

Chilean Flamingo

DOMAIN Eukaryota	KINGDOM Animalia	PHYLUM Chordata	CLASS Aves
ORDER Phoenicopteriformes	FAMILY Phoenicopteridae	GENUS Pheonicopterus	SPECIES Pp. chilensis

WHERE DO THEY HANG OUT?

Chilean flamingos live in shallow brackish saltwater lakes, coastal estuaries, and lagoons. They are found in temperate South America, from central Peru through the Andes to Uruguay and Tierra del Fuego.



A LOOK FOR THE SPOTLIGHT!



They are pale pink with a salmon-pink bustle and grayish legs with red feet and knees. The primary and secondary feathers are black with crimson along the edges. Chilean flamingos obtain their beautiful color from the food they eat. They have short tails and long wingspans. The joint that is often mistaken for their knee is an ankle!

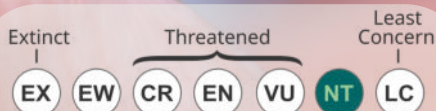


WHAT'S ON THE MENU?



Flamingos invert their heads and sweep their bills sideways to collect food. Specialized slits in the beak act as a filter and enable the birds to consume tiny food items.

Chilean flamingos, like other flamingos, are omnivores and mainly feed on invertebrates that live in the bottom mud. However, their diet also contains some blue-green algae and aquatic plants.



FLOCK OF PINK FEATHER STAYS TOGETHER

They are social birds that live together in colonies. These birds are monogamous and typically found in groups of 20 or more birds. Chilean Flamingos are migratory and fly in a V formation. Their voice is loud and rather goose-like and is vital in locating the young, as well as keeping the flock together when flying.

CHILEAN FLAMINGO FAMILIES

Breeding and nesting occur in massive colonies. It occurs year-round, although it is heavily dependent on food availability and environmental conditions. One egg is laid and incubated by both adults for 26 - 31 days. Chilean Flamingos are white and gray when they first hatch. The young are fed until approximately three months of age



THREATS TO THEIR SURVIVAL



Habitat loss



Illegal Egg Collecting



Human disturbance

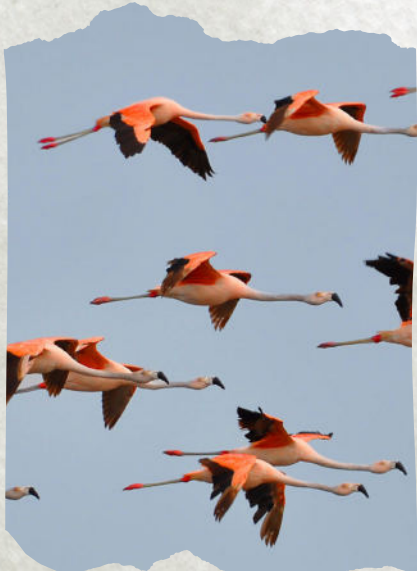


Photo by zoofanatic via wiki commons

Chilean flamingos are listed by the IUCN as near threatened because of their small population of 200,000.

Significant threats include:

human disturbances, such as egg collecting,

habitat loss caused by mining, and hunting.



5 FUN FACTS ABOUT CHILEAN FLAMINGOS



In many languages, the word flamingo (derived initially from the Portuguese language meaning red goose) is a reference to their flying style formation and the noise they make



Flamingos are an ancient group of birds. Their fossil records date back to the Miocene epoch, approximately 10 million years ago



There are 19 vertebrae in a flamingo's neck, while humans (& giraffes!!!) only have seven



In the early years of zoo flamingo care, zoos fed these birds carrots, red peppers, and dried shrimp to keep them pink



Flamingo knees are carpal joints that bend both ways