

White-headed Buffalo Weaver

Dinemellia dinemelli



Class: *Aves*

Order: *Passeriformes*

Family: *Plocidae*

Characteristics:

The male and female of the white headed buffalo weaver have dark brown wings with orange to yellowish-orange feathers at the base of their tail and on the back of their hind quarters. With the exception of the black eye-rings around their eyes, their heads and undercarriage are covered in white plumage. Their feet are usual for perching birds, meaning they have three unwebbed toes facing forward with one strong toe oriented backwards. They have strong beaks (meaning they have broad, and tall beaks when considering their body size). These beaks have been observed to go from a dark black to a light dust color during breeding season. Their call seems to be almost electronic.

Behavior:

Colonies of these birds take advantage of the insects disturbed by the movement of passing by buffalo, giving them their name. These groups are often territorial, males often fending off invading males.

Reproduction:

Both males and females will participate in a courtship dance consisting of partly opened wings exposing the white patches on the bottom of their wings accompanied by bobbing their heads while singing. Elaborate enclosed nests are built in trees. The nests exterior and frame are made with twigs with the interiors lined with grass and other soft materials. These nests usually have one entry tunnel that leads to multiple chambers. 2 to 4 eggs will be incubated by both parents for 14 days. Both parents will also feed their young until they fledge (max. 21 days). At this point the offspring can choose to leave or stay with the colony (aviansag.org).

Diet:

Wild: Insects and fruits

Zoo: pelleted diets, fruit/vegetable mix and insects.

Conservation:

No current conservation efforts are underway.

FYI:

When building their nests, they may steal from the nests of other birds.



Range & Habitat:

Prefer dry, arid regions of East Africa



Lifespan: up to 20 years in captivity, years in the wild: unknown.

Special Adaptations:

- Weave elaborate nests

IUCN Conservation Status:

Least Concern

