, the aviary is one of the coolest places in the zoo! The lory cage is 12 ft. high, 30 ft. long and 20 ft. wide. Most of the floor of the exhibit is grassy, but a portion where the public stands is covered with crushed stone.

In winter the birds are held inside a heated building. Cages are 1 in x. 1 in. wire with concrete floors and heavily perched. Temperature is kept around 75° F. The floor, wire and walls are scrubbed daily with disinfectant.

The birds are allowed to stay in the outdoor exhibit only when overnight lows are predicted by the National Weather service to exceed 45° F. Otherwise they are confined to winter holding. We don't put the lories out until the middle of May, and bring them in during September.

The birds' food is presented in sterile stainless 9-inch cake pans set in specially made aluminum angle holders about 4 - 5 feet off the ground. The morning diet is a blend of: 10 cups water,

1 peeled banana, 1 cored apple, 1 medium carrot, 1 cup LPN mix, and 1/4 cup sugar. Each of the six afternoon pans contain: 1/4 cup corn, 1/2 cup finely chopped apple, 1/4 cup fresh green grapes, 1/4 cup chopped fresh pear, 1 tablespoon parakeet seed, 1/4 cup fresh chopped greens (spinach, kale, etc.)

Every spring and fall, the birds are wormed when they are moved between winter quarters and outdoor display. The Ivomec is orally administered under supervision of the zoo's vet at a dose of 0.28 mg Ivomec per kg body weight. ➤

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