

Species Profiles:

White-tailed Jay

(*Cyanocorax mystacalis*)

by Jack Clinton-Eitnear
San Antonio, Texas

Range: southwest Ecuador and northwest Peru, South America.

Status in Captivity: less than 100 birds imported in recent decade.

Action Required: birds in captivity should be paired and bred to prevent species extinction in captivity.

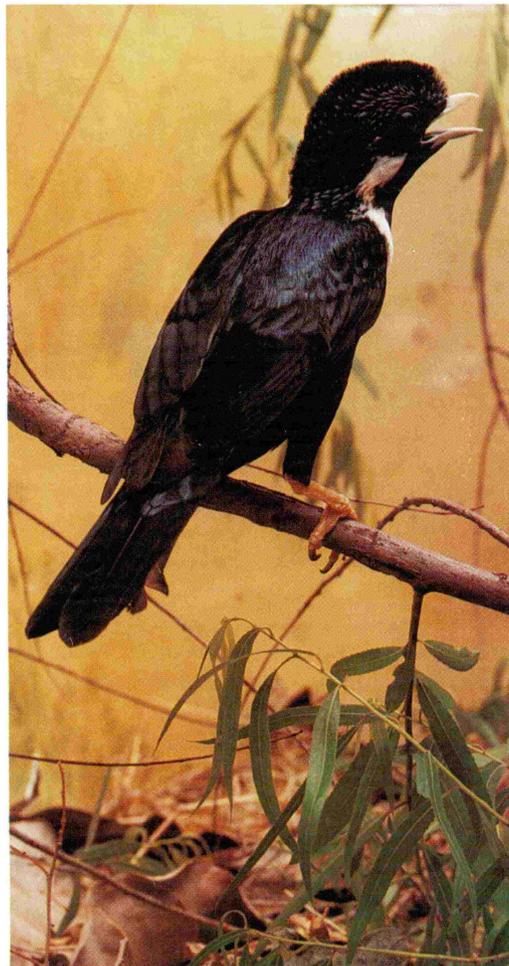
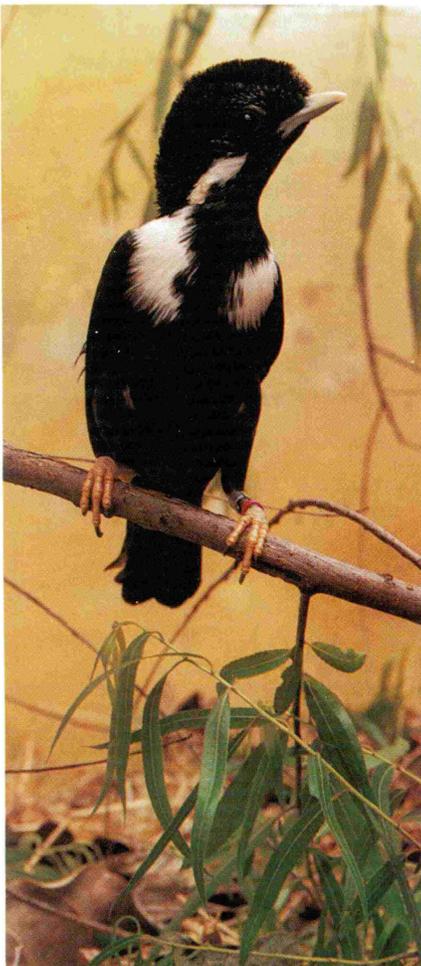
Anyone holding this species should contact the AFA Business Office as numerous individuals are in need of specimens to establish pairs for breeding purposes.



White-tailed Jay

Photo by Jack Clinton-Eitnear

Photos by Ron Parker



Sulawesi King Starling (Celebean Mynah)

Sulawesi King Starling or Celebean Mynah

(*Basilornis celebensis*)

by Martin Vince and Jon Seltz
Sedgwick County Zoo
Wichita, Kansas

Of the 17,000 islands that make up Indonesia, only a handful are large enough to have attracted human habitation. One such island, Sulawesi, provides a home not only for a burgeoning human population but also for the Sulawesi King Starling. The Sulawesi King Starling shares the genus *Basilornis* with only four other members; the Greater King Starling (*B. galeatus*) from Banggai and Sula Island, the Seram King Starling (*B. corythaix*) from Seram Island, and the Mount Apo King Starling (*B. miranda*) from Mindinao Island, the only Philippine representative of *Basilornis*. The Indonesian members, *B. galeatus* and *B. corythaix* both strikingly resemble *B. celebensis* with only differences in their crests clearly setting them apart; indeed as recently as 1976, Eck treated all taxa as conspecific.

A denizen of forests, *B. celebensis* is not uncommon in parts of Sulawesi and thankfully is now starting to make its mark in aviculture. Around 30 specimens are currently being kept by zoos and private breeders, of which about 30% are captive bred.

As with many sturnids, the constitution of the Sulawesi King Starling is as robust as it is omnivorous: a balanced diet incorporating fruits, animal proteins and live food has brought us a good measure of success. As with many omnivores, the Sulawesi King Starling is very tolerable of other birds which share space with them. In fact, we have seen tanagers and buntings standing on top of the King Starling nest box as the parents were feeding their young.

Once a compatible pair has been obtained, a nest box, 30 cm tall by 18 cm wide by 18 cm deep, with a 6 cm diameter entrance hole, should prove acceptable. Given the choice, small rounded leaves such as *Ficus benjamina* will be taken into the box and used to build almost the entire nest. Such nesting activity will be most secretive. If successful, four to six eggs may be laid which, from our limited observations, will be a pale blue, speckled in pale brown.

For the first five or six days, the young are fed on live food, parental preference leaning heavily towards wax worms, thereafter they are fed on the adult's diet.

To date, breeding successes with *B. celebensis* have been encouraging, the only setbacks having been the occasional over romantic male injuring and/or killing his mate when she is not quite ready to accept his advances. Such aggression should be watched for and the males removed for a short cooling down period.

With continued interest by both the public and private sectors, the future remains hopeful for this unusual sturnid. ●



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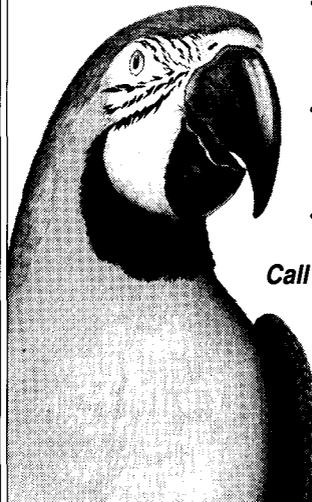
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