

AGAPORNIS...THE LOVEBIRD FAMILY

Continued from the February edition

#9 BLACK-COLLARED LOVEBIRD



SPECIMEN IN THE AMERICAN
MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
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Photo: "Stavenn"

The Black-collared Lovebird, *Agapornis swindernianus*, is also known as Swindern's Lovebird, and is one of the least known of the genus. It is small, being just 13.5cm (5") in length. It is mostly dusky green with a black band on the back of its neck, beneath which is a yellow area that merges into the green of the back. The throat is washed yellowish, and the chest is brownish-red. The lower back, rump and upper tail coverts are a brilliant blue. The

primaries are black, the outer edges of which are green. The under-wing coverts are green. The central tail feathers are green, the lateral tail feathers are red towards the base, with a black bar and green tips. The iris is yellow, the feet grey and the beak dark greyish-black. The sexes are similar. Immature are paler than the adults, lack the black collar and have a pale beak.

There are three subspecies of the Black-collared Lovebird:

- The nominate race, *A. s. swindernianus* - Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana
- Cameroon Black-collared Lovebird, *A. s. zenkeri* - Cameroon, Gabon and Congo
- Ituri, known as Emin's Lovebird, *A. s. emini* - Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda.

The Black-collared Lovebird is distributed across a wide range in equatorial Africa. It is a forest dweller where they hide high in the canopy and are characterized as being extremely shy. It is rare in some parts of its range, but the range is so large that the population is difficult to estimate. However, it is believed the population is not under significant threat.



The Black-collared and the Red-faced ranges overlap slightly in some areas, and both species have been observed feeding in the same fig tree. Black-collared Lovebirds are rarely kept in captivity, as they require certain native fig seeds or flesh as a staple part of their daily diet, and without these they do not normally thrive.

The Black-collared Lovebird was discovered by Heinrich Kuhl in 1820. Their name commemorates the Dutch professor, Theodore van Swinderen of the University of Groningen.

The Black-collared Lovebird is evaluated as Least Concern on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

R.V.C. with help from Wikipedia

This concludes the *Agapornis* series.

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BIRD KEEPING IN AUSTRALIA