

The Right Feet



Written by Kerrie Shanahan



The Right Feet

Informative text type: Description

Levels: 11–12

Word count: 302

Science Curriculum links

Australia

- BS (ACSSU017) Living things have a variety of external features
- BS (ACSSU211) Living things live in different places where their needs are met

New Zealand

- LW: All living things have certain requirements so they can stay alive
- LW: Living things are suited to their particular habitats

Key concepts

- All birds have things in common; they all have feathers, lay eggs and have two feet.
- Birds have different types of feet, and they use their feet to do different things.

Text features

- Introduction, conclusion, headings, fact boxes and index

Reading strategy

- Linking information in photographs and text

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But birds have different kinds of feet because they use their feet to do different things.

What do these birds use their feet for?

Introduction

All birds are the same in some ways.

They all lay eggs.

They all have wings and a beak.

And they all have two legs and two feet.



Using feet to perch

Lots of birds use their feet to hold on to branches.

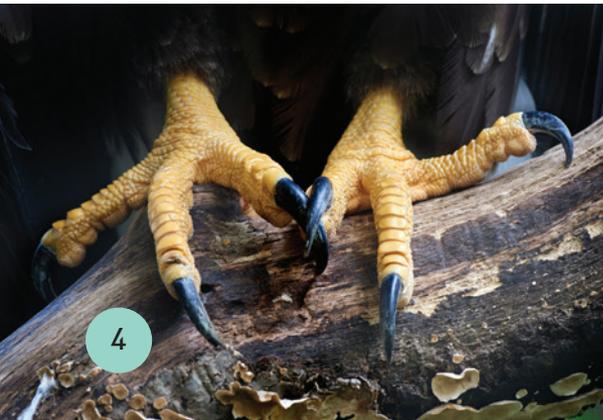
These birds have a long back claw.

They wrap this claw tightly around the branch they are sitting on.

They can hold on to thin twigs or thick branches.



parrot



4



Did you know?

About half of all birds have feet for perching.

5

Using feet to get food

Some birds use their feet to get their food. These birds have strong claws. They fly down and grab hold of their food with their feet. Their claws grip it tightly. The birds hold on to the food as they rip it open to eat it.

A sea eagle with its prey



A hawk with its prey



Did you know?

The ostrich is the fastest two-legged animal in the world.



emu



roadrunner



These birds are good runners. They have flat feet with three toes on each one.

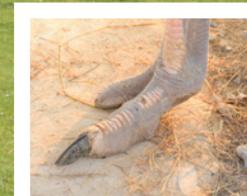
This bird is also good at running. It is the only bird that has just two toes.

Using feet to run fast

Some birds are good at running. They have strong feet that push off the ground as they run along.



ostrich



Using feet in water

Some birds that live close to water have webbed feet.

Birds with webbed feet have flaps of skin between their toes.



Did you know?

The biggest bird with webbed feet is the albatross.



Birds use their webbed feet to push the water away as they move along.

Some birds use their webbed feet to help them land on water, and take off from water.



mallard

This bird does not have webbed feet, but it is good at walking on sand. It has long toes that dig into the sand as it walks.

Some birds that wade in water have webbed feet, too. Having webbed feet helps them walk on wet sand or mud.



egret

? **Did you know?**
The African jacana has very long toes! It uses them to walk on top of plants that grow in the water.



African jacana

Conclusion

All birds have feet.

But all birds do not have the same feet.



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