

The American Flamingo

The American flamingo, aka Caribbean flamingo or rosy flamingo, can be found along the coastlines of southern and southeastern North America, the Caribbean, eastern Central America, northern South America, and a small population also dwells on the Galápagos Islands. They prefer freshwater and saline estuaries, lagoons, mudflats, coastal and inland lakes. Due to an abundant and increasing population overall, these birds are listed as Least Concern by the IUCN.



The Stats...

Scientific name: *Phoenicopterus ruber*

Weight: Up to 8 lbs.

Length: Up to 57.08 inches

Wingspan: Up to 5 feet

Lifespan: Up to 50 years

- 1.) As of 2020, there were an estimated population in excess of 205,000 wild individuals. The most recent estimate is closer to 300,000+.
- 2.) These are the only naturally occurring flamingos to live in North America.
- 3.) While being the largest flamingos in the Americas, they are smaller than greater flamingos.
- 4.) A group of flamingos is called a colony, flamboyance, regiment, or stand.
- 5.) Flamingos are social animals that dwell in large colonies of up to several thousand individuals.

But wait, there's more on the American flamingo!

- 6.) American flamingos spend most of their day feeding.
- 7.) Algae, brine, brine shrimp, shrimps, mollusks, marine worms, and aquatic insects are all on the menu..

Did you know...?

American flamingos produce a quiet gabbling sound when feeding, a grunt or growl when courting, and a honking sound while in flight.

- 8.) These birds are wary of humans and will fly away when approached.
- 9.) Even though these birds aren't considered true migratory birds, they will relocate to new patches of water to find food. This makes them nomadic birds.

But wait, there's still more on the American flamingo!

- 10.) These birds are diurnal (active during the day), like all flamingos.
- 11.) American flamingos are monogamous (mate for life).
- 12.) They will turn their heads, bow their necks, and/or raise their wings in an amazing synchronization.
- 13.) Both parents participate in building the nest, which consists of a raised edged mud ring.
- 14.) Females lay a single egg that hatches in up to 31 days.
- 15.) Chicks are fed crop milk (regurgitated food from the parents stomach).

But wait, there's a little more on the American flamingo!

- 16.) Their visible knee is actually an ankle joint. Their actual knee is near their body and is hidden by feathers.
- 17.) They not only feed while standing, but they will also feed while swimming, like ducks, they will upend themselves and submerge their head into the water up to 51+ inches under the water.
- 18.) There are some who feel that American flamingos should be considered native to Florida.
- 19.) Their necks consist of 19 vertebra.

The Questions...

1.) What is the IUCN status of these flamingos?

2.) How many of these flamingos are estimated to exist in the wild?

3.) A group of flamingos is called...

4.) They eat what foods?

5.) Flamingos are nocturnal. True or False?

6.) How many eggs does a female lay?

7.) What is crop milk?

8.) Their feathers are made of the same material as our hair and fingernails. True or False?

9.) They have how many vertebra in their neck?

10.) Do both parents build the nest?

11.) What does monogamous mean?

12.) Name the sounds flamingos make.

13.) How tall is an American flamingo?