

African Spoonbill

Platalea alba



The African Spoonbill is unmistakable in Africa and is found in Lakes, Marshes, Coastal Lagoons, and Shallow Inland Waters from Senegal to Ethiopia, South to the Cape and also Madagascar.

The African Spoonbill is the largest of the 6 Spoonbill species in the world. Feeding in small groups of up to 10 birds, they wade slowly into shallow water with their beaks partly or wholly submerged, sweeping it from side to side. They also probe into mud and sometimes can be seen running through the water after fish.

They are colonial breeders, in groups of up to 250 pairs or even more, often with other water birds. The nest is a flattish oval platform of sticks or reeds on partly submerged trees, bushes or reeds. The youngsters leave the nest at around 46 days of age. You will often see some of the wild spoonbills on top of the aviary as we have 9 pairs that come back to the park to breed every year.



Lifespan: 20 Years

Weight: 1790 g

Size: 90 - 91 cm

Breeding Season: August - December

Incubation Period: 25 - 29 Days

Number of Chicks: 2 - 3

Diet: Small Fish and Aquatic Invertebrates.

Problems They Face: Seriously threatened by destruction of breeding colonies.

Conservation Status: Not Globally Threatened – Becoming uncommon in most of their range.