

JENDAY CONURE CARE GUIDE

Aratinga jandaya · Know before you bring one home

ORIGIN

**North-east
Brazil**

SIZE

28–30 cm

WEIGHT

110–140 g

LIFESPAN

20–30+ years

NOISE

Extremely loud

TALKING

Limited

Personality & behaviour

- Playful, cuddly, comedic and intensely social. Jendays bond hard, often to one person, and can become jealous and nippy toward everyone else without deliberate socialisation from the start.
- Jenday or sun conure? The reliable field mark is the back: a jenday keeps a solidly green back, mantle and wings above an orange-red breast, while a sun conure's back and shoulders are golden-yellow with green only on the wings. Expect one-person bonding and jealous nipping at other family members — counter it by having everyone hand-feed treats and do short training sessions from day one. Tail-fanning, pinned eyes and a stiff forward lean precede a bite.
- Use positive reinforcement only — never hit, shout at or frighten a bird for biting or vocalising.

Housing & cage setup

- Minimum 90 × 75 × 110 cm, larger preferred. Bar spacing 15–20 mm, with horizontal bars for climbing.
- Natural branch perches (15–25 mm), shreddable toys, foraging puzzles, a bathing dish and daily destructible wood. Avoid fabric huts and loose-thread rope toys.

Time, company & noise

- 3–4 hours out of the cage daily with company. An ignored jenday screams, and the screaming is very hard to live with.
- This is the deciding factor. *Aratinga* conures produce a sharp, screeching contact call that is physically uncomfortable at close range and clearly audible several houses away. It is normal species behaviour, not a training failure, and it will not be trained out. Unsuitable for flats, townhouses, shared walls or noise-restricted estates.
- Foraging toys, shreddable materials, puzzle feeders and trick training. Reward quiet; never reward a scream with attention, even negative attention.
- Provide 10–12 hours of quiet, uninterrupted darkness on a predictable schedule. Sleep-deprived parrots become irritable, scream more and are more likely to pluck.

What to feed

- A complete pellet as the foundation, converted gradually.
- Fresh vegetables and leafy greens daily, with orange and dark green vegetables for vitamin A.
- Small measured portions of fruit — jendays will gorge on it and ignore everything else.
- Cooked legumes and whole grains.
- Seeds and nut pieces strictly as training rewards.
- A cuttlebone and clean fresh water daily.
- Chop and mix everything finely so the bird cannot pick out only the fruit and seed. Vitamin A deficiency is common in conures on poor diets and shows up as recurring respiratory and sinus problems.

Do not feed

- Avocado — every part of the plant, including guacamole.
- Chocolate and cocoa.
- Caffeine, alcohol and xylitol (sugar-free sweetener).
- Onion, garlic, chives and leeks.
- Fruit pits and stones: apple, pear, cherry, apricot, peach and plum.
- Raw or dried beans — all legumes must be thoroughly cooked.
- Rhubarb leaves.
- Salty, sugary, fried or processed human food.
- Dairy in more than a trace — birds cannot digest lactose.
- Mouldy or fermenting food, including fruit left in the bowl.
- Anything from your mouth, plate or fork — human saliva carries bacteria that kill birds.
- Grit. Parrots husk their own seed and grit can cause fatal impaction.
- Human medicines or supplements unless prescribed by an avian vet.

Health & what to watch

- Watch for feather picking, obesity, proventricular dilatation disease, vitamin A deficiency and, rarely, conure bleeding syndrome.
- **Before you buy:** Ask the seller for the hatch date, the closed ring number, a DNA sex certificate and any disease screening already done. A seller who cannot answer those questions, or who will not let you watch the bird eat, is a seller to walk away from. Ask what the bird is currently eating, so you can keep it stable for the first fortnight.
- **Your first month:** Book a wellness examination in the first week, not just when something looks wrong. Quarantine a new bird for 30–45 days away from any birds you already keep, ideally in separate air space. Recommended screening: psittacine beak and feather disease (PBFD), psittacosis (*Chlamydia psittaci*), polyomavirus and avian bornavirus.
- **Ongoing & human health:** Annual check-ups, moving to twice yearly for larger species over ten. Wing clipping is not routine care — discuss it first, because flight builds fitness, balance and confidence. Psittacosis passes to people as a flu-like illness or pneumonia: if you develop unexplained respiratory symptoms, tell your doctor you keep birds.

Who this species suits

- **First-time owners:** Possible for the right person — jendays are easy birds to care for. The noise, not the care, is what makes or breaks it.
- **Experienced owners:** A rewarding, affectionate companion in a home that can absorb the volume.
- **Families & children:** Good with families in detached homes, for children roughly eight and up. Everyone must handle the bird regularly or it will pick one person and resent the rest.

Before you decide

- I have listened to a recording of a jenday conure screaming and I can live with it.
- My home is detached, or my neighbours genuinely do not mind.
- Everyone in my household will handle and train this bird, not just me.
- I accept a commitment of twenty to thirty years.
- If several answers are “No”, this is not the right bird for you — and walking away is a good outcome.

Urgent — see an avian vet today

- Difficulty or open-mouth breathing
- Pronounced tail bobbing at rest
- Fluffed, quiet and sitting on the cage floor
- Collapse or severe weakness
- Bleeding that does not stop, including a broken blood feather
- Seizures or loss of balance
- Repeated vomiting or regurgitation
- Not eating, or noticeable weight loss
- Straining, a swollen abdomen, or a hen unable to pass an egg
- Sudden major change in droppings
- Any contact with a cat or dog, even a minor scratch
- Suspected poisoning, fumes or trauma
- Recurrent sneezing, nasal discharge or swollen eyes — often vitamin A related

Recommended avian specialist

- **Bryanston Avian, Exotic & Small Animals Clinic**
- 99 Grosvenor Road, Bryanston, Johannesburg
- 011 706 1381 · WhatsApp 061 533 9950 · info@baesac.co.za
- Not every vet treats birds. Find your nearest avian-experienced practice before you need one.



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