

Species Fact Sheets

Order: Passeriformes
Scientific Name: *Lophorina superba*

Family: Paradisaeidae
Common Name: Superb Bird-of-paradise

AZA Management: Green Yellow Red None



NATURAL HISTORY:

Geographic Range: Europe Asia North America Neotropical
 Africa Australia Other Found only on the island of Papua New Guinea

Habitat: Forest Desert Grassland Coastal
 Riverine Montane Other Click here to enter text.

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 With heat source and shelter

Heat Tolerance: To 30° F To 50° F To 70° F To 90° F
 To 110° F Other Provide shade and misters

Diet: Frugivore Carnivore Piscivore Insectivore
 Nectivore Omnivore Folivore Other (Add Below)

Captive Dietary Needs:
 Superb Bird-of-paradise are susceptible to hemochromatosis so a low iron diet is required. It is recommended that they be fed a diet of 39% Low iron pellet (no more than 125ppm), 60% low iron fruit mix (apple, papaya, pear, and melon), 1% meal worms (during breeding season only). Also able to feed chopped greens (kale, collard greens, and romaine).

Life Expectancy in the Wild: Males: Unknown Females: Unknown

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Life Expectancy in Captivity: Males: 21 years Females: 30 years

BREEDING INFORMATION:

Age at Sexual Maturity: Males: 5-6 years Females: 3 years

Courtship Displays: Males will call to attract females to their territory from high exposed perches. Females will come to watch the courtship dance which involves the initial static display where males keep their feathers slicked against their body and head pointed upward while the narial tufts project upwards. He will then extend the breast shield out and flick his cape up and over his head but not extend it. This will then lead to the high intensity display in which the breast shield is extended, the narial tufts are flared, and the cape is thrust over the head and extended fully. The male will then dance in semi-circles around the female while maintaining this posture and always face the female head-on. The wings and tail will also flick during this courtship display.

Nest Site Description: Females will typically build nests within the territory of the male they breed with even though the male takes no part in the incubation of eggs or rearing of young. The cup shaped nest constructed of leaves, stems, ferns, and other plant fibers

Clutch Size, Egg Description: 1 egg clutches, eggs are typically pale brown with darker brown markings that can be streaked or spotted. Egg size averages 30.01mm x 23.2mm

Incubation Period: 16-19 days

Fledgling Period: 20-25 days

Parental Care: Females alone incubate the egg and care for young.

Chick Development: Chicks grow rapidly. Hand-rearing protocols and detailed descriptions of development is well documented by the Avian Propagation Center at the San Diego Zoo. Chicks that are hand-reared are usually independent by day 25-30, but will continue to beg from caretakers for several weeks afterwards. Parent-rearing has occurred although with less success and is not recommended by the SSP.

CAPTIVE HABITAT INFORMATION:

Social Structure in the Wild: Solitary. Males are reported to prefer territories along ridge crests with steep, sloping ridges or flanks for display and song perches. Males and females typically do not interact except for breeding purposes. However, females will often nest within the territory of a male.

Social Structure in Captivity: Superb Bird-of-paradise should not be housed together, but can be used in mixed species exhibits. Males should be housed in enclosures adjacent to potential breeding females and given access once the female has shown interest in breeding. Ideally males can have access to the female during the day and separated from her at night to avoid any aggression or disturbance of the nest. Once an egg is produced, the males should not be given access to the female as there are reports

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of males disturbing the females and killing the offspring. Immature birds should be housed independently but adjacent to other Superb Bird-of-paradise.

Minimum Group Size: 1.1

Maximum Group Size: None known

Compatible in Mixed Species Exhibits: Varies
Comments: Can be used in exhibits with other non-aggressive birds that maintain a low-iron diet.

Optimal Habitat Size: Minimal space requirements per bird in a breeding situation would be 5' x 6.5'. Ideally enclosures should be around 15' x 11'.

Management Challenges: The North American population of Superb Bird-of-paradise is small and decreasing in genetic diversity with little hope of any importations or new founders.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

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San Diego Zoo, San Diego, CA. Personal Photograph. Jonathan Bilby. 2016.

San Diego Zoo, San Diego, CA. Personal Photograph. Chuck Border. 2016.

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