



65'4"
LENGTH
OVERALL

—
18'6"
MAXIMUM
BEAM



BIRDS OF PASSAGE

A Florida couple explore the seas with their two parrots on board their Outer Reef 650 Motoryacht.

BY KRISTIN BAIRD RATTINI

FOR DAVID AND NICOLE KRUEGEL, cruising is for their birds. Leeloo, a white-bellied caique parrot, and Atticus (Atti for short), an eclectus parrot, take to the seas as eagerly as they do the air. The Kruegels are significantly expanding their voyages in their new full-time home on the water—a 2009 Outer Reef 650 Motoryacht—and the 7-year-old parrots are enthusiastic companions. ¶ Boats

and birds have been constants in Nicole's life. Her childhood home was *Tempest*, a 1937 46-foot wooden sloop anchored in Dana Point, California. She got her first bird, a lovebird, at age 7 and has had feathered friends ever since. David grew up in Ormond Beach, Florida, and has spent countless hours water-skiing, surfing and scuba diving. Their mutual love of the water drew them together and assured they would

The Outer Reef 650 Motoryacht gave this couple the room needed to have their parrots along for full-time at-sea adventures.



always be a boating couple. ¶ They started in 2007 with a 19-foot center-console, then, two years later, moved up to a 30-foot Regal. A 2016 cruise through the Abacos aboard their Mainship 430 trawler convinced the duo that it was time to find a boat that they, their two cats and the birds could live on full time. “Every

time we sailed, we had to board the birds, and it was a big hassle to find a facility that could take care of them properly,” David says. ¶ They took delivery of a Fountaine Pajot sailing catamaran in March 2020. After sailing along the Eastern Seaboard and the Florida Keys, in fall 2021, they returned to the Bahamas, this time



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FAN FAVORITE

Outer Reef Yachts has experienced strong demand for the 650. Recently, it has invested in reengineering this bluewater voyager. The 650’s updated design has enabled a 4-stateroom, 4½-head layout—a best-in-class long-range motoryacht.

THE LINEUP

The Outer Reef 650 MY is part of the builder’s Classic series, which includes 15 other model variations from 63 to 90 feet LOA across three vessel classes called S, M and X. Beam dimensions identify each class. It also has Trident, a modern long-range sports motoryacht line with 62- and 72-footers as well as an Explorer series with a 108- and 115-footer.

The Kruegels’ enthusiasm for a life on the water is matched by their love for their parrots, Leeloo and Atti.

In the parrots' customized aft starboard cabin, the top bunk has been removed to allow more room for their cage and a view out the window. They have their own head (Leeloo is toilet trained) with a perch beside a big mirror.



with the parrots. “It was a learning experience for U.S. Fish and Wildlife, and for the Bahamian immigration and customs folks because they’d never had to do this before,” David says. The Kruegels scrambled to complete paperwork and health checks before leaving the United States. Upon their arrival at West End, they found the Bahamian officials less interested in paperwork than in taking selfies with the birds. ¶ The family

cruised Grand Bahama, the Abacos, Eleuthera, the Exumas, the Berry Islands and Bimini. ¶ Having parrots “is like having a 3- or 4-year-old forever,” David says. First, there’s the diet. They need daily fresh fruits and vegetables, which can be difficult to find while cruising. Leeloo can be a picky eater. “We gave her a green apple in the Bahamas, and she threw it back at us,” Nicole says. ¶ As the Kruegels settle into their Outer

A cruise to the Bahamas gave the Kruegels a rapid-fire lesson on bird-immigration requirements.



2,000 GAL.
FUEL
CAPACITY
—
400 GAL.
FRESHWATER
CAPACITY



Reef 650 Motoryacht, *Avalon*, there's something for everyone. The boat has a 3,500-nautical-mile range, which will enable them to check off a bucket-list item: transiting the Panama Canal and exploring the Pacific. The interior gives the humans plenty of room to lounge and the birds lots of interior flight space. ¶ In the parrots' customized aft starboard cabin, the top bunk has been removed to allow more room for their cage

and a view out the window. The birds also have their own head with a perch beside a big mirror. "Leeloo likes to look at herself and talk to herself all day," Nicole says. There's also plenty of room for the birds' snacks and toys. ¶ On rough sea days, the parrots prefer to hunker down in their cabin. But on calm days, "they can't wait to get out," Nicole says. "They're eager to see where they are and what's going on. They get so excited." ♥

Raised on a boat, Nicole Kruegel has also been a bird-owning enthusiast since the age of 7.