

LESSER FLAMINGO

Phoeniconaias minor

- **Range:** East and South Africa, Mauritania, Senegal and NW India and Pakistan.
- **Habitat:** Inland saline and alkaline lakes and also coastal lagoons. Breeds on extensive mudflats usually far out from shore in large lakes or pans.
- **Nutrition:** Almost entirely dependent on microscopic blue green algae and diatoms, rarely small invertebrates.
- **Reproduction:** 1 or rarely 2 eggs. Incubation 28 days.
- **Social structure:** Large colonies of many thousands of pairs (up to 1,100,000).
- **Weight:** 1.5 – 2 kg.
- **Dimensions:** Height 80 – 90 cm. Wingspan 1.00 – 1.10 m.
- **Estimated population in the wild:** 2,220,000 – 3,240,000 individuals.
- **Lifespan:** 30 years.
- **Threats:** Highly sensitive to habitat loss or modification. Proposed soda-ash mining and hydroelectric power development could negatively affect their main breeding site at Lake Natron in Tanzania. This could cause rapid overall population declines due to human disturbance and the introduction of an alien brine shrimp to clean the soda of algae. Other threats include land-claim, water pollution, and collisions with electric wires.
- **IUCN Status:** NT (near threatened).

Did you know?

- It is the smallest of all flamingo species.
- The lesser flamingo has the biggest population of all flamingo species, but the global population has declined noticeably.
- They form the largest flocks of all flamingo species.
- Lesser flamingo bills are a dark red colour which appears black when seen from a distance.
- Their eyes are golden with a purple eye-ring.