

# Bird Adaptations- Build A Bird

*Where do birds live? Can you design a bird from a selection of wings, feet, and beaks that make it well suited/adapted for a particular habitat?*

**Grades:** K-5<sup>th</sup> Grade

**Materials:**

- Bird features sheet
- Build a bird worksheet
- Crayons/colored pencils

**Key Vocabulary:**

- Bird
- Adaptation
- Habitat
- Bill or beak

**Objectives:**

Students will be able to:

- Understand how birds' bodies are adapted to live in different habitats that provide their food source
- Understand that birds that look similar often live in the same habitat
- Explain why a bird is adapted to a particular habitat and answer questions about it
- Understand that living things in a habitat depend on each other for food

## Background:

Birds live in lots of different habitats. They have different shaped bodies, feet, and beaks that are adapted to where they live and the food they eat.

- Shore and wetland birds- waders, longer legs, beaks adapted to probing for shellfish and long wings (e.g. spoonbill, curlew, avocet, oystercatcher, herons)
- Water birds- webbed feet, maybe long necks for catching fish, long legs and flat beaks for dabbling (e.g. grebes, mallards, and other ducks)
- Woodland birds- feet for clinging, beaks for breaking seeds, nuts, fruits, insects and short wings to fly through foliage (blackbird, jays, robin, chickadee)
- Birds of prey- hooked beaks, tearing claws and very good eyesight (e.g. kestrel, eagle, hawk, owl)

**FUN FACTS:**

- Most birds have hollow bones so they can be light enough to fly!
- There are around 1000 different bird species in the world
- The ostrich is the largest bird in the world
- Scientists believe birds evolved from a group of dinosaurs called theropods

Today we will be learning about birds, their habitats, and adaptations. What is a **habitat**? (*Place where a plant, animal, or organism lives. Provides food, water, shelter, and space to live.*) What is an **adaptation**? (*Physical or behavior characteristic that helps an organism survive in its current environment.*) Birds live in lots of different habitats. They have different shaped bodies, feet, and beaks that are adapted to where they live and the food they eat.

Questions to think about:

- Can you name birds you've seen and where you have seen them?
  - *Ex: ducks, in a lake, hawk in the sky*
- What are some features of these animals that helped them adapt to their habitat?
  - *Ex: webbed feet or long necks for water birds, large long wings for soaring bird*

**Build a Bird (15-30 mins):**

- In this activity, you will be creating a new bird species, designed to live in its habitat, and creating a story about your bird (bird's species name, what it feeds on, and where it lives)!
  - Some example habitats include:
    - Wetland
    - Farm/Open meadow
    - Backyard/Garden
    - Pond
    - Forest/Woodland
- Using the bird parts sheet, trace or free draw the different bird parts: wings, beaks, legs, and feet on their bird body (worksheet). Draw in any features that missing or are not quite right, add details and color your bird

Name \_\_\_\_\_

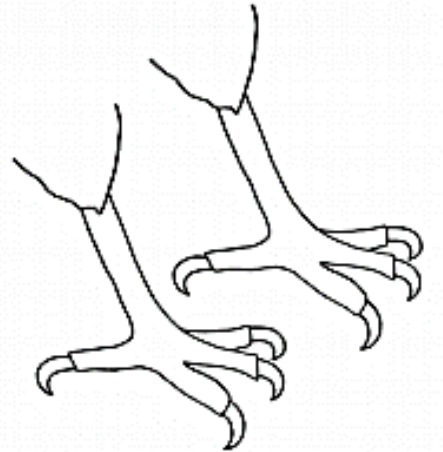
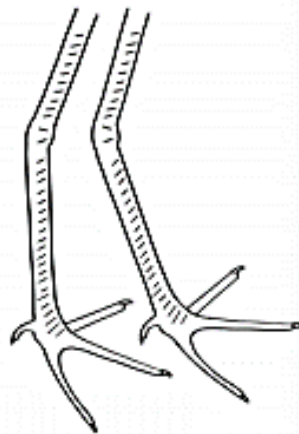
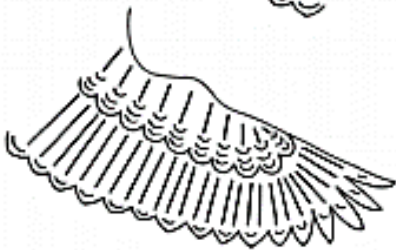
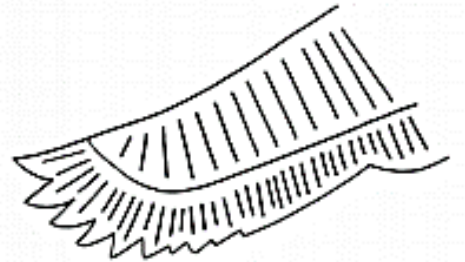
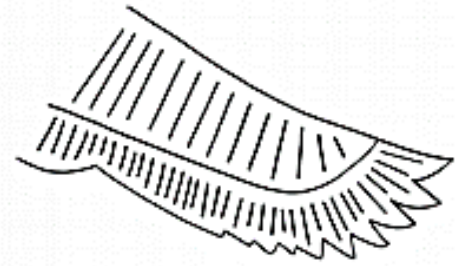
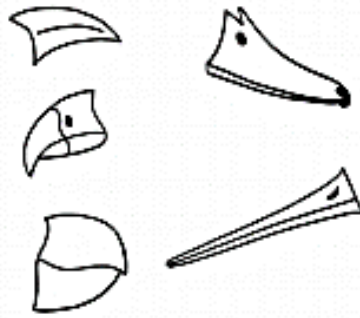
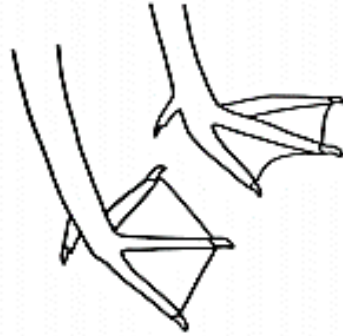
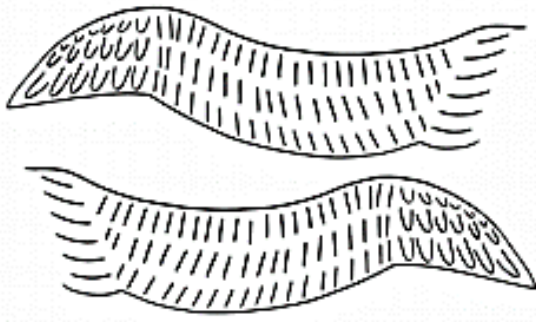
## Build a Bird



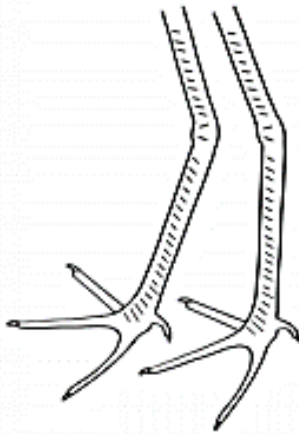
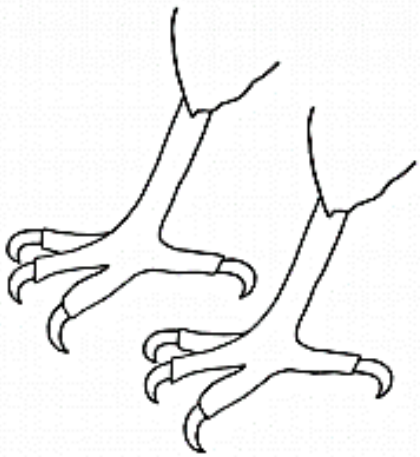
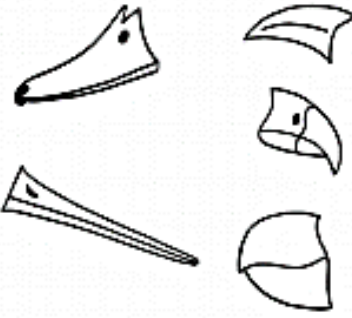
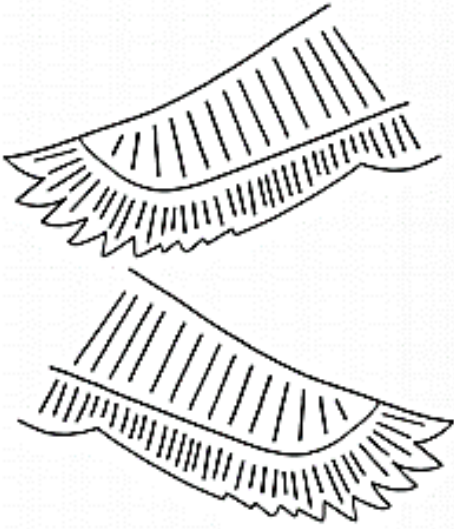
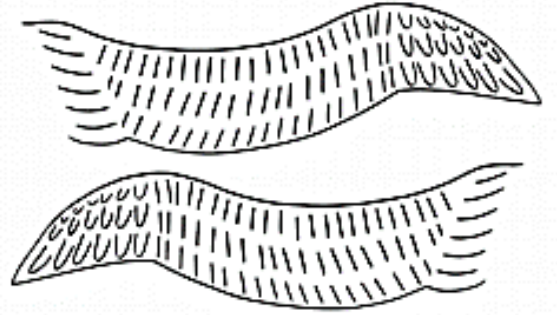
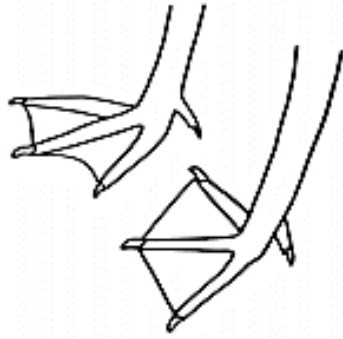
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It feeds on



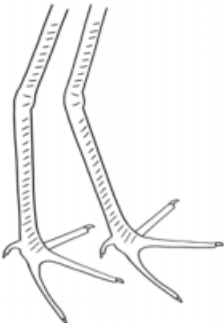
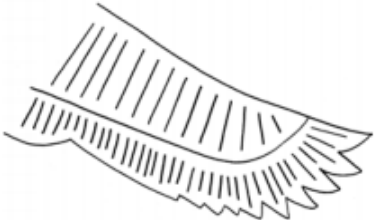





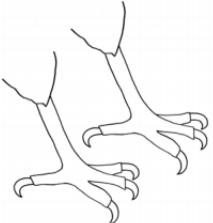

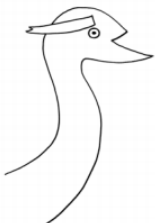



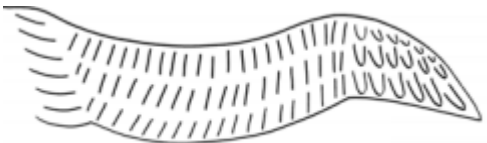
It lives



REVERSE SIDE



## Bird Parts- Adaptations

| Heads  | Bills/Beaks  | Legs & Feet   | Wings  |
|--|--|---|--|
|  <p>Head designed for larger bill</p>   |  <p>Long skinny bill adapted for probing for shellfish, fish, and insects in the water</p>  |  <p>Long legs are great for wading and walking along the shore to catch prey</p> |   |
|  <p>Head designed for smaller bill</p>  |  <p>Large flat bill is designed for skimming, dabbling, and eating water plants</p>   |  <p>Webbed feet great for swimming</p>  | <p>Soaring wing- long, but are relatively broad or fat. Individual "finger feathers" allow bird to make subtle movements without moving the entire wing</p>                                  |
|  <p>Large eyes to help see in the dark, and large facial disks for excellent hearing</p> |  <p>Hooked, sharp beak designed for catching and eating prey</p>   |  <p>Talons or tearing claws are great for catching prey</p>                     |  <p>Short wings to maneuver through foliage, trees, and shrubs</p>                                       |
|  <p>Long neck for reaching, diving, and catching fish/insects</p>                       |  <p>Large bill designed for eating seeds and nuts</p><br> <p>Beak perfect for eating insects and small seeds</p> |  <p>Perching feet designed for clinging to branches and twigs</p>               |  <p>Long and slender, slow flapping wings Good for long flights, but not good for quick maneuvering</p> |