

# Forpus Fanciers

Photo by Carol Noble



Turquoise rumped parrotlet

by Carol Noble  
Alleghany, California

Forpus Fanciers is a club for people interested in parrotlets. Most of the current members have or are interested in *Forpus* parrotlets but we are also open to people interested in *Touit* sp., *Nannopsittaca* sp., and owners and lovers of any small parrot. The reason for such a broad base is that there are several small parrots which are erroneously called parrotlets. These include the *Brotogeris* sp., *Bolbabynchus* sp., and I have even been told to include conures in this parrotlet list.

The definition for a parrotlet is a small square tailed parrot. All parrotlets come from the Americas (Mexico, Central, and South America). They are all small birds. The largest is about the length of a budgie, tip to tail, but it has a short tail and is considerably heavier. The smallest is about four inches — if you took that same budgie and cut off his tail at the base the budgie would be the same length but considerably heavier than the parrotlet. The largest is in the *Touit* sp., being 17 cm. or about 7 inches. The smallest is the *Forpus passerinus* (green rump parrotlet) at 12 cm. or about 4-1/2 inches, this bird looks much smaller than 4 inches

because of its stance and weight.

The *Forpus* parrotlet voice is more finch-like than parrot. They can yell but I have only known them to do so when being handled. They have a tendency to be flighty when first acquired but will, if given time, settle into quiet cage birds. As pet birds the youngsters will tame down and learn to talk. The limitation of speech I don't believe has been discovered because most of us enjoy the natural twittering so much. Most of the talking parrotlets I know of just learned on their own.

Most common of the *Forpus* parrotlets seems to be the *F. coelestis*, Pacific or celestial. This bird is about 4-1/2 inches in length, it is grey-green in color with a bright green face. The rump and wings are marked with ultramarine blue. The next most common seems to be the *F. passerinus*, green rump. This bird is running a very close second to the *Coelestis*. It again is very small, 4 - 4-1/2 inches, and bright green all over. As the name implies, it has a green rump and blue markings on the wings. The next is the *F. cyanopyguis*, Mexican or turquoise rump. This seems to be the parrotlet which was the most common thirty years ago and I believe it is still the most common in California. This bird is larger than the other two mentioned at about 5 - 5-1/2 inches. It is a light green with turquoise blue rump and wing markings. The next to be found is *F. xanthopteryguis*, blue wing — a lot of birds are labeled as blue wings but, in fact, are turquoise rumps or Pacifics. Even green rumps are sometimes sold as this bird. The blue wing is a small bird about the same size as the green rump, 4 - 4-1/2 inches. They are bright green with blue rump and wing markings. The most well known seems to be the *F. xanthops*, yellow face. This bird was only recently brought into captivity and is the bird most people ask about. It is large for a parrotlet at 6 inches, about the size of a peach-face lovebird. It is grey-green, more grey than green, and has a very yellow face (hence the name) and dark blue-violet markings on the wings and rump. The other two *Forpus* parrotlets, *F. conspicillatus* (spectacal) and *F. sclateri* (Sclater's) are not currently kept in captivity. The Sclater's is a jungle bird and is said to be darker than the other types and the spectacal is a small grey-green bird with a green cast to the face. Both have blue markings on the rump and wing.

All *Forpus* parrotlets are dimorphic and all but two *Touit* sp. are dimorphic also. The hen *Forpus* parrotlet will have green under wings and usually a green rump. The hen yellow face has the wing feathers "tinged" with blue and a lighter blue rump than the male. Also some of the Pacific hens will have a rump as dark as the males but the underwing will be green. The *Touits* are not as general as each individual species has its own markings. The two species which are not dimorphic are the *T. batavica* — seven-colored parrotlet, and the *T. melanonata* — brown backed parrotlet.

Anyone who is interested in parrotlets or in joining Forpus Fanciers can contact me, Carol Noble, Secretary — Forpus Fanciers, P.O. Box 872, Alleghany, CA 95910. ●

## Nestmates Anonymous

This service is to match unmated birds, to bring joy to forlorn single birds and their discouraged owners, and to broaden the gene pool in needy species.

To list a bird give as much of the following as you can: English name or names by which it is known, Latin name and sex; your name, address and phone number; one dollar for up to four birds.

To answer a listing send a separate letter for each bird sought (each one goes to a different source), including your name, address and phone number; enclose a dollar for each bird sought (to cover mailing your response).

Address all communications to Ms. Cathy Grosse, 3120 Epworth Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio 45211. Do not write to the *Watchbird!*

### WANTED:

Female scarlet macaw, *Ara macao*  
Female grey-cheeked parakeet,  
*Brotogeris pyrrhopterus*  
Male Timneh grey parrot, *Psittacus erithacus timneh*  
Male great-billed parrot, *Tanygnathus megalorhynchus megalorhynchus*  
Male severe macaw, *Ara severa*  
Male caninde macaw, *Ara canindae*  
also known as blue-throated macaw,  
*Ara glaucogularis* ●