

Species Fact Sheets

Order: Columbiformes
Scientific Name: Otidiphaps nobilis spp.

Family: Columbidae
Common Name: Pheasant pigeon

AZA Management: Green Yellow Red None



NATURAL HISTORY:

Geographic Range: Europe Asia North America Neotropical
 Africa Australia Other Pheasant pigeons occur throughout New Guinea, the Aru Islands, Western Papua Islands, and the D'Entrecasteaux Archipelago (Fergusson Island).

Habitat: Forest Desert Grassland Coastal
 Riverine Montane Other These shy birds are more often heard than seen in the dense, primary rainforests that they tend to inhabit.

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 Pheasant pigeons housed outdoors should have access to shelter from the elements at all times of the year. They tend not to tolerate colder temperatures. Although they have been maintained at 40 degrees Fahrenheit for short periods of time (with supplemental heat and shelter)

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it is suggested they not be subjected to temperatures below 40 degrees Fahrenheit for extended periods

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:

Ingredients for captive diets have been found to vary greatly for this species. Overall, a protein source in the form of a commercial pelleted diet is combined with chopped fruits and vegetables in addition to the occasional insect matter. Many reports indicate a 50/50 ratio of pellets to fruits and vegetables seems adequate. Food is typically offered throughout the daylight hours.

A clean water source should always be available. Shallow pans seem to work well.

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

Life Expectancy in Captivity: Males: Unable to calculate Females: Unable to calculate

BREEDING INFORMATION:

Age at Sexual Maturity: Males: [Click here to enter text.](#) Females: Both males and females have been shown to be reproductively viable after only one year of age. Both sexes appear to be fertile into their mid to late 20's. If eggs are removed soon after laying, birds can re-clutch in as few as 16 days.

Courtship Displays: Males will court females throughout the year in captivity. Breeding success has been observed during all 12 months. The male will call to the females using a distinctive display. He will point his bill towards the ground and raise his tail and rump in the air. By using this position, the resulting call is believed to be amplified and has been likened to the sound of a gas-powered motor. During these displays males have been observed running at females with their necks outstretched and tails fanned out and lowered. The pair makes contact with their breasts and will often preen each other or even regurgitate after initial contact. Females have been observed in the bill down/tail up posture – most often in the nest prior to egg laying.

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Nest Site Description:

Both males and females have been observed constructing nests. These vary from simple scrapes in the ground sometimes augmented by sticks or grass to elevated platforms. Hay, straw, sticks and other natural fibers have been used to line artificial nest boxes and platforms. Baskets or platforms vary in size but should all have a small lip around the edge to prevent nesting material as well as eggs from rolling out. Even if nests are lined it is recommended that the birds have some other materials available to promote the natural behaviors of nest building.

Clutch Size, Egg Description:

Pheasant pigeon eggs are distinctively oblong.
Length: 46.00-48.35mm Average length: 47.06mm (n=21)
Width: 31.70-33.25mm Average width: 32.43mm (n=21)
Fresh weight: 24.94-28.02g Average fresh weight: 26.74g (n=20)
The most distinctive feature of a pheasant pigeon egg is the location of the air cell. Upon candling, one will immediately notice that the air cell is not centered at the blunt end of the egg. Instead it is further down the side from the blunt end. During development the air cell continues to expand in this oblique arrangement.

Incubation Period: 28 days

Fledgling Period: ~30days

Parental Care:

Both parents produce crop milk for the growing chick, which tends to fledge at approximately 30 days.

Chick Development:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

CAPTIVE HABITAT INFORMATION:

Social Structure in the Wild:

Behavior in the wild is almost unknown.

Social Structure in Captivity:

Pheasant pigeons should be housed in pairs when possible. In the wild, birds are seen singly as well as in pairs; even when apparently foraging alone the mate is often not far away. (Gibbs, et al 2001) Birds spend much of their day walking around with their tails pumping up and down as they go. If disturbed they will flee on foot and will only take flight if truly startled. In captive situations, aggression between mates has been observed from time to time. This will consist of chasing and occasionally using the feet or beak to strike out. Serious injuries are uncommon but loss of feathers and related stress can result. Multiple offspring have been housed successfully with breeding pairs and trios of birds (1 male: 2 females) have also been effective. Both scenarios however have been dependant on the size of the area in which the birds are housed. The larger the area the greater the ability to house more than a single pair.

Minimum Group Size: 1

Maximum Group Size: unknown

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Compatible in

Yes

Mixed Species Exhibits:**Comments:**

Commonly kept with other species of birds without issue.

Optimal Habitat Size:

Pheasant pigeons have been housed in both indoor and outdoor facilities – both on and off exhibit. It has been suggested that the minimum space for a pair of birds would be no less than 4’ wide x 10’ long. Heights may vary. Since these birds will nest and roost off the ground 5-6’ of height would be acceptable. If kept in mixed species situations it is hoped that the available space would be greatly increased. The species has been housed on various substrates including, soil, bark mulch, sand, fine to coarse gravel and concrete. In areas with poor air circulation substrates that could promote mold/spore growth should be avoided to curtail possible respiratory ailments. The birds do require some perching off the ground, as they will roost at night. This also offers an escape option if the birds feel threatened. Live plantings can help provide cover and possible nesting materials. The birds tend not to damage live foliage for the most part. Birds should always be housed in covered enclosures. Solid walls, varying diameters of wire and cloth mesh and glass have all been used successfully for containment.

Management Challenges:[Click here to enter text.](#)**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:**

Please contact Program Leader at JCBski@aol.com for complete husbandry manual for this species...

REFERENCES:[Click here to enter text.](#)[Click here to enter text.](#)[Click here to enter text.](#)[Click here to enter text.](#)[Click here to enter text.](#)[Click here to enter text.](#)[Click here to enter text.](#)[Click here to enter text.](#)[Click here to enter text.](#)**COMPLETED BY:**

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– Pheasant pigeons

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