

Burchell's Coucal

Centropus burchellii

Almost endemic to Southern Africa, the Burchell's Coucal's distinctive call, resembling water pouring from a bottle, is said to signal impending rain, earning them the name "Rainbird"

Living in riverside, dense bush, moist vegetation and marshes, the Burchell's Coucal has one of the most distinctive and tranquil calls. Sounding like water bubbling out of a bottle, they often call just before rain is expected. The pairs often perform this duet together and the calls overlap in pitch and duration.

The nest is a large untidy dome with a side entrance made of grass and trigs and lined with leaves. The male does most of the incubation and the chicks hatch a little after 2 weeks from the time they are laid. The hatchling has black skin with long white hair-like down. The chicks are fed by both parents and are known to hiss and emit a foul-smelling black cloacal liquid when threatened. The chicks leave the nest at around 18 days of age, barely able to fly and rely on the parents for up to one month longer.



Lifespan: 20 Years
Weight: 160 - 180 g
Size: 36 - 42 cm
Breeding Season: Varies according to area
Incubation Period: 14 - 15 Days
Number of Chicks: 3 - 6
Diet: Insects, Spiders, Snails, Crabs, Lizards, Frogs, Snakes, Birds and Eggs, Mice and Rodents.
Problems They Face: Wetland and Freshwater habitat loss.
Conservation Status: Not Globally Threatened