

# Elegant Crested Tinamou

*Eudromia elegans*



**Class:** *Aves*

**Order:** *Struthioniformes*

**Family:** *Tinamidae*

**Characteristics:** Elegant crested tinamous are stocky, round birds with very short tails and rounded wings. This is a partridge-like ground bird. These birds are very large tinamous with a long, thin crest on the head. The body is usually 15-16 inches long ([Encyclopedia of Life](#)). The elegant crested tinamou has only three toes. The body color is an olive gray with black and white lines scattered on the body. This species has a long white stripe from the eye to the side of the neck. ([Cornell](#))

**Behavior:** Elegant crested tinamous are mostly [terrestrial](#) and spend their time foraging for food on the ground. They will generally only take flight if startled. They do have very fast flight but stay close to the ground. This species is most active in the morning and late afternoon. When not feeding, the tinamou [seeks shade](#) for rest or dust bathing. During the non-breeding season, tinamous form flocks of 30-40 individuals. ([Cornell](#))

**Reproduction:** The elegant crested tinamou will begin to [sing](#) well before the breeding season. When the female is ready to mate, she will chase the male until he chases her back. The female will then allow herself to be caught. Males will dig a nest bowl by running continuously in a circle. Females will lay a clutch of 5-6 eggs. The eggs are yellowish-green in color. A single female may lay 30-40 eggs in a season. The male will incubate the eggs for about 20 days. The young leave the nest shortly after hatching, accompanied by the male. The male is responsible for all of the parental care until the young are independent at 3-4 months of age. ([ASAG](#))

**Diet:** Wild: Insects, seeds, leaves, and fruit.

Zoo: Fruits, vegetables, greens, finch seed, pigeon mix, and vitamin supplements.

**Conservation:** According to [IUCN Redlist](#), the elegant crested tinamou is of least concern. The population is believed to be declining, but at a fairly slow pace. This tinamou has a very large range and is thought to be widespread and common throughout.

**FYI:** Tinamous are closely related to the ostrich and emu. ([Toledo Zoo](#)) The male hides the chicks entirely under his wings and body. They will gradually wander further and further from him.



## Range & Habitat:

This tinamou is found in dry lowland shrubland and farmland in Southern Chile and Argentina.



**Lifespan:** up to 10 years in captivity, unknown in the wild.

**Special Adaptations:** The tinamou is the closest living relative of prehistoric bird species.

**IUCN Conservation Status:**  
Least Concern

