

GREAT CURASSOW

Crax rubra

Anatomy –

The great curassow is a 36-inch tall, hearty bird. All great curassows have a peak of forward-curling feathers on their heads, and long tails. The bases of the great curassow's bills are yellow, decorated with a yellow, round bulge. The coloring of the females varies; they can be black or chestnut-colored with black or white bars; their heads and crest may be barred with black and white. The males are a lustrous blue or black color, and have white bellies. Although they have low rates of reproduction, they are long-lived birds.



Habitat –

While the range of the great curassow extends from southern Mexico to western Ecuador, their habitat is usually limited to parks. They build their nests of leaves and twigs in forks and depressions in trees. The male Curassow leads his family and whistles when there are signs of danger. Females lay two eggs at a time. Curassows are monogamous and travel in pairs or in small groups. The group can communicate by grunting. Like chickens, they tend to run rather than fly.

Diet –

The Curassow finds its food by foraging on fallen fruits, berries and seeds. Additionally they may scrape the ground in search of insects or small animals.

Threats –

Deforestation of tropical forests is the major threat to the survival of the Great Curassow. Humans are a direct threat to the Great Curassow because the local inhabitants hunt them for food. Besides humans, snakes are also their predators.

Sources:

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Photo by Gerry Ellis (www.gerryellis.com)