

Species Fact Sheets

Order: Phoenicopteriformes
Scientific Name: Phoenicopterus chilensis

Family: Phoenicopteridae
Common Name: Chilean Flamingo

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 [Click here to enter text.](#)

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:

There are several commercial flamingo products on the market that replicate the flamingos natural diet. A canthaxanthin supplement may also be given to aid in the pink pigmentation of the feathers.

Life Expectancy in the Wild: Males: 30 Females: 30

Life Expectancy in Captivity: Males: 55 Females: 55

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BREEDING INFORMATION:

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

Courtship Displays: Head flagging, false feeding, wing-leg stretch, wing salute, and twist-preen

Nest Site Description: Flamingos should have a dedicated area for breeding in an area that will have the least amount of disturbance. The rookery should be separate from feeding areas and free from predators. A variety of soils can be used but it is critical to keep the soil supple and turned, to allow the bird to work it with their beaks to build their mounds. The soil in the nesting area should be kept wet to lightly flooded. Wet soil will stimulate the birds to build and lay. Mulch, leaves, etc can be added to the soil for texture

Clutch Size, Egg Description: Flamingos lay one egg which is elongated and symmetrical. Eggs are white with a chalky coating. Egg dimension is 92x 53.1 mm.

Incubation Period: 28-32 days

Fledgling Period: 90-120 days

Parental Care: Both parents incubate the egg. When the egg hatches one parent will stay with the chick continuously while it is on the nest. The pair takes turns with this responsibility. Both parents feed the chicks but in some cases it has been observed that one of the parents is the primary feeder. Adult flamingos secrete a special formula called "crop milk" to feed the chicks. When the chick leaves the nest, the parents continue to care for the chick for approximately six months and have been observed caring for chicks even until the next breeding year.

Chick Development: Chicks hatch after a 28-32 day incubation. Chicks begin to fluff out and vocalize within an hour after hatching. They stay on the nests usually for a week but can leave as early as 3 days and as long as 14 days. When chicks leave the nest, they form groups known as a crèche with other chicks. Chicks usually fledge at 90-120 days.

CAPTIVE HABITAT INFORMATION:

Social Structure in the Wild: Colonial

Social Structure in Captivity: Colonial

Minimum Group Size: 20

Maximum Group Size: Depends on exhibit size but otherwise no limit

Compatible in Mixed Species Exhibits: Yes **Comments:** Mostly see with Pelicans, Ibis, egrets, spoonbills. Swans can be dangerous mixed with flamingos

Optimal Habitat Size: Flock size should be taken into consideration and the bird given a pool large enough for the entire colony to wade in. Flamingos like to

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wade in shallow – ankle deep water and enough ground space should be provided so that the birds have adequate resting space, appropriate flight distance to avoid panic when staff are in the the exhibit and enough space for the colony’s breeding rituals.

Management Challenges: Chilean flamingos have not bred consistently in captivity. Age, sex ratio and inappropriate exhibits may all play a part. AZA has a large population but a rather low reproduction number. Meeting Institutional needs has been a challenge as there are more places who want them or want to increase flock numbers than there are birds available.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

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REFERENCES:

Flamingo Husbandry Guidelines

Flamingos by Malcolm and Carol Ogilvie

Birds of the World "Wading Birds" by John P.S. Mackenzie

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COMPLETED BY:

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Date: 2/2/2014