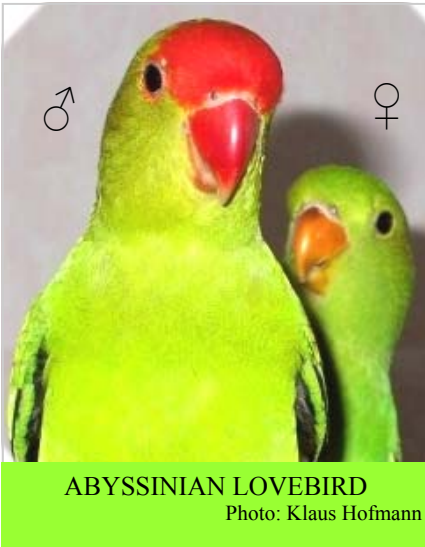


AGAPORNIS...THE LOVEBIRD FAMILY

Continued from the November edition

#7 ABYSSINIAN LOVEBIRD



The Abyssinian Lovebird (*Agapornis taranta*) also known as Black-winged Lovebird is a predominantly green bird about 16.5cm (6.5 inches) long, and is the largest of the Agapornis genus. They are native to Eritrea and Ethiopia, and are uncommon in aviculture.

This species, is about 16-16.5cm (6.25-6.5 inches) in length, and is the largest of the lovebirds. They are sexually dimorphic.

The sexual colouring difference becoming apparent in juvenile birds after their first moult at about eight or nine months of age. Both the male and female are mostly green, but the adult male has a red forehead and a ring of red feathers around its eyes, while the female has an all green head. The tail is tipped with black and the feathers below the tail have a yellowish tinge. The rump and the feathers above the tail are light green. In the male the under-wing feathers are usually black, whilst the female's under-wing feathers are greenish or brownish-black. Both sexes have a reddish beak and grey feet.



HABITAT

Map: Courtesy American CIA

The Abyssinian Lovebird nests in tree cavities. The hen carries the nesting material to the nest tucked into her feathers. Like the Peach-faced and the Madagascar only a small pad is built to hold the eggs, which are white with three or four being the usual clutch. The incubation period is twenty-three days, with the female only carrying out this task. The chicks fledge forty-five days or more after hatching.

In the wild their diet mainly consists of seeding-grasses, fruits and berries. They are often found feeding among acacias, euphorbias, junipers and the sycamore fig. In captivity their diet is similar to the other lovebird species dealt with in this series, but the addition of dried figs, which they relish, would be beneficial.

Widespread and common throughout the highlands and mountainous regions of its range, the Abyssinian Lovebird is evaluated as "Least Concern" on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.



A FINE SPECIMEN OF
A CAPTIVE MALE
Photo: Klaus Hofmann

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