



# African Pygmy Goose

**Nettapus auritus**

FAMILY: Anatidae

ORDER: Anseriformes

AZA MANEGMENT: Yellow

## GEOGRAPHIC RANGE

- EUROPE
- ASIA
- NORTH AMERICA
- NEOTROPICAL
- AFRICA
- AUSTRALIA
- OTHER

## HABITAT

- FOREST
- DESERT
- GRASSLAND
- COASTAL
- RIVERINE
- MONTANE
- OTHER

African swamps, marshes and sluggish rivers supporting an abundance of aquatic vegetation. They prefer quiet, secluded pools with plenty of dense vegetation to camouflage.

## CIRCADIAN CYCLE

- DIURNAL
- CREPUSCULAR
- NOCTURNAL
- OTHER

Additional information here if needed.

## TEMPERATURE TOLERANCE



From 50° F to 90° F

## DIET

- FRUGIVORE
- NECTIVORE
- CARNIVORE
- OMNIVORE
- PISCIVORE
- FOLIVORE
- INSECTIVORE
- OTHER

**Captive Dietary Needs:** Mazuri waterfowl maintenance/breeder, millet/red millet and fresh chopped greens (romaine/kale).

## LIFE EXPECTANCY

	Median Life Expectancy	Maximum Longevity	
Within AZA	~10	15	♂
In the Wild	~10	15	
Within AZA	~10	15	♀
In the Wild	~10	15	

# BREEDING INFORMATION



## AGE AT SEXUAL MATURITY



Males ~2



Females ~2

**Incubation period: 23-26 days**

**Fledgling Period: 50-60 days**



## CLUTCH SIZE, & EGG DESCRIPTION



5-9 Ivory white eggs (up to 12 in some cases); eggs tend to be laid every other day. First eggs in clutch may be olive-tinged

# CAPTIVE HABITAT INFORMATION



## SOCIAL STRUCTURE

**In the Wild:** Birds can be semi-gregarious, at times forming groups of 20-200 birds. Larger groups tend to occur during molt and dry seasons.

**Within AZA:** Dominant drakes will push a less dominant drake out of the social structure; birds tend to form strong pair bonds so 1.1 is an ideal breeding setup.

**Minimum Group Size: 1.1**

**Maximum Group Size: 2.2; depending on the size of the pond and breeding setup.**



## COURTSHIP DISPLAYS

Female solicits male frequently with head-bobbing.



## NEST SITE DESCRIPTION

Typically in hollow tree cavities above water, sometimes as high as 60 ft. (in the wild). It is rare for them to nest on land but has been reported in ground vegetation around swampy marshes. Entrance holes range from 2.6" x 2.4" with a nest chamber ~5" in diameter. In captivity birds tend to feel comfortable as cavity nesters, hollow palm logs and porch boxes work very well, although they have been known to utilize ground vegetation and tunnel boxes.



## CHICK DEVELOPMENT

Chicks have a stiff tail at hatch, black and white with a black dot on cheek; hatch weights can range from 15g-18g. By 45 days of age, chicks typically weigh ~200g and are full winged.



## PARENTAL CARE

Female incubates exclusively, male acts as sentinel during this period. Female broods the chicks on her own, but male will stay nearby. The drake's role in brood care is unknown.



## MIXED SPECIES EXHIBITS

**Compatible in mixed species exhibits?**

YES

NO

**Comments:** Birds can be kept and bred successfully in a mixed exhibit but care should be taken not to overcrowd the exhibit as well as to provide plenty of visual barriers and nesting opportunities.



## OPTIMAL HABITAT SIZE

Birds do well in a small quiet pool with running fresh water ~4' x 4' and 4 ft. deep, as well as a larger pool with visual barriers in/around the water to help curb some anxious behavior. Perching close/above the water is very helpful to relieve some stress when maintenance is necessary in the ponds.



## MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES

Charming birds, but can be quite anxious in an aviary that doesn't allow them to have their own private area and/or visual barriers. A more advanced species to breed in captivity although recently, success has been more prominent in zoos across the US. During chick rearing, chicks need quite a bit of stimulation in the first few days after being introduced to food

stimulation in the first few days after being introduced to food and special attention should be paid to keeping their plumage clean.

## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

### REFERENCES

Todd, Frank S. Natural History of Waterfowl. Ibis Publishing company, California. (1996)  
Scott, P. A Colored Key of the Wildfowl of the World. Slimbridge, England. The Wildfowl Trust. (1988)  
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