The Comb-crested Jacana, also known as the Lotusbird, has a red fleshy forehead comb, a black crown, back and breast and brown wings. The belly, face and throat are white, and there is a faint yellow tinge around the eye and throat. Both sexes are similar in appearance, but the female is larger than the male, and slightly brighter in colour. In flight, the long legs and toes trail behind the body. Young Jacanas resemble the adult birds, but are rufous to black on the head and nape, and have a rufous-black breast band. The red fleshy comb is much smaller and darker.

Comb-crested Jacanas occupy coastal and sub-coastal regions from the Kimberleys, Western Australia, through northern Australia to about Grafton, New South Wales. They are more common in the north of their range. The species also occurs in New Guinea, Indonesia and the Philippines.

Comb-crested Jacanas are found in tropical and subtropical freshwater wetlands, including lagoons, billabongs, swamps, lakes, rivers, sewage ponds and dams, providing there is adequate floating vegetation.

The Comb-crested Jacana feeds on aquatic insects, which it seizes from floating vegetation or the surface of the water. It also feeds on seeds and aquatic plants. Birds rarely come to shore. When searching for food, the Comb-crested Jacana bobs its head and flicks its tailed continuously.