

Spooky Eyes or Tuffy?

By Marcella Covault © 2008

Imagine my surprise when my proven pair of Pacific parrotlets (green pied/blue male x blue/pastel female) presented me with my first fallow baby! (Since almost all color mutations in parrotlets are recessive, they must both be also carrying fallow!) Not only that, it is a blue fallow pied male. When I pulled the clutch for handfeeding, he was starting to feather, but what were most noticeable were the eerily-shining red eyes! I sent the picture to my sister, who immediately dubbed him, "Spooky Eyes!"



The picture captured at this time was also so typical of him for the next 3 weeks. He would puff and posture almost any time he was approached. He was the oldest of the clutch, and none of the others did that—my granddaughter started calling him "Tuffy." He was not nippy or skittery, just challenging me, but once I picked him up, he was sweet and friendly, and he liked to hang out on my shoulder and mess with my hair as he matured.

His eyes have darkened a little bit, but they are still an almost luminescent red (especially when reflecting light from a camera flash). I've taken some pictures, but they cannot really capture how striking he is.



I have been told that one shouldn't expose red-eyed birds to direct sunlight. I do know that he seems to really like bright light and to gravitate to the hanging light fixtures, which I have to watch carefully, because they are globed upward with bulbs, and I'd hate for him to land on a lit hot bulb! The others like the light too, but not as much as he does and without as much tendency to seek out the bright-lit bulbs.

I also notice that while he flies well, he seems more cautious than the others, in that he will sometimes hover a split-second before landing instead of just land-grab on the curtain rod (for example), as his clutchmates do. That could just be his personality, or it could have to do with his vision needing a bit brighter light, with shadowed areas not seen quite as well (kind of like night vision issues with people).



At any rate, he is a treat to watch and be around, and I'm trying to decide how to proceed with him as I don't *think* I have any more fallows, and I was not planning to add to my parrotlet pairs. It might be interesting, however, to pair him with a turquoise or turquoise/fallow hen!

Because of his personality, there is a part of me that would like to just keep him as a pet (for me or someone else), and he is still tame after several months in a bachelor flight!