

Species Fact Sheets

Order: Charadriiformes.
Scientific Name: Calidris pugnax

Family: Scolopacidae
Common Name: Ruff

Management: SSP Secure SSP Provisional None Other
 SSP TAG Monitored Studbook
 Signature

Photo (Male):

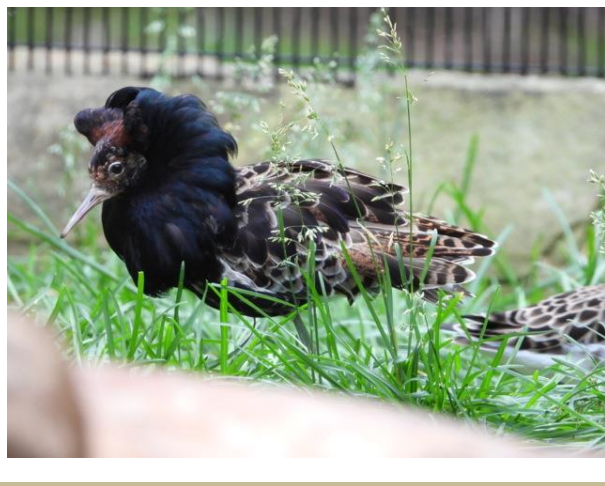


Photo (Female):



NATURAL HISTORY:

Geographic Range: Europe Asia North America Neotropical
 Africa Australia Other Frequently wanders worldwide

Habitat: Forest Desert Grassland Coastal
 Riverine Montane Other Wet meadows, shallow open wetland, shores

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 Can tolerate periods of sub-freezing weather

Heat Tolerance: To 30° F To 50° F To 70° F To 90° F
 To 110° F Other Can tolerate periods of extreme heat

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

Captive Dietary Needs:

Invertebrates based diet. Some grain in winter.

Life Expectancy in the Wild: Males: 10 Females: 10

Life Expectancy in Captivity: Males: 15 Females: 15

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BREEDING INFORMATION:

Age at Sexual Maturity: Males: 2-3 years Females: 2 years

Courtship Displays: Complex interactive postures

Nest Site Description: Bowl in grass or forbs on the ground

Clutch Size, Egg Description: 4. brown gray black mosaic as gravel, earth

Incubation Period: 23 days

Fledgling Period: 28 days

Parental Care: None required. Female guards, stimulates feeding, leaves brood before fledging

Chick Development: Fragile powder puffs week 1 requiring low stress environment, hiding, low density, live food

CAPTIVE HABITAT INFORMATION:

Social Structure in the Wild: Very complex. Males polymorphic, larger than females, flock and winter separately, long distance and highly variable migrant. Polygamous, promiscuous lekking shorebird, male breeding behavior ritualized in three distinct genetic forms, females choose mates and may have more than one, males take no role in nest or young. Juveniles independent, flocking.

Social Structure in Captivity: Generally good flock and community citizens

Minimum Group Size:
1.1 but larger flocks better, perhaps 4.8 optimum breeding group.

Maximum Group Size:
Unknown. Male breeding groups >6 may lead to harassment of females

Compatible in Mixed Species Exhibits: Yes, though flighty

Comments:

Fills an exhibit niche well where there is water edge, short grass or bare substrates. Unique and attractive, exhibit species with fantastic breeding behavior.

Optimal Habitat Size: May succeed in large community to smaller single species aviaries

Management Challenges: Flighty and prone to collisions with enclosure walls and supports. Stress prone at all stages but will calm with frequent, constant human exposure. Artificial hatching rate can be low, eggs fragile. Males can become overly aggressive to females without refuge. Females often unsuccessful at incubation in the presence of males. Subject to bill and leg injuries during growth. Long lived and productive once settled in captivity.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

This is an extraordinary species, complex genetically, morphologically, behaviorally. Excellent educational resource and attractive, entertaining species for display. During non-breeding time, may be maintained in small holding facilities off-

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exhibit or as diverse member of a large community. Suits well as a representative global shorebird, wetland ambassador. The most frequently recorded Palearctic vagrant bird in North America, well known to and popular with birders.

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REFERENCES:

Van Gils, J., P. Wiersma, and G. M. Kirwan (2020). Ruff (*Calidris pugnax*), version 1.0. In Birds of the World (J. del Hoyo, A. Elliott, J. Sargatal, D. A. Christie, and E. de Juana, Editors). Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, NY, USA

Evolutionary Ecology of Fixed Alternative Male Mating Strategies in the Ruff (*Calidris pugnax*) Michel Baguette, Baptiste Bataille and Virginie M. Stevens In: DIVERSITY Special Issue 2021 Feature Papers by Diversity's Editorial Board Members

Pers Comm Kraemer, Jacob S., Pinola Conservancy Aviary

Pers Comm Johann, Achim, NaturZoo Rheine

Pers Comm Diener, Eric, Heidelberg Zoo

Pers Comm Kuepper, Clemens, Max-Planck-Institute for Biological Intelligence

Pers Comm Clausen, Kay, Hamburg, Germany

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COMPLETED BY:

Name: Paul M. Dickson

Date: April 2, 2024.