

Species Fact Sheets

Order: Charadriiformes
Scientific Name: *Fratercula arctica*

Family: Alcidae
Common Name: Atlantic puffin

AZA Management: Green Yellow Red None

Photo (Male):



Photo (Female):



NATURAL HISTORY:

Geographic Range: Europe Asia North America Neotropical
 Africa Australia Other "North Atlantic": Maine, to high Arctic in eastern Canada and east to northern Russia, south to northern France.

Habitat: Forest Desert Grassland Coastal
 Riverine Montane Other And Atlantic waters

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 60 F

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

Captive Dietary Needs:

Capelin, Smelt, Silversides, Krill, Herring

Life Expectancy in the Wild: Males: 20-25 years Females: 20-25 years

Life Expectancy in Captivity: Males: 20-30 years Females: 20-30 years

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BREEDING INFORMATION:

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

Courtship Displays: Courtship displays occur on water and land. (Most successful copulations occur on water.) Males will perform sexual nodding; rapid head jerks, like a hiccup, raising their bill vertically, accompanied by soft vocalizations. Billing also occurs between mates. Mates will lower their heads, point their bills downward, and touch their closed bills together.

Nest Site Description: Rock crevice or burrow

Clutch Size, Egg Description: Pairs typically lay one egg, a second may be laid if the first is lost early in incubation

Incubation Period: Both sexes incubate; 39-45 days

Fledging Period: 43-52 days

Parental Care: Both parents feed from hatch to fledging. One parent remains in the nest with the chick at all times, the other then forages.

Chick Development: Chicks remain in the nest until fledging, and are completely independent when they leave the nest. Typically they leave the nest at night, to avoid predation. In captivity, chicks can be pulled before fledging, to be introduced back to the exhibit after fledging.

CAPTIVE HABITAT INFORMATION:

Social Structure in the Wild: Colonial

Social Structure in Captivity: Colonial

Minimum Group Size: 1.1

Maximum Group Size: Limited by exhibit size

Compatible in Mixed Species Exhibits: Yes **Comments:** Other alcids and waterfowl primarily. Hybridization is possible with Horned puffins.

Optimal Habitat Size: There are not currently any published exhibit standards at this time. With that, pool/water space should be ample to allow the entire collection to utilize it comfortably at the same time. The land space should be the same, with some sort of burrows, or access to burrows built into the exhibit.

Management Challenges: Life support to maintain chilled water and air are the main challenges.

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ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

Species photo credit: Mike Aguilera, SeaWorld photographer

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REFERENCES:

Gaston, Anthony J. (2004). *Seabirds: A Natural History*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

AZA Charadriiformes Taxon Advisory Group 2011-2015 Regional Collection Plan. Silver Spring, MD. Association of Zoos and Aquariums

Johnsgard, Paul A. (1987). *Diving Birds of North America*. University of Nebraska Press

Nettleship, David N., Birkhead, Tim R. (1985). *The Atlantic Alcidae*. London: Academic Press

<http://projectpuffin.audubon.org/atlantic-puffin-3>

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