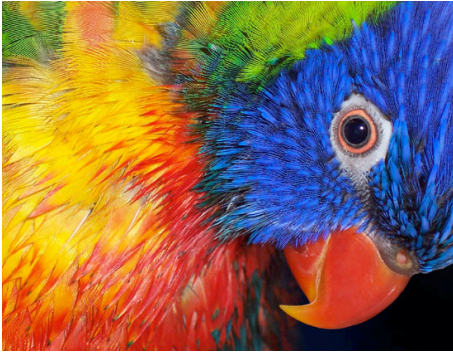


Feeding your lorikeet



Harrison's Bird Foods® – "because the most important thing you can do for your bird is to feed it right"

Lorikeets are energetic, entertaining and sometimes messy birds. They can make great pets but special attention must be paid to their diet. Lorikeets are nectar feeders. They do **not** eat seed, instead consuming nectar, pollen, fruit and vegetables.

What to feed

You can use formulated diets specifically designed for lorikeets supplemented with fresh food. We recommend and provide **Harrison's Bird Foods®**.

When feeding a **formulated diet**, always follow the manufacturer's directions. If fed wet, make sure any uneaten food is removed at least daily to prevent fermentation and bacterial growth. If you find there is regularly food left over at the end of the day, you may be feeding too much!

We recommend and provide **Harrison's Bird Foods®**, specially formulated parrot pellets, an organic, proven, complete diet that yields the best long-term health results of any documented or homemade diet.

- Harrison's® Fine, Superfine or Mash - High Potency Formula is used for the first 6 months followed by Adult Lifetime Fine, Superfine or Mash after they are converted. The formula should be soaked in a mixture of 2 tablespoons of water and ½ teaspoon of corn syrup.

Other diets which are available:-

- Nekton Lori® – a powdered diet which is made up with water to form a nectar type mix.
- Vetafarm Blossom Nectar® - a pre-prepared liquid diet option
- Vetafarm Golden Lori Dry Nectar®
- Wombaroo Lorikeet and Honeyeater® Food



Fresh food provides important nutrients. Orange vegetables such as carrots, sweet potato and pumpkin are ideal. Apples, beans, berries, broccoli, carrots, celery, grapes, mango, melon, pears, parsley, pasta, rice, spinach, fresh sweet corn, oranges and strawberries are other great choices. These can be fed sliced up or pureed and can be given in conjunction with formulated diet. Just use a few items at a time, also mix it up a little, don't use the same ingredients each mix. Don't leave this puree in the aviary for more than a day, as it will spoil quickly. Don't feed fruit alone or as the major component.

"Wild" lorikeet fruit has a higher concentration of protein and fibre than our fruit. The higher fibre slows transit time of food through the gut. As lorikeets digest protein poorly, so the slower movement of food through the gut allows better protein uptake (hence the addition of vegetable and sprouted seeds to the puree).

But if you do want to get back to nature your lorikeet will appreciate eucalypt, bottle brush and callistemon branches, especially those that are flowering. You can also supplement your lorikeet's diet with fruit juices such as apricot or peach juice.

What not to feed

Lorikeets are NOT seed eaters. Animal based protein, including eggs as egg powder, is toxic and there is risk of bacterial contamination (Salmonella). Adding supplements into drinking water are not a good idea as there is no way to assess their water intake, and excesses of some vitamins are quite dangerous.

How much food to feed?

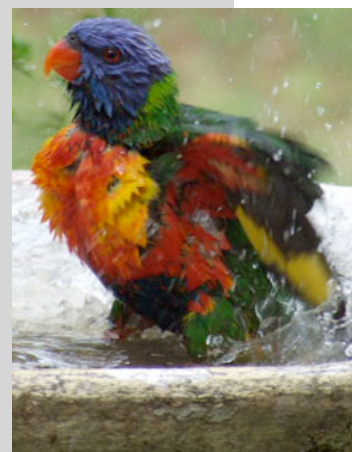
That is a difficult question to answer precisely. The vitamin/mineral and protein needs remain relatively constant, energy has the greatest fluctuation. Energy needs depend upon various factors:

1. Age: older lorikeets have less of a requirement than younger, growing birds
2. Gender and sexual status: Egg laying females will require more calcium and energy than non-egg layers and males.
3. Behaviour: those birds kept in a small aviary will need less energy than those who are free flighted.
4. Environment: those birds kept inside with require less energy than those in outdoor aviaries. Energy requirements can double in cold climates, also consider where the bird originates and try to maintain a similar temperature gradient. Lorikeets within a multi-bird aviary will be more active (there is a pecking order to define), so the number of birds kept will also contribute to requirements.
5. Season: birds follow a seasonal pattern with their moult, so food requirements will increase during this time.
6. Health: sick birds will eat less - a change in the amount your lorikeet is eating can be used as a sign of how well it is doing.

Lorikeets don't have a high demand for drinking water as the food they eat has a high moisture content, but water should always be freely available. Remember to have a separate water bowl for bathing.

Hygiene

Lorikeets are particularly messy eaters, so their cage and water becomes contaminated easily. This messy life style promotes yeast and bacterial growth, lorikeets are susceptible to these disease causing organisms. The food/water containers should be cleansed daily and the cage at least weekly



Signs of poor diet

Your lorikeet can't tell you if there is a problem, they like to do it in a subtle way, some signs that your lorikeet's diet is just not right:

- an excess loss of feathers outside moulting time
- changes in feather colouration, this includes if the colours of your lorikeet are different from the norm. Feather colour can evolve from aberrations in dietary vitamins A, C and E, carotenoids, selenium, zinc and amino acids
- reduced movement
- variation in vocalisation

If your lorikeet has been living the good life on simple sugars and saturated fats, then a weight loss diet will need to be implemented. It is important not to reduce essential vitamins/minerals.

For further information on feeding, diet conversion and exercising your lorikeet, please do not hesitate to contact us on (02) 6295 0770.