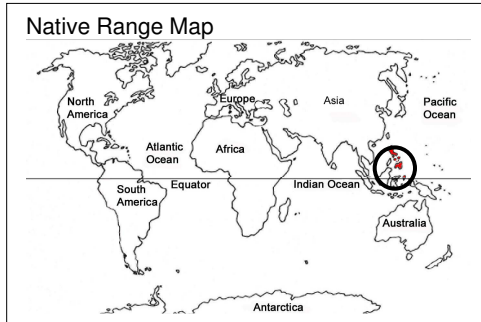


Native Range Map



Luzon Bleeding-heart Pigeon

Kingdom: Animalia
Phylum: Chordata
Subphylum: Vertebrata
Class: Aves
Order: Columbiformes
Family: Columbidae
Genus: *Gallicolumba*
Species: *luzonica*



Photo courtesy of Karen Marzynski

Habitat

- **In the Wild:** The Luzon bleeding-heart pigeon is native to the forests of the Philippine islands of central and southern Luzon and Polillo.
- **Exhibit Location:** Diversity of Birds

Characteristics

- Length: 12 inches; Weight: 6 ounces; Wing span: 15 inches
- *Gallicolumba luzonica* has a dark red patch on its breast that looks like a bleeding wound, hence the name “bleeding heart.”
- They are short-tailed and long-legged with light blue-grey wings and heads with blackish bills. The wing coverts (small feathers that cover the larger wing feathers) are marked with three dark red-brown bands. The throat, breast and underparts are white. Lighter pink feathers surround the red patch on the breast. The legs and feet are red.
- **Lifespan: In the Wild:** 15 years; **In Captivity:** 25 years

Behaviors

- This pigeon is diurnal, being active during the day.
- Bleeding-heart pigeons roost and nest in low to medium height trees, shrubbery and vines. They use the thick surrounding undergrowth to escape from predators. When disturbed, they may fly a short way, but then run a great distance to get away.
- They move in flocks over the dense forest floor in search of food among dead leaf litter.
- They stay in touch with other members of the flock with a series of coos.
- **Enrichments at the Zoo:** The Diversity of Birds exhibit simulates the rainforest, complete with leaf litter to stimulate their natural foraging behavior. Small shrubs and trees provide nighttime roosting and nesting sites.

Reproduction

- Bleeding-heart pigeons are sexually mature at 18 months of age.
- Due to their natural shyness, not much is known about their reproductive behavior in the wild.
- These birds are monogamous. The parents share responsibility for care of the eggs and the young.
- During breeding, males attract females with courtship displays. The male chases the female displaying an inflated breast to fully show his vivid blood markings or “heart.”
- Nests are flimsy structures made of straw and twigs built in low trees or bushes.
- Females lay 2 creamy white eggs per clutch. The eggs are incubated for 15-17 days by both parents. Generally males will sit on the nest during the day and the females take their turn by night.
- When the squabs (baby pigeons) hatch, they are altricial (helpless, naked, blind and requiring attentive parental care and feeding). Both parents feed the young by producing a milk-like substance in their crops (beginning of digestive system). This ensures that the squabs get the nourishment they need for growth, even if food is scarce. The parents stop producing milk after about 10 days and solid food is introduced into the diet.
- The squabs leave the nest in 10-14 days, but parents stay close to their offspring for 2-3 months.
- Adults commonly re-nest, producing 2 or more broods a year.

Diet

- **In the Wild:** seeds, fruits, insects, worms, other small invertebrates
- **At the Zoo:** pigeon pellets, fruit mix, seeds, mealworms, wax moth larvae

Conservation Status

- **IUCN status:** NT- near threatened; **CITES:** Appendix II
- Although the bleeding-heart pigeon is not endangered, because its distribution is restricted to 2 islands, populations are susceptible to selective pressures that are common to small populations in isolation.
- Serious threats to this species are the loss of habitat to deforestation, the illegal hunting for food, and the collection for the pet trade. The bleeding-heart pigeon is a common food source for indigenous people. Probably the most severe threat to wild populations is the pet trade. Zoos world-wide are attempting to build a sustainable captive population for release into the wild at some point in the future when habitat destruction can be halted, slowed or even restored. Since this is a fairly recent endeavor, success has been minimal partly because of the already limited population and that very little is really known about this species.
- Predators: eagles, hawks, owls, vultures, snakes, monkeys, civet cats, crocodiles, humans

Did You Know?/Fun Facts

- The bleeding-heart pigeon, like all doves and pigeons, drinks water by submerging its beak and sucking the water up and swallowing without raising its head between sips.
- When they forage for food, they resemble a chicken; thus their scientific name: *Galli* means chicken and *columba* means dove.
- These birds help insure the success of these forests through seed dispersal.

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