

BLUE-NAPED MOUSEBIRD

updated March 2017



Range	Found in the drier parts of central Africa
Habitat	Dry country in woodland, scrub bush and cultivated areas
Diet (wild)	Mainly fruit; also eats buds, leaves, and flowers
Diet (captivity)	
Description	Length: 13–14 inches. Crested head, turquoise-blue nape patch, grayish body, and a black and red bill. The tail is slender. The young lack the blue on the nape but have pink facial skin and greenish bills.
Lifespan	16 years
Reproduction	During breeding season, groups break up into couples, with each pair building their own nest. A platform of twigs forms the nest's foundation.
Behavior	Like a parrot, mousebirds use their beak to help it climb trees. They can hang upside down and eat in any position. Mousebirds travel in groups of five or six individuals. As a group, they move between one bush and another. Mousebirds are so named because they scurry along branches with their long, thin tail trailing behind them, resembling a mouse.
Our animals	2 females, 3 males. Born: 2009 (females) and 2008 (males) at St. Louis Zoological Park
Cool stuff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The order Coliiformes is confined to sub-Saharan Africa and is the only bird order confined entirely to that continent. • Mousebirds can swallow food as big as their heads. Their jaws are hinged similar to snakes. • Mousebirds are pamprodactylous. This means the two outer toes are reversible. All four toes can be directed forward at will. • When mousebirds sleep, they hang in clusters, abdomen to abdomen, with heads upright between their legs, and tails pointing straight down.

Phylum
ChordataClass
AvesOrder
ColiiformesFamily
ColiidaeGenus
Urocoliusspecies
U. macrourus