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The story behind the picture

Who's a pretty boy, then?

Photographer *Leila Jeffreys*



Neville, Major Mitchell's cockatoo



Oscar, eclectus parrot



Commander Skyring, gang-gang cockatoo



Tani, masked owl



Seisa, palm cockatoo



Pepper, southern boobook



Flight Sergeant Chalky No 1, budgie



Charlie, black-headed gouldian finch



Jimmy, budgie



Handsome, turkey vulture



Riley, eastern screech owl



Wonder, albino turkey vulture



Bob, American kestrel

For Wonder, a rare albino turkey vulture, life can be trying. His terrible eyesight means that "he is afraid of his own shadow", says Australian photographer Leila Jeffreys. He was found face down in the snow in Michigan and is now at a Californian rescue centre, where Jeffreys took his portrait. "There is a gentleness to him that makes me melt," she says.

Jeffreys has spent more than ten years travelling the world and finding rescue birds to pose for her, and has compiled a book, *Bird Love*. In it, we are introduced to Tani, the 11-year-old masked owl, who has expressions "so like ours" that Jeffreys felt

as though she were photographing "a small human wrapped in a shawl". And Neville, the naughty pink cockatoo (above), who looks as if he is posing for his mug shot.

Some of Jeffreys' sitters were more agreeable than others. The finches were incessant fidgets and Pepper the owl preferred the floor to her perch. But the boldest was Oscar the parrot, who would "open his wings up, revealing the lovely colours underneath," says Jeffreys, "as if he were trying to woo a lady". **MONIQUE RIVALLAND**

Bird Love by Leila Jeffreys (Abrams, £19.99) is out now