Click to verify

Birds are warm-blooded vertebrates characterized by feathers on their bodies, toothless beaked jaws, hard-shelled calcareous eggs, and a four-chambered heart with a high rate of metabolism. They are experts at flight (except flightless birds, like ostrich, penguins, and some diverse endemic species living in islands), equipped with wings, which are nothing but forelimbs modified for an aerial lifestyle. Their bones are lightweight and pneumatic, bearing air cavities connected to the lungs. They belong to the class Aves under the tetrapod clade Archosauria, including their sister group, crocodilians. They have a worldwide distribution with an estimated population of around 11,000 known living species. They are extremely social, using tuneful songs as calls to attract potential mates or communicate with their conspecifics. While the smallest living bird, the bee hummingbird, measures 6.3 cm (2.5 inches) in length and weighs less than 3 gm (about 0.1 ounces), the largest living bird, the common ostrich, stands over 9 feet (2.75 meters) tall and weighs 150 kg (330 lbs). The avian skeleton is characterized by lightweight bones filled with air cavities (pneumatic bones) directly connected to the respiratory system. Their forelimbs are modified into wings by the fusion of bones, reduction of digits and claws, and inclusion of attachment points for the feathers. The hindlimbs culminate in claws and are covered with scales to help them perch on tree branches. The skull is large in adults, and all bones are fused, leaving no visible sutures. The vertebral column is divided into cervical, thoracic, lumbar, and caudal regions, with remarkable variation in the number of vertebrae in the cervical region. They have flattened ribs that fuse to a keeled sternum, providing attachment sites for the flight muscles. Birds have feathers on their bodies, which are nothing but epidermal growths attached to the skin. They are present in specific skin tracts called pterylae and serve different purposes apart from flight, such as thermoregulation, camouflage, and attracting mates. They shed their feathers annually and reacquire them through molting, though many birds may molt multiple times yearly. Ducks and geese lose all their feathers at once, temporarily becoming flightless. Birds also have scales (homologous to those of reptiles and mammals) on specific portions of their bodies, such as the toes and metatarsus. These scales are clustered keratin, like beaks, claws, and spurs. Though non-overlapping in most birds, kingfishers and woodpeckers have overlapping scales. Birds have a four-chambered, myogenic (muscle-driven) heart covered by a fibrous pericardial sac. The atrium and ventricle of each side are separated by atrioventricular valves that prevent blood from flowing backward. Like a mammalian heart, the avian heart wall has three layers: epicardium (outer layer), myocardium (middle layer), and endocardium (inner layer). The sinoatrial node sets the hearts pace, using calcium to send a depolarizing signal from the atrium through the right and left atrioventricular bundle, which leads to the contraction of the two ventricles. The arteries that carry oxygenated blood throughout the body comprise thick, elastic muscles that contract (vasoconstriction) while the blood flows into the capillaries of the different organs. The gaseous exchange occurs at these capillaries, following which the deoxygenated blood travels through the veins by dilating them (vasodilation). After the blood reaches the right atrium, it moves to the right ventricle, passing it to the lungs for oxygenation. Birds have a characteristically unique respiratory system adapted for their aerial lifestyle. Their lungs are connected to several pairs of nonvascular air sacs, which, in turn, are connected to the air spaces in the bones. When the bird inhales air, most of it bypasses the lungs and flows straight into the air sacs, filling the bones with sufficient air. On exhalation, the used air moves out of the lungs while the air stored in the posterior sacs is forced into the lungs, thus ensuring a constant supply of fresh air. The avian digestive tract is characterized by the presence of a crop, an enlargement of the esophagus, and the muscular gizzard of the stomach. While the former stores food, the latter contains swallowed stones that substitute teeth and help grind food. They excrete nitrogenous waste in the form of uric acid (uricotelic) using kidneys. However, some birds, like hummingbirds, are facultatively ammonotelic, releasing waste as ammonia, whereas a few others expel creatine. Most birds, except ostriches, lack a urinary bladder or urethral opening and release nitrogenous waste as semi-solid waste along with feces. The brain is the central organ of a birds nervous system. It is large and divided into the forebrain, midbrain, and hindbrain, each performing a different function. While the cerebrum in the forebrain controls most behavior patterns, the cerebellum coordinates the movement of different body parts. To the posterior of the cerebellum lies the hindbrain that connects the rest of the brain to the spinal cord. Birds have a well-developed visual system, marked by large, tetrachromatic eyes capable of detecting colors that most animals lack. They possess ultraviolet (UV) sensitive cone cells for sensing colors; however, they sometimes contain double cones that enable achromatic vision. While birds with eyes on the sides of their heads have wide vision, those with eyes on the front of their heads, like owls, have binocular vision characterized by acute depth estimation. The eyes are covered by a thin nictitating membrane (third eyelid) that moves horizontally and keeps them moist. A fan-like structure called the pecten constantly supplies blood to the innermost retina. Male birds have two testes, and those belonging to the groups Palaeognathae (except kiwis), Anseriformes (except screamers), and Galliformes have a specific copulatory organ called the penis. However, birds in the group Neoaves completely lack this organ. Females usually have a single ovary and an oviduct, but many species, like kiwis, have two functional ovaries. They also have sperm-storing tubules to preserve the gametes long after copulation. Aves and their sister group, Crocodilia, are the only living representatives of the reptile clade Archosauria. Scientists Gauthier and de Queiroz described Aves in four ways: All archosaurs that are more closely related to birds than to crocodiles (alternately Avemetatarsalia) All advanced archosaurs with feathers (alternately Avifilopluma) All feathered dinosaurs that fly (alternately Avialae) The last common ancestor of all the currently living birds and all its descendants (a crown group) All modern birds belong to the crown group Aves, which has two infraclasses: the Palaeognathae, which includes the flightless ratites and the weak-flying tinamous, and the most diverse Neognathae, containing all other species. The following list contains all the extant orders of birds classified under the two infraclasses. Infraclass: PalaeognathaeSuperorder: StruthionimorphaeOrder: Struthioniformes (Ostriches) Superorder: NotopalaeognathaeOrder: Rheiformes (Rheas) Order: Tinamiformes (Tinamous) Order: Casuariiformes (Emu and Cassowaries) Order: Apterygiformes (Kiwis) Infraclass: NeognathaeSuperorder: GalloanseraeOrder: Galliformes (Chickens and relatives) Order: Anseriformes (Ducks and relatives) Superorder: NeoavesOrder: Phoenicopteriformes (Flamingoes) Order: Podicipediformes (Grebes) Order: Columbiformes (Pigeons and Doves) Order: Mesitornithiformes (Mesites) Order: Pteroclidiformes (Sandgrouse) Order: Apodiformes (Swifts, Treeswifts, and Hummingbirds) Order: Caprimulgiformes (Nightjars) Order: Aegotheliformes (Owlet-nightjars) Order: Podargiformes (Frogmouths) Order: Steatornithiformes (Oilbird) Order: Nyctibiiformes (Potoos) Order: Cuculiformes (Cuckoos) Order: Otidiformes (Bustards) Order: Musophagiformes (Turacos) Order: Opisthocomiformes (Hoatzins) Order: Gruiformes (Rails and Cranes) Order: Charadriiformes (Waders and relatives) Order: Gaviiformes (Loons) Order: Procellariiformes (Albatrosses and Petrels) Order: Sphenisciformes (Penguins) Order: Ciconiiformes (Storks) Order: Suliformes (Boobies, Cormorants, and others) Order: Pelecaniformes (Pelicans, Herons, Ibises) Order: Eurypygiformes (Sunbittern and Kagu) Order: Phaethontiformes (Tropicbirds) Order: Cathartiformes (New World Vultures) Order: Accipitriformes (Hawks and relatives) Order: Strigiformes (Owls) Order: Coliiformes (Mousebirds) Order: Leptosomiformes (Cuckoo rollers) Order: Trogoniformes (Trogons and Quetzals) Order: Bucerotiformes (Hornbills and relatives) Order: Coraciiformes (Kingfishers and relatives) Order: Piciformes (Woodpeckers and relatives) Order: Cariamiformes (Seriemas) Order: Falconiformes (Falcons) Order: Psittaciformes (Parrots) Order: Passeriformes (Passerines) Birds evolved from theropod dinosaurs, such as dromaeosaurids and oviraptorosaurs, during the Late Jurassic Period. Over millions of years, they underwent changes, finally giving rise to the modern birds we see today. Given below is a timeline diagram that represents the evolutionary history of these animals. Although birds are abundant in almost every terrestrial habitat on all continents, their highest diversity is in the tropics. Birds like snow petrels extend their breeding colonies as far south as 440 km inland from Antarctica. Many species, such as the ring-necked pheasant, have been purposely introduced by humans in certain areas as game birds, eventually establishing stable populations. In contrast, monk parakeets have accidentally entered several North American cities and heavily populated them. Birds mainly feed on nectar, fruits, plants, seeds, and a variety of small animals, such as insects and other bird species, that hop onto them from branches. Scavenging birds, such as vultures and hawks, feed on dead and decaying remains. Those that feed entirely on one specific food type, such as hummingbirds feeding on nectar, are specialists, whereas pigeons, sparrows, and crows are generalists living off multiple food items. While most birds are active during daytime (diurnal), owls and nightjars are active at night (nocturnal) or during twilight (crepuscular). While aquatic birds, such as loons, diving ducks, auks, and penguins, actively pursue their prey by propelling their bodies underwater, aerial predators, like sulids, kingfishers, and terns, plunge their bodies in the air to grasp their prey. Birds usually scoop water in their beaks and raise their heads to let it run down their throats. However, pigeons, finches, mousebirds, and button-quails can easily suck up water without having to tilt their heads. Flamingoes, prions, and some ducks are filter feeders that consume food particles suspended on the water surface. Gulls, skuas, and frigatebirds often steal food from other birds (kleptoparasitism) to save energy spent on foraging.Birds usually groom themselves by nibbling their feathers with their beaks (preening) and lubricating them with anti-microbial secretions from the uropygial or preen gland at the base of the tail. Some birds use anting, where ants are encouraged to run through their plumage to help them eliminate ectoparasites. They also bathe in water, dust themselves, or roll in loose soil to eliminate these parasites. They often stretch out their wings under the sun to reduce fungal infestations using the heat of the rays. Many land birds, waterbirds, and shorebirds set out to journey across long distances to avoid extreme weather conditions and optimize the availability of resources and breeding habitats. While land birds have a flight range of around 2,500 km, shorebirds can cover distances as long as 4,000 km. The peregrine falcon can reach more than 300 km (186 miles) per hour, making it the worlds fastest bird. The longest annual migrations are recorded in muttonbirds, which spend their summers in the North Pacific off Japan, Alaska, and California and move southwards to New Zealand and Chile, making for a year-round trip of 64,000 km. When attacked, some petrels eject an obnoxious stomach oil against the aggressor, while pitohuis flash a powerful neurotoxin from their skin and feathers. While some birds, like steamer ducks, geese, swans, and stone curlews, hammer their opponents using a bony knob on their metacarpal, jacanas attack using their blade-like radius. The sunbittern displays eye-shaped patches on its wings and tail to mimic large predators and ward off potential enemies. Birds have developed several mechanisms to rest or sleep (roost) when they have some respite from foraging. Many sleeping birds, such as the American Flamingo, tuck their heads either into the feathers of their backs or breasts while sleeping. Some sleeping birds take quick peeks at their surroundings while sleeping (vigilant sleep) and are extremely sensitive to the slightest disturbances around them. Frigatebirds fall asleep even during flight and use only half of their brain (slow-wave sleep) during that time. Acorn woodpeckers roost communally during winter to reduce the loss of body heat. Nightjars, woodswallows, and some hummingbirds enter a state of decreased physiological activities (torpor) during the night, whereas the common poorwill enters into hibernation. Birds cool themselves while resting by staying under shade or in water, panting, and fluttering their throats. Few birds, like the white stork, defecate onto scaly parts of their legs as a cooling mechanism (urohydrosis). Birds communicate through songs and calls produced by their vocal organ, the syrinx. These sounds help identify individuals, evaluate potential mates and attract them, claim territories, and warn members of groups. Some songbirds can simultaneously use both sides of their syrinx to produce different acoustic effects. Palm cockatoos and woodpeckers drum on the surface of the wood and use such mechanical sounds for communication. Though some birds live in small, incidental, or family groups, others flock in large numbers for safety and efficient foraging. They also form associations with non-avian species, like dolphins and tuna, pushing shoaling fish toward the waters surface, which gives them access to birds. Hornbills also form a mutualistic association with the common dwarf mongoose, where they forage together and warn each other of nearby predators, like birds of prey. While the ruby-throated hummingbird lives for only three to five years, the worlds oldest known wild bird, a Laysan Albatross, is around 73 years old. The majority of birds are monogamous or have exclusive partnerships throughout their lives; however, in birds belonging to the family Anatidae, extra-pair copulation or infidelity is common. Other mating systems, like polygamy, polyandry, polygyny, and polygynandry, are also found across the different families of birds. Sexual selection Male birds engage in some courtship displays to woo their mates. These typically involve singing, but sometimes, the males drum their tails, dance, or take elaborate aerial flights to attract the females. Usually, the females select visually appealing males, but in phalaropes, it is the opposite, where the males choose vibrant females as their mates. Some birds, such as house sparrows, acorn woodpeckers, ravens, and ostrich, are among the 130 species of birds that display homosexual behavior by involving in sexual interactions with individuals of the same sex. Nesting Most female birds develop a special brood pouch by shedding feathers close to the belly and getting ready to lay and incubate eggs. They lay amniotic eggs, with a fluid-filled amniotic membrane covering the embryo. These eggs are covered by hard calcareous shells composed of calcium carbonate, which are often patterned to help camouflage against their backgrounds. Eggs are usually laid in cup-shaped nests built using leaves, twigs, sticks, lichen, and other natural components. However, most birds that live in open habitats, like the common guillemot, lay eggs on bare ground. Similarly, emperor penguins keep their eggs protected between their body and feet. Sometimes, birds, like cuckoos and honeyguides, lay their eggs in another birds nest (brood parasitism) so that the host accepts and raises their young. The female or both parents incubate the eggs using brood patches, through which heat passes. The incubation period may vary from 10 days in woodpeckers, cuckoos, and perching birds to more than 80 days in kiwis and albatrosses. Some megapodes incubate their eggs using the warmth of sun rays, decaying vegetation, or volcanic sources. Parental Care In over 90% of bird species, both parents care for the chicks. In crows, Australasian wrens, and Australian magpies, the breeding pairs close relatives often care for the young (alloparenting). Many seabirds, such as the great frigatebird, continue to provide parental care for up to six months till the young are ready to fledge. Their young are also fed for an additional 14 months after fledging. Seabirds have special salt glands in their heads to eliminate excess salt from their bodies. Nectar-feeding birds, such as hummingbirds, sunbirds, lories, and lorikeets, have special brushy tongues and bills adapted for fitting into flower parts.Birds that feed on the nectar of flowers are excellent pollinators and play an important role in the dispersal of seeds. They are also considered ecosystem engineers as they establish microhabitats for hundreds of invertebrate species that take refuge in the nests built by the birds. In islands where mammals cannot reach, birds often substitute for them in ecological roles. Certain birds endemic to New Zealand, such as the extinct moa, the New Zealand pigeon, and the kokako, play important roles in maintaining the islands ecological stability. Although hundreds of birds have gone extinct in the past, the worst avian extinction occurred during the colonization of Melanesian, Polynesian, and Micronesian islands, washing away around 750 to 1,800 species. The most common anthropogenic threat to bird diversity is the constant degradation and loss of natural habitats. Other threats include long-line fishing bycatch, overhunting, competition from invasive species, and climate change. With their populations constantly declining, 1,227 bird species were listed as threatened by BirdLife International and the IUCN in 2009. However, conservation efforts are being undertaken to restore existing habitats and breed captive populations for reintroduction in the wild. Birds are a class of warm-blooded vertebrates with distinguishing features including feathers, wings, and beaks. They are renowned for their remarkable diversity, encompassing over 10,000 known species. This diversity is evident in their size, shape, coloration, behavior, and preferred habitats. However, with such a vast number of species, a system is needed to organize and classify them.The following AnimalWised article explores the various types of birds, their classification, and their primary characteristics.You may also be interested in: Different Types of Pet BirdsContentsBird characteristicsTypes of birdsPalaeognathae birdsNeognathae birdsIn the scientific community, birds are classified as theropod dinosaurs, the only lineage within the dinosaur group known to have survived extinction. Their origin can be traced back millions of years to these bipedal, meat-eating dinosaurs.Paleontological evidence, including fossilized remains, reveals a strong link between birds and theropods. Shared characteristics such as hollow bones for efficient flight and certain skeletal structures support this evolutionary connection.Therefore, from a biological standpoint, birds are not a completely separate class of animals, but rather the sole surviving descendants of a particular dinosaur lineage. Over vast stretches of time, these ancestors developed unique adaptations, enabling them to take flight and diversify into the over 9,000 bird species gracing the planet today. Let us take a closer look at these specific adaptations: Feathers: these lightweight marvels provide insulation, waterproofing, and most importantly, the ability to fly. The structure of feathers allows for different wing shapes depending on the bird's flight style, from the high-maneuvering wings of a hummingbird to the long, soaring wings of an albatross.Hollow bones: many bird bones are lightweight and air-filled, reducing overall body weight and making flight more efficient. This is crucial since heavier creatures require more energy to stay aloft.Beaks: unlike dinosaurs with teeth, birds have beaks adapted for various diets. From the powerful crushing beaks of parrots to the long, probing beaks of waders, these specialized tools allow birds to exploit a wide range of food sources.Air sacs: bird lungs are connected to a network of air sacs that extend throughout their body. This unique respiratory system allows for a more efficient flow of oxygen throughout the body, vital for the high energy demands of flight.Keen eyesight: birds possess exceptional vision, with some species having incredible zooming capabilities or the ability to see ultraviolet light. This sharp vision aids in tasks like hunting, navigation, and predator avoidance.Lightweight skeleton: bird skeletons are constructed from lightweight bone and have fused bones for added strength. This reduces weight while maintaining a strong framework for flight and movement.Specialized feet: just like beaks, a bird's feet come in all shapes and sizes, each perfectly suited to their lifestyle. Wading birds have long toes to distribute weight on soft surfaces, raptors have sharp talons for grasping prey, and owls have a reversible outer toe for better balance when climbing.Superb hearing: certain birds, like owls, have exceptional hearing thanks to facial features that act like satellite dishes, pinpointing even the faintest sounds of prey.Salt glands: seabirds have special glands near their eyes that help them expel excess salt they ingest from seawater.Temperature regulation: since feathers can trap heat, some birds like vultures have opted for featherless heads to dissipate heat in hot environments.Colorful plumage: while some birds have excellent camouflage, others utilize vibrant feathers for attracting mates, displaying dominance, or even scaring predators.Unique vocalizations: Birds have an impressive range of vocalizations, from the melodic songs of songbirds to the harsh calls of raptors. These sounds are used for communication, attracting mates, and defending territory.To delve deeper into the fascinating origins of birds and their prehistoric transformation, check out this other article.Birds, like all living creatures, are classified within a hierarchical system called taxonomy, where organisms are grouped based on shared characteristics. Here's the breakdown for birds:Kingdom: Animalia (all animals)Phylum: Chordata (animals with a backbone)Class: Aves (all birds, extinct and living)Within the Class Aves, birds are categorized into subgroups based on closer similarities. With over 10,000 species worldwide, their diversification occurred over millions of years, notably during the Cretaceous period approximately 145 million years ago. These birds are primarily grouped into two main lineages:Palaeognathae: This group includes flightless birds like ostriches and emus, along with the flight-capable tinamous. This group comprises about 50 species, primarily found in the southern hemisphere. Examples include ostriches, emus, and kiwis.Neognathae: This incredibly diverse group encompasses all other living birds, from eagles to penguins to hummingbirds.Dive deeper into the fascinating world of bird nests. This other article explores the different types birds build and the materials they use.Palaeognathae, also known as paleognaths, are a group of birds encompassing flightless birds and the flight-capable tinamous. Their name comes from the ancient Greek words "palaios" meaning "old" and "gnathos" meaning "jaw," referencing their unique jaw structure which is considered more primitive than other birds.Flightless birds, also referred to as ratites, encompass a variety of species, such as:Ostrich (Struthio camelus): the ostrich is the largest living bird species and is renowned for its exceptional speed as a runner. It inhabits various regions in sub-Saharan Africa.Rheas (Rhea Americana): species like Rhea Americana are smaller compared to ostriches but are adept runners. They have lost the ability to fly and are native to South America.Cassowaries (Casuarius casuarius): cassowaries reside in Australia and New Guinea.Emus (Dromaius novaehollandiae): emus are native to Australia. Both species are flightless and primarily move by walking or running.Kiwis (Apteryx owenii): kiwis are unique birds endemic to New Zealand. They are small, possess a distinctive round body shape, and predominantly inhabit terrestrial environments.These flightless birds share key adaptations for ground dwelling. They lack a keel, a structure for flight muscles, and have flattened wings unfit for flying. Their bodies are built for running, with strong legs and muscles that make them exceptional sprinters.The only flying members of the Palaeognathae are the tinamous. Tinamous stand out as an anomaly within the Palaeognathae group. While flightless ratites like ostriches and emus are commonly associated with this lineage, tinamous possess the ability to fly, albeit in short bursts.This intriguing contrast highlights the complex evolutionary history of these birds. Despite their flight capability, tinamous share similar jaw structures and are believed to have originated from a common ancestor with ratites within the Palaeognathae group. Want to dig deeper into the world of flightless birds? Check out this next article. Neognathae are the vast majority of living birds, encompassing nearly 10,000 species. They represent the "new jaw" group compared to the Palaeognathae birds. This is a tremendously diverse group, containing birds of all shapes and sizes. However, some general features that unite all Neognathae birds are:Fused bones in the wrist (carpus) for a stronger wing structure.A specific arrangement of three toes (one pointing backwards).Typically 13 or fewer vertebrae.Unlike the flightless ratites and the single flying tinamou in the Palaeognathae group, most Neognathae birds can fly (exceptions include penguins and ostriches). Additionally, their jaw structures differ.Neognathae birds are further divided into Orders, each containing birds with more specific shared characteristics. There are around 40 to 50 orders within the Neognathae sub-class. Here are some prominent examples: Perching birds (Passeriformes): this is the largest and most diverse order, accounting for over half of all bird species. It includes songbirds like robins, finches, sparrows, and crows, renowned for their complex vocalizations.Birds of prey (Falconiformes): these birds are specialized hunters with keen eyesight and sharp talons. This order encompasses eagles, hawks, falcons, and owls, each with adaptations suited to their specific hunting strategies.Waterfowl (Anseriformes): ducks, geese, swans, and pelicans belong to this order. They are typically adapted for aquatic environments with webbed feet for swimming and waterproof feathers.Parrots (Psittaciformes): this vibrant group includes macaws, cockatoos, parakeets, and more. Parrots are known for their intelligence, colorful plumage, and ability to mimic sounds.Shorebirds (Charadriiformes): this order encompasses sandpipers, plovers, gulls, terns, and auks. These birds are often found near water and have adaptations for wading in shallow water or catching prey in flight.Penguins (Sphenisciformes): these flightless birds are uniquely adapted for a life at sea. Their wings have evolved into flippers for swimming, and their bodies are streamlined for underwater movement.Did you know a bird's feet can reveal a lot about its lifestyle? Explore the fascinating world of bird feet and their unique adaptations in this other article. BibliographyLovette, I.J. & Fitzpatrick, J.W. (2016) . Handbook Of Bird Biology . The Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Third Edition. CornellUniversity. 733 pp.Bierregaard, R. O. (1994). Yellow-headed Caracara . Josep del Hoyo, Andrew Elliott & Jordi Sargatal (eds.), ed. Handbook of the Birds of the World. Volume 2. New World Vultures to Guineafowl. Barcelona: Lynx Editions.Senar, JC & Guallar, S. (2004). Much more than feathers . Barcelona: Institute of Culture of Barcelona.Why am I seeing this?You are seeing this because the administrator of this website has set up Anubis to protect the server against the scourge of AI companies aggressively scraping websites. This can and does cause downtime for the websites, which makes their resources inaccessible for everyone.Anubis is a compromise. Anubis uses a Proof-of-Work scheme in the vein of Hashcash, a proposed proof-of-work scheme for reducing email spam. The idea is that at individual scales the additional load is ignorable, but at mass scraper levels it adds up and makes scraping much more expensive.Ultimately, this is a hack whose real purpose is to give a "good enough" placeholder solution so that more time can be spent on fingerprinting and identifying headless browsers (EG: via how they do font rendering) so that the challenge proof of work page doesn't need to be presented to users that are much more likely to be legitimate.Please note that Anubis requires the use of modern JavaScript features that plugins like JShelter will disable. Please disable JShelter or other such plugins for this domain.This website is running Anubis version devel. 26.06.2025Hnsehauk og spurvehauk lever begge i skog, men utenfor hekkesesongen kan de dukke opp nrmest hvor som helst. Spurvehauken er klart mest tallrik, og sees oftere enn sin strre slektning i urbane strk. Men hvordan kan du vre sikker p hvilken art du ser?Les hele saken 25.06.2025N skjer det spennende og ikke minst nyttige endringer! AviList er en ny enhetlig sjekkliste over alle verdens fuglearter. Listen er lansert som et samarbeid mellom Avibase, American Ornithological Union, Cornell Lab, BirdLife International og International Ornithologists Union (IOU). N blir det bare n liste forholde seg til!Les hele saken 24.06.2025BirdLife Oslo og Akershus og BirdLife Asker og Brum lokallag har klaget p en utbyggingsplan for Oksenya bruk p Fornebu, som vi mener truer verneverdiene i det nrliggende Storykilen naturreservat. Den vedtatte planen er dessuten betydelig oppskalert sammenlignet med tidligere planer. N har Statsforvalteren gitt fullt medhold: Reguleringsvedtaket er opphevet, og kommunen m behandle saken p nytt.Les hele saken 18.06.2025En ny forvaltningsplan fra EU kan fre til omfattende nedskyting av storskarv i Europa. Planen, som ble lagt frem i april av den europeiske rdgivende kommisjon for innlandsfiske (EIFAAC), foreslr systematisk skyting av opptil 150000 storskarv rlig. Men bak de dramatiske tallene skjuler det seg et dypere problem: naturen fr skylden for noe mennesker selv har skapt.Les hele saken 17.06.2025Et EU-forslag om forby bruken av bly i jakt, sportsskyting og fiske, mter ufortjent motstand. BirdLife Norge har bedt norske myndigheter om sttte helhjertet opp om forbudet, som bygger p solid vitenskapelig dokumentasjon. Om vi ikke griper muligheten n, vil natur og folkehelse fortsette lide.Les hele saken 16.06.2025Stortinget har vedtatt endringer i naturmangfoldlovens 17 som dramatisk svekker vernet av ville dyr. BirdLife Norge mener at endringen bryter med Bernkonvensjonen, og har sendt en formell henvendelse om mulig traktatbrudd.Les hele sakenFlere nyheter There are over 10,000 types of birds in the world. They range from big to small, and although its impossible to know about them all, they have plenty of qualities in common that place them in the Aves class of the animal kingdom. Whether birds interest you or youd just like to know more about them, well cover key information about some of the many bird species out there. Youll learn about the most known birds, from their history to unique features. Different types of birds have attributes that make them as unique as humans, and knowing about them lets you appreciate what mother nature has to offer. In this article, youll find 40 different types of birds! You may know what birds are, but what makes them birds? No matter how many types of birds there are, they all have a commonality. Birds are classified as endothermic vertebrates, so they can regulate their own temperature and have an inner skeleton, which is hollow, by the way, to allow easy flight. In addition, they have feathers, wings, and a spindle-shaped body to make the flight comfortable. Instead of a mouth with teeth, these curious animals have a beak. Also, they are bipedal, meaning they use only two legs for walking. They vary in size from 2 inches to 9 feet 2 inches. Every type of bird hatches from a hard-shelled egg, which is fertilized internally. Collective bird nouns: a flock of birds (generic noun for any type of bird) and a flight of birds (when in flight). History And Evolution Did you know that birds are the only dinosaurs still alive today? Birds are theropods, which is the same classification as a T-rex! A theropod is a bipedal animal with three toes and claws on each limb. The oldest bird species existed 150 million years ago and closely resemble todays birds, except they had teeth. Current-day birds lost their teeth during their evolution. Types of birds are divided into two groups: Palaeognathae, which are flightless and weak flying birds, and Neognathae, which all other birds fall into. Palaeognathae only contains six of tens of thousands of bird types, including ostriches, kiwis, rheas, tinamous, emu, and cassowaries. All types of birds chirp or sing to mate, warn others of danger, or scare predators. Some of them even dance to attract a mate even chickens do, but its a different type of chicken dance to the one you know! Also, all bird species lay eggs. Most birds live in flocks for safety, and many migrate to different locations throughout the year to find food or mate. Different types of birds have common DNA traits that group them together, and this list has 40 orders of birds with varying species within the type mentioned. Knowing about different bird types will give you fascinating insight and a newfound appreciation of the birding world. Here are the 40 orders with a few species of birds that fall within each one of them. Somali ostrich Ostriches are the giants among our feathered friends, weighing 220 to 350 pounds. They have the largest eyes of any mammal on earth regarding their body ratio and lay the biggest eggs of any type of bird. They do have wings but cant fly; however, they make up for it by being able to run 43.5 mph, making them one of the fastest land animals! Ostrich farming is common worldwide for meat, leather, feathers, and eggs. The Philippines and Namibia have the largest ostrich farming industries. These flightless birds are native to Africa but were commonly found across Asia in ancient times. Different species: There are only two ostrich speciesthe common ostrich and the Somali ostrich. Read next: 14 Biggest Animals in the World Greater Rhea Rheas look like ostriches and are even called South American ostriches. This omnivorous bird type weighs up to 50 pounds, making them the largest South American bird where they are native. They are flightless, have long necks and legs, and reach up to 5 feet tall. They eat seeds, fruit, small insects, lizards, and small birds. Rheas prefer to live in open land like grasslands and are known to live up to 15 years in the wild. They live in solitude until the mating season arrives. Humans farm them for meat, eggs, feathers, and leather. Different species: American rhea, Darwins rhea, and Puna rhea. Kiwi Another flightless type of bird is the New Zealand national bird called a kiwi. These birds are special enough for New Zealanders to be called kiwis. Kiwis are about the size of chickens, covered in brown feathers, and have thin, elongated beaks. They are a near-threatened species, with only around 24,000 remaining, and decline by an estimated 5.8 percent per year. Kiwis are protected in reserves and national parks. They live up to 60 and eat an omnivorous diet of insects, seeds, and berries. Their eggs are enormous in proportion to their body size, which is around 15% of the females body weight. Different species: Great spotted kiwi, little spotted kiwi, brown kiwi, southern brown kiwi, North Island brown kiwi. Red-winged Tinamou Tinamous fall into the Palaeognathae types of birds, but they can fly partially, unlike their ostrich, rhea, and kiwi friends. These birds range from 6 to 20 inches and have a small head and sizeable feathered rump with feather-hidden wings. Tinamouses are ground dwellers who can fly but prefer to run, but they get tired quite quickly, so they are experts in hiding. They live in various habitats, from forests to open land, all over Central and South America. Some tinamous species like to live alone, while others prefer a flock. South American people love to hunt this bird type because theyre quite tasty. Different species: There are 47 tinamous species; the most known is the great tinamous. Emu Emu and cassowaries are different types of birds, but they are closely related. Emus come second as the tallest bird next to ostriches, reaching 6 feet 2 inches. They have long brown feathers, long necks, and legs and can run up to 30mph but cant fly. They are native to Australia and also their national bird. Cassowaries are found in Northeastern Australia and the tropical forests of New Guinea and the Aru Islands. These birds are flightless and have colorful necks and faces with black bodies. Females are more colorful and larger. Cassowaries grow up to 5 feet 11 inches tall and weigh around 130 pounds. Different species: The three emu species are the common emu, Kangaroo Island emu, and King Island emu. Cassowaries have Southern, Northern, and dwarf cassowary species. Brown Leghorn Rooster Chickens, classified as Gallus gallus domesticus, are domesticated and by far the most common birds you can find almost anywhere in the world, but they are originally from South Asia. As you probably already know, these landfowls get farmed for their meat and eggs, and humans have been doing so since the Stone Age. Chickens also have cultural significance in folklore and religion. The average lifespan of a chicken is between 5 and 10 years. They do fly, but not very far or high. Theyre also intelligent birds, and scientists have even discovered that chickens can demonstrate problem-solving skills, effective communication, and empathy. Different species: Gallus gallus domesticus is the only chicken species, but there are hundreds of differing breeds. Mandarin duck Ducks are water birds amongst types of birds and are known as waterfowl. They are small, with short necks, waterproof feathers, and webbed feet. There are around 100 known species of ducks, and theyre found on every continent besides Antarctica. Although they love to swim, ducks are well adapted to fly and live on land. They are social birds that form paddling groups to protect themselves from predators. Swans and geese are of the same family of waterfowl as ducks. Swans are the largest flying birds. Geese are smaller than swans but larger than ducks. Different species: The most known are the domestic and Mallard ducks. Swans only have six species; the most known is the Mute swan, and geese have gray, white, black, and snow species. Titicaca Grebe Grebes are commonly mistaken as ducks but are their own species. They are rather funny looking with similarities to coons and loots and are closely related to flamingos. Grebes are found in North and South America, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australia. Depending on the species, grebe types of birds weigh between 5 ounces and 3 pounds. Different grebe species range from 8 to 29 inches in length and have varying beak shapes, but all have ornamentation on their heads. Different species: There are 20 grebe species. The most common are Neogaeornis wetzeli, pied-billed grebe, and western grebe. Subdesert Mesite Mesites are a bird type living in forests and endemic to Madagascar. They are partially or entirely flightless. Mesites are 12 inches long, with a thick tails, short wings, and brown feathers. They forage the ground for seeds and insects. Sub-desert mesites use their bills to probe soil. They like to live in pairs or flocks and mate monogamously. Mesites are very vocal and make noises to keep others out of their territory. All mesite species are endangered and listed as vulnerable to extinction. Different species: The three species are the brown mesite, white-breasted mesite, and sub-desert mesite. American flamingos Flamingos are gracious wading birds with six species, which are native to the Americas and Afro-Asia. These beautiful birds acquire their cheerful color from the aqueous bacteria and beta-carotene from their food sources. The more vibrant a flamingo is, the healthier these types of birds arewhich is also a strong signal for potential mates. They feed on insect larvae, plankton, mollusks, crustaceans, and small insects. Flamingos are very social and noisy birds, living in massive colonies, and varied vocalizations. Appearance-wise, flamingos range from 2.6 to 4.7 feet in length and weigh 5.5 to 7.7 pounds. Flamingos can have a wingspan between 37 and 59 inches. Different species: Chilean flamingo, greater flamingo, American flamingo, lesser flamingo, Andean flamingo, and Jamess flamingo. Did you know? The name flamingo comes from Portuguese or Spanish flamengo, which means flame-colored. Saxon fairy swallow pigeon Pigeons are a group of birds that belong to the Columbidae family. Although many of us regard pigeons and doves as different birds (genetically speaking), they are the same thing. The difference is etymological (relating to the origin of words). The word pigeon comes from the French, while dove is of Nordic origins. However, many agree that a pigeon denotes a bigger bird, while doves are smaller. Different species: There are roughly 351 different types of pigeons and doves in 5 subfamilies and across 50 genera, but some interesting species are the Nicobar pigeon, Carneau pigeon, and Victoria crowned pigeon (which is the largest species of pigeon!). Pin-tailed sandgrouse Sandgrouse is found in Africa and Asia, living in open planes like grassland, savannas, and semi-desert terrains. They have small heads like a pigeon, fat bodies, and short legs, and are gray or brown with white spots or neutral-colored markings. They grow between 9.4 and 15.7 inches, depending on the species. They can fly but prefer to dwell on the ground. Their diet consists of seeds and insects, but they much prefer seeds. Sandgrouse finds one mate and stays with them for life. They are game birds with thick skin and thick feathers, which makes them hard to hunt. Different species: There are 16 sandgrouse species, divided into Pterocles, Nyctiperdix, Calopterocles, and Syrrhaptes. Great Bustard Youll find these types of birds in grassland in Africa, southern Europe, Australia, Asia, and parts of New Guinea. Bustards are medium or large-sized birds between 16 to 59 inches long. They have long legs, three toes, and horizontal-like bodies. They prefer to live on the ground and can run extremely fast when threatened, but they can fly sustainably, just slowly. They have fascinating courtship movements where the male extends their neck back to the opposite end of the body with a puffed throat and fanned-out tail feathers. Different species: There are 23 bustard species. The Great Bustard is the largest land bird in Europe. Common cuckoo Cuckoos are not just the clock you might know about! These birds are smallish, but their looks vary as theyre found worldwide besides Antarctica. They love to live in leafy trees in forests and thickets. These are the first carnivorous birds on this List of types of birds; some even eat frogs and baby birds of other bird species. The common cuckoo found in Europe, Africa, and Asia is the one that makes the signature sound that led to the creation of German cuckoo clocks. Male cuckoos also have a mating dance, which entails head bobbing and fanned feathers, to which females respond with a bubbling sound. Different species: There are 147 cuckoo species. The common cuckoo, roadrunners, malkohas, koels, and coucals are the most known. White-cheeked turaco Turacos are lovely little birds that have bright colors like red or green, with some species being white, brown, or gray. They inhabit parts of Africa where they are affectionately known as Loeries. Theyre also sometimes called go-aways because of the gway sound they make. Turaco species vary in size from 4 inches to 28 inches. They are social birds that like to live in flocks and can live up to 30 years old. Turacos live in woodlands and savannahs and love to live in trees, where they feast on fruit, flowers, and insects. Different species: There are 18 turaco species, the most known being the white-crested turaco. Virginia Rail Rails, cranes, and their relatives are called Gruiformes. Rails are small or medium-sized, with species from 5 to 25 inches tall. Cranes get up to 7 feet tall. The Sarus crane is the worlds tallest flying bird. Rails and cranes love to live in wetlands, marshlands, and forests. Rails have short, rounded wings and like to live on the ground. Some rail species are entirely flightless, but they all find life easier to live on the land. Cranes are tall birds with long legs, slender bodies, and large, rounded wings, and all can fly. Different species: There are over 150 rails species and 15 crane species. Kentish plover Waders are also known as shorebirds because they like to live on muddy shorelines like wetlands and coastal regions. You can find waders on every continent. Some even like to live periodically in Arctic regions in the summer. Most species like to eat invertebrates like insects and mollusks, depending on where they live. They have sensitive beaks that help them find prey. Waders are known to migrate and have strong metabolisms for this purpose. Different species: Waders have 210 species, not including herons and storks, which are also referred to as waders. One of the most unique-looking types of birds is the hoatzin. They are the size of a chicken with an orange mohawk, blue face, and red wings. They live in the Amazon basin along rivers and lakes, living in flocks. They mainly eat leaves and have a different stomach from all other bird species because it has foregut digestive chambers like a cow instead of a regular stomach. They live in branches and are good swimmers. They are clumsy creatures that make huffing noises when they walk. Different species: Opisthocomus hoazin is the only species. Jungle nightjar Nightjars are reddish brown, brown, or gray birds that have long wings, short legs, and very short beaks. They grow between 12 and 28 inches long, depending on the species. They fly very quietly and disguise themselves easily along the bark of trees. You can find nightjars in South America, Europe, Asia, and periodically in Africa. There is a legend that nightjars drink milk from goats and get called goatsuckers, but this isnt true they only feast on insects. Nighthawks are also considered nightjars but have longer bills and softer feathers. Different species: There are 79 nightjar and ten nighthawk species. Common potoo Potoos are related to frogjars, nightjars, and nighthawks. These weird birds make haunting sounds and live in Central and South America and Caribbean islands, finding sanctuary in forests. They only eat insects, so you dont have to worry about their eerie calls! Potoo species look mostly the same with large heads, short beaks, big yellow eyes, long wings, and tails, and are brown. They grow to be 8.3 to 22.8 inches long. One interesting fact is that potoos sense movement even when their eyes are closed to stay weary of predators! Different species: Rufous potoo, Great potoo, Long-tailed potoo, Northern potoo, Common potoo, Andean potoo, and the White-winged potoo are some potoo species. Oilbird Oilbirds are found across South America, including Trinidad Island. Oilbirds are nocturnal creatures that eat fruit from laurels and oil palms which is how they got their name. They live in flocks and often nest in caves. Their eyesight is well-adjusted for nighttime foraging, and they have echolocation like bats. These large birds grow between 16 and 19 inches and have a 37-inch wingspan. They have small eyes, hooked beaks, and soft reddish-brown feathers with white spots all over their body. Their wings are unique in that they are easily twisted and help them hover for cave living. Different species: The only oilbird species is Steatornis caripensis. Tawny Frogmouth Frogmouths are found in southeastern Asia, Australia, and New Guinea. They are named after their frog-like beak, which they use to eat insects. They have hooked beaks with bristles. Asian frogmouths have smaller, rounded beaks. They are reddish-brown or grayish and disguise well by resting horizontally on branches. Frogmouths grow between 10 and 22 inches. Frogmouths mainly eat insects but also prey on mice and tiny frogs, which they sometimes slam against rocks to help them capture their food. The newest frogmouth species was discovered in 2007 in the Solomon Islands, starting a whole new Rigidipenna genus. Different species: Frogmouth has 12 species, divided into the genus Podargus, Batrachostomus, and Rigidipenna. Australian Owlet-Nightjar Owlet-nightjars are closely related to nightjars and frogmouths but are their own bird type. These birds are only active in the twilight hours of the evening, known in zoology as crepuscular. Owlet-nightjars hunt insects midair and sometimes on the ground, too. Most owlet-nightjars are found mainly in Australia, New Guinea, New Caledonia, and the Moluccas. Their feathers are brown mixed with other pale shades, and they have short wings, long tails, tiny feet, and a small beak that can open wide for air hunting. They grow to 7 to 12 inches. Different species: There are 11 species, and the best known is the moth owl. Red-billed tropicbird Tropicbird types are medium-sized animals ranging in size from 76 to 102 cm in length and 94 to 112cm in wingspan. They are mostly white with varied black markings over their bodies. Tropicbirds feed on squid and fish, catching their prey by plunge-diving into the ocean. Further out, tropicbirds are seabirds native to the Atlantic, Indian, and Pacific oceans. Yes, they have a worldwide range. Different species: There are three tropic bird speciesred-billed, red-tailed, and white-tailed tropicbird. These three cute families of birds belong to the same order called Apodiformes because they share some anatomical similarities, such as long wings with short bones and bare feet. Swifts are highly aerial birds. They are superficially similar to swallows but are not closely related to any passerine species. Also, they occur on all continents except Antarctica. Treeswifts or crested swifts are aerial near passerine birds, closely related to true swifts. They are distributed from India and Southeast Asia through Indonesia to New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. All the different types of hummingbirds are native to the Americas and have varied specialized characteristics to enable rapid, maneuverable flight, exceptional metabolic capacity, adaptations to high altitudes, sensitive visual and communication abilities, and long-distance migration in some species. Different species: there are around 100 swift, four treeswift, and 366 hummingbird species in the world. Some are the dark-rumped swift, volcano hummingbird, and mustached treeswift. Kagu Sunbitterns are found in tropical North and South American regions. They have similarities to the kagu but are entirely their bird type. Sunbitterns are neutral-colored with linear patterns and have long, pointed beaks. They use vivid wing patterns to display courtship and scare off threats. Kagus are highly endangered, nearly flightless birds only located in New Caledonia. They are gray, with a large rump, orange eyes, reddish-brown beaks, and legs.They grow up to 22 inches. Like Sunbitterns, they display their feathers in the presence of threats and courtship. Different species: Sunbitterns have three species: The Amazonian sunbittern, the northern sunbittern, and the foothill sunbittern. The only Kagu is Rhynochetos jubatus. Common loon Loons, also known as divers, are found in North America and northern Eurasia. They are black and white with gray spear-shaped beaks, and all species look similar, making them hard to distinguish. They look like ducks and spend their time in water propelled by their webbed feet. They used to be classified as grebes only because they looked similar. These aquatic creatures can dive 200 feet below water and compress air to support their underwater adventures. They eat fish, crabs, and insects. Their haunting calling sounds give them their name, which means to moan in Old Norse. Different species: Common loon, juvenile red-throated loon, black-throated loon, yellow-billed loon, and the Pacific loon. Galapagos Albatross Albatrosses are seabirds found around the Southern and Pacific oceans. Theyre one of the largest flying birds and have a 12-foot wingspan. They drink seawater and eat squid, krill, and fish. They struggle to keep their heavy bodies airborne, so they spend much time floating around. Sailors say it is bad luck to kill an Albatross. Petrels are closely albatross-related seabirds adapted to live in cold conditions, like the snow petrel. They nest inland and on cliffs and meat fish and krill. The snow petrel is one of the only three birds in the Antarctic region, followed by the Antarctic petrel. Most petrel species are white with black eyes. Different species: There are 22 albatross species and seven petrel species. Royal Penguin A penguin is a flightless bird specially adapted to a marine lifestyle. Their wings are modified flippers, and they are excellent swimmers. There are six penguin genera and roughly 19 penguin species; however, scientists often argue over which subspecies should be a species themselves. Added together, we have (roughly) 278 different types of penguins. The six penguin genera are Aptenodytes, Eudyptes, Eudyptula, Megadyptes, Pygoscelis, and Spheniscus. Different species: king penguin, chinstrap penguin, Adelie penguin, and emperor penguin (biggest species of penguin). Marabou Stork Storks are birds that are rumored to carry babies to their mothers! These birds are found along shorelines of Africa, Asia, and Europe. Some newer species are found in Argentina and Australia. They grow between 2 to 5 feet tall, have long bills, legs, and necks, and vary in color but are mostly known to be white. They arent very vocal because they have an underdeveloped voice organ, but instead clatter their beaks to communicate, especially when theyre excited. They live in flocks and eat during the day on a diet of fish, small creatures, and sometimes carrion. Different species: There are 19 stork species. The most commonly known are the white stork and saddle-billed stork. Blue-footed booby Another seabird is a booby. Boobies are up to 35 inches long and have long beaks with stout bodies. They live by the sea and have a diet of fish, which they dive out from the water. They have air sacs to help alleviate pressure when they dive. They are sadly an endangered species, thought to be caused by overfishing. Cormorants are seabirds found in Britain and Ireland. They are 24 to 39 inches long with dark-colored feathers, thin beaks, and webbed feet. They can dive 150 feet deep into the oceans they live around and only eat fish. Different species: Boobies have six species, including the commonly known blue-footed boob, and the only cormorants are the great cormorant and the common shag. Tricolored Heron Pelicans are large water-loving birds that grow to 70 inches with a 10-foot wingspan. They are most known for the pouch beneath their beak, which is used to capture prey and drain water they surprisingly dont use their pocket to save food for a later snack! Herons are found around wetlands, marshlands, and rivers in many parts of the world. They eat frogs, fish, and any other aquatic creatures they encounter. Herons stand in an s-shape with an elongated neck, thin lengthy pointed beak, and extended legs. Ibises live in wetlands, forests, and plains in warm regions, feeding on fish and mollusks. They grow to 30 inches long, have thin bodies, long necks, and extended pointed beaks, and vary from brown to white depending on the species. Different species: Pelicans have seven species, herons have 60, and ibises have 29. Andean Condor New World vultures belong to the order Cathartiformes of raptors or birds of prey, which has seven species. Vultures are like natures clean-up crew! Theyre scavenging birds that love to feast on the bodies of dead animals. Surprisingly, eating this kind of food doesnt make them sick at all. In fact, their tummies are home to special bacteria that help them digest the meat. Also, New World vultures have a great sense of smell, so they can sniff out their next meal. One thing you might notice about vultures is that they have bald heads. Yep, thats right no feathers on their heads! It might look a bit strange, but it actually serves a purpose. Feathers can get messy when theyre eating, so having a bald head helps keep them clean. Overall, vultures play an essential role in nature, making sure that nothing goes to waste and keeping our environment tidy. Theyre fascinating types of birds, dont you think? Different species: turkey vulture, Andean condor, king vulture, and California condor. Bald eagle Hawks, eagles, Old World vultures, and kites are all diurnal birds of prey belonging to the Accipitriformes order. Hawks are types of birds of prey in the Accipitriformes order that vary from small to medium-sized. With keen eyesight, hawks are able to see eight times clearer than humans and in

color. Most hawks are robust raptors that have a range of 18 to 30 inches in size and often prefer living in large, open spaces of North and Central America, the West Indies, and Jamaica. But they can be found in most continents except Antarctica. Different types of hawks keep a diet consisting of small mammals, reptiles, and some seafood caught frolicking in shallow waters like crabs. As for eagles, they are powerfully-built birds of prey with sturdy heads and beaks. Most of them live in Africa and Eurasia, but some can be found in the Americas and Australia. There are about 68 different types of eagles in the world, and they are divided into subfamilies according to their DNA: fish eagles, booted eagles, snake eagles, and harpy eagles. A vulture is a bird that loves to feast on dead animals. There are 23 types of vultures alive today (including Condors). The Old World vultures are found in Europe, Africa, and Asia, and there are 16 different species of them. These types of birds are amazing scavengers! Another relative of hawks, the kites, are birds of prey that belong to the Accipitridae family. They come in many types, with three main groups: Milvinae, Elaninae, and Perninae. Kites are usually smaller than the other birds in this order and have a small head, a partly bare face, a short beak, and long, narrow wings and tail. These cool birds can be found all around the world, but they mostly live in warm regions. Some kites like to eat insects, while others are scavengers and enjoy munching on rodents and reptiles. There are even a few kites that are specialists in eating snails! Different species: Ferruginous hawk, northern goshawk, common black hawk, cinereous vulture, griffon vulture, black-winged kite, and bald eagle (the most famous North American bird species). Boreal owl Regardless of the types of owls in question, most owls have a distinct and similar physical appearance. The round, facial disk face helps them focus sounds toward their large, feathered ears. Most owls have asymmetrically positioned ears that help triangulate the preys position from the littlest sounds. As with most owls characteristics, the fluffy feathers help owls make virtually no noise when flying through the night sky. The stealthy feathers pair incredibly well with the owls large, bulbous forward-facing eyes to create a deadly predator. Owls are scientifically classified as raptors, birds of prey, and are referred to as Strigiformes. This Strigiformes order is split into two main types of owls: Tytonidae and Strigidae. Owls hunt mostly small mammals, insects, and other birds, although a few species specialize in hunting fish. Different species: tawny owl, Eurasian eagle-owl, Tasmanian masked owl, and barn owl Red-faced Mousebird If you travel to sub-Saharan Africa, youll find the little mousebird fluttering in the trees. They are the only Africa-only bird. They have a 3.9-inch body length, long, thin tails that extend to 9.4 inches, stubby beaks, and grayish. Their feathers look like hair, which makes them look like mice, giving them their name. They live in flocks and eat seeds, berries, and budding flowers. Their strong claws grip well enough that they sometimes feed upside down! They scurry around with their short legs and are incredibly acrobatic, which makes them fun to watch. Different species: The six remaining species are the red-faced mousebird, speckled mousebird, white-backed mousebird, red-backed mousebird, white-headed mousebird, and blue-naped mousebird. Cuckoo-roller The cuckoo roller is its very own species that is not related to the cuckoo itself. Cuckoo rollers inhabit forests and woodlands in the Comoro Islands and Madagascar. They grow between 16 to 20 inches, have gray chests and heads, greenish wings and tails, spotting, stout beaks, and only two toes. These birds sit perched, waiting for prey, including insects like caterpillars and grasshoppers, and sometimes, they eat chameleons and geckos. Cuckoo rollers nest high up in trees and are thought to live in pairs. Different species: The only species is Leptosomus discolor. Resplendent Quetzal Trogons and quetzals are of the same taxonomic order Trogoniformes. They are colorful and are between 9.1 and 16 inches long. Trogons have fossils that date to 46 million years ago, meaning these birds know how to survive! They nibble holes in trees to nest in tropical forests across the world. Quetzals are also colorful birds with similar habits to trogons but are found in Mexico and Central and South America. They are also larger than average trogon species, reaching 13 to 16 inches long, with tails that can double this measurement. Different species: Trogonidae has 46 species, 5 of which are quetzals. Rhinoceros Hornbill Hornbills are one of the bird types in tropical regions of Africa, Asia, and some nearby islands like New Guinea. Hornbills are named after their large, curved beak that sometimes has a casque in some species. Hornbills are usually black with white or colored markings and an orange or yellow bill. These types of birds have smaller species that grow to 1 foot long and larger ground species that reach 4 feet 11 inches. Hornbills use their powerful beaks to catch prey, fight, and build nests. They eat fruit, insects, and small animals. Different species: There are around 60 hornbill species. Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher Kingfishers are brightly colored birds in Africa, Asia, Oceania, and Europe. Colorful plumage, brown eyes, pointed beaks, and short, broad bodies characterize kingfishers. Depending on the species, they grow between 3.9 and 18 inches long. They prefer a tropical habitat near water to fish but also eat insects, worms, reptiles, frogs, and other small creatures. These types of birds are territorial creatures and have a monogamous mating pattern. Different species: Kingfishers have 116 species divided into river, water, and tree varieties. Imperial Woodpecker Woodpeckers live in woodlands and forests worldwide, besides the Gila woodpecker, which nests in cacti! Smaller woodpeckers are 3 inches long, and larger species of bird grow to 22 inches. Some are colorful, while others are dull, but all woodpeckers are known to use their sharp beaks to knock into the wood to find prey, make nests, and communicate. Woodpeckers have strong legs and claws to help them live their lives moving around trees. Their brains are also specialized to allow them to peck wood without damage. Piculets and wrynecks are woodpecker relatives. Different species: There are around 240 woodpecker species, including northern flicker, Gila woodpecker, and great slaty woodpecker. Red-legged seriema Seriemas are the only remaining species of the family of birds called Cariamidae. These kinds of birds were once believed to belong to the crane family because of their appearance. They have long legs and necks, short wings, hooked bills, and brownish feathers. They grow up to 35 inches tall and weigh around 3.5 pounds. Seriemas prefer to remain on the ground to find food, following a diet of insects, frogs, snakes, lizards, and some plants, and nest in trees at night. They either live alone or in pairs and never migrate. Although they can fly, theyre better at running, reaching speeds of 37 miles an hour. Different species: There are only red-legged and black-legged Seriemas. Australian Hobby Falcons are highly specialized carnivores that actively hunt for prey, which include reptiles, rodents, insects, smaller types of birds, and small vertebrates. They are the largest genus in the family, Falconidae. Falcons differ from other raptors like hawks and eagles as they have a specialized beak equipped with a tomial tooth specifically used to kill prey. Eagles and hawks usually kill using their strong feet before ripping prey apart. Also, they have thin, tapered wings that allow these types of birds to fly and quickly maneuver at high speed. The group of birds referred to as falcons live solitary lifestyles. They are diurnal birds, which means that they hunt during the day. A notable feature of falcons is that they take the honor of being the fastest creatures on Earth. Peregrine falcons have been recorded to reach a top speed of 242 miles an hour! Different species: peregrine falcon, common kestrel, pygmy falcon, and Australian hobby Blue-and-yellow macaw is one of the most colorful types of birds Parrots are colorful birds in the order Psittaciformes. Although using scientific or academic terms in a conversation is always impressive, its more helpful and interesting to know what makes a parrot a parrot. This type of bird must have a curved beak to be classified as part of the parrot family, and all types of parrots have zygodactyl feet. Thats a scientific term for having four toes, with two facing backward and two forward. The parrots curved beak is one of its most distinctive features, and they use it so much its almost like an extra limb. With over 401 species around the world, parrots are distributed over tropical regions in the Americas, Africa, Asia, and Australia, but most of them are in South America and Australasia. Different species: hyacinth macaw, scarlet macaw, military macaw, and sun parakeet Raggiana Bird-of-paradise Passerines are types of birds in the Passeriformes order, which enclose more than half of all types of birds (including sparrows, finches, warblers, birds-of-paradise, wrens, and many others). With far more than 6,500 species of perching birds, this order is by far the largest of terrestrial vertebrates. (The biggest bird family is the Tyrannidae, with over 400 species.) Passerines are divided into three clades: Acanthisitti (New Zealand wrens), Tyranni (mostly South American suboscines), and Passeri (oscines or songbirds). The passerines contain several groups of brood parasites, such as the viduas, cuckoo-finches, and cowbirds. Most passerines are omnivorous, though shrikes are carnivorous, and others are insectivorous. Different species: hooded crow, blue jay, New Zealand wren, barn swallow, house sparrow, Asian fairy-bluebird, and magnificent riflebird. As birds grow up, some of them change their eye color. This adaptation helps these types of birds recognize maturity and, therefore, the suitability of a potential mate. Its like theyre showing off that theyre all grown up and ready to find a mate. Flamingos have a funny way of eating they can only chow down on their food when their heads are upside down! Did you know that birds actually came from reptiles? The earliest bird we know about is the Archaeopteryx, which lived a whopping 147 million years ago. It looked way different from todays birds and even had a long bony tail and teeth! The biggest bird in the world is the ostrich, and it cant fly, but it can reach a super impressive height of 8.8 feet and lay the largest bird eggs, weighing up to 2.2 pounds! On the flip side, the smallest living bird is the bee hummingbird. Its so tiny, measuring only 2.1 inches long and weighing less than half an ounce. And guess what? It lays the tiniest eggs theyre as small as peas! Heres a fun fact about eggs if a chicken has dark earlobes, itll produce brown eggs, but if it has white earlobes, itll lay white eggs. Birds have super-fast heartbeats! Depending on the bird and the temperature, their heart rates can range from 100 beats per minute at rest to a whopping 1,200 beats per minute while flying! Have you ever heard of a poisonous bird? The Pitohui from Papua, New Guinea, is the only known poisonous bird in the world. Its skin and feathers have poison in them yikes! Pigeons were the heroes of the World Wars, acting as messengers when communication methods were unreliable. Over 300,000 pigeons were used during the wars, and 32 of them even received a special medal! Penguins are not just great swimmers they can also jump up to 9 feet in the air! How cool is that? The Peregrine Falcon is the speediest bird around. When it goes into a hunting dive, it can reach an incredible speed of 242 mph! And in regular flight, the common Swift holds the record at 105 mph. Albatrosses are unique because they can sleep while flying! They doze off while cruising at a speedy 25 mph. Meet the chatterbox of the bird world the African Gray Parrot! It can learn over 800 words, while most other parrots can only manage around 50. The Madagascar Pochard is the rarest bird in the world, with only around 25 left in the wild. On the other hand, domestic chickens are everywhere! Owls cant move their eyes as we do, but they make up for it by rotating their heads a mind-blowing 270. It gives them an incredible 360 vision! The cutest birds alive, ahem, I mean, puffins, are not just great flyers; they can fly underwater, too! How adorable is that? Woodpeckers are pros at pecking. They can peck a whopping twenty times a second at a speed of around 15 mph. Talk about hard work they can peck 12,000 times per day! Did you enjoy learning more about these types of birds? Then, be sure to share this article with your friends and help spread the word about these wonderful creatures! For public and academic libraries, government agencies, consulting firms, nature centers, nonprofits, and more Learn more For Cornell Lab Chairman's Council members, AOS members, Public Libraries, Bird Clubs and other organizations Special Member Access Recently Updated Accounts Save July 31 for this mid-summer webinar! Join four expert taxonomists for a deep discussion about AviList, a unified global avian checklist that provides the most current and authoritative taxonomy of birds around the world. AviList, a unified global checklist of birds that provides the most current and authoritative taxonomy of birds around the world, was released today by experts in taxonomy, nomenclature, and bioinformatics including researchers from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, American Ornithological Society, BirdLife International, International Ornithologists Union, and Avibase. The new checklist recognizes 11,131 species of [] Our partners at re:Wild, American Bird Conservancy, the Search for Lost Birds project published an interesting paper detailing their methods for determining what is a "lost bird."Published in Frontiers in Ecology and Environment (2024). Video: A songbird singing Audio: Music with rhythmic piano, strings, and and a songbird singing Text: A power new resource for birders Video: A flock of shorebirds flying over the ocean Text: Take a deep dive into the remarkable world of birds with: Audio: A bird singing Text: The Cornell Lab of Ornithology - Birds of the world Video: A grid of website pages with photos of birds Text: 10721 species accounts, 249 family accounts Video: An animated map of bird migration across the Western hemisphere Text: Range and migration maps Video: Four illustrations of birds Text: Color illustrations Video: Two grebes in the water Text: Images, videos and sounds Audio: Music builds with marimba and percussion Text: Birds of the World brings together scholarly content from four celebrated works of ornithology: Video: A close up of a hummingbird Text: Birds of North America Video: A bird performs a courtship display Text: Handbook of the Birds of the World Video: Two birds perched on a branch Text: Neotropical Birds Video: A small songbird perched on a tree Text: Bird Families of the World Text: And combines it with: Video: A map of the world with animated yellow dots representing data points Text: eBird Video: A collage of photographs of birds Text: Macaulay Library Text: on a single comprehensive, authoritative platform. Video: A grid of of website pages with photos of birds Text: "The depth of information is simply breathtaking" - Garret MacDonald, eBirder Text: Find us at: birdsoftheworld.org Video: An animated logo Text: The Cornell Lab of Ornithology The IUCN (2024) Red List is based on a different taxonomy than Birds of the World. As such, we can only display conservation status for taxa where the two taxonomies match at the species level. For all unmatched taxa, the conservation status is "Unknown". A global alliance of nature organizations working to document the natural history of all bird species at an unprecedented scale. Birds: What Is A Bird? Information, Pictures & Video. Part one of our Ultimate Guide to Birds. On this page youll find out what makes a bird a bird. Youll also discover some amazing facts about birds and the lives that they lead.If you didnt know about the link between birds and dinosaurs, prepare to have your mind blown!Active Wild Bird ArticlesOnce youve finished this page, check out the pages below for more amazing bird facts!The Ultimate Guide To Birds: What Is A Bird?On this page youll discover incredible facts about one of the most widespread and familiar types of animal in the world: birds.Birds are found in many different environments. This snowy owl has adaptations that allow it to live and hunt in the Arctic.Random bird fact: There are around 10,000 species of bird.Birds are found on every continent andin many different habitats. Frompenguins that live on the frozen coastline of Antarctica, toostriches found in the Sahara Desert: birds are (almost) everywhere!Birds also play a big part in our own lives. If you look out of the window, the first animal that youre likely to see will be a bird or an insect but probably a bird! Even if you cant actually see a bird, youll probably be able to hear one.Nearly everyoneeven those who arent interested in wildlifecan identify several species of bird.On this page youll find out all about birds, including how they evolved and what makes a bird a bird.Random bird fact: the worlds most common wild bird is the red-billed quelea. This sparrow-sized bird is found in Sub-Saharan Africa, where it forms flocks of over a million individuals. There are thought to be around 1.5 billion red-billed queleas alive today!How many different types of bird can you name!You may know more species of bird than you realize!You may not be able to name all 10,000 birds species, but you probably know more than you think you do. Grab a sheet of paper and write down all of the different types of bird that you know; you may surprise yourself!Random bird fact: The worlds fastest animal is the peregrine falcon. This amazing bird can reach speeds of over 320 km/h (200 mph) when it dives!OrnithologyOrnithology is the scientific study of birds, and people who study birds are known as ornithologists. For the rest of the page, you can consider yourself to be an ornithologist as you find out about bird evolution, bird characteristics, and what makes a bird a bird.AvesBirds are members of the class* Aves. At the time of writing, Aves contains 46 Orders, 248 families and around 10,000 species. (These figures are likely to change; animal classification never stays the same for long!)Examples of well-known bird families include Passeridae and Accipitridae.The family Passeridaecomprises the true sparrows (including the house sparrow Passer domesticus, which is the worlds most widely-distributed bird).Accipitridae includes many species of birds of prey, including hawks, eagles, kites, harriers and some vultures.*If you want to know more about classes, orders and other animal groups, check out our Animal Classification page.Birds Are Reptiles (Sort Of)!In the past, Aves was considered to be a group in its own right. Today, some scientists consider Aves to be part of the class Reptilia (the reptiles).Thats right: birds are now considered (by some) to be reptiles! If you hear a scientist talking about avian reptiles, then hes talking about birds!This is because the ancestors of birds are reptiles. In fact, the crocodilians (reptiles such as crocodiles, alligators, and related animals) are more closely related to birds than they are to other reptiles such as snakes and lizards.In modern animal classification, scientists prefer animal groups such as Reptilia to include all of the descendants of an ancestral species.Because a birds ancestors were reptilian, the class Reptilia would be incomplete without the birds. Therefore, Aves is seen as a sub-group of Reptilia.The first person to recognize the link between reptiles and birds was English biologist Thomas Henry Huxley (1825 1895) (Wikipedia). In the 1860s he described birds as being glorified reptiles.Birds Are Dinosaurs!Birds are the only remaining dinosaursAs if birds weren't already amazing enough, they take on a whole new level of awesomeness when you consider that theyre actually the direct descendants of dinosaurs. In fact, most scientists today consider birds to be dinosaurs!So you can quite correctly tell people that youve seen a real, living dinosaur!Random bird fact: Britains most common species of bird is the wren. The wren is also one of the smallest British birds: only the goldcrest and the firecrest are smaller! In fact, the goldcrest is Europes smallest bird.Bird EvolutionMillions of years ago (at least 247.2 million years ago, maybe even more) a group of reptiles called archosaurs split away from other reptiles. The archosaurs themselves then split into two main groups: Pseudosuchia and Avemetatarsalia.Pseudosuchia are the ancestors of modern day crocodilians (animals such as crocodiles and alligators).Avemetatarsalia includes the dinosaurs, an incredibly successful group of reptiles that first appeared between 243 and 231 million years ago, during the Triassic Period.Dinosaurs rose to dominance during the Jurassic Period. Their reign continued all the way up to the CretaceousPaleogene Extinction Event, which occurred around 66 million years ago.Long before this catastrophic event, which wiped out all of the large dinosaurs, members of a group of dinosaurs known as theropods began to develop bird-like qualities. These feathered dinosaurs would be the ancestors of all living birds.True birds first appeared around 120 million years ago, during the Cretaceous period. Birds are the only dinosaurs to have survived the CretaceousPaleogene Extinction Event.A Birds Closest Living RelativesThe group of animals most closely-related to birds are the Crocodilians.The closest living relatives of birds are the crocodilians; members of the order Crocodilia. Crocodilia is the group of animals that contains all crocodiles, alligators and gharials.What Makes a Bird a Bird?Biggest and Smallest BirdsBird facts: ostriches are the worlds biggest birds.Birds are extremely varied. An ostrich (the worlds biggest bird) is, on the surface, very different to a bee hummingbird (the worlds smallest bird).However, despite the external differences, there are certain things that all birds have in common: characteristics that all members of Aves share.If asked what makes a bird a bird? the first answer that many people come up with is that birds are flying animals. If they want to be more precise, theyll say flying vertebrates.They would only be partly right. Although all birds are vertebrates (i.e. they have backbones), not all birds can fly (think of ostriches and penguins). In addition, there are flying vertebrates that arent birds, namely bats. So this isnt how scientists define a bird.Not all birds can fly! (This Adelie Penguin looks like it might be trying!)Characteristics Of BirdsThere are a number of characteristics that make a bird a bird. Some, such as feathers, are only found in birds. Others, such as being warm-blooded and laying eggs, are shared by other types of animal. Its having the right combination of these characteristics that makes a bird a bird!What Is A Bird?Here is a list of bird characteristics:Birds are vertebrates (i.e. they have backbones)Birds have feathersBirds dont have teethBirds have beaksBirds have limbs that are modified for flight (wings)Birds lay eggsBirds are endothermic (i.e. theyre warm-blooded)Birds have hollow bones & skeletons that are adapted for flightLets look at these in more detail:Birds Are VertebratesAs weve already found, all birds are vertebrates (i.e. they have backbones), just like you and I! Most familiar animals, such as mammals, reptiles and amphibians, are vertebrates, but vertebrates actually only make up a very small part of the animal kingdom.(In fact, around 97% of all animals are invertebrates animals without backbones!)Birds Have FeathersAll birds have feathers. (But not all have feathers as long or as brightly-colored than those of this resplendent quetzal!)Birds are the only living animals to have feathers. Feathers, as well as being necessary for flight, also serve a number of other purposes. These include: helping to keep the birds body at the right temperature; communication and display; camouflage; protection; and waterproofing.Some feathers, known as filoplumes, provide sensory information.Random bird fact: the bird with the largest wingspan is the wandering albatross (Diomedea exulans). Its huge wings can span 3.65 m (12.0 ft.).Birds Have Beaks (and dont have teeth)As birds evolved they lost their teeth and gained beaks instead. Beaks come in all shapes and sizes, and have many uses. Beaks are mainly used for eating, but they also come in handy for preening (feather cleaning), fighting, and for picking things up (e.g. sticks, to make a nest).Beaks are strong but lightweight, unlike teeth, which may be strong, but which are also very heavy. Having a beak is therefore the ideal solution for a flying animal.The shape of a birds beak is related to what it eats. You may be surprised to learn that parts of a birds beak contain touch receptors, making it very sensitive.The bird with the worlds largest beak is the Australian pelican. Its beak can be up to 50cm (20 in.) long!The bird with the longest beak in relation to body size is the sword-billed hummingbird. Its bill can be over 10 cm (4 in.) long.Birds Have WingsA kestrels specially adapted wings enable it to hover.A birds wings are its modified forelimbs (front limbs, or arms). These wide, specially shaped limbs enable (most) birds to launch themselves from the ground and power themselves through the air.Even flightless birds have wings. This is because the ancestors of all birds including flightless birds could fly.The shape of a birds wing depends on the lifestyle it leads. Birds such as albatrosses have long, narrow wings. This helps them to glide for long distances using very little energy.Short, narrow wings, such as those of a hawk, provide speed and maneuverability. Large, wide wings provide lift for birds such as eagles to gain height and soar.A penguins short, strong wings act as flippers, enabling it to fly through the water.Birds Lay EggsBirds develop outside of their parents body, protected by the hard shell of an egg. Birds arent the only animals to lay eggs (many reptiles and amphibians also lay eggs).Birds are endothermic (Warm Blooded)Birds, like mammals, are warm blooded. A warm-blooded animals body is able to keep itself at the ideal temperature. Unlike a lizard, for example, a bird doesnt have to bask in the sun in order to get warm enough to hunt. Its body takes care of that automatically!Hollow Bones & Special SkeletonsMany of a birds bones are hollow. This is another weight-saving adaptation for flight. The bones of diving birds are often more solidly constructed than those of other types of bird. This makes them heavier and less buoyant, helping the bird to dive deeper and for longer.A birds sternum (breastbone) extends outwards to form what is known as a keel. The birds wing muscles attach to the keel. This arrangement gives the wing muscles additional leverage. This provides the necessary power and efficiency for flight.The members of a group of large, flightless birds known as Ratites dont have a keel. This group includes birds such as ostriches and cassowaries.Air Sacs & A Special Breathing SystemA birds skeleton has spaces for air sacs. These inflate and deflate as the bird breathes. Birds have a special breathing system that is more efficient than that of mammals.A birds lungs extract oxygen both when air is breathed in and when it is breathed out. Some of the air that is breathed in is stored in the air sacs before being passed through the lungs when the bird breathes out.This is yet another modification for flight.Random bird fact: the Arctic tern travels further than any other animal in a year, covering an incredible 90,000 km (56,000 mi) during its annual migration. Four-Chambered HeartLike crocodilians (and mammals), birds have four-chambered hearts. Birds have higher heart rates than mammals, and their hearts are usually bigger in relation to body size.Now youre up to speed on bird characteristics, lets discover more about bird biologyBirds: Designed For FlightA birds body has many adaptations for flying. This bald eagles broad wings allow it to glide and soar.Although not all birds can fly, they all share the same ancestors, all of which could fly. This means that a birds body is designed around being able to fly.In order to fly, a birds body must be light yet strong. Flight requires a large amount of oxygen and energy. Therefore a birds respiratory system (how oxygen is extracted from air) and circulatory system (how blood is moved around the body) both need to be extremely efficient.If youre a bit of an extrovert, stand up and try to flap your arms fast enough to take off. Try as you might, youll never leave the ground (sorry to break it to you like this).Even if you only flap for a few seconds, youll probably be left feeling out of breath; its extremely strenuous. Obviously you havent got feathers, but even if you did youd find it too tiring to be able to fly.Just imagine how much energy it would take to actually lift your body off of the ground (even if you had feathers). Now consider that some birds fly all round the world several times in their lifetimes, and that some hummingbirds flap their wings 50 times per second!A birds body needs to be pretty efficient!Birds have a higher metabolism (how fast their bodies use energy) than other land vertebrates. Their hearts beat faster, and their body temperatures are higher.There is a trade-off to being both warm blooded and able to fly. Birds need a lot of energy to stay alive. This means that they need to eat a lot of food. Birds cant just laze around like cold-blooded animals such as snakes and crocodiles they need to be constantly on the lookout for the next meal!Flying requires a great deal of energy. Hummingbirds have the highest metabolisms of all animals apart from insects.Bird Facts: The Ultimate Guide To Birds: ConclusionIf youve come this far then youre well on your way to becoming a bird expert!Birds are very common, and its easy to take them for granted. A world without birds would be a very miserable place. Just imagine walking in the woods with no birdsong, or going to the park without any ducks to feed! Even going to the beach and being bombed by a seagull is a small price to pay for the color and joy that birds bring into our lives.Bird Articles On Active WildOther PagesYou can learn more about other members of the animal kingdom on the following pages:The Data Zone is a window into the scientific work of BirdLife International. Browse factsheets detailing our Red List assessments for all the worlds birds and important sites for their conservation, explore interactive dashboards and read 300+ case studies. Science Birds, Reptiles & Other Vertebrates Birds How do birds differ from other animals? What are the main features of a bird's anatomy? How do birds use their wings to fly? What types of habitats do birds live in? How do birds communicate with each other? What is migration, and why do some birds migrate? How do birds build their nests and care for their young? What are some threats to bird populations today? How do birds contribute to ecosystems and human life? bird, (class Aves), any of the more than 10,400 living species unique in having feathers, the major characteristic that distinguishes them from all other animals. A more-elaborate definition would note that they are warm-blooded vertebrates more related to reptiles than to mammals and that they have a four-chambered heart (as do mammals), forelimbs modified into wings (a trait shared with bats), a hard-shelled egg, and keen vision, the major sense they rely on for information about the environment. Their sense of smell is not highly developed, and auditory range is limited. Most birds are diurnal in habit. More than 1,000 extinct species have been identified from fossil remains.Since earliest times birds have been not only a material but also a cultural resource. Bird figures were created by prehistoric humans in the Lascaux Grotto of France and have featured prominently in the mythology and literature of societies throughout the world. Long before ornithology was practiced as a science, interest in birds and the knowledge of them found expression in conversation and stories, which then crystallized into the records of general culture. Ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs and paintings, for example, include bird figures. The Bible refers to Noahs use of the raven and dove to bring him information about the proverbial Flood.Various bird attributes, real or imagined, have led to their symbolic use in language as in art. Aesops fables abound in bird characters. The Physiologus and its descendants, the bestiaries of the Middle Ages, contain moralistic writings that use birds as symbols for conveying ideas but indicate little knowledge of the birds themselves. Supernatural beliefs about birds probably took hold as early as recognition of the fact that some birds were good to eat. Australian Aborigines, for example, drove the black-and-white flycatcher from camp, lest it overhear conversation and carry the tales to enemies. Peoples of the Pacific Islands saw frigate birds as symbols of the Sun and as carriers of omens and frequently portrayed them in their art. The ravena common symbol of dark prophecywas the most important creature to the Indians of the Pacific Northwest and was immortalized in Edgar Allan Poes poem The Raven. Eagles have long been symbols of power and prestige in many parts of the world, including Europe, where their representations are often seen in heraldry. Native Americans sprinkled eagle down before guests as a sign of peace and friendship, and eagle feathers were commonly used in rituals and headdresses. The resplendent quetzalthe national bird of Guatemala, which shares its name with the currency and is a popular motif in art, fabric, and jewelrywas worshipped and deified by the ancient Mayans and Aztecs. Highly symbolic birds include the phoenix, representing resurrection, and the owl, a common symbol of wisdom but also a reminder of death in Native American mythology. The bird in general has long been a common Christian symbol of the transcendent soul, and in medieval iconography a bird entangled in foliage symbolized the soul embroiled in the materialism of the secular world.In modern times the recreational pleasures of bird-watching have grown in tandem with the rise of environmentalism. Evolving from the American and European shoot-and-stuff mania of the 19th century, bird-watching became a sportlike activity based on rapid identificationthe rarest being the most rewardingwith the aid of binoculars and spotting scopes. The change from shooting to sighting coincided with campaigns, beginning about 1900, to halt the slaughter of wild birds for food and millinery. Bird-watching was advanced by the publication of excellent field guides and improvements in photography and sound recording. By mid-century the watchers enjoyable but rather unsophisticated tallying of year lists and life lists of species personally observed was being augmented, if not replaced, by interest in careful studies of bird behaviour, migration, ecology, and the like. This trend was abetted by bird banding (called ringing in the United Kingdom) and by such organizations as the British Trust for Ornithology and the National Audubon Society, which coordinate professional and amateur observations and efforts with scientific studies. pigeon skeletonPigeon skeleton, with the near wing raised and the far wing omitted.Birds arose as warm-blooded, arboreal, flying creatures with forelimbs adapted for flight and hind limbs for perching. This basic plan has become so modified during the course of evolution that in some forms it is difficult to recognize. Among flying birds, the wandering albatross has the greatest wingspan, up to 3.5 metres (11.5 feet), and the trumpeter swan perhaps the greatest weight, 17 kg (37 pounds). In the largest flying birds, part of the bone is replaced by air cavities (pneumatic skeletons) because the maximum size attainable by flying birds is limited by the fact that wing area varies as the square of linear proportions, and weight or volume as the cube. During the Pleistocene Epoch (2.6 million to 11,700 years ago) lived a bird called Teratornis incredibilis. Though similar to the condors of today, it had a larger estimated wingspan of about 5 metres (16.5 feet) and was by far the largest known flying bird. The smallest living bird is generally acknowledged to be the bee hummingbird of Cuba, which is 6.3 cm (2.5 inches) long and weighs less than 3 grams (about 0.1 ounce). The minimum size is probably governed by another aspect of the surface-volume ratio: the relative increase, with decreasing size, in surface through which heat can be lost. The small size of some hummingbirds may be facilitated by a decrease in heat loss resulting from their becoming torpid at night. When birds lose the power of flight, the limit on their maximum size is increased, as can be seen in the ostrich and other ratites such as the emu, cassowary, and rhea. The ostrich is the largest living bird and may stand 2.75 metres (9 feet) tall and weigh 150 kg (330 pounds). Some recently extinct birds were even larger: the largest moas of New Zealand and the elephant birds of Madagascar may have reached over 3 metres (10 feet) in height. The ability to fly has permitted an almost unlimited diversification of birds, so that they are now found virtually everywhere on Earth, from occasional stragglers over the polar ice caps to complex communities in tropical forests. In general the number of species found breeding in a given area is directly proportional to the size of the area and the diversity of habitats available. The total number of species is also related to such factors as the position of the area with respect to migration routes and to wintering grounds of species that nest outside the area. In the United States, Texas and California have the mostapproximately 620 for each (the figure varies based on criteria used for inclusion on state lists, such as unconfirmed, accidental, hypothetical, extirpated, and extinct species). More than 920 species have been recorded from North America north of Mexico. The figure for Europe west of the Ural Mountains and including most of Turkey is 514. More than 700 species live in Russia. At least 4,400 species live in North and South America. Although several South American countries boast well over 1,000 species, Costa Rica, with an area of only about 51,000 square km (about 20,000 square miles) and a known avifauna of more than 800 species, probably has the most diversity for its size. Asia accounts for more than 25 percent of the worlds species, with 2,700 species, and Africa slightly less, with about 2,300.

Which bird has a long thin and curved beak. Which is the bird that has a long beak name. Which is the bird that has a long beak answer. Which is the bird that has a long beak called. Which of the following bird has a long and pointed beak. Which bird has a long thin beak. Which bird has a long and slender beak. Which bird has a huge beak nearly 19 cm long. Which is the bird that has a long beak in india. Which bird has a long and pointed beak. Which bird has a long curved beak. Which bird has a long beak and loves to catch fish.