



# Vanellus spinosus

Common name: **Spur-winged Lapwing**Latin name: **Vanellus spinosus**Local name: **السقد، كروكرو "Sugod"**

## ECOLOGY

### Type:

**Wild**

### Role in Ecosystem:

Because they feed on so many invertebrates, spur-winged lapwings help regulate invertebrate populations within the ecosystems that they inhabit.

## HABITAT

This species prefers marshes and similar freshwater wetland habitats. It inhabits a great variety of habitats, including cultivated fields or (burnt) grassland, near pools, lakes, rivers, or lagoons, mudflats, sandflats, soda flats, rice fields, flooded fields, beaches, and dunes.



### Food

**Carnivore**

Primarily insects, insect larvae, and small invertebrates.



### Movement and Communication

This species is largely sedentary throughout its African range and makes only local, irregular movements. Mediterranean populations, however, have been documented as being fully migratory, moving north and south with the seasonal changes.

Spur-winged lapwings are found in flocks of 15 up to over 100 and are very vocal and communicative with upwards of 10 different vocalizations used for warnings, alarms, threats and attracting mates.



### Social Habits

**Social**

Outside of breeding season Lapwings like to cluster in groups of about 15 birds. They vocalize loudly to warn of predators, attract mates, and defend their territory.

### Reproduction

**Oviparous**

Because of the large geographical range of this species, the breeding season is quite variable. The species nests from March to September in West Africa and the eastern Mediterranean, with the timing of breeding varying greatly elsewhere.

Spur-winged lapwings nest in solitary pairs or loose colonies, where nest territories are actively guarded against other bird species. The males make complex mating calls combined with dancing courtship rituals to attract a female. The monogamous pair will build a nest together, usually made in a shallow scrape on the ground and sometimes lined with vegetation. The female lays a clutch of 2-4 brown speckled eggs. Both parents incubate the eggs for about 22 days and feed the young. If the pair re-clutches in the same year, the male tends to the older chicks while the female incubates the second clutch of eggs. The juvenile birds are independent after fledging (7 – 8 weeks) but will often remain in the area until the next breeding season.

### Attributes

#### Size:

25–28 cm; wingspan 69–81 cm.

#### Weight:

127–177 g

## INTRODUCTION

The spur-winged lapwing is a conspicuous and unmistakable bird. They are medium-large waders with black crowns, chest, foreneck stripe and tail. The face, the rest of the neck, and belly are white and the wings and back are light brown. The bill and legs are black. Its striking appearance is supplemented by its noisy nature, with a loud did-he-do-it call. The bird's common name refers to a small claw or spur hidden in each of its wings.

The spur-winged lapwing breeds around the eastern Mediterranean, in a wide band from sub-Saharan West Africa to Arabia. The Greek and Turkish breeds are migratory, but other populations are resident.

## LIVELIHOODS AND CULTURE

### Human interaction

Spur-winged lapwings lay their eggs on the ground, and very aggressively defend their territory. They are known to attack animals and sometimes humans that wander near their nests. These attacks are rarely dangerous, however.

### Cultural value

The local name of this bird is used in Sudanese culture to describe someone who suffers from lack of sleep as well as poor sleeping as the bird moves a lot at night and makes sounds. This bird is also alert defending its territory and its nest a reason that leads local people to describe attentive people as "Sugod". While the adult bird is considered a symbol of beauty, the nestling of spur-winged lapwing is used to denote ugliness in Sudanese traditional stories.

### Cultural expression

Their rhythmic movement is referenced by the *Shaygiya* traditional dance.

A restless person is called sugod like the bird as they don't sleep at night.

طير السقد ما بنوم نص الليالي يحوم .. ييذاها من خرطوم شائل سلاحو معاه

## THREATS

Habitat Loss and Degradation

Climate change

Hunting and Trapping

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