CREATURE ATLAS

Animal Fact Sheet

Name: _____ Date: _____



Yellow-billed Oxpecker

Buphagus africanus

The yellow-billed oxpecker (Buphagus africanus) is usually presented as the textbook example of mutualism, riding on buffalo, giraffe and rhino and picking off their ticks. The reality is considerabl…

Quick facts

Classification: Bird
Family: Buphagidae
Habitat: Savanna
Diet: Omnivore
Conservation status: Least Concern
Lifespan: 8-10 years
Weight: 45-57 g
Scientific name: Buphagus africanus

Did you know?

- Despite their beneficial reputation, Yellow-billed Oxpeckers sometimes peck at wounds to keep them open and feed on blood, which can slow healing for…
- Oxpeckers drink blood and keep wounds open, and an experiment showed that removing them from cattle did not reduce tick loads but did let wounds heal…

What I learned

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