

Species Fact Sheets

Order: Cuculiformes
Scientific Name: *Coua cristata*

Family: Cuculidae
Common Name: Crested Coua

AZA Management: Green Yellow Red None

Photo (Male):



Photo (Female):



NATURAL HISTORY:

Geographic Range: Europe Asia North America Neotropical
 Africa Australia Other Madagascar

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 Able to tolerate temps down to 40 degrees F, if provided with shelter and a heat source.

Heat Tolerance: To 30° F To 50° F To 70° F To 90° F
 To 110° F Other

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

Captive Dietary Needs:

Captive diets should consist of a variety of soft fruits and greens, a soaked commercial bird pellet, insects, and a protein source such as mice pinks and/or commercial avian meat diets.

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

Life Expectancy in Captivity: Males: Unknown, but original birds imported to the US population are still alive at 15 years old. (August 2017)
 Females: Unknown, but the original birds imported to the US population are still alive at 15 years old. (August 2017)

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BREEDING INFORMATION:

Age at Sexual Maturity: Males: 9 months Females: 1 year

Courtship Displays: The male will present valued food items to the female while making a soft “grring” sound. Pair bonding behavior includes presenting each other with nesting material while head and tail bobbing.

Nest Site Description: Loose platform of small twigs; will readily utilize artificial nest platforms and wide baskets in captive settings, may or may not utilize nesting material

Clutch Size, Egg Description: 2, oblong, white, average size is

Incubation Period: 11 days

Fledgling Period: 10-12 days

Parental Care: In the AZA population, only a few pairs have reliably incubated their eggs. Most chicks have been hand-reared. However, progress is being made with parental incubation and rearing. With a pair will incubate, both parents will participate and feed the chicks. However, aggression towards chicks at fledging has been observed in multiple pairs. Fledglings will most likely need to be removed to a “finish cage” set-up that physically separates the chicks from the parents but still allows them to feed the chicks through the mesh.

Chick Development: Chicks are altricial, but grow and wean quickly.

CAPTIVE HABITAT INFORMATION:

Social Structure in the Wild: Unknown

Social Structure in Captivity: Monogamous pairs, singletons, small single sex groups

Minimum Group Size: 1

Maximum Group Size: Pairs or Single-sex trio

Compatible in Mixed Species Exhibits: Yes **Comments:** Some egg breaking has been reported in off-exhibit breeding situations when mixed with other species, but space and nesting sites may be a factor.

Optimal Habitat Size: No smaller than 6' x 10' x 12' (or similar) for a breeding pair. Singletons can utilize a smaller space, for example 4' x 10' x 12'.

Management Challenges: As stated above, most challenges center around parental care.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

Crested Couas are great exhibit birds and are a favorite of many of our guests. Hand-reared birds are especially calm and can be utilized in interactive aviaries.

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REFERENCES:

del Hoyo, J., Elliot, A. & Sargatal, J. eds. (1997). Handbook of Birds of the World. Vol. 4. Sandgrouse to Cuckoos. Lynx Edicions, Barcelona.

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