

Weaver



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The animal kingdom's craftsman weaver

The weaver is a small passerine bird the same size as a sparrow. It lives in the tropical regions of the globe. There are a large number of species, most of which live in Africa. They are sociable birds which often gather in flocks. They are to be found in all areas where there is sufficient tree cover for them to be able to build their hanging nests. Some weavers are to be found in wooded savanna, while others completely forest dwellers.

As a general rule their plumage is fairly dull but at breeding times the male is adorned with a brilliant livery, mostly of reds and yellows. Weavers are mainly seed-eaters but will also eat insects. The weaver is so named because of its curious habit of weaving its nest. Vegetable fibres and palm fronds are interwoven to make a kind

of long-necked bottle. Each nest is independant but hundreds are to be found grouped together, always in large colonies.

It is the male weaver's job to put together the family home. He begins by tearing and shredding the leaves of a palm tree and starts work by weaving first of all a circular shape to serve as foundation. The opening of the nest is always placed at the bottom and is at the end of a tube 20 or 25 in long. When the nest is finished the male begins his courting display and the female will respond. After mating, the female retires to lay her eggs and remains alone until the young are hatched.

The weaver's nest is an incomparable masterpiece and forms a safe refuge away from the attacks of any enemy.

Incubation: 15 to 17 days Number of eggs: 2 to 4		Two clutches per year Young leave the nest at 2 weeks old		Adult length: 13 cm (5 in) Wing-span: 24 cm (10 in)	
Phylum: Vertebrata	Class: Aves	Order: Passeriformes	Family: Ploceidae	Genus and species: Ploceus cucullatus	