

Species Fact Sheets

Order: Gruiformes
Scientific Name: *Lophotis gindiana*

Family: Otididae
Common Name: Buff-crested bustard

AZA Management: Green Yellow Red None



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 Buff-crested bustards are susceptible to frostbite. Birds must be moved to heated sheds at 32F [dry conditions] and to heated sheds at 35F with precipitation.

Heat Tolerance: To 30° F To 50° F To 70° F To 90° F
 To 110° F Other Provide shade at temps over 80F. Poor feather condition and other health issues can result from birds that stay continually wet.

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

Captive Dietary Needs:
 Buff-crested bustards are omnivores. The recommended diet should include nutritionally complete feeds, whole prey (vertebrate and invertebrate), and produce. Diets in zoos typically include fruits (e.g., apple), vegetables (e.g., cabbage), invertebrates (e.g., mealworms and crickets), whole vertebrate prey (e.g., small mice), processed meats (e.g., beef, horsemeat), and some form of

Species Fact Sheets

nutritionally balanced pelleted food (e.g., game bird pellets). Diet is fed 2x/day.

Life Expectancy in the Wild:	Males:	Unknown but est 12-15 years	Females:	Unknown but est 12-15 years
Life Expectancy in Captivity:	Males:	Studbook data ~20 years	Females:	Studbook data ~20 years

BREEDING INFORMATION:

Age at Sexual Maturity:	Males:	1-2 years	Females:	1-2 years
--------------------------------	--------	-----------	----------	-----------

Courtship Displays: The breeding display of the male is of the 'aerial' type. The male begins the display by calling in an ever increasing volume. It is thought that males call from traditional display areas. After calling, the male flies into the air upwards of 30m and then turns on his back with his feet facing up. He next flips over and falls to the ground with his wings spread out. The display is geared towards attracting a female and may also define territories among males. When a female is encountered, the feathers on the crown of the male are erected to form a crest. The throat and neck feathers are puffed out. After copulation, the male leaves and resumes displaying to attract another female.

Nest Site Description: The female makes no nest in the traditional sense. Rather, the eggs are laid on the ground in a shallow scrape. Often, the nest is near a clump of grass.

Clutch Size, Egg Description: The usual clutch is two eggs. The eggs are olive brown to pinkish-buff with dark brown marks.

Incubation Period: Incubation periods range from 19-21 days.

Fledgling Period: 5 weeks

Parental Care: Maternal only. Females also raise chicks on their own. Chicks are cryptically colored and precocial at hatch, but depend on the dam for their entire diet for the first few days of life. After a few days chicks begin picking up food on their own, but still rely on the dam for the majority of their food intake. The dam feeds the chick by picking up a food item and feeding it directly to the chick.

Chick Development: The chicks of buff-crested bustards are precocial, have open eyes at hatching, and are able to stand within hours. Fledging occurs at about four or five weeks, although the young often remain with the female for several months after this event. Do not pinion chicks.

CAPTIVE HABITAT INFORMATION:

Social Structure in the Wild: Buff-crested bustards are generally found alone. Reports of pairs may pertain to females with older chicks. There is no indication of permanent pair bonding

Species Fact Sheets

Social Structure in Captivity: Some pairs are compatible year round while others must be separated after copulation.

Minimum Group Size: One male: one female

Maximum Group Size: One male: two females

Compatible in Mixed Species Exhibits: Yes

Comments:

They do well housed with a variety of small species of birds (e.g. starlings, barbets, rollers, pigeons, and a variety of ground birds from guinea fowl to waterfowl).

Optimal Habitat Size: They do well in small or large well-planted aviaries that give the birds many places to hide. A particularly nervous individual may need a large space. Buff-crested bustards fly up to avoid danger and can be seriously injured flying into the ceiling of shorter caging.

Management Challenges: Serious aggression problems can occur during the breeding season. Males have been observed harassing females to the point of injury during their attempts to copulate with an unreceptive female. Some pairs are compatible year round while others must be separated after copulation.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

Buff-crested bustards are listed by IUCN as a species of Least Concern

REFERENCES:

del Hoyo, J., Elliot, A., & Sargatal, J. eds. (1996). Handbook of the Birds of the World. Vol. 3. Hoatzin to Auks. Lynx Edicions, Barcelona.

Hallager, S.. International Studbook for the Buff-crested bustard. 2013. Smithsonian National Zoological Park.

Johnsgard, Paul A.. 1991. Bustards, Hemipodes, and Sandgrouse, Birds of Dry Places. Oxford University Press.

Baily, T., & Hallager, S. 2003. Management of Bustards in Captivity. Avicultural Magazine 109 (1): 1-8.

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:

Name: Sara Hallager

Date: 5/11/2014