

Species Fact Sheets

Order: Passeriformes
Scientific Name: *Artamus leucorhynchus*

Family: Artamidae
Common Name: White-breasted Woodswallow

AZA Management: Green Yellow Red None

Photo (Male):



Photo (Female):



NATURAL HISTORY:

Geographic Range: Europe Asia North America Neotropical
 Africa Australia Other
 Native to the Andaman Islands, the Malay Peninsula, the Philippines, Indonesia, New Guinea, north and east Australia, and the southwest Pacific.

Habitat: Forest Desert Grassland Coastal
 Riverine Montane Other
 Prefers open country habitats with trees, often being found in dry open woodland, cultivated land, mangroves, the occasional forest clearing, and on the coast near the beach.

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 This species could most likely tolerate temperatures down to

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45 degrees with supplemental heat.

Heat Tolerance: To 30° F To 50° F To 70° F To 90° F
To 110° F Other [Click here to enter text.](#)

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

Captive Dietary Needs:

Though they have a brush-tipped tongue, their wild diet is largely insectivorous. In a zoological setting, insects form the bulk of their diet, though they are often kept in mixed-species exhibits and therein have access to a wide variety of diet items such as fruit, greens, hard-boiled egg, dog food, various pelleted diets, and more.

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

Life Expectancy in Captivity: Males: Unknown; late teens has been recorded Females: Unknown; late teens has been recorded

BREEDING INFORMATION:

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

Courtship Displays: Wing-flapping while holding insect or nesting material; this usually occurs with vocalizations.

Nest Site Description: In the wild, the nest is a loose cup or bowl of roots, grass, and twigs. It is lined with fine grass and placed in the fork of a tree, or in a stump hollow. In a zoological setting, a small cup-shaped nest (either made in-house or using a basket or similar item) can be used as a foundation in which the birds can build. These birds will use various items such as raffia, wood wool, coir fiber, and Spanish moss to line their nest. These birds will come to the ground for nesting material, but are most comfortable when it is strung in and on trees/exhibit furniture.

Clutch Size, Egg Description: 2-3 eggs; beige, with brown speckling

Incubation Period: 16-18 days; begins with last egg laid **Fledgling Period:** 21-24 days

Parental Care: Both parents incubate, brood, and care for the growing chicks. There is evidence that these birds are both colonial breeders (although they will breed when kept as a sole

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pair), and that they are possibly cooperative breeders, which makes determining dam and sire difficult. When kept in a large breeding group, several adults may be seen carrying food to the nest and/or feeding the chicks.

Chick Development: Weaning takes an average of 62 days.

CAPTIVE HABITAT INFORMATION:

Social Structure in the Wild: Woodswallows tend to breed, forage, and altogether live in small flocks in the wild; they appear to be a colonial species, and are also possibly cooperative breeders.

Social Structure in Captivity: This species does best when kept in groups of 4 or more, for breeding and exhibitry; as they are a small, shy bird a larger group also has the advantage of being more visible. However, a single pair can be kept and will breed willingly. Ideally this species is housed in a large, well-planted exhibit with plenty of open space to glide and plenty of vertical space.

Minimum Group Size: 4

Maximum Group Size: No max

Compatible in Mixed Species Exhibits: Yes **Comments:** Can be kept with most taxa within a mixed species exhibit, but as they are a smaller species they can be easily displaced by more assertive species.

Optimal Habitat Size: Large free flight mixed species aviary approximately 30' wide x 25' high x 40' deep. For a single pair in a breeding setup, 8' wide x 20' L x 10' H or larger is suitable.

Management Challenges: In a larger exhibit, this species tends to be more hands-off as they can be difficult to capture or trap, and tend to evade any human contact. Specifically for breeding, it can be nearly impossible to ascertain sire and dam; furthermore, the cooperative and colonial breeding behavior of this species adds extra complications to this.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

As the most represented species in the Artamidae family within AZA zoos, the White-breasted Woodswallow is a unique, charismatic, and beautiful bird. Aside from being taxonomically unique, this understated bird also fills an upper story niche in any mixed taxa exhibit, and the acrobatic, soaring behavior as it dives to catch insects can be readily incorporated into a visitor experience or keeper chat.

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REFERENCES:

D. Rimlinger, J. Theule San Diego Zoo; S. Newland & A. Heitman, Sedgwick County Zoo; J. Lindholm, Tulsa Zoo; D. Oehler, Bronx Zoo; J. Dunster, Zoo Miami; Dr. J. Smith, Fort Wayne Children's Zoo – personal communication 2017/2018

http://aviansag.org/Husbandry/Unlocked/Care_Manuals/White%20Browed%20Woodswallow.pdf – provides some relatable information for White-breasted Woodswallow

White-breasted Woodswallow (*Artamus leucorhynchus*). Field Guide to the Birds of Australia, 6th Edition (1999). Retrieved 9/2018 from <http://www.birdsinbackyards.net/content/biblio/Field-guide-birds-Australia-6th-Edition>.

<http://www.arkive.org/white-breasted-woodswallow/artamus-leucorhynchus/>

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Date: 9/27/2018