

BLUE-BELLIED ROLLER

updated March 2017



Range	Western and central Africa, from Senegal to southern Sudan
Habitat	Wooded savanna, tree plantations, forest edges, recently burned land, and forests near marshes
Diet (wild)	Large insects
Diet (captivity)	Bird of prey diet
Description	Length: 11–12 inches; weight: 3–5½ ounces. Sexes are similar. Cream colored heads and chests, dark wings and vibrant royal-blue chests and a bright aqua blue tail. The wings also have a bright aqua blue stripe that can be seen during flight.
Lifespan	Unknown; may live to up to 20 years
Reproduction	The females lays 2–3 eggs; at higher latitudes, up to six eggs will be laid. Both parents incubate for about three weeks. Young take about four weeks to fledge. Adults feed regurgitated food to hatchlings. Juveniles from previous broods will assist with feeding. The nest is built about 30 feet (10 meters) up in a tree or in a tree cavity. Courtship includes the male and female blue-bellied rollers chasing each other in flight, rolling through the sky, and calling loudly to each other. This is why these birds are called “rollers.”
Behavior	These social birds typically gather in small groups of 3–7, sometimes more. Rollers exhibit social behaviors such as calling to each other, chasing each other, flying together, and defending territory together. When hunting, they perch in trees up to 30 feet high (10 meters) and dive bomb prey on the ground. They also flock to the scene of forest and brush fires to feed on insects fleeing flames.
Our animals	1 female, 1 male. Born: 04/2010 (male); 08/2013 (female) in captivity
Cool stuff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blue-bellied rollers and other “true” rollers are so named because of their spectacular, tumbling courtship flights. • The call of blue-bellied roller is a harsh clicking ga-ga-ga sound. • Blue-bellied rollers are well-adapted to living in regions dominated by agriculture. They probably play a key role in pest control for farmers in these areas by eating insects which may otherwise feed on crops. • The order Coraciiformes is a group of usually colorful birds that includes kingfishers and bee-eaters.

Phylum
ChordataClass
AvesOrder
CoraciiformesFamily
CoraciidaeGenus
Coraciasspecies
C. cyanogaster