

# Spur-winged Lapwing

*Vanellus spinosus*



**Class:** *Aves*

**Order:** *Charadriiformes*

**Family:** *Charadriidae*

## Characteristics:

Also known as the spur-winged plover (not to be confused with the recently renamed masked lapwing of Australasia), this lapwing is a wading bird identified by their striking white cheek feathers, black head cap, brown wings against a black body and long black legs.

## Behavior:

In Africa, lapwings don't travel far outside their home area but merely make short movements to find wetter areas of their habitats. They spend their time searching the marshy ground for small invertebrates.

## Reproduction:

Because of their large range, these birds have variable breeding seasons. Spur-winged lapwings nest in solitary monogamous pairs, often with other mixed species bird nesting colonies. The large nesting groups help protect the birds in the colonies against predation. The lapwing pair will build a nest in a scrape on the ground sometimes lined with vegetation. The female lays 2 eggs that are yellow with brownish black mottling. They hatch after a 28-day incubation period and both sexes help feed the young. If they double-clutch, the male tends the older chicks while the female incubates the second brood ([Sacramento Zoo](#)).

## Diet:

Wild: Invertebrates

Zoo: softbill, feline diet, capelin, mealworms and insectivore diet

## Conservation:

Spur-winged lapwings are abundant in their range in Africa and as such are listed as Least Concern by IUCN.

## FYI:

The bird gets its name from a small spur-like appendage hidden in each of its wings. They may use this wing-claw to attack other animals who may be threatening them or their offspring ([Beauty of Birds](#)).



## **Range & Habitat:**

Marshes and wetland habitats of central Africa



**Lifespan:** over 15 years in captivity, up to 15 years in the wild.

**Special Adaptations:** Spur-winged lapwings have a unique call that acts as an alert when humans are near.

**IUCN Conservation Status:**  
Least Concern

