

Species Fact Sheets

Order: Gruiformes
Scientific Name: *Eurypyga helias*

Family: Eurypygidae
Common Name: Sunbittern

AZA Management: Green Yellow Red None

Photo (Male):



Photo (Female):



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 55 F with access to heat

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:

Fish, meat, pinkies and/or chopped fuzzy mice, soaked dog food

Life Expectancy in the Wild: Males: Unknown/~15 years Females: Unknown/~15 years

Life Expectancy in Captivity: Males: 24-29 years Females: 15-20 years

BREEDING INFORMATION:

Age at Sexual Maturity: Males: Earliest 1 year Females: Earliest 1 year

Courtship Displays: Soft & low calling, swaying side to side with intermittent bill clacking when pair are near each other.

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Nest Site Description: Shallow cup nest made with mud, leaves, sticks, and moss. Typically on a branch near but not over water. Height is typically 10-20 feet in the air

Clutch Size, Egg Description: 2-3 eggs light brown with dark spots and blotches

Incubation Period: 27-30 days

Fledgling Period: 20-30 days

Parental Care: Both parents incubate eggs and feed the chicks. Some pairs will allow multiple clutches to stay and form a family unit. Other pairs will allow offspring to stay for 3-4 months then will show aggression

Chick Development: The chicks are precocial and start investigating out of the nest at an early age. It is common for chicks to fall out of the nest. It is optimal to return young chicks to the nest if it is accessible.

CAPTIVE HABITAT INFORMATION:

Social Structure in the Wild: Solitary or in pairs

Social Structure in Captivity: Some pairs will allow offspring to stay and form a family unit. Other pairs will allow offspring to stay for 3-4 months then will show aggression quickly. There has been success with a sire with his 2 male offspring. Factors influencing these diverse social structures within the species are not well understood at this point.

Minimum Group Size: Single bird

Maximum Group Size: 5 is the largest group successfully housed; 2 parents and 3 offspring

Compatible in Mixed Species Exhibits: Yes

Comments: Various passerine species, various species of waterfowl, agouti, sloth, callitrichidae species, ciconiiformes & phoenicopteriformes species

Optimal Habitat Size: Minimum space for quarantine for a single bird or compatible pair 7'x5'x7'; exhibits 24' x 11.5'x 12' or larger, sufficient dimensions to easily glide up for safety and on the ground for eating. Pools or large puddles for dipping food and bathing; plant furnishings for nesting material; variety of tree/branch sizes for perching and nesting options. Nest are built on high open branches near but not over water

Management Challenges: Hand rearing is not a preferred method, these birds imprint easily. Occasionally they will still breed, but there are usually complications with incubating and rearing offspring.
Bumblefoot can be a problem if birds are overweight (target weight 180-240gm depending on body score) or lacks adequate perching. Reduce this problem by encouraging activity and vary sizes and texture of perching.

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ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

Please provide optimal padding on the top of the crate during transport to prevent injury.

REFERENCES:

AZA Sunbittern SSP Sustainability Report

AZA Sunbittern Breeding Transfer Plan

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COMPLETED BY:

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Date: 12/15/2018