

African Purple Swamphen

Porphyrio madagascariensis

Previously known as the Purple Gallinule, the Purple Swamphen is a very distinctive bird found in large parts of Africa, always near fresh water like reed-beds, marshes and flooded grassland.

The species makes loud, quick, bleating and hooting calls, which are hardly bird-like in tone. It is particularly noisy during the breeding season. Despite being clumsy in flight it can fly long distances, and it is a good swimmer, especially for a bird without webbed feet.

Preferring wet areas with high rainfall, swamps, lake edges and damp pastures, they often live in pairs and larger communities. It clambers through the reeds, eating the tender shoots and vegetable-like matter. They will eat eggs, ducklings, small fish and invertebrates such as snails, often using one foot to bring food to their mouth rather than eat it on the ground. Where they are not persecuted they can become tame and be readily seen in towns and cities.



Lifespan: 20 Years

Weight: 500 - 850 g

Size: 38 - 46 cm

Breeding Season: Seasonal

Incubation Period: 23 - 27 Days

Number of Chicks: 3-6

Diet: Shrimps, Insects, Amphibians, Fish and reed shoots and leaves.

Problems They Face: No details available on problems they face or population size.

Conservation Status: Not Globally Threatened