Bird Fact File

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Flying Colours

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What Are Birds?

FACT 1: Birds are **warm-blooded** animals with a backbone.

Birds have wings, feathers and a beak. They lay eggs.

Most birds can fly, though a few birds have small, weak wings and cannot fly.



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The body of a **typical** bird has these parts:



a java sparrow

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Flight

FACT 2: Birds are the largest, fastest and strongest flyers.

Although bats and some insects can also fly, birds are the best flyers. Birds can flap their wings, or they can stretch their wings out and glide. Some birds can **hover** in the air. Hummingbirds can even fly backwards.



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The fastest bird is the peregrine falcon. This bird dives on its prey, usually another bird, from the air. The peregrine is so fast it often takes its prey by surprise.

FACT 3: A flying bird's body is made for flight.

A flying bird has large, light wings and powerful muscles that help to move the wings. Unlike other animals that have heavy jaw bones with teeth, a bird has a light beak. A flying bird's skeleton is also light because many of its bones are **hollow**.



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A bird's body is covered with feathers. Feathers protect the bird and help to keep it warm and dry. Feathers help a bird to fly and land. They also keep a bird's body shape smooth. This helps a bird to move through the air more easily. A bird's feet and beak do not have feathers.