

# Species Fact Sheets

**Order:** Falconiformes  
**Scientific Name:** Polihierax semitorquatus

**Family:** Falconidae  
**Common Name:** African Pygmy-Falcon

**AZA Management:**  Green  Yellow  Red  None

**Photo (Male):**



**Photo (Female):**



**NATURAL HISTORY:**

**Geographic Range:** Europe  Asia  North America  Neotropical   
 Africa  Australia  Other  [Click here to enter text.](#)

**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  Pygmy Falcons are not cold tolerant and should be provided with a heated nest box if temps fall below 60.

**Heat Tolerance:** To 30° F  To 50° F  To 70° F  To 90° F   
 To 110° F  Other  Pygmy falcons are quite tolerant of warmer temps but should be provided with shade as needed.

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

**Captive Dietary Needs:**

Mouse, lizard, meat, and insect combination. Adult mice must be skinned to prevent impaction.  
 Sample diet: 1 adult, mouse, 1 anole, 10 g Bird of Prey meat diet, 5 mealworms, 5 adult crickets.

**Life Expectancy in the Wild:** Males: UNK Females: UNK

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**Life Expectancy in Captivity:**

Males:

Mean life expectancy is 7 years, with many birds living well into their teens.

Females:

Mean life expectancy is 7 years, with many birds living well into their teens.

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## BREEDING INFORMATION:

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

**Courtship Displays:** Calling, head-bobbing and bowing displays, with tail pumping. Female solicits by crouching.

**Nest Site Description:** Occupy weaver nests, nest lip coated with droppings that eventually turn pink

**Clutch Size, Egg Description:** Usually 3 (2-4) laid at 2-day intervals, can double clutch, eggs have spherical shape, matte white ground, 28-30 x 22-23 mm

**Incubation Period:** 27-31 days

**Fledgling Period:** 30 days

**Parental Care:** Both sexes incubate, but the female does the majority and is fed by the male

**Chick Development:** Newly hatched chicks bright pink and covered with white down, quills appear within a week, fully feathered by 3 weeks (except for down on head and short tail). Leave nest at 27-40 days, but return at intervals. Fully independent at 6-8 weeks. Adult plumage in 1 year or less.

## CAPTIVE HABITAT INFORMATION:

**Social Structure in the Wild:** Found in pairs, but can be polyandrous during breeding and rearing, with young helpers from previous broods

**Social Structure in Captivity:** Best housed in pairs, young offspring can remain with the parents for ~6 months at which point aggression may be observed based on the sex of the offspring.

**Minimum Group Size:** 1

**Maximum Group Size:** 2 – different sexes

**Compatible in Mixed Species Exhibits:** Varies **Comments:** Suggested only with birds larger than themselves, additional females can be housed adjacently to promote breeding

**Optimal Habitat Size:** 2 x 2.5 x 3 m or larger

**Management Challenges:** Sensitive and prone to deserting nests if disturbed, hatching problems in managed care, strictly territorial, especially around nests, hand-reared falcons can become very imprinted.

## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

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