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# Peafowl

*Pavo cristatus*

**Class:** *Aves*

**Order:** *Galliformes*

**Family:** *Phasianidae*

## Characteristics:

In the same family as pheasants and chickens, the male of the species is one of the flashiest, most colorful birds on earth. While often referred to as simply “peacocks,” *peafowl* is the actual correct species name with peacock being the male and peahen the female; an easy way to remember this is think of their relatives: cocks are what you call male chickens and hens are female chickens. The Indian (Common) peafowl is the type you see at Idaho Falls Zoo where the male has blue dominant feather coloration and the female displays the more drab brown coloration. Both sexes have head crest.

## Behavior:

Peacocks are among the largest of the birds that can fly (when you take into consideration their wingspan and tail length) and are known for their impressive courtship displays to attract females ([National Geographic Kids](#)). Peafowl are territorial and protective of their mates and young so be careful not to get too close to these birds. If you hear them making a “clicking” noise, that means back off! Peafowl are social, and even in the wild will gather together in a group called a “party.” In the wild, peafowl will roost in trees.

## Reproduction:

Similar to other pheasants, a male will gather a harem of several females, each of which will lay 3 to 5 eggs which she incubates until they hatch at around 28 to 30 days. In captivity they tend to build nests wherever they can find that feels safe. In the wild, their nests is usually a scrape in the ground under shrubs or trees. Peachicks are fully feathered and able to walk immediately after hatching. They will usually stay with mom for at least two months, if not longer ([Animal Moms](#)).

## Diet:

Wild: Plant material and insects

Zoo: Scratch grains, greens

## Conservation:

None. Peafowl have been kept by humans for thousands of years

**FYI:** Peacocks raise their train by raising the much smaller feathers underneath them.



## **Range & Habitat:**

Originated in Sri Lanka and India



**Lifespan:** around 15-20 years in captivity and in the wild.

**Special Adaptations:** Long train is not their tail, but actually elongated feathers that grow off the male’s back during breeding season. He sheds them once the season ends.

## **IUCN Conservation Status:**

Least Concern

