

Species Fact Sheets

Order: Charadriiformes
Scientific Name: *Fratercula corniculata*

Family: Alcidae
Common Name: Horned Puffin

AZA Management: Green Yellow Red None



NATURAL HISTORY:

Geographic Range: Europe Asia North America Neotropical
 Africa Australia Other Pacific and Arctic Ocean

Habitat: Forest Desert Grassland Coastal
 Riverine Montane Other Pelagic, Marine

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 Ideal air temp is 40-60 F; can be in colder short term as long as the entire colony can get in the water

Heat Tolerance: To 30° F To 50° F To 70° F To 90° F
 To 110° F Other Ideal air temp is 40-60 F, average of 50 F.

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

Captive Dietary Needs:

Whole food items recommended (small fish, invertebrates, silversides, lake smelt, capelin, small herring, salmon smolts, sand eels/lances, krill, squid, clams). Consumes about 25% of body weight daily.

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Life Expectancy in the Wild: Males: +20 years Females: +20 years

Life Expectancy in Captivity: Males: +20 years Females: +20 years

BREEDING INFORMATION:

Age at Sexual Maturity: Males: 3-5 years Females: 3-5 years

Courtship Displays:

Billing. Adults in pair stand facing, with bills side by side, and waggle heads while opening and closing bills. Although Billing occurs during courtship, it continues through reproductive season and may be observed between neighbors and individuals of same sex. During Billing, male sometimes grabs feathers on female's neck. Between Billings, partners occasionally bow toward each other and sometimes male ends Billing by grabbing female's leg above tarsus.

Head-Jerking. As in Tufted Puffin, uses Head-Jerking in courtship. In contrast to Tufted Puffin, may use Head-Jerk, in less exaggerated form, in other contexts as well. Head-Jerking observed in groups of birds on water, when not directed to a particular bird; spectators of a courting pair sometimes follow them and Head-Jerk. During Head-Jerking, individual utters a sort of op sound during prolonged Head-Jerking utters a rhythmic op-op-op-op.

Nest Site Description:

In the wild, the most common nesting habitat for Horned puffins is rock crevices in talus. This differs from other puffin species that are known for creating tunnels and burrows in the ground. Depending on geographic location nest sites can be situated in talus, among beach boulders, or found in earthen burrows.

Nests are usually constructed by using the feet, and sometimes bill, to excavate soil, debris, etc. from rock crevices or burrows. Nesting materials, such as dry grasses, small twigs, and sometimes feathers, are gathered using its bill and brought back to the nest site. Nest construction varies.

In a zoo or aquarium environment, exhibits are designed to depict natural habitats. Rockwork and substrate on exhibit and/or artificial nest boxes are used.

Clutch Size, Egg Description: 1 egg; usually dull or creamy white color and may show faint markings or spots

Incubation Period: ~40-45 days

Fledgling Period: ~40-45 days

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Parental Care: Both sexes incubate egg. Parents brood the chick for ~6-7 days until the chick can thermoregulate. Both sexes feed the chick during daylight hours. Parents do not provide any parental care post fledging.

Chick Development: Chick growth and development can be highly variable depending on parental care and depends on daily food intake.

CAPTIVE HABITAT INFORMATION:

Social Structure in the Wild: Colony

Social Structure in Captivity: Ideal to have equal sex ratio and a range of ages in population

Minimum Group Size: 6

Maximum Group Size: 20 or more

Compatible in Mixed Species Exhibits: Yes **Comments:** Other alcids, oystercatchers. Can out compete auklets

Optimal Habitat Size: Min. pool depth 7 feet, average exhibit size 1,350 sq. ft, with average rock cliff height of 14 feet. Average pool volume 25,000 gallons. 75% of colony should be able to occupy water at one time. Generally have 1/3 land area to 2/3 water surface area.

Management Challenges: Aspergillosis; aggression toward conspecifics and other species, especially during breeding season. Can often defend more than one nest tunnel in captivity.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

Need full spectrum lighting. Exhibit should be designed to encourage natural behaviors of swimming, diving, resting, feeding in the water, walking, climbing, nesting, porpoising, rafting, bathing, and preening.

REFERENCES:

Birds of North America

COMPLETED BY:

Name: Sara Perry

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