



Common Name

Ruff

Scientific Name: *Calidris pugnax*

FAMILY: Scolopacidae

ORDER: Charadriiformes

AZA MANAGEMENT: Not Managed/ TAG Monitored

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



TEMPERATURE TOLERANCE



From ° 30F to °90 F

Can tolerate periods of subfreezing weather. Can tolerate periods of extreme heat.

DIET

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

Captive dietary needs: Invertebrates-based diet. Some grain in winter.

LIFE EXPECTANCY

Median Life Expectancy

Maximum Longevity

Within AZA	15 years
In the Wild	10 years



Within AZA	15 years
In the Wild	10 years



BREEDING INFORMATION



AGE AT SEXUAL MATURITY



Males 2-3 years



Females 2 years

Incubation period: 23 days

Fledgling Period: 28 days



CLUTCH SIZE, & EGG DESCRIPTION



4. brown gray black mosaic as gravel, earth.



COURTSHIP DISPLAYS

Complex interactive postures.



NEST SITE DESCRIPTION

Bowl in grass or forbs on the ground.



CHICK DEVELOPMENT

Fragile powder puffs week 1 requiring low stress environment, hiding, low density, live food.



PARENTAL CARE

None required. The female guards and stimulates feeding, and leaves brood before fledging.

CAPTIVE HABITAT INFORMATION



SOCIAL STRUCTURE



MIXED SPECIES EXHIBITS

Compatible in mixed species exhibits?

YES

NO

Comments: Fills an exhibit niche well where there is water edge, short grass, or bare substrates. Unique and attractive

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 is ritualized in three distinct genetic forms, females choose mates and may have more than one and males take no role in the nest or young. Juveniles independent, flocking.

edge, short grass, or bare substrates. Unique and attractive, exhibit species with fantastic breeding behavior.

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

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, and eggs fragile. Males can become overly aggressive to females without refuge. Females are 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, and behaviorally. Excellent educational resource and attractive, entertaining species for display. During the non-breeding time, may be maintained in small holding facilities off-exhibit or as a diverse member of a large community. Suits well as a representative global shorebird, and wetland ambassador. The most frequently recorded Palearctic vagrant bird in North America, well known to and popular with birders.

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



COMPLETED BY:

Name: Paul M. Dickson

Date: 4/2/2024.