



Green-naped Lory

# Getting started with Lories

by Dick Schroeder  
Inglewood, California

Every month or so I'm asked to speak at local (sometimes not so local) bird clubs. I either speak on lories or softbills, whichever the program officer wishes. These being my favorite groups of birds, I would hate to have to choose between keeping only one or the other.

After a lory program, one of the questions I'm most frequently asked is, "What are the best lories for a first time lory breeder to start with?" They have all seen the slides of the more exotic members of the *Loriidae* family, i.e. Stellas, Fairy, Red-flanked, etc. and, of course, want to start right out with these. This is fine, since the basic husbandry of lories is the same regardless of the species. It's just that it is a lot easier to breed some species than it is others, and I don't like to see someone lose their enthusiasm with breeding birds because of early failures.

It would certainly be best to start with one of the most common varieties, as these are not only easy to find, they would be the least expensive to purchase, and the easiest to sell the offspring of. Some suggestions would be Red or Moluccan Lory (*Eos bornea bornea*), Blue-streaked Lory (*Eos reticulata*), Green-naped or "Rainbow" Lory (*Trichoglossus haematodus haematodus*), or the Chattering Lory (*Lorius garrulus* and ssp.).

Now, after giving you several choices of species with which to begin your lory breeding venture, I'll tell you what you *really* want to start with. The little Goldie's Lorikeet (*Glossopsitta goldiei*). (You taxonomists can argue with Rosemary Low or Joseph Forshaw re: the genus). This little 7-inch native of New Guinea is perfect for beginners as well as the experienced lory breeder looking for something new.

While they may not be the most colorful member of the family (they aren't red!), the various shades of green, along with the scarlet, purple, and blue on the head certainly make them attractive. There are several reasons for choosing Goldie's to begin with. They are most quiet of all lories, and they are usually quite pro-



The Goldie's Lorikeet



The Blue-streaked Lory

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\* Position open — contact regional vice president if interested  
\*\* Indicates 2 year term has been fulfilled. If no new interested party  
comes forward and indicates a desire to serve, incumbent remains in  
position.

For information about contacting any of these member clubs,  
please call that club's state coordinator.

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November 2, 3, 4, 1990

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For hotel reservations call: Cathy Stromberg 1-800-933-9678

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February 8, 9, 10, 1991

Albuquerque Hilton Hotel

Albuquerque, New Mexico

### SUMMER ANNUAL CONVENTION

August 6 - 12, 1991

Red Lion Hotel

San Diego, California

lific. Three clutches a year are common. (That's six babies, as lorries lay only two eggs with each clutch). Nothing could be easier to hand feed, if you choose to do so, than a Goldie. If you have ever waited too long to pull a conure chick for hand rearing, you know what a struggle this can be. Not so with these little guys, they will eat at *any* age. They will even start eating nectar from a dish while still in pinfeathers if they are kept with older chicks.

Being one of the smaller lorries, they will breed in smaller accommodations. Ours do quite well in cages 18" deep x 24" high x 30" long. Nearly any size of nest box will do (this is true for most lorries). A budgie box with pine shavings or eucalyptus chips is fine. As with all lorries (there are a few exceptions), two eggs will be laid and incubated for 23 days. When they hatch, the Goldie's chicks are covered in long, white down, looking very much like two golf balls. Goldie parents are among the best, in fact, we use them for fostering some of the more difficult species. The chicks can be pulled for hand rearing if they are intended as pets, or left with the parents to be reared for future breeding stock.

The diet for our Goldie's is the same as all the rest of our lorries and lorikeets. (The difference between a lory and a lorikeet is the same as between a parrot and a parakeet). All of our breeder pairs receive nectar every day, as well as apple and grapes. Many of our pairs also have dry lory diet as well. We use Avico's Lory Life and Lory Life Nectar. There are other prepared diets available as well as millions of home brew recipes. It used to be that every lory keeper had his own "secret" recipe, but the availability of commercially prepared "complete" diets has made keeping these beautiful birds much easier.

It has been said that lorries are "too messy" to fool with. I find just the opposite to be true. Granted, here in coastal southern California, we can keep our birds outside all year long, which makes keeping *any* birds easier. We also have a number of other hookbills which, of course, eat seed. The seed eaters are *far* more work to clean up after than the lorries. With lorries there are no seed hulls to rake up, their liquid droppings disappear into the shrubbery or ground cover. When the water dishes are refilled each day, the cage is squirted out and the clean up is done.

Lories are generally aggressive and should be housed one pair to a cage. There are some exceptions wherein they can be colony bred. We have successfully raised the little Meyer's Lorikeet (*Trichoglossus flavoviridis meyeri*) in this manner. It is almost impossible to keep accurate records when more than one pair is in a cage, so we have discontinued this practice. With the larger species of lorries, colony breeding is *very* risky, as they will kill or severely injure anything in their cage, including ground birds like button quail. They are definitely best kept to themselves.

We have housed lorries in planted aviaries on several occasions. The little guys (Goldie's, Meyer's, Fairies, etc.), make very little impact on the plants, but the larger species seem to chew off leaves just to watch them fall.

Goldies, as well as a large number of other species, are still imported on occasion. Even so, when a shipment may contain 100 Red Lorries and 200 Green-naped Lorries as well as many Chattering Lorries, there may be only 20 or less Goldie's Lorikeets. And, as it seems that most bird importation will end within the next five years, it's imperative that we establish some of these beautiful little nectar feeding parrots in our aviaries. The days of huge shipments of birds to be sold as pets are nearly over. If we and future generations are to continue to enjoy these very special birds, we must act *now* to preserve them in captivity. As imported birds become less available, it is very important to affiliate with a specialty group working with your particular species. These groups generally publish a yearly roster which enables members to find other members who are working with their particular species. A census is usually taken so that members will know which birds need more work and which are becoming well established.

Those interested in breeding lorries are encouraged to join the International Loriidae Society (I.L.S.). Contact Sharon Casmier, Secretary, 17704 S. Tapps Drive E., Sumner, WA 98390.

The I.L.S. publishes a quarterly bulletin as well as a census and roster. The bulletin contains classified ads for members as well as informative articles on lorries in captivity and conservation efforts in the wild. It has an international membership and is well worth the \$20 yearly dues. ●