

White-cheeked Turaco

Tauraco leucotis



Class: *Aves*

Order: *Cuculiformes*

Family: *Musophagidae*

Characteristics:

The average size of this bird is approximately 16 inches. They are olive green with a darker greenish-blue tail and wings. The underwings are a vibrant red. The crown of the head has a dark green-blue crest. There are white patches on the cheeks and in front of their eyes. Around their dark eyes is a featherless dark orange region. Their beaks are also a dark orange. The green and red feathers contain copper, giving them their colors.

Behavior:

Live in non-migratory flocks of up to 12 individuals. A flock will often have a favored roosting and feeding area. They move from area to area by running along branches. They have calls which they use as a way to locate one another. These birds remain silent and still when predators are near. If they're spotted they will take off flying. Pairs are very territorial with males often chasing away intruders.

Reproduction:

Mostly form monogamous pairs with both mother and father taking turns incubating 2- 3 eggs for a space of 21 to 24 days. When the chicks hatch, the feeding of these offspring becomes a flock affair (Ruppel 1835). Chicks are able to fly after 4 weeks and will decide whether to stay with or leave the group around 6 weeks of life.

Diet

Wild: Prefer to eat fruits and berries with the occasional insect or small lizard.

Zoo: A variety of fruits and vegetables with hard boiled eggs serving as a proteins source.

Conservation:

Are considered a pest by natives because they feed on crops. Deforestation is also a concern.

FYI:

- Chicks have claws on the end of their wings to help them cling to branches. They lose these claws when they fledge (National Aviary).
- Key species in seed dispersal



Range & Habitat:

A variety of forest habitats, including tall, riverside and evergreen.



Lifespan: up to 10-12 years in captivity, 8 years in the wild.

Special Adaptations:

Will shed their major feathers when captured to avoid predation

IUCN Conservation Status:

Least Concern

