

White-crested Turaco

Scientific Name: *Tauraco leucolophus*

Class: Aves

Order: Cuculiformes

Family: Musophagidae



The White-crested Turacos are a very colorful bird with their light green body plumage; dark blue to purple back, wings and tail, jet black face, red eye ring, bright yellow beak, red flight feathers, long charcoal tail and their white chin, neck and nape. Their most prominent feature is their white crest that resembles a Mohawk. They have red flight feathers. The red and green color is due to a special copper pigmentation which is unique to the turaco species. A distinctive feature is their semi zygodactylous toes. Each claw has a pair of toes that face forward and a pair that face backward (8 toes in all), but they have a more flexible toe on the rear of each claw that they can move to the side. This flexibility makes for easy grip of branches and to climb trees. The average White-crested turaco is approximately 15 inches long and weighs between 6-8.5 ounces.

Range

The range of the white crested turaco is a narrow strip of Central Africa from Nigeria across Chad and Cameroon into Sudan and Zaire.

Habitat

The habitat of the white crested turaco is humid forest edge to open woodland to acacia shrub. They are tree birds.

Gestation

Breeding is late spring into summer, 22 days

Litter

2 eggs

Behavior

White crested turacos start feeding often at dawn and then with preening tree breaks continue eating until time to roost. Male and females commonly pair up and engage in small flocks but they are territorially expressive. Each pair defends its space

Reproduction

A breeding pair of white crested turacos establishes a flat nest of twigs 5 to 20 meters up in trees. After performing their mating dance, the female lays the eggs and both sexes raise the young.

Wild Diet

White-crested turacos have a diet of fruit, seeds, leaves, flowers and, occasionally, caterpillars, moths, beetles, snails and slugs.