

# African Pygmy Goose

**Scientific Name:** *Nettapus auritus*

**Class:** Aves

**Order:** Anseriformes

**Family:** Anatidae



The African Pygmy Goose is a perching duck from the sub-Saharan Africa area. They are the smallest of Africa's wildfowl, and one of the smallest in the world. The average weight of a male is 285 grams (10.1 oz) and for the female 260 grams (9.2 oz). Their wingspan is between 142 millimeters (5.6 in) to 165 millimeters (6.5 in). The African pygmy goose has a short bill which extends up the forehead so they resemble geese. The males have a white face with black eye patches. The iridescent black crown extends down the back of the neck. The upper half of the fore neck is white whereas the base of the neck and breast are light chestnut colored. The sixteen tail feathers are black. The wing feathers are black with metallic green iridescence on the coverts.

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## Range

The African pygmy goose is found in sub-Saharan Africa and Madagascar. They are known to be nomadic.

## Habitat

They live in slow flowing or stagnant water with a cover of water lilies. This includes inland wetlands, open swamps, river pools, and estuaries.

## Gestation

The female lays 6 to 12 eggs that are incubated for 23 to 26 days.

## Litter

There is usually between 6 and 12 young with each mating.

## Behavior

They live in strong pair bonds that can last over several seasons and their breeding is triggered by rains.

## Reproduction

The African pygmy goose will nest in natural hollows or disused holes of barbets and woodpeckers in trees standing in or close to the water. They have strong pair bonds that may last over several breeding cycles. The move to mate is triggered by the rains which increases the food supply to the parents and young.

## Wild Diet

The African pygmy goose eats predominantly the seeds of water lilies, seeds, and vegetative parts of aquatic plants. They also may eat aquatic insects and small fish.