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Clover, Skye and Finn: Bittersweet Transitions in a Mickaboo Parrotlet Family By Lucy Macmillan



Skye (blue) preening Clover.

Skye and Clover, two parrotlets, were adopted by Dean Tatsuno's family as a bonded pair from Mickaboo in July, 2014. The two young birds had been together for about five years before being surrendered to Mickaboo by a woman with medical difficulties of her own who could no longer care for them. Skye and Clover were in foster care for over a year before being adopted. The Tatsunos had had a variety of birds in the past that they had purchased from pet stores or breeders over the years, including zebra finches and budgies. They learned of Mickaboo when the family lost one of their parakeets and posted to Mickaboo's Lost and Found [page](#).

Clover and Skye were additions to the Tatsuno family's flock, consisting of two spunky budgies: Speedy, who was found on the streets of Cupertino, and Pika, who was purchased to keep Speedy company. Another chapter in the parrotlets' lives was just beginning.

Unfortunately, shortly after getting Clover home it was apparent she had some health problem. After many tests, it was determined that she had either cancer or a problem with her oviduct. With the dedicated guidance of Dr. Chris Sanders from Wildwood Veterinary in Portola Valley, the Tatsunos learned to administer Lupron¹ injections as the first course of action against the possible cancer. When the treatments did not seem to be effective, it was decided Clover should have surgery to determine the actual problem. In March, 2015, Clover survived a 1.5 hour surgical procedure to remove the oviduct and deposits and was determined to be cancer-free. Clover could now return home to her flock and happily she did, recovering quickly!



Skye and Clover watching the other half of their new flock, Pika and Speedy (Christmas 2014).

Dean described Clover as much healthier and happier after her surgery, enjoying her freedom from pain with a new sense of purpose. Clover had a strong personality and was more adventurous than Skye, often bossing Skye around in a hen-pecked sort of way – the two little birds loved each other and could often be seen preening each other.

Unfortunately, while Clover had benefited from the dedicated care of Dr. Sanders and the Tatsuno family, she had heart disease (common in companion birds) and died of a stroke in July

¹ Lupron is a synthetic hormone used to treat reproductive cancers in humans and is used for avian reproductive cancers as well.



Clover, less than two days after surgery.

2015. Poor Clover had to endure a lot in her short life. But even with all the issues Clover faced, her family felt she had lived a much better life in her last year with dedicated health care and love.

And so with the sad loss of Clover, parrotlet life in the Tatsuno family went on. Now that Skye was the sole parrotlet of the family, the Tatsunos decided to get her a new companion. Enter young and feisty Finn, a 1-½ year old male parrotlet, another Mickaboo adoptee. As is standard procedure with introducing birds into a new flock, Finn had to be quarantined to ensure he was healthy enough to join Skye and the others. Finn was also medicated for spirochetes, a form of bacteria that is commonly found in birds from pet stores, large flocks or breeders. Finn received a clean bill of health in mid-September and has now joined his flock!

Finn seems to have some of the same traits as did Clover, being adventurous, flying to explore his new home, landing on his parents' shoulders, and even playing with Legos.

It isn't easy being a surrendered parrotlet, much less one with physical disabilities, but with the dedication of Mickaboo adopters like the Tatsuno family and wonderful veterinarians like Dr. Sanders, parrotlets like Clover, Skye and Finn are given chances to live positive, healthy lives in their new forever homes, one chapter at a time.



Finn explores his new home, parrotlet style.



Finn playing with Lego's – just waiting for Skye to give him a helping hand



Finn (at left) eats breakfast with his new flockmates.