

# Superb Starling

**Scientific Name:**

*Lamprotornis superbus*

**Range:**

Ethiopia, Somalia, Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania.

**Habitat:**

Partially open areas with scattered trees and shrubs - prefers to be near water.

**Average Size:**

Length: 7 inches

Weight: average undocumented

**Lifespan:**

Undocumented

**Diet:**

*Wild:* Insects, fruit and grain

*Zoo:* Various produce, mealworms and crickets

**Reproduction:**

*Incubation:* about 13 days

*Clutch size:* 4 eggs

**Appearance:**

Adults have glossy plumage, starting with black heads and iridescent blue-to-green back, upper breast, wings, and tail. The belly is rust colored. Adults have a pronounced white band on the breast. The underside of the wings and tail are white. The eyes are a piercing cream color. Juveniles have duller plumage with no more than a suggestion of the white breast band and brown eyes.

**Predators:**

Unknown in wild

**Population Status:**

Stable

**About the Animal**

This African starling species is considered one of the 'glossy starlings', referring to the beautiful sheen of its feathers. This species is as common in parts of Kenya as robins are in the United States. Sometimes called 'clowns of the savannah' these outgoing, curious birds prefer to live in groups in which all members assist with the care of hatchlings.

**Mating and Reproduction**

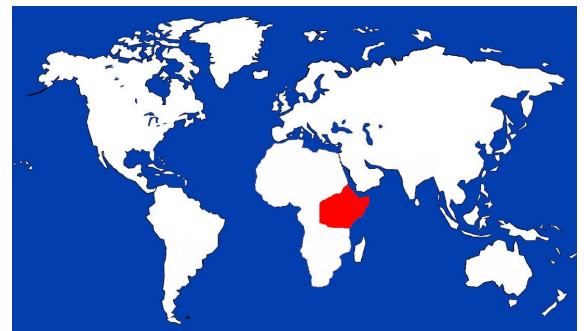
Superb Starling pairs engage in courtship behavior that includes jumping on the ground with wings trailing and singing to one another.

Preferred nesting sites include thorn bushes, low bushes, and cliff hollows. Superb Starlings build nests from grass, leaves, and small twigs, but like many birds often add other materials, including man-made objects and the feathers of other bird species. Males and females share responsibility for nest construction.

Hatchlings are cared for not only by the parents, but also by related and non-related younger birds, especially during years of unpredictable rainfall.

**Amazing Information**

Some birders have noted that during the height of mating season, males are such enthusiastic swains that they will even sing in the middle of the night when the moon is full in order to attract a female.



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