



African Straw-colored Fruit Bat

Eidolon helvum

Range: Central and South Africa, Madagascar, and the Arabian Peninsula

Habitat: Forest and Savannah zones, and sometimes urban areas. They prefer tall trees for roosting.

Diet: Bark, flowers, nectar, leaves, and fruit.

Lifespan: They can live up to 21 years old.

Description: The straw-colored fruit bat got its name for the yellow fur on their back. Their bellies are a brown color while the skin of their wings is a dark brown or black. They can grow to between 6-9 inches from head to tail and have a wingspan of 2½ feet.

Breeding: Mating usually occurs between April and June. The embryo usually undergoes a process of delayed implantation, meaning that it will become dormant until a later date – in this case, October. Females will give birth to one offspring per year in clusters of females and will care for her young until it is old enough to survive on its own.

Behavior/Adaptations: Like many other fruit bat species, this bat does not use echolocation to find food. When eating, they will suck out the juices of the fruit they eat, and leave the rest as dry pellets, including the seeds. This makes them important seed dispersers and are also known as very important pollinators.

Predators: While fruit bats don't have many predators because they live in colonies, owls, snakes, crows, hawks, and mammals can hunt them.

Conservation: Although they are considered possibly the most widespread fruit bat in the world, they are listed as near threatened.

Interesting Facts:

- They will bite into soft wood to gain moisture.

Information taken from the following sources:

<http://www.arkive.org/straw-coloured-fruit-bat/eidolon-helvum/>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Straw-coloured_fruit_bat

http://www.lowryparkzoo.com/bio_aviaries_fruit_bat.php



Seba's Short-tailed Fruit Bat

Carollia perspicillata

Range: Central and South America

Habitat: They prefer moist evergreen forests and dry deciduous forests usually below 3,200 feet, but sometimes up to 5,000.

Diet: Most of their diet is made up of fruit and pollen, but will occasionally eat insects.

Lifespan: They can live to be between 2 and 10 years old, but 50% will die by the time they reach 2 years old.

Description: Seba's Short-tailed Fruit Bats are one of the rare microbats that feed primarily on fruit. Being a microbat, they are a smaller "new-world" bat. They are a small, brown bat about 1.8 to 2.5 inches long, 7.8 inch wingspan, and weigh between .35 - .7oz (10-20g).

Breeding: These bats have two mating seasons each year; one that coincides with peak fruit production (June through August) and the other at the end of the dry season when flowers begin to bloom (February through May). They have offspring at each birth after a gestation period of 115-120 days.

Behavior/Adaptations: Seba's bats have a very good sense of smell they use to find fruit. They feed on more than 50 types of fruit, most of which grow on low-lying shrubs. They typically forage for food within one mile of their roost.

During the day, they roost in colonies of 10-100 individuals in caves or hollow trees. There are two different colonies that they roost in; one is a harem, made up of one male and many females; and the other is a bachelor group, which are made up of adult and sub-adult males not attached to harems.

Predators: Snakes, raptors, and nocturnal arboreal mammals.

Conservation: They are considered common throughout their range.

Interesting Facts:

- A bat's wing is essentially a modified hand, with the thumb is the claw, which aids in climbing, clawing, and manipulating foods.

Information taken from the following sources:

http://www.jacksonvillezoo.org/animals/mammals/sebas_short-tailed_bat/

<http://www.marylandzoo.org/animals-conservation/mammals/sebas-short-tailed-bat/>



Swift Fox

Vulpes velox

Range: Swift foxes had an original range from the plains of western Canada and across the Great Plains of North America to Texas. They disappeared from Canada in the 1930s and have recently been introduced there. The current main range for them is in Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico, and Wyoming where they have stable populations.

Habitat: They primarily live in shortgrass prairies and deserts. They make their dens in sandy soils on open prairies, along fences, or in plowed fields.

Diet: The Swift Fox's diet varies with the season and depend on what is available. It will eat what it can catch including small mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, insects, as well as berries and grasses.

Lifespan: In captivity, they can live to be 3-5 years old and up to 12-14 years in captivity.

Description: Swift foxes are the smallest of the wild canines in North America weighing at between 4.4-6.6 lbs (about the size of a domestic cat). They have light grey fur with orange-tan coloring on the sides and legs. Their throat, chest, underside and inside of the ears are creamy white. Their tail is bushy and marked with black at the tip. They also have black patches on either side of the snout.

Breeding: Swift foxes sometimes mate for life, but may not necessarily mate with the same partner each year. Males become sexually mature at one year, while females may wait until their second year before mating. The breeding season in Canada begins in March, and will begin as early as December in the United States range. Swift foxes have one litter per year and the gestation period is 50-60 days. Pups are born in the underground den and typically remain there for about a month. Their eyes and ears open up between 10-15 days old and weaned at 6-7 weeks old. Pups will remain with the mother and father until the fall.

Behavior/Adaptations: Like their name suggests, they are swift and can reach speeds of up to 31 mph. Their speed helps them catch food and avoid predators. They will also seek shelter in burrows to avoid predators. They are mainly nocturnal, but may sun bathe in the winter during the warm midday period, while in summer, they only spend early evenings and nighttime above ground.

Predators: Coyotes, badgers, golden eagles, bobcats, humans.

Conservation: They are considered a species of Least Concern on the IUCN Red List, but are listed as Endangered on the US Federal List

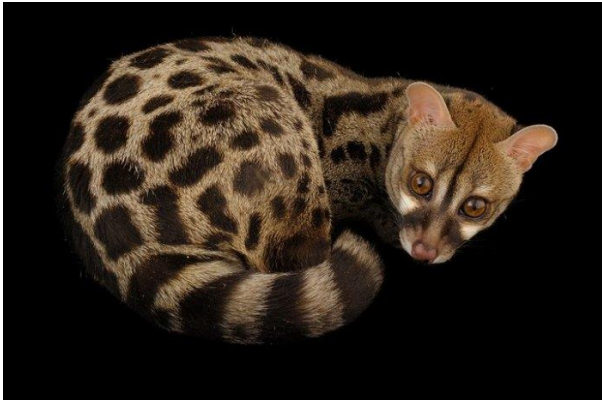
Interesting Facts:

- Some studies suggest that Swift Foxes and Kit Foxes are the same species.

Information taken from the following sources:

http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu/accounts/Vulpes_velox/

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swift_fox



Large-spotted Genet

Genetta tigrina

Range: They are dispersed throughout Africa.

Habitat: They prefer an area with lots of cover, like forests or areas with high vegetation. They also prefer to be close to an area with a permanent water source.

Diet: Large-spotted Genets will mostly eat small mammals, insects, small birds, snakes, and amphibians, but will also eat fruit.

Lifespan: They can live to be around 8 years old in the wild.

Description: Genets are short to the ground with a very long body that can reach almost 3 feet from head to tail. They have tan-brown fur with large black spots and dark rings on the tail.

Breeding: Genets breed in the warm, wet season between September and March. After a gestation period of 70-77 days, the mother will give birth to 1-5 kittens in a hollow tree, among loose boulders, or a hole in the ground. Like cats, the young will knead the abdominal area where the teats are to stimulate milk flow and purr as they nurse. Between 42 and 91 days, the young are able to eat solid food. At 7 months old, they are able to kill their own prey.

Behavior/Adaptations: Genets are nocturnal and are well-suited to be terrestrial and arboreal (and can also swim). When they are frightened or threatened, they will arch their back like a cat. They are solitary and will defend their territory (especially females).

Predators: Not much is known about the Genet's predators, but humans are known to shoot them on poultry farms.

Conservation: They are considered a species of Least Concern.

Interesting Facts:

- Genets are related to both cats and mongooses.

Information taken from the following sources:

http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu/accounts/Genetta_tigrina/

http://www.krugerpark.co.za/africa_large-spotted_genet.html

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cape_genet

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genet_\(animal\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genet_(animal))



Pallas' Cat

Otocolobus manul

Range: Central Asia including the countries of Mongolia, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kashmir, and Western China.

Habitat: The Pallas's Cats prefer to live in cold, arid habitats in upland, hilly areas such as stony alpine desert and steppe grassland with rocky outcroppings.

Diet: They feed on small mammals such as gerbils, pikas, and voles, as well as small birds such as the chukar partridge.

Lifespan: They typically can live between 8-10 years old in the wild.

Description: Pallas's Cats are the size of domestic cats, but appear larger due to their stocky frame and long, dense coat. Their coats can seasonally change color from a frosted gray in winter to a gray/red color in the spring.

Breeding: They are seasonal breeders and males will follow the females around for 3-4 days to guard her from mating with other males. Litters of 6-8 kittens are born in late April-May after a gestation period of 66-75 days. The young reach sexual maturity at about 12 months old.

Behavior/Adaptations: Pallas's Cats are quiet and solitary and predominantly crepuscular, but can be active at any time day or night. They take shelter in caves or rock crevices. They hunt by stalking and ambushing their prey or by staking out entrances to their prey's burrows.

Predators: Humans, domestic dogs.

Conservation: They are considered to be Near Threatened.

Interesting Facts:

- Both males and females scent mark their territory.

Information taken from the following sources:

<http://www.arkive.org/pallass-cat/otocolobus-manul/video-00>

<http://bigcatrescue.org/pallas-cat-facts/>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pallas's_cat

Kinkajou

Potos flavus



Range: Central and South America

Habitat: Closed Canopy Tropical Forests including lowland rainforests, montane forests, dry forests, gallery forests, and secondary forests.

Diet: While 90% of their diet consists of fruit, they will also eat honey, flowers, insects, and small vertebrates.

Lifespan: They can live up to 23 years in the wild, and 32 years in captivity. The oldest living kinkajou was recorded as 41 years old.

Description: Fur is short and brown. They weight 3-10 lbs. Body length is 42-57 cm (16.5 – 22.5 inches), while the tail length is between 50-56 cm (15.7-22 inches). They have a prehensile tail to aid in climbing and dexterous forepaws to manipulate food. Rear feet are longer than the front feet. They have a long, extrudable tongue to probe flowers for nectar or honey.

Breeding: Males squabble around mating time. One male usually dominates and ends up with 91% of copulations. They have a low reproductive rate. Females typically have a litter size of one, and give birth no more than once per year. Gestation is 112-118 days.

Behavior/Adaptations: They are nocturnal and spend their days sleeping in tree hollows with up to 5 other individuals. While avoiding predators in the tree-tops, they take advantage of the food.

They have a unique set of scent glands on their chin, throat, and chest used to mark territorial boundaries. Home ranges are from 75-125 acres with strict boundaries between groups. Social groups consist of a breeding female with her juvenile (1 year old) and sub adult (1-3 years old) offspring, accompanied by 2 adult males.

Individuals typically forage alone at night, and later meet up with other members of their social group. This type of solitary/group lifestyle is an adaptation to reduce feeding competition.

Conservation: Kinkajous are considered a species of Least Concern.

Interesting Facts:

- They are not primates; their closest relatives are the coatis, raccoons, and ringtails of the family Procyonidae.
- They have a low predation risk because they are too nocturnal for eagles, too large for owls, and too arboreal for mammalian predators.

Information taken from the following sources:
MacDonald, Encyclopedia of Mammals. 2001
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kinkajou>



Linne's Two-toed Sloth

Choloepus didactylus

Range: Central America and Northern South America, including some portions of Brazil and Peru

Habitat: Sloths are arboreal and spend their entire lives in trees in the canopy of tropical forests

Diet: Primarily herbivore: leaves, flowers, and fruit

Lifespan: In the wild: 10-12 years, in captivity: up to early 30's

Description: Body of the sloth is about 30 inches in length and covered with a grayish-brown fur that has little grooves to collect algae, which gives the sloth a green tint in color. The four long limbs are the same length and each end in two curved claws. Sloths have a very short neck and flat head. Sloths have large eyes, and a very stubby nose. The sloth's teeth are molars that are constantly worn down by chewing. To compensate for a lack of sharp teeth, the sloth has hardened lips that help to clip leaves and flowers from trees.

Breeding: Breeding is believed to occur at any point in the year. After a gestation period of about 6 months, the female sloth gives birth to one offspring a year. The baby is about 10 inches long and clings to its mother for 5 weeks until it can move around on its own.

Behavior/Adaptations: Sloths spend almost their entire lives in the trees. They mate, eat, sleep, and give birth while hanging in the trees. They only descend to the forest floor when they need to find another food source or to defecate which they only do about once a week. Sloths have a very slow metabolism, so food stays in the digestive track for up to a month. Despite being awkward on land, sloths are very good swimmers. Sloths are extremely slow and usually only climb at a rate of about 6 feet per minute. Because of their speed, their best defense is camouflage. They spend most of their day curled up in the tree tops sleeping, and wake for a few hours at night to forage for food.

Predators: Ocelot, Anaconda, Raptors, Caiman, Humans

Conservation: Linne's Sloths are not currently threatened, but their habitat is rapidly disappearing due to increased rainforest logging activities.

Interesting Facts:

- There are 6 different species of sloths, two of which are two-toed and the others are three-toed.
- Two-toed sloths have the lowest body temperatures among mammals with the greatest fluctuation...they could range between 86-93 degree Fahrenheit!

Information taken from the following sources:

<http://www.eol.org/pages/328521>

<http://www.xenarthra.org/sloth/factsheet/print.shtml>

<http://www.honolulu zoo.org/sloth.htm>

http://www.mnzoo.com/animals/animals_sloth.asp



Six-banded Armadillo

Euphractus sexcinctus

Range: The South American countries of Bolivia, Brazil, Uruguay, Paraguay, and Suriname.

Habitat: Six-banded Armadillos prefer to live in open areas such as savannas, shrubland, and dry semi-deciduous forests.

Diet: They are omnivorous and will eat plant material (including bromeliad fruit, tubers, palm nuts) composes 90% of the diet. Insects like ants, termites, carrion, and small vertebrates such as frogs are also eaten. They will also occasionally feed on dead carcasses by standing on them and ripping off pieces held in their jaws.

Lifespan: They can live 8-12 years in the wild, and up to 20 years in captivity.

Description: Six-banded Armadillos are the second largest armadillo species. They are moderately hairy and yellow to red-brown in color. They have short limbs with sharp claws to help them dig. Their protective shell is made of bony plates called scutes covered with horny skin. Six-banded armadillos have between 6 and 8 moveable bands on the shell and 2-4 distinctive bands of plates around the base of the tail, where scent glands are located.

Breeding: Females usually gives birth to a litter of 1-3 (both male and female) babies in a nest that she has built herself. These babies may be born anytime during the year after a gestation period of 60-64 days. There is a possibility of a time delay between fertilization and the implantation of the egg in the wall of the female's uterus. Babies weigh about 95-115g at birth and their eyes open after 22-25 days. During the first month of their lives, the babies quadruple their weight and by the end of the month are able to eat solid foods. Armadillos are considered mature at 9 months old.

Behavior/Adaptations: Most armadillos are nocturnal while six-banded armadillos tend to more diurnal and can remain active in daylight. Armadillos are solitary and will dig burrows for themselves to use as shelter. When digging, a six-banded armadillo will pile dirt underneath themselves with their front claws, and then use their hind claws to throw the piled dirt out behind it. They use the same den site for quite some time. Most armadillo species abandon dens after only a few days. If they feel threatened by predators, they will freeze, draw their legs under their hop and shoulder shields and sit tight on the ground, protecting their vulnerable underside. If they are close to their burrow they may also try to run to it for protection.

Predators: Jaguarondis, jaguars, cougars, wild dogs, alligators, maned wolves, and humans who eat them for meat.

Conservation: They are considered a species of Least Concern.

Interesting Facts:

- Six-banded armadillos are the most common species of armadillo in Argentina.
- "Armadillo" is Spanish for little armored one.
- Armadillo head plates are unique to each armadillo, like human fingerprints.
- All armadillos are found in the new World (Americas), most likely originating in South America.

- King George II of England, was presented with an armadillo as a gift. The “Indian Monster” was kept happy by supplying it with hard boiled eggs.

Information taken from the following sources:

<http://cincinnati-zoo.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Six-Banded-Armadillo-complete.pdf>

http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu/accounts/Euphractus_sexinctus/

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Six-banded_armadillo



Southern Flying Squirrel

Glaucomys volans

Range: Can be found in southeastern Canada, the eastern United States, south to Mexico and Honduras.

Habitat: Southern Flying Squirrels are found in wooded areas. They seem to prefer seed-producing hardwoods, particularly maple, beech, hickory, oak, and poplar. They can also be found in mixed conifer/deciduous forests.

Diet: They eat a variety of fruits, nuts, insects, small birds, and meat scraps.

Lifespan: They live to be around 6 years old in the wild and up to 10-15 years old in captivity.

Description: Southern Flying Squirrels can be distinguished by the patagium, or gliding membrane that extends from their wrists to their ankles. The loose skin along the side of the body is supported by cartilaginous spurs on the wrists and ankles. The fur on their back and tail is grey with varying amount of gray tinge and their belly is white. They have very large eyes due to their nocturnal habits and the visual requirements of gliding. They are about the size of a chipmunk.

Breeding: Females usually mate twice per year the first season being from February-May and the second from July-September. The gestation period is 40 days with litters ranging from 1-6 young (2 or 3 is most common). The young are weaned at 65 days and are independent at 120 days. They usually become mature between 9-12 months old.

Behavior/Adaptations: Southern Flying Squirrels are nocturnal. They live in hollow trees, deserted woodpecker holes, and in buildings and bird boxes. They line their nests with soft materials like shredded bark, dry leaves, moss, feathers, and fur. Bats are the only truly flying mammals, flying squirrels actually glide using the patagium on the sides of their bodies. They leap from high vantages and spread their arms and legs the loose skin of the body into an efficient sail. As they approach a landing, they raise the tail to change the course of the glide upwards and extend the limbs to use the skin as a parachute. Upon landing, they quickly move to the other side of the tree to avoid predators that may have detected and followed them during the glide. Most glides are between 20 and 30 feet, but can be as long as 150 feet.

Predators: Small hawks and owls, foxes, weasels, marten.

Conservation: They are considered a species of Least Concern.

Interesting Facts:

- Flying Squirrels do not hibernate, but slow their body activity in winter and sometimes nest in groups to stay warm.

Information taken from the following sources:

http://animaldiversity.org/accounts/Glaucomys_volans/
<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/mammals/flyingsquirrel.html>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southern_flying_squirrel



Spectacled Owl

Pulsatrix persipicillata

Range: Spectacled Owls can be found from Southern Mexico through Argentina as well as on Caribbean islands such as Trinidad.

Habitat: They live near water in rainforest and woodlands. They can be found from sea level to elevations of 5,250 feet.

Diet: Spectacled Owls will prey on insects, tree frogs, reptiles, birds, small mammals, crabs and occasionally skunks and opossums.

Lifespan: Their average lifespan is 25 to 30 years.

Description: Spectacled Owls are characterized by white "spectacles" around their bright yellow eyes. They have a dark brown plumage on their upper parts and off-white or light yellow plumage on their breast. They have a thin white strip around the throat with a thick dark brown stripe below. Coloration is reversed in juveniles; they are mostly white with a brown/black facial disk. Males can weigh up to 453-680g and females weigh between 680-906g. Their wingspan ranges from 2.5 feet to 3 feet.

Breeding: Breeding occurs in the dry season or the beginning of the wet season (April to June or September to October depending on location). They build their nests inside tree cavities. Females lay a maximum of two eggs and often only one chick will survive. Young fledge after 5-6 weeks; they are often dependent on their parents for up to a year. Spectacled Owls reach maturity in 3-5 years.

Behavior/Adaptations: Spectacled Owls are typically nocturnal, but have been known to hunt during the day on some occasions. They are not known to be migratory. Males have a distinct call that sounds like a hammer hitting a hollow tree repeatedly; the sound descends in volume. Females have a loud screeching call used mostly to attract mates during the mating season.

Spectacled Owls are very fast, and once they spot their prey they will swoop down, snatch up the prey, and return to their perch. They will also glean insects from vegetation. They are carnivorous and mostly eat mice and insects. They are also known to eat crabs, bats possums, skunks, frogs and smaller birds no larger than a blue jay.

Predators: Because they hide in foliage that hangs low, they are not easily detected by predators, but are sometimes preyed upon by larger birds.

Conservation: Spectacled Owls are considered a species of least concern. They could become severely threatened if rainforests and other forested areas in South America continue to be cut down for agriculture and lumber industries.

Interesting Facts:

- Owls will eat their whole prey, but cannot digest bones or fur. 18-24 hours after they eat, they regurgitate a pellet made up of bones and fur.
- Owls have approximately 5000 feathers on their body.
- Owls have 14 neck bones (humans have 7) which gives them the ability to have flexible necks that can move 270 degrees.

- Spectacled Owls get their name from the pattern of feathers around the eyes, which makes it look like they are wearing glasses.

Information taken from the following sources:

http://animaldiversity.org/accounts/Pulsatrix_perspicillata/

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spectacled_owl

<https://www.zoo.org/page.aspx?pid=1859#.VVOnVvVhBc>

https://www.toledozoo.org/animals/fact-pages/birds/spectacled_owl/data.html



Burrowing Owl

Athene cunicularia

Range: In the summer, they can be found in the central, plains states. In the winter, they can be found in southern South America.

Habitat: Burrowing Owls prefer open habitats such as savannahs, grasslands, treeless plains, and desert.

Diet: They feed on small mammals, small birds, and invertebrates.

Lifespan: It isn't widely known how long they can live, but the oldest one ever banded was 8 years and 8 months old.

Description: Burrowing Owls are small – only growing to be between 7 ½ - 10 inches tall and weighing only 5.3oz. They are predominantly brown with lighter colored speckles/spots on the back side and some barring on the belly. They have bright yellow eyes and long legs.

Breeding: Nesting season in the United States begins in February (sometimes later depending on the state of migration) when a male and female form a monogamous pair and either find or dig a nesting burrow. The female will lay up to 12 eggs and incubate them for 4 weeks. Meanwhile, the male will hunt for food and bring it back to the nest and feed his mate.

When the young hatch, they are helpless and rely on their parents for survival. The female typically stays with the young while the male hunts for food to feed to the female and their brood. At about 4 weeks of age, the young are capable of short flights, and at 6 weeks old, they are able to fly well, but will still be fed by their parents for the next 6-8 weeks.

Behavior/Adaptations: Unlike other owls, they will live and nest in underground burrows that they have dug themselves or take over burrows that have been dug by a mammal (like prairie dogs). They will line the opening of their burrows with mammal scat to attract dung beetles which they eat.

Predators: Larger mammals, raptors, reptiles, and housecats.

Conservation: They are considered to be widespread, but their populations continue to decline due to habitat destruction, pesticide poisoning, and car collisions.

Interesting Facts:

- The Burrowing Owl is predominantly crepuscular, but will hunt all day and all night as well.

Information taken from the following sources:

<http://www.arkive.org/burrowing-owl/athene-cunicularia/image-G51451.html>

http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/burrowing_owl/lifehistory

<http://www.birdpop.org/burrowingNATHIST.htm>

<http://www.nmburrowingowl.com/threats.html>



Speckled Mousebird

Colius striatus

Range: Speckled mousebirds are found in Cameroon, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and throughout eastern and southern Africa.

Habitat: They prefer open areas and are widespread in savanna and open woodlands, as well as areas with tangled thickets. It is a common "backyard bird" and often seen in urban areas that contain gardens and orchards.

Diet: Speckled mousebirds are omnivores that forage in the mid to upper canopy, feeding primarily on fruit. They will also eat berries, leaves, buds, blossoms, seeds, and the nectar of various aloe plants. To add protein, it will search out termites and ants.

Lifespan: They can live to be approximately 11 years old in captivity.

Description: Speckled mousebirds are very finely barred on their chest, throat, cheeks, and nape. They are light brown, with a prominent crest on top of their head. The upper portion of their bill is black, while the lower part is a light pink or tan. Their feet are reddish pink. In total, speckled mousebirds are about 14 inches long, with their tail making up about half of their length.

Breeding: These birds build relatively large nests, which are constructed by both the male and female. The nest is made from any materials which the birds can find, including man made waste products such as paper and plastic, which leads to a scruffy looking nest. The female will produce 1 to 7 eggs which take 14 days to hatch.

Behavior/Adaptations: Speckled mousebirds are social birds. They feed and preen in groups. They also accompany each other when they go to dust bathe on the ground. At night, they roost in very tight groups of 20 or so birds and on cold nights, they can become torpid.

Song/Call: Speckled mousebirds are typically noisy. They make a warbling "tsu tsu" call while in flight, and are known for their "tisk-tisk" alarm call.

Predators: Raptors including peregrine falcon, lanner falcon, Wahlberg's eagle, African harrier-hawk, and the barn owl. They may also be eaten by black-headed heron.

Conservation: They are considered a species of least concern.

Interesting Facts:

- The speckled mousebird is the largest species of mousebird.
- Mousebirds are related to cuckoo rollers, trogons, hornbills, kingfishers, and woodpeckers.
- Speckled mousebirds get their name from their mouse-like scurrying movements in leaf litter, mousy-brown coloration, and long tails.

Information taken from the following sources:

<http://www.torontozoo.com/explorethezoo/AnimalDetails.asp?pg=434>

<http://winghamwildlifepark.co.uk/animal/speckled-mousebird>

https://www.hoglezoo.org/meet_our_animals/animal_finder/speckled_mousebird/



Gopher Tortoise

Gopherus polyphemus

Range: They are found in the southeastern part of the United States including southwestern South Carolina to the southern tip of Florida west through Southern Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi, to Louisiana and the edge of southeastern Texas and Arkansas.

Habitat: Gopher Tortoises prefer dry landscapes such as sandy ridges and sand dunes, as well as longleaf pine forests.

Diet: They are herbivores, eating grasses and low herbs, as well as occasional fruits and berries.

Lifespan: Over 40 years.

Description: Gopher tortoises have a light to dark brown, elongate upper shell and dull yellow plastron. The skin is greyish brown and the head is large and blunt. The hind feet are small and stumpy. The front legs are shovel-like for burrowing in sand. They can grow to be between 4 inches and 9.5 inches long. Males will have longer gular projections than females.

Breeding: Males will make short rasping calls to attract females. Males also have a pair of glands under their chin that may function to attract females. Once mating occurs, the eggs of the gopher tortoise are laid in late April to July. They are deposited 5 or 6 eggs at a time in holes dug in the ground so that they are protected from the hot sun. The eggs will incubate in the nest cavity for about 100 days before hatching. Gopher tortoises take 16-21 years to mature.

Behavior/Adaptations: Gopher tortoises can be found every month of the year with the peak activity happening in May or June. The excavation of burrows is its main activity. The burrows, which are dug with their front legs, can be up to 9 feet deep and 39 feet long. These burrows give them a place to sleep, where they are protected from enemies and harsh weather conditions. They spend their nights in the burrows and emerge daily in warm weather, usually in the morning before the heat is too great to forage for food.

Predators: Humans have been known to eat them and take them as pets. Raccoons, foxes, skunks, armadillos, and fire ants are well known nest predators of the gopher tortoise.

Conservation: Listed by IUCN as Vulnerable. Gopher tortoises are a keystone species as their burrows, both active and abandoned, are used by over 100 other vertebrates and invertebrates such as burrowing owls, raccoons, and snakes.

Information taken from the following sources:

http://animaldiversity.org/accounts/Gopherus_polyphemus/

<http://www.arkive.org/gopher-tortoise/gopherus-polyphemus/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gopher_tortoise



European Glass Lizard

Ophisaurus apodus

Range: Southeastern Europe to Southwestern Asia

Habitat: In the underbrush of grasslands and sparsely woody hills

Diet: Insects, small mammals, and bird eggs.

Lifespan: Wild: 20 years; Captivity: 30 years

Description: Growing up to 3 feet in length, the glass lizard is a legless lizard resembling a snake in body shape, but are true lizards. Unlike snakes, they have eyelids, multiple rows of underside scales and the ability to break off their tail when threatened. They are diurnal and crepuscular and are most active after a rain storm.

Breeding: Females reach maturity at 2-3 years of age and typically lay 6-10 eggs in late summer. The females remain with the nest for the 6 weeks it takes for the young to hatch, but do not aggressively defend the nest. Once the eggs hatch the female leaves. The young are about 6 inches long after they hatch.

Behavior/Adaptations: The name glass lizard comes from their ability to break their tail off into multiple pieces when threatened leading people to believe these lizards "break like glass." Their tail is able to regrow after it breaks.

Conservation: Least Concern

The Zoo's Glass Lizards: Scapelli and King Koopa hatched in 2015. As of now, it's difficult to tell if they're male or female. Scapelli lives behind the scenes in our terrarium room and is used for educational programming. King Koopa is on display next to the entrance to the nocturnal loop.

Interesting Facts:

- Glass lizards were used in place of snakes in the "snake scene" of *Raiders of the Lost Ark*.
- They are also called the sheltopusik and legless lizards
- Glass lizards still have free-floating remains of a hipbone and small tips of hind legs!

Information taken from the following sources:

<http://nationalzoo.si.edu/Animals/ReptilesAmphibians/Facts/FactSheets/Europeanglasslizard.cfm>

<https://www.zoo.org/page.aspx?pid=1940#.V4j3yfrK70>

<http://dcpaleo.org/sheltopusik-ophisaurus-apodus/>

<https://www.zoo.org/page.aspx?pid=1940#.WKYXt9IrIdU>