



Dalmatian Pelican

Pelecanus crispus

FAMILY: Pelecanidae

ORDER: Pelecaniformes

AZA MANAGEMENT: Studbook

GEOGRAPHIC RANGE

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

HABITAT

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

CIRCADIAN CYCLE

- DIURNAL

TEMPERATURE TOLERANCE



From 30 ° F to 110 ° F

Provide opportunity for indoor housing below 30 degrees

DIET

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

Thawed, frozen fish which are supplemented with vitamin E/thiamin. It is recommended to feed more than one species of fish. Trout, smelt, capelin, sardine, mackerel and herring are commonly fed. Birds are hand-fed the fish in a catch pen, usually twice per day. When chicks are present, the parents are feed extra small trout which increases in size as the chick(s) grow, also the number of feedings per day increases to 3 or 4. If possible, give access to a natural pond containing live fish to encourage natural foraging behavior.

LIFE EXPECTANCY

	Median Life Expectancy	Maximum Longevity	
Within AZA	X	~50 years	♂
In the Wild	Unknown	Unknown	
Within AZA	X	~50 years	♀
In the Wild	Unknown	Unknown	

CREPUSCULAR

NOCTURNAL

OTHER

BREEDING INFORMATION



AGE AT SEXUAL MATURITY



Males: Typically 3-4 years but can be as early as 2 years



Females: Typically 3-4 years but can be as early as 2 years

Incubation period: 30-34 days

Fledgling Period: 60-85 days, but chick may “fledge” to water at 30-45 days and continue to return to the nest daily until fully fledging



CLUTCH SIZE, & EGG DESCRIPTION



Average clutch is 2 eggs, but can be from 1-6. Eggs are laid every 2-3 days. Egg is white with a chalky exterior.



COURTSHIP DISPLAYS

Male will perform a bowing display with wings drooping but wingtips elevated and tail spread, while vibrating both the wing and tail feathers. The bill is snapped shut, the gular pouch expands and hissing and spitting sounds are made.



NEST SITE DESCRIPTION

The nest is located on the ground on an island or floating vegetation. It is quite large with the base composed of large sticks and lined with softer material such as papyrus tops or grasses.



CHICK DEVELOPMENT

Chicks are altricial and born naked with eyes shut. They will eventually be covered in white down. If more than one chick hatches in a nest, siblicide may occur.



PARENTAL CARE

Both parents incubate the eggs and care for the chicks. While the chick is very young, one parent will always be at the nest, but as the chick ages, the parents will begin to leave it alone at the nest for increasingly longer periods of time.

CAPTIVE HABITAT INFORMATION



SOCIAL STRUCTURE

In the wild: Gregarious



MIXED SPECIES EXHIBITS

Compatible in mixed species exhibits? YES

NO

Comments: Can be housed with other species of pelicans such as Great White Pelicans or Pink-backed Pelicans. Can also be housed in large exhibits with a variety of mammals, but require a place such as an island where they can escape. Horned mammals may gore pelicans.

Within AZA: Gregarious

Minimum Group Size: 3.3 for breeding, for non-breeding at least 3-4 birds

Maximum Group Size: As many as exhibit can hold comfortably, try to keep sex ratio even for breeding



OPTIMAL HABITAT SIZE

Large pond with island or floating barge or raft for nesting. Catch pen for feeding birds is helpful.



MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES

Siblicide-Can cross-foster additional eggs/chicks or hand-raise to prevent siblicide. Hospitalization-Birds do not do well under anesthesia. Feet-Bumblefoot can occur; also if thorny acacia trees are present, thorns can impale webbing on feet.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Dalmatian Pelicans in captivity are very tractable. They easily train to come into a catch pen to eat and some can be hand-grabbed for a medical procedure or move. During nesting, many of the birds will sit tight while the keeper procures the egg for candling or the chick for processing. In this case, proceed with caution and wear safety goggles as the bird may snap at you. Note that in the photos, both birds are shown in breeding plumage. The sexes are similar except that the female is smaller. In non-breeding plumage, the pouch and the skin around the eye is a dull yellow color and the feathers on the top of the head are very short.

REFERENCES

Del Hoyo, J., Elliot, A. & Sargatal, J. eds. (1994). Handbook of the Birds of the World – Vol 1. Ostrich to Ducks. Lynx Edicions, Barcelona.

Paul A. Johnsgard, (1993), Cormorants, Darters, and Pelicans of the World, The Smithsonian Institution



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