

Bubulcus ibis

Common names:

engl.:	Cattle Egret
esp.:	Garcilla bueyera
fr.:	Héron gardeboeuf
de.:	Kuhreiher
ital.:	Airone guardabuoi

Scientific synonyms:

- Ardeola ibis*
- Ardea ibis*
- Egretta ibis*



Characteristics:

Adult:

Measurements: Total length 48-53 cm (male slightly larger than female). Wing span 90-96 cm.

Plumage: Breeding: Sexes alike. Feathers of crown, chest, and center of mantle loose, greatly elongated, those of mantle nearly reaching tip of tail; ginger-buff. Rest of plumage white. Non-breeding: White, feathers of crown paler than in breeding plumage. In male, feathers of chest and center of mantle tinged cream-buff, in female white.

Bill: Yellow most of year, red during short time before egg-laying. Length (from feathers to tip of upper mandible) 52-60 mm.

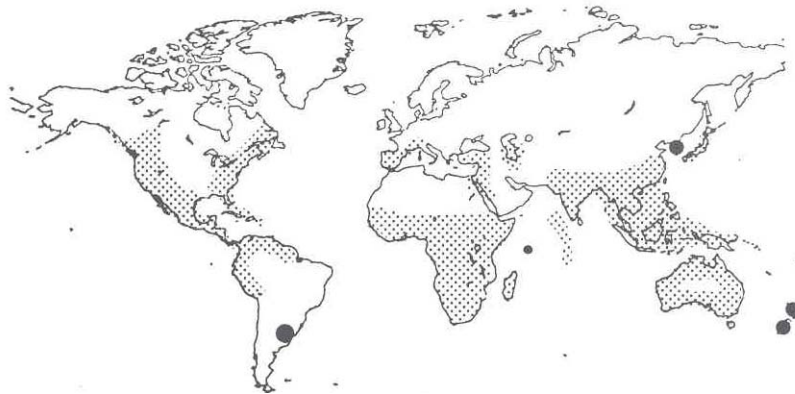
Iris: Yellow most of year, red during short period before egg-laying.

Legs and feet: Most of year tibia yellowish green, feet dark green. Short period during pair formation feet red and then yellow. Tarsus length 70-85 mm.

Immature: Like adult female in non-breeding plumage.

Distribution:

Nearly cosmopolitan. Distributed to 45°N in North America and Eurasia (47°N in France) and to about 35°-40°S. Occurs: throughout Africa (except Sahara), Madagascar, Seychelles, Comoro Islands, Aldabra and Mauritius; in SW Europe (Spain, Portugal, France), Turkey, Caucasus south of Lenkoran and Volga delta, Israel and Arabia; gap in Iranian region; eastwards from Pakistan to Japan; southwards to Sri Lanka and Maldives, and to Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia. Has recently irrupted into Australia and New Zealand. In South America, range including northern coast of Chile, Bolivia, Peru, Colombia, Venezuela, the Guianas, Amazon delta, and from SE Brazil to Buenos Aires, Argentina; northward range from West Indies and Central America, along the Atlantic coast to Canada (Newfoundland), and along the Pacific coast to Northwest Territories in Canada.
B.i. ibis: Africa, SW Asia, S Europe, North and South America.
B.i. coromandus: Asia east from Baluchistan to Australia.
B.i. seychellarum: Seychelles.

**Population:**

Wild population:

Expanding over last 50 years.

Captive population:

The International Zoo Yearbook reports 129 *B. ibis* bred in 25 collections during 1982, and 150 bred in 22 collections during 1983.**Trade:**

16 live specimens recorded by CITES Parties from 1982 to 1985.

Intraspecific variation:

Three subspecies, distinction difficult outside breeding season.

B.i. coromandus differs from nominate *ibis* in buff colour on head spreading to cheeks and throat, ornamental feathers more golden, bill / and tarsus longer on average; more extensive feathering on tibia.

B.i. seychellarum has slightly more golden plumes in breeding plumage; tends to be shorter-winged.

Similar species:

Unmistakable, particularly in summer. *Egretta garzetta* (sheet A-211.001.008.005) and *Egretta gularis* (not listed) have longer bill, *Ardeola ralloides* has darker, thinner bill, streaked head and darker body.



B.i. coromandus
breeding

Bibliography:

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