

MOUSTACHED PARROT (PARAKEET)

Psittacula alexandri alexandria

Sub-species: *Psittacula derbiana derbiana* - Deryban Parakeet (Tibetan),
Psittacula derbiana chinensis - Chinese Derbyan Parakeet.

Other Common Names: Mustache Parakeet, Java Moustached Parakeet.

Range: Java, Bali and Indonesia.

Average Lifespan: 22 year(s).

Compatibility: Average.....for a parrot.

Description: The Mustache Parakeet is an intelligent and outgoing bird that is gaining increasing popularity among aviculturists worldwide.



The Mustache Parakeet, also known as the Java Mustache Parakeet is the nominate form of eight different subspecies of Mustached Parakeets. Though this bird is related to the Ringnecks, they are quite different in personality. They are reported to be mellower and not as loud as the Ringnecks, though, the Mustache Parakeet is

described by many as "feisty". The Moustache is considered by many fanciers to be among the most stable of the Psittaculæ. They are generally calmer than the Indian and African Ringnecks as well as the Plumhead. They are also generally excellent eaters and will sample new foods that other birds may pass up. They can talk rather clearly, and they are reported to speak with much more clarity than the Ringnecks, although they may not say that much. It is important that Mustache Parakeets are handled regularly from a young age, as they can become aggressive if they are not well socialized and handled regularly. If you want a smaller parrot with a lot of personality, the Mustache Parakeet may be the bird for you; But be warned, they are also known for being 'opinionated' and sometimes stubborn. This is not surprising when you consider the Mustache Parakeet's intelligence. The Mustache Parakeet is related to the Ringneck

Parakeets, and like them, they can often talk, though they are not as clear of speech as some of the larger parrots, such as the African Grey. In the wild this bird is often seen in flocks of 10 to 50 individuals. These flocks may often be heard before they are seen. This is a fact that should be kept in mind before deciding to purchase a Mustache Parakeet. The average lifespan of the Mustache Parakeet is 20 to 25 years.

The Mustache Parakeet is perhaps most famous for its moustache-like markings on the sides of its face. These black markings really do resemble a moustache! They are a medium sized parrot, averaging 13 inches in length (33 centimeters) and 100 to 130 grams in weight at maturity. The male Mustache Parakeet has green plumage with a grey head. They have pretty markings on their heads and faces. The area around the eyes is greenish and their heads have a pretty bluish tinge. They have a thin line over their foreheads and wide stripes on their cheeks. They have beautiful pink plumage on their breasts, throat and upper abdomens, making them very attractive birds. They have colorful wings and red bills. Females generally have a duller pink color on their chests and their middle tail feathers are shorter than the male's feathers. Their shorter tails, light pink bills, and the incomplete cheek stripes easily distinguish immature individuals.

The Java Mustache Parakeet is native to the islands of Bali and Indonesia as well as the island for which it was named, Java. They are also seen in southern Borneo, but it is theorized that they were introduced to this area, and are not native. In the wild this bird prefers the lowland plains and foothills. It is rarely seen at higher elevations. It also seems to prefer deciduous forests to evergreens. In the wild this species feeds on fruits, berries, flowers, nuts, seeds, nectar, and leaf buds. They are also seen as pests in some regions because they also enjoy feeding in rice fields.

Specific Care Information: The Mustache Parakeet has no known species related illnesses or susceptibilities. Like other parrots they require companionship, and if you keep them singly you must be able and willing to spend large amounts of time with them. The same is true if you want to maintain their tameness. They should be handled regularly and be well socialized, if you wish them to be good, handle-able pets.

The Mustache Parakeet is a voracious chewer and should be provided plenty of chew toys. Other toys are also a must to stimulate this intelligent bird. If they are not given plenty of exciting toys, they will grow bored and behavioral problems can result.

Breeding and Propagation: The Mustache Parakeet reaches maturity somewhere between 2 and 3 years of age. In the wild they breed between the

months of December and April, though this is variable depending on the weather and altitude. For example, it has been reported that they will breed in every month except April on the island of Java.

They are commonly bred in captivity.