

Species Fact Sheets

Order: Piciformes
Scientific Name: *Ramphastos sulfuratus*

Family: Ramphastidae
Common Name: Keel-billed toucan

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 [Click here to enter text.](#)

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 [As long as shelter and a heat source are provided](#)

Heat Tolerance: To 30° F To 50° F To 70° F To 90° F
 To 110° F Other [Provide shade and access to mister system](#)

Diet: Frugivore Carnivore Piscivore Insectivore
 Nectivore Omnivore Folivore Other (Add Below)

Captive Dietary Needs:

A commercial, low-iron pellet such as Mazuri softbill diet, along with a variety of low-iron fruits. Pellets can be lightly soaked to improve palatability. Toucans are susceptible to iron storage disease, so foods high in iron should be avoided.

Life Expectancy in the Wild: Males: Unknown Females: Unknown

Life Expectancy in Captivity: Males: Up to 20 years Females: Up to 20 years

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BREEDING INFORMATION:

Age at Sexual Maturity: Males: 3-4 years old Females: 3-4 years old

Courtship Displays: Breeding season occurs from March until June. Males will vocalize and offer food to females. A pair may also engage in bill "dueling."

Nest Site Description: Nests occur in tree cavities 20 feet up, which the birds hollow out themselves. They leave some wood chips to line the nest. Nests may also include a collection of pits from fruit that has been eaten. Providing a pair with a nest cavity packed with substrate allows them to excavate it themselves, thus facilitating breeding behavior.

Clutch Size, Egg Description: 1-4 dull white eggs

Incubation Period: 16-20 days

Fledgling Period: 5-7 weeks

Parental Care: Both males and females incubate eggs and feed chicks.

Chick Development: Chicks hatch with eyes closed and no feathers. Food items higher in iron/protein are acceptable during this time in a toucan's life. This would include insects, pinkies, bird of prey, etc.

CAPTIVE HABITAT INFORMATION:

Social Structure in the Wild: Toucans live and forage in groups of up to 15-20 individuals.

Social Structure in Captivity: Usually housed in pairs or small same sex groups. Chicks may stay with parents for up to 2 years.

Minimum Group Size: 1

Maximum Group Size: 4-5 adults

Compatible in Mixed Species Exhibits:

Varies

Comments:

Toucans may show aggression toward other species and have been known to kill and consume fledglings of other species, particularly passerines. Diet may be a concern as well due to the low-iron needs of toucans. Toucan breeding should also be considered a high priority and other species housed with them may interfere with that. Examine exhibit size, foliage cover, and dietary concerns when considering keel-billeds in a mixed species aviary.

Optimal Habitat Size: Floor space for a breeding pair should be a minimum of 200 square feet. Exhibit height should be a minimum of 8 feet. Both should be larger if at all possible.

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Management Challenges: There are two main challenges when it comes to keel-billed toucan management. The first is their susceptibility to iron storage disease. Despite limiting the iron in their diet, there is still a high incidence of it among captive toucans of all species. The second challenge is breeding. There have been very few zoos successful in breeding this species. Causes are unknown but variables include exhibit size, access to outside, diet, pair compatibility, and others.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

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REFERENCES:

Jones, Reeve and Carole S. Griffiths.(2011).Keel-billed Toucan (*Ramphastos sulfuratus*), Neotropical Birds Online (T. S. Schulenberg, Editor). Ithaca: Cornell Lab of Ornithology; retrieved from Neotropical Birds Online: <https://neotropical.birds.cornell.edu/Species-Account/nb/species/kebtou1>

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