

Beak Guide



Tearing

Some birds eat meat but don't have teeth to chew their food. They need a powerful beak to tear off tiny pieces of meat, as well as tough skin and fur. Tearing beaks are sharp and usually have a hook at the end.



Cracking

Some birds eat nuts and seeds but need to break open their tough shells. Cracking beaks are thick and strong, and birds with bigger beaks can eat bigger nuts and seeds.



Poking

Some birds eat things like worms and bugs that are buried underground. Poking beaks are long and thin so they can quickly dig under the ground or tree bark and pull out their food.



Straining

Birds that live in the water have tiny comb-like ridges at the edge of their beak so that they can catch little fish and bugs swimming by. Straining beaks are long and flat with tiny teeth.

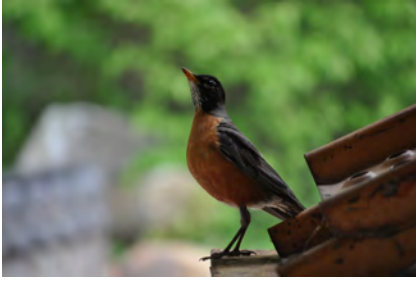


Multipurpose

Some birds eat lots of different things, like nuts, insects, or even garbage! These birds need a beak that helps them hold and eat different foods. Multipurpose beaks are long and thick.

Bird Guide

Information adapted from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's *All About Birds*



American Robin

Habitat: Fields and forests

Appearance: Large, yellow beak and bright red belly.

Diet: Berries and worms

Call: High pitched peeping that sounds like someone laughing.

Fun facts: Robins have great eyesight and are most active in the morning!

Type of beak: _____



Northern Cardinal

Habitat: Fields and the edges of forests

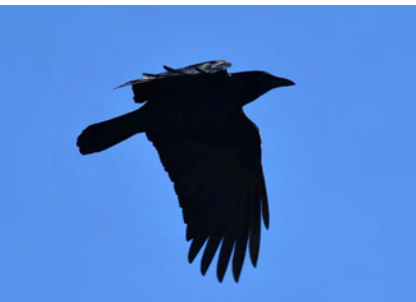
Appearance: Bright red with black face feathers. Distinctive mohawk.

Diet: Seeds and nuts

Call: Loud metallic call like a car alarm.

Fun facts: Though males are bright red females are pale brown.

Type of beak: _____



American Crow

Habitat: Can live anywhere but prefer places with lots of people such as cities and towns

Appearance: Completely black feathers

Diet: Insects, fruit, garbage, nuts, meat.

Call: High pitched, nasal caw.

Fun facts: Crows are incredibly intelligent birds that have been known to use tools and can communicate with other crows.

Type of beak: _____



Turkey Vulture

Habitat: Fields, suburbs and roadsides

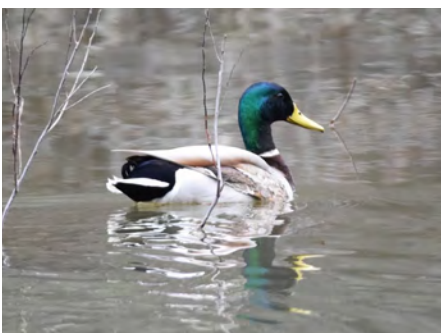
Appearance: Large, brown feathers and bald pink head. White underwing

Diet: Dead animals and roadkill

Call: Usually silent but make a cat like hiss.

Fun facts: Turkey vultures have some of the largest nostrils and one of the strongest sense of smell of any bird!

Type of beak: _____



Mallard Duck

Habitat: Ponds, lakes and marshes

Appearance: Brown feathers and orange webbed feet.

Diet: Underwater plants and insects

Call: A quack that starts loud but slowly becomes softer.

Fun facts: Male mallard ducks will develop green head feathers in the spring to attract females!

Type of beak: _____



Common Grackle

Habitat: Fields, meadows and cities

Appearance: Black with glossy purple and bronze feathers

Diet: Corn, acorns, meat, garbage

Call: Hoarse whistle that sounds like a rusty gate.

Fun Facts: Grackles will let ants crawl over their bodies that will eat any parasites that may hide in their feathers!

Type of beak: _____



Downy Woodpecker

Habitat: Woodlands, edge of forests, parks.

Appearance: Black with a white belly. Red spot on back of head.

Diet: Insects

Call: Quick high pitched *pik* sound.

Fun Facts: Woodpeckers have spiked tongues that are so long they wrap around the back of their skulls!

Type of beak: _____



Red-Tailed Hawk

Habitat: Open woodlands, parks, fields and pastures.

Appearance: Large with a red tail. Mostly pale below with a darker belly band.

Diet: Voles, mice, rabbits, squirrels.

Call: Hoarse, screaming *kee-eeee-arr*.

Fun facts: Whenever you hear a hawk or eagle in a movie, it is almost always the sound of a red-tailed hawk.

Type of beak: _____



Canada Goose

Habitat: Lakes rivers and ponds

Appearance: Brown with black head feathers and white chin feathers.

Diet: Aquatic plants and grass

Call: A loud horn like honk.

Fun facts: Geese are incredible flyers and can fly 1200 miles in a single day!

Type of beak: _____



House Finch

Habitat: Towns, lawns, small conifers, barns.

Appearance: Small with a conical bill. Streaky brown body and males have rosy red around face and upper chest.

Diet: Seeds, buds and fruits.

Call: Long, jumbled warbling song with short notes.

Fun facts: The oldest known House Finch was an eleven-year-old female!

Type of beak: _____

Now it's your turn!

If you were to make your own bird what would it look like? What would it eat and how would it get its food? What color would it be and why? Draw it below!

Just like these birds had different adaptations yours should to!

Birds name: _____

Habitat: _____

Diet: _____

Call: _____

Fun Facts: _____



Beak Type Answer Key

American Robin: Poking beak

Northern Cardinal: Cracking beak

American Crow: Multipurpose beak

Turkey Vulture: Tearing beak

Mallard Duck: Straining beak

Common Grackle: Multipurpose beak

Downy Woodpecker: Poking beak

Red-tailed Hawk: Tearing beak

Hooded Merganser: Straining beak

House Finch: Cracking beak