

Species Fact Sheets

Order: Caprimulgiformes
Scientific Name: Podargus strigoides

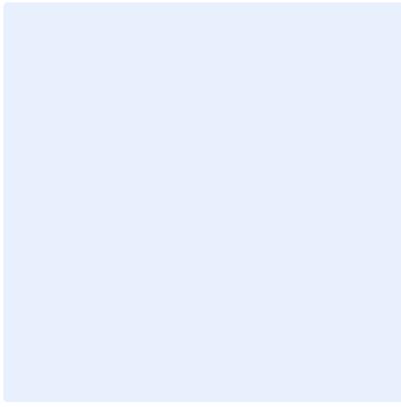
Family: Podargidae
Common Name: Tawny frogmouth

AZA Management: Green Yellow Red None

Photo (Male): Species is monomorphic



Photo (Female):



NATURAL HISTORY:

Geographic Range: Europe Asia North America Neotropical
 Africa Australia Other

Habitat: Forest Desert Grassland Coastal
 Riverine Montane Other

Frogmouths prefer open eucalyptus forests and riverside groves, mixed or deciduous woodlands and woodland clearings and edges. They avoid rainforest and treeless desert type habitats. They are the only frogmouth species that has adapted well to modified or urbanized areas such as farmland, parks and gardens, and residential zones.

Circadian Cycle: Diurnal Crepuscular Nocturnal Other [Click here to enter text.](#)

Cold Tolerance: To 70° F To 60° F To 50° F To 40° F
 To 30° F To 20° F Other

In captivity, if afforded shelter from wind, rain and snow, frogmouths have demonstrated tolerance to temperatures in

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the high teens (F) for extended periods of time (1 week). In the wild, frogmouths use bouts of torpor (a state of lowered physiological activity typically characterized by reduced metabolism, heart rate, respiration, and body temperature) at night as a means of conserving energy during periods of cold, winter temperatures when invertebrate food may be less available. They are one of the largest birds known to use this strategy.

	To 30° F	<input type="checkbox"/>	To 50° F	<input type="checkbox"/>	To 70° F	<input type="checkbox"/>	To 90° F	<input type="checkbox"/>
Heat Tolerance:	To 110° F	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other	Dependent upon many variables, but species is generally heat tolerant. Over 90 deg F, sufficient shade and or misting should be provided for relief from heat.				

	Frugivore	<input type="checkbox"/>	Carnivore	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Piscivore	<input type="checkbox"/>	Insectivore	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Diet:	Nectivore	<input type="checkbox"/>	Omnivore	<input type="checkbox"/>	Folivore	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Add Below)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Captive Dietary Needs:

Frogmouths are primarily insectivorous. Large insects, such as grasshoppers and beetles, seem to be favored, but small vertebrates such as frogs, lizards, small rodents, are also taken. Similar to birds of prey, indigestible components of the diet (hair, exoskeletons, etc.) are regurgitated in the form of a cast. Frogmouths hunt by scanning the ground for prey from low perches (branches, stumps, posts, etc) throughout their territory. When prey is located, they glide down and pounce on it, snap it up in their strong bill, and sometimes return to the same perch where the item is consumed. Large prey is often beaten against a perch prior to being eaten (a habit shared by Laughing kookaburras).

Based on this information, it is recommended that captive diets consist primarily of insects with smaller amounts of half-grown mice.

Life Expectancy in the Wild:	Males:	No published data on wild birds.	Females:	No published data on wild birds.
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Life Expectancy in Captivity:	Males:	Up to 20-30 years, possibly up to 40.	Females:	Up to 20-30 years, possibly up to 40.
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BREEDING INFORMATION:

Age at Sexual Maturity: Males: 1 year Females: 1 year

Courtship Displays: No published information; Not well understood or studied

Nest Site Description: Nests consist of a loose assemblage of small sticks and other assorted items such as pieces of bark, grasses, and even cobwebs. Fresh plant material (i.e. leafy branches) may also be used. Nests are typically placed in the fork of a large, horizontal branch. The pair may continue to add nesting material to the nest even after eggs have been laid. The same nest site may be used year after year. In captivity, stick wreaths may be used to form an artificial nest on an elevated platform 4-6 feet off the ground.

Clutch Size, Egg Description: A clutch of 1-3 elliptical, white eggs are laid on 1-3 day intervals.

Incubation Period: 26-30 days. The male incubates the eggs during daylight hours and is relieved by the female at night. At night, the incubating bird is regularly fed by its mate at the nest.

Fledgling Period: 25-35 days of age, although in the wild chicks sometimes fall or get displaced from the nest much earlier by wind or other disturbances. One of the adults will tend to a prematurely fledged chick, but mortality due to predation can be high in those circumstances.

Parental Care: Both parents care for the chick(s). Males typically brood the offspring during the day as the female remains perched close by.

Chick Development: At hatching, chicks are semi-altricial and covered in a dense white downy plumage. At approximately 9 days of age, the chick's eyes begin to open. Primary feather development begins at approximately 20 days of age. Fledging occurs at 25-35 days of age, although in the wild chicks sometimes fall or get displaced from the nest much earlier by wind or other disturbances. One of the adults will tend to a prematurely fledged chick, but mortality due to predation can be high in that circumstance. Fledglings remain in close proximity to, and dependent upon, the adults for another 1-2 weeks after leaving the nest. Young may live with the parents for several months before dispersing, but the extent of that dispersal is unknown

CAPTIVE HABITAT INFORMATION:

Social Structure in the Wild: Monogamous pairs

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Social Structure in Captivity: Monogamous pairs

1 pair

Minimum Group Size:

Maximum Group Size:

Some institutions have managed frogmouths in small groups (typically same age, same sex cohorts), but caution should be exercised when attempting to do so. In one case, 3 offspring remained with their parents until the following nesting season.

Compatible in Mixed Species Exhibits:

Varies

Comments:

Frogmouths can be kept in mixed species exhibit with caution. They can sometimes be intimidated and harassed by more aggressive diurnal species, and their nocturnal habits could be a potential source of disturbance for diurnal cage mates. It is recommended that breeding pairs be maintained in their own dedicated space.

Optimal Habitat Size: The author recommends a minimum enclosure size of 10' x 10' x 8' for a pair of frogmouths. Larger spaces are desirable to elicit a broader range of natural behaviors and to allow sufficient room for flight.

Management Challenges: Although frogmouths can be long-lived in captivity, their apparent reproductive life span appears to be limited. Historically, few birds (of either sex) have reproduced over the age of 17 years.

Frogmouths experience significant, seasonal weight fluctuations. In some cases, birds may double their weight during the winter months. Post-breeding food consumption increases dramatically. Frogmouths have proven to be very adept at self-regulating their food intake and weights. This species appears to be genetically hard-wired for extreme seasonal weight fluctuations, and attempts to micromanage their weight and food intake (as is typically done with raptors) should be avoided. For reasons unknown, hand-feeding frogmouths has been a common husbandry practice in AZA zoos. Transitioning healthy birds to self-feeding is highly recommended in order to promote more natural behaviors and allow for the natural, seasonal weight fluctuations mentioned above.

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Target weight range for a typical frogmouth:
Breeding season (April-July): 350-450g
Non-breeding season (Sept-March): 500-600g

Please contact the SSP Coordinator for more information on weight fluctuations.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

A Wiki web page relating to the captive management of Tawny frogmouth is maintained by the SSP Coordinator. This site posts and shares best husbandry practices, incubation parameters, hand-rearing information, and photographs of exhibits and nest sites. Institutions currently working with frogmouths or those considering the species for their collection are encouraged to access the Wiki site by contacting the SSP Coordinator for a free subscription.

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