



# Common Name Inca Tern

**Scientific Name:** *Larosterna inca*

FAMILY: Sternidae

ORDER: Charadriiformes

AZA MANAGEMENT: Signature

## GEOGRAPHIC RANGE

- EUROPE South America
- ASIA
- NORTH AMERICA
- NEOTROPICAL
- AFRICA
- AUSTRALIA
- OTHER

## HABITAT

- FOREST Found along the beaches and coasts of South America, from Peru to Chile
- DESERT
- GRASSLAND
- COASTAL
- RIVERINE
- MONTANE
- OTHER

## CIRCADIAN CYCLE

- DIURNAL
- CREPUSCULAR
- NOCTURNAL
- OTHER



## TEMPERATURE TOLERANCE



From ° 40F to °90 F

## DIET

- FRUGIVORE
- CARNIVORE
- PISCIVORE
- INSECTIVORE
- NECTIVORE
- OMNIVORE
- FOLIVORE
- OTHER

Captive dietary needs: Fish-based diet supplemented with commercial meat diet, insects, and thiamin supplement. Will readily consume small rodents, like pinkies. Large pools or water tubs will be used for both bathing as well as dipping fish. Water should be changed often if a waterfall or large pool is not available

## LIFE EXPECTANCY

Median Life Expectancy

Maximum  
Longevity

Within AZA	Up to 28 years
In the Wild	Unknown



Within AZA	Up to 28 years
In the Wild	Unknwon





# BREEDING INFORMATION



## AGE AT SEXUAL MATURITY



Males 2 years



Females 2 years

**Incubation period: 24-27 days with a 25 day average**

**Fledgling Period: Approximately 40 days**



## CLUTCH SIZE, & EGG DESCRIPTION



1-2 brown speckled eggs. Eggs can measure app. 51mm long x 36mm wide.



## COURTSHIP DISPLAYS

Head bobbing, synchronous vocalizations, excavation of nest sites and courtship feeding.



## NEST SITE DESCRIPTION

In the wild nests can be in burrows, caves, or other cavities. They have been known to use old Humboldt Penguin nests. In captivity, several nest structures have been used, including nest boxes, artificial tunnels, and open platforms. Nests can be situated about 5' from the ground, but some Inca terns have nested on the ground in tunnels or halved planting pots.



## CHICK DEVELOPMENT

Chicks may begin to explore outside the nest before fledging. Chicks are brownish-grey and have small mustache plumes. As the chicks age, their bills and legs will develop the distinct red color. It can take several years before chicks develop into complete adult plumage



## PARENTAL CARE

Both parents incubate and rear the chicks.

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# CAPTIVE HABITAT INFORMATION



## SOCIAL STRUCTURE



## MIXED SPECIES EXHIBITS

Compatible in mixed species exhibits?

YES

NO

**Comments:** Have been successfully housed with other Charadriiformes, Galliformes, Passeriformes

**In the wild: Colonial species forming large flocks, up to 5000 birds when feeding**

Charadriiformes, Galliformes, Passeriformes, Sphenisciformes, Columbiformes

**In Captivity: Colonial species and form pairs. Pairs may change annually with the courtship displays highlighting newly formed pairs. Same-sex pairs have been known to form in captivity.**

**Minimum Group Size: Ideally more than 6. Should not be housed singly.**

**Maximum Group Size: Dependent on exhibit size only.**

## OPTIMAL HABITAT SIZE

Inca terns are normally kept in large flight or walk-through aviaries. They will utilize multiple levels of exhibits that include high rock work or elevated perching areas as well as mid-level perching and the ground. Inca terns in the wild will hover above the ocean before plunging to find prey. If the exhibit is tall enough, this behavior can be seen in the captive environment.



## MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES

Monitoring pairs in large colonies to determine the parentage of chicks can be challenging.

## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Information about the current AZA population can be found in the member's section of AZA or questions can be addressed to Sunny Nelson, SSP coordinator.

## REFERENCES

N/A

## COMPLETED BY:

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Date: 3/27/2014