

## **CANARY WINGED PARAKEET – BROTOGERIS VERSICOLORUS – TOUIA AILES VARIEES**

**BIOMETRICS:** Length: 22 cm; Weight: 55 - 70 gr.

**DESCRIPTION:** Canary-winged Parakeet is a common cagebird.

Adult male has green plumage almost overall, slightly darker on back. On the wings, alula and inner primary coverts are white. Outer webs of first primaries are blue, with green edges, and remaining of primaries is white. Secondaries are white with yellow tinge, and secondary coverts are yellow. Tail is graduated and green.

Underparts are green, with slightly paler throat. On the under wings, coverts are green. Flight feathers are darker green, and secondaries and tertials are white. Under tail is dark green.

Head is green with pale bluish forehead and face. We can see some scattered blue-grey feathers on face.

Bill is horn-coloured, slightly pinkish-brown. Eyes are dark brown, with pale grey bare eye-ring and lores. Legs and feet are greyish-pink.

Both sexes are similar.

Juvenile resembles adults, but primaries show less white and they have green tips.

Secondaries are yellow with green edges. It has shorter tail. Bill is brown on lower base.

**VOICE:** Canary-winged Parakeet utters high-pitched “screak” interspersed with “weechah-weechah”. These parakeets perform some duets, involving rapid exchange of calls. These duets can be used towards other parakeets in defence of roosting or feeding areas, and nesting site.

**HABITAT:** Canary-winged Parakeet frequents wet forests, edges and clearings along rivers, gallery forests along watercourses, parks and gardens. Usually, it avoids deep tropical forest.

**RANGE:** Canary-winged Parakeet is native to the Amazon River Basin, from south-eastern Colombia to the River’s mouth in Brazil. We can find feral populations in Lima, Peru, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic and also mainland USA.

**BEHAVIOUR:** Canary-winged Parakeet is a very gregarious species, living in small or large groups. They gather in great numbers at communal roosts at night. This species is highly arboreal.

Canary-winged Parakeet feeds mainly on seeds and fruits, well hidden in dense foliage in canopy. But it can be very conspicuous while feeding at treetops.

Feral populations have adapted and also come to bird-feeders, feeding also on nectar and blossoms.

Often seen in pairs during breeding season, birds perform duets. These exchanges of calls are probably used to strengthen pair-bonds, but mainly in defence of roosting-sites, feeding areas and nest-site. These duets signal the close union of a pair, showing this pair as a unit within the flock.

If threatened, Canary-winged Parakeet raises its wings and claps them, in order to produce explosive noises.

**FLIGHT:** Canary-winged Parakeet performs swift, direct flight above canopy, and it is noisy and conspicuous when flying. Its white flight feathers allow identifying the species while in flight.

**REPRODUCTION:** Breeding season occurs from January to July in South America.

Canary-winged Parakeet is a cavity-nester. It can use holes in trees, or form a kind of tunnel in dead palm fronds for nesting in.

Female lays 4 to 5 white eggs. Incubation lasts about 23 to 26 days. Usually, male may stay on nest at night, but incubation is mainly by female.

Chicks are altricial and naked at hatching. Female probably stay on nest for the first week, and feeds the young with food brought by male. Young fledge 50 to 60 days after hatching.

**DIET:** Canary-winged Parakeet feeds mainly on seeds and fruits. Feral birds have adapted to other food resources, and consume blossoms and nectar, and frequent bird-feeders.

**PROTECTION / THREATS / STATUS:** Canary-winged Parakeet is common to abundant in most parts of its range. This species is not globally threatened.

Text by Nicole Bouglouan

**Sources:**

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