

# Species Fact Sheets

**Order:** Ciconiiformes  
**Scientific Name:** *Ciconia ciconia*

**Family:** Ciconiidae  
**Common Name:** (European) White stork

**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 [Prefer open country. Nest in urban areas often on man-made structures.](#)

**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 [Can tolerate colder temps for short periods with access to minimal shelter](#)

**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 and meat products primary food. Supplement with insects for enrichment.

**Life Expectancy in the Wild:** Males: 30 years or longer Females: 30 years or longer

**Life Expectancy in Captivity:** Males: 35 years Females: 30 years

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## BREEDING INFORMATION:

**Age at Sexual Maturity:** Males: Three to four years Females: Three to four years

**Courtship Displays:** Birds are tightly bonded and will bill clatter with the neck extended.

**Nest Site Description:** A large stick/straw nests are built on elevated structures

**Clutch Size, Egg Description:** Three to five eggs, usually four, in a stick/straw nest built on an elevated structure

**Incubation Period:** 31-34 days

**Fledgling Period:** Two months

**Parental Care:** Both parents care for the chicks.

**Chick Development:** Chicks are precocial with white down and a black beak.

## CAPTIVE HABITAT INFORMATION:

**Social Structure in the Wild:** Can nest in close proximity to other white storks, but will aggressively protect their nests. They are gregarious during migration and in winter range, often gathering in large numbers.

**Social Structure in Captivity:** Storks may be maintained in flocks as long as there is adequate space for nesting birds. It is recommended that habitat is large enough that nests can be built at least 30 meters from other nests.

**Minimum Group Size:** One pair

**Maximum Group Size:** Multiple pairs

**Compatible in Mixed Species Exhibits:** Yes **Comments:** Can work with select hoofstock and many bird species

**Optimal Habitat Size:** 2500 square feet for one pair.

**Management Challenges:** Trying to maintain more than one pair can sometimes be difficult because of territorial fights. These fights can be severe, with birds sustaining serious injuries. However, in many European zoos they are successfully managed in this manner and regularly breed.

## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

This is a good stork species for cold weather zoos.

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## REFERENCES:

Handbooks of Birds of the World, Volume One, Page 460. Lynx Editions

Storks, Ibises, and Spoonbills of the World. Hancock, Kushhlan, and Kahl. Academic Press, 1992. Page 97-103.

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