

# STARLING, EMERALD

## RANGE:

Wooded savanna areas of West Africa, French Guinea, Sierra Leone and the Ivory Coast.

## HABITAT:

Prefers orchard bush and wooded areas, and open savanna.

## SIZE:

Length: 7–7 ½ inches. Considered a small, short-tailed starling.

## LIFE EXPECTANCY:

Has been recorded to have lived 14 years in captivity. Probably shorter in the wild.

## DIET:

Small fruits and seeds, insects. Young hatchlings are fed a diet entirely of insects.

## REPRODUCTION:

- Are considered to be an aggressive species when breeding
- Nests are made up of a pad of green leaves, usually placed in a hole in a stump or small tree. Both the male and the female participate in the construction of the nest.
- Eggs have been recorded to have been laid as early as March. Generally 2–4 eggs are laid in a clutch. The eggs are pale blue, and often have reddish brown patches.
- Incubation is from 13–15 days. Observations of captive births show both parents feed and care for the young and sometimes others help out.
- Young retain patches of dull plumage on their under-parts until they reach an age of about 12–14 months.

## BEHAVIOR:

- Emerald starlings tend to live in flocks that spread out during the day, but come back together in the late afternoon in groups of 12–50 for roosting. Thus they are loosely colonial.
- Smaller flocks may come together at times to form larger groups which can create a rather noisy chorus in the tree tops.

## POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Emerald starlings are considered one of the more beautiful species of starlings, with their bright iridescent metallic green upper body, wings and tail.
- There are no blue tones to the plumage as in some other closely related species.
- Immature birds are brown, mixed brown and green above, with green wings.

## STATUS:

Common. Some birds have been caught and used as pets in Europe. Habitat destruction is causing concern for the future.

## REFERENCES:

<http://www.colszoo.com/animalareas/aforest/starling.html>

<http://www.redroaddesign.com/forest/animals/birds.html>

# theZOO

L O U I S V I L L E



*Robert Kemnitz, photographer*

Order:	<b>Passeriformes</b>
Family:	<b>Sturnidae</b>
Genus:	<b>Lamprotornis</b>
Species:	<b>iris</b>