

A Bird Called Rosy Spoonbill

How do you think the rosy spoonbill got its name? Did you guess that its bill is shaped like a spoon? Did you guess that some of its feathers have a rosy color?

The rosy spoonbill is a big bird. It gets up to 32 inches tall. Its head is green, orange, or black and has no feathers. That's right, it is bald. The feathers on its neck and back are white. Its wings are rosy pink. Its chest is pink too.



This bird lives in the hot wetlands of Texas, Louisiana, Georgia, and Florida. The rosy spoonbill makes its nest on a pile of sticks. It can be seen sitting in a swamp on the branch of a mangrove tree.

The rosy spoonbill walks in the water to get food. It swings its spoon-like bill from side to side in the water as it goes.

People used to hunt this bird in Florida. They made its feathers into fans to sell to tourists. Because of this, the rosy spoonbill is nearly extinct in Florida.

Quiz Questions

1. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

The rosy spoonbill has a _____ chest and _____.

bill, pink, sticks, wings

2. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

The rosy spoonbill _____ in hot wetlands. Its nest is a pile of _____.

lives, sings, sticks, wings

3. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Sometimes the rosy spoonbill _____ on the branch of a mangrove tree.

Sometimes it _____ its spoon-like bill through the water to get food.

inches, sits, swings, wings

4. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

People used to make fans for _____ from the spoonbill's feathers. Hunters made the spoonbill nearly _____ in Florida.

bills, extinct, sticks, tourists

5. How did the rosy spoonbill get its name?

Word List

bill	pink	swing
fill	sink	wing
frill	think	sing
ill	ink	sick
in	inch	stick
is	finch	slick
this	flinch	click

A Centipede at Your House?

The centipede is a small animal you might have in or around your house. It lives in dirt. Check out the garden or the driveway. It lives in dust. Look in the back of your closet or under your bed.

A centipede has a long, thin body and a lot of legs. It can have 15 or more sets of legs. The legs are set two to each segment of the centipede's body. With all these legs, it can run very fast.

Centipedes have venomous jaws, which they use to bite down on small insects. The venom puts the insect to sleep. The insect is then eaten.

Centipedes found in North America are pretty small. Eight inches is as long as they get. In other places in the world, they may get bigger. The bite of big centipedes can make a welt on people but will not kill them.

If you see a centipede, don't kill it. See if you can catch it. Set it outside where it can eat some pesky bugs.



Quiz Questions

1. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

If you want to find a centipede in your house, look under your _____ or in the back of your _____.

bed, check, closet, garden

2. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

The centipede is a small animal with many _____. It can have _____ or more sets of legs.

checks, legs, ten, then

3. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Each _____ of a centipede's body has a _____ of two legs.

insect, segment, set, welt

4. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Many _____ are eaten by centipedes. If you see a centipede, put it outside in the _____.

closet, garden, insects, welts

5. How do centipedes help us?

Word List

leg	segment	insect
beg	figment	inset
peg	pigment	instep
pen	pesky	stepson
ten	penny	sunset
then	petty	setup
when	jetty	setback

A Comet Crashes Into Jupiter

In July of 1994, a comet cracked into pieces. Then it slammed into the planet Jupiter. Scientists watched through telescopes. Comets do not crash into planets very often. Scientists were glad to have the chance to see the crash happen. Fireballs flashed when the comet blasted into Jupiter.

Comets have smashed into planets in the past. Big holes were made where the comets crashed. Many scientists think that a comet smashed into Earth long ago. They think a comet caused the dinosaurs to become extinct.

Someday a comet may slam into the earth. But do not worry about this. It will not happen for more than 1,000 years. Scientists need to learn about happenings like the crash of the comet into Jupiter. This will help them plan for such a happening on Earth.



Photo courtesy of NASA

Quiz Questions

1. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

In 1994, scientists got a _____ to see something big. They watched a comet _____ into Jupiter.

chance, cracked, glad, slam

2. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

The scientists were _____ to see the crash _____.
cracked, glad, happen, slammed

3. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Comets do not slam into a _____ very often. A comet may have crashed into Earth in the _____.

chance, past, plan, planet

4. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Someday another comet may _____ into Earth, but that will not
_____ for a long time.

crack, crash, flashed, happen

5. Why were scientists glad to have the chance to see the comet crash into Jupiter?

Word List

past	slammed	flashed
last	clammed	slashed
fast	crammed	clashed
fan	crashes	crashed
pan	clashes	cracked
plan	slashes	stacked
than	stashes	slacked

Animal Tracks

Rabbits are fast. Look for their tracks in your backyard. Look on the bank of a hill. You will see two long tracks and two short tracks, like dots.

Raccoons can be found in the woods or in town. Their tracks are like handprints. Each one has five long nails.

Muskrats run fast to their marshy habitat. Their tracks look a bit like fall leaves.

Badgers go out at night looking for food on the prairie. Their two tracks cross over each other. They have long nails.

Bobcats are five times the size of a house cat. They live in the hills. Their tracks look like a house cat's tracks, but bigger.

The black bear walks through the woods looking for summer fruits. It visits your campsite to see what scraps are left from dinner. Its tracks look a lot like your footprints.



Quiz Questions

1. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

You can tell what animals live near you by looking at their _____. You may have seen the tracks of rabbits in your _____.

backyard, bank, scraps, tracks

2. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Tracks that look like your footprints belong to a _____ bear. The bear may have been looking for _____ of food at a campsite.

backyard, black, campsite, scraps

3. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Tracks that look like _____ come from a raccoon. These animals may use a town or woods as their _____.

bank, bobcats, habitat, handprints

4. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

In a marshy habitat, you might find _____ that look like fall leaves. These come from _____.

bobcats, muskrats, scraps, tracks

5. How are the tracks of badgers and raccoons alike?

Word List

cat	bobcats	rabbits
rat	muskrats	raccoons
at	backyard	baboons
bat	campsite	badgers
back	handprint	cabin
black	sandbox	habit
track	sandblast	habitat

Carl Sandburg: American Poet

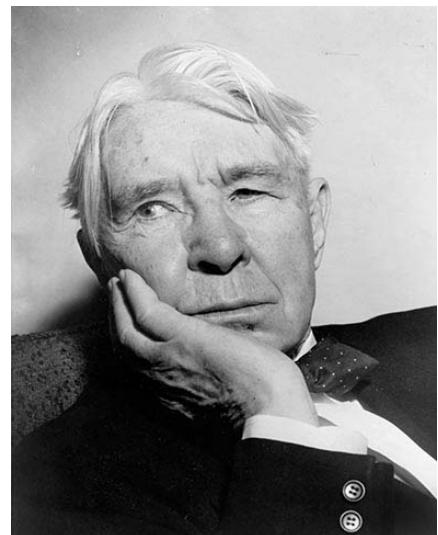
Carl Sandburg was a tall man. He had white hair. His hair had a habit of hanging in his eyes. He wrote poems, stories, and songs. He wrote about life in America. It is said that he worked in an attic. He had a wooden cracker box for a desk.

Sandburg wrote six books about Abraham Lincoln. He wrote a book for children called the *Rootabaga Stories*.

Sandburg was a pacifist. That means that war made him sad. This sadness shows in some of his works.

Sandburg read his poems and stories all over America. One time a man tap-danced while Sandburg read a poem. Still, Sandburg was not a rich man.

Sometimes people wrote to Sandburg. Some said they did not like his writing. He always wrote back to thank people for their letters.



Quiz Questions

1. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

A tall man with hair _____ in his eyes stood in front of some people. He read a poem while a man _____.
habit, hanging, sadness, tap-danced

2. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Carl Sandburg wrote poems, stories, and songs in his _____. He wrote books about American life, but he was not a rich _____.
attic, habit, man, that

3. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Carl Sandburg's _____ about war shows in some of his works. Sandburg was a _____.

back, habit, pacifist, sadness

4. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Sandburg always wrote _____ to people to _____ them for their letters.

back, sadness, thank, that

5. What did Sandburg write about?

Word List

sad	cracker	attic
had	backer	antic
mad	sacker	mantic
man	sadness	bandit
an	madness	gambit
tan	danced	rabbit
than	pranced	habit

Collecting Stamps

When you write a letter to your grandmother or grandfather, it takes a stamp to mail it. Mail workers must pick up, sort, and carry the mail. Stamps are a way we pay them.

Stamps can be fun to collect. They come from many lands, like China, France, and Japan. They come from all over the United States. Stamps have pictures on them of just about anything you can name. Kings, cats, cars, plants, and movie stars are all found on stamps.



Here is how to start your collection. Ask your family and pals to save stamps for you. See how fast your collection grows.

To get a stamp off an envelope, put it in cold water for half an hour. It will lift right off.

Let your stamps dry. Sort them by the lands they come from or the many kinds of pictures on them. Keep them flat in a scrapbook. Show your scrapbook to the gang.

Quiz Questions

1. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Some people collect _____. They collect them from many
_____.

lands, plants, scrapbooks, stamps

2. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

You can ask people in your _____ to save their stamps for you. That way, your collection will grow _____.
family, fast, plants, scrapbook

3. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

You can get stamps off envelopes by putting them in cold water for _____ an hour. Keep the stamps _____.

fast, flat, gang, half

4. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

You can keep your stamps in a _____. You can show them to your _____.

gang, land, plants, scrapbook

5. Who can help you start a stamp collection?

Word List

land	flat	scrapbook
hand	fat	grandmother
band	cat	grandfather
bang	camp	catnap
gang	lamp	taxman
rang	clamp	madcap
pang	stamp	halfback

How to Make Real Lemonade

Real lemonade is not made from a mix that you get in a can. It is not made from frozen concentrate. You guessed it! Real lemonade is made from fresh, yellow lemons, sugar, and water.

You need kitchen tools to make real lemonade. You need a pitcher and a spoon. You need a knife, a lemon squeezer, and a cup. You need about three lemons to make lemonade for six people.



First, cut the lemons in half. Then, squeeze the juice out of them. Next, take the seeds out of the juice, and pour the rest into the pitcher. Then, pour a cup of sugar into the pitcher. Next, add four cups of water. Mix. Have a taste. Add more lemon, sugar, or water until it tastes the way you like it.

Now you have real lemonade. Chill it well, or add ice. Pour it into glasses, and enjoy.

Quiz Questions

1. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Many people _____ lemonade. Some lemonade is made from
_____ concentrate.

enjoy, fresh, frozen, rest

2. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Real lemonade is made from _____ lemons, sugar, and water. Follow each
_____ in order.

fresh, next, step, then

3. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

The first step is to cut the _____. The _____ step is to squeeze the juice out of the lemons.

lemonade, lemons, next, rest

4. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Add water and sugar, and _____ mix and taste. If it tastes good, chill it _____ and serve it to your friends.

enjoy, fresh, then, well

5. What do some people use in place of fresh lemons to make lemonade?

Word List

fresh	yellow	lemon
flesh	mellow	lemonade
mesh	bellow	lemongrass
men	fellow	bitten
ten	elbow	mitten
then	enjoy	kitten
them	employ	kitchen

Interesting Insects

An insect is a little animal. It has six legs. Its body has three parts. Most insects have wings. Some insects sting people.

Insects have lived on Earth over 400 million years. They live everywhere. They can live in small places like the insides of seeds. They can live in houses. Look in your window sills. They can live outside. Check the twigs on trees.

Scientists have long lists of insects. They think there are millions of different kinds of insects.

Insects have interesting senses. They smell with their antennae. Ants pick up the odor of other ants with their antennae. They will kill an ant they do not know by smell. Some insects taste with their feet. Butterflies taste with their feet. Many insects hear with hairs on their bodies and antennae. Crickets hear with the eardrums on their legs. Most insects have good vision for seeing things that are close. Wasps have eyes with many lenses. Everything they see is broken up into little bits. How would the world look in many little pieces?



Quiz Questions

1. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Scientists think there are at least one _____ different kinds of insects. Insects are _____ animals that live everywhere.
billion, little, million, sting

2. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

All insects have _____ legs. Some insects have _____ and can fly.

millions, six, twig, wings

3. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Most insects do not smell, hear, or taste like we do. Ants _____ up smells with their antennae. The _____ hears with eardrums on its legs.

cricket, list, pick, sting

4. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Butterflies can taste _____ with their feet. The eyes of wasps have lots of lenses, so they see the world in _____ bits.

little, picks, things, twig

5. How does the world look to wasps?

Word List

six	wings	million
mix	things	billion
mist	sings	into
list	sill	inside
twist	kill	insect
twigs	will	interest
wigs	twill	interesting

Milk Snake

Would you like a milk snake? Think before you answer this question. Note it says milk snake, not milk shake. You had better not mix up the two.

The skin of a milk snake feels like silk. It is soft, cool, and smooth against the fingers. It is not a good idea to touch this snake. It sometimes bites, but its bite is not venomous.

Milk snakes are thin snakes. They can be up to six feet long. They have red, black, and white rings on their skin.

Milk snakes eat lizards. They eat small birds and their eggs. They eat turtle eggs, mice, and moles. They kill their prey by squeezing them to death. A snake that kills like this is called a constrictor.

Long ago, people thought milk snakes milked cows. This is not true. Milk snakes are found from southern Canada through South America.



Quiz Questions

1. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Milk snakes are long, _____ snakes. Their _____ feels cool and silky against the fingers.
lizards, rings, skin, thin

2. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Milk snakes have red, black, and white _____ on their _____.
milk, rings, silk, skin

3. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Milk snakes are called _____ because a milk snake _____ its prey by squeezing it to death.
constrictors, kills, lizards, skins

4. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

You should _____ before you touch a milk snake. It may bite your _____.
constrict, finger, silk, think

5. How did the milk snake probably get its name?

Word List

milk	thin	lizards
silk	skin	wizards
sill	spin	gizzards
will	in	blizzards
fill	inches	buzzards
fix	pinches	constrict
mix	finches	constrictor

Picasso—A Well-Known Artist

Pablo Picasso was a gifted artist from Spain. He could draw, paint, and shape things from clay. Picasso did his first works when he was a young man. Many of his first pictures were sad. He picked shades of blue to show his sadness. The faces in these pictures were sad and thin.

Later Picasso lived in Paris. His pictures looked different then. They had twisted shapes and figures. Picasso put the shapes together in strange ways. He made pictures look like puzzles with the pieces mixed up. He even added bits of junk to some of his pictures.

Many people disliked Picasso's pictures. But other people loved them. His art became very famous.

Picasso lived to be 91 years old. Today, his art is still famous. When we think of him, we think of the beginning of modern art.



Quiz Questions

1. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Pablo Picasso was a _____ artist. He could draw, paint, and shape
_____ from clay.
figures, gifted, mixtures, pictures

2. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

His first _____ had many shades of blue. He _____ blue to
show sadness.
beginning, mixing, picked, pictures

3. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

The people in his first pictures had sad, _____ faces. His later pictures were of _____ figures and shapes.

gifted, his, thin, twisted

4. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Some of Picasso's later paintings look like _____ up puzzles. Sometimes he even added _____ of junk to them.

bits, figures, mixed, picked

5. How were Picasso's later works different from his first works?

Word List

twisted	pictures	figures
misted	fixtures	fingers
listed	mixtures	singers
lifted	mixed	stingers
gifted	picked	stiffer
sifted	licked	differ
shifted	lived	different

The Red-Headed Woodpecker

The red-headed woodpecker is about seven inches tall. Its head, neck, and chest are bright red. Its body is white, and its wings are black. In the sun this bird's black wings look blue. Because of the red, white, and blue colors, it has been called flag bird. It is also called jelly coat and white shirt.

The red-headed woodpecker nests in trees, telephone poles, and fences. It lives in Canada and America. It eats flies, grasshoppers, pesky grubs, and nuts. It pecks open nuts with its beak. It hides them in its nest like squirrels do.

The red-headed woodpecker lays six white eggs each spring. The eggs hatch. The chicks are little jelly coats, flag birds, or white shirts. Which name do you like best?



Quiz Questions

1. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

The red-headed woodpecker is called _____ coat and white shirt. It is also called flag bird because it is _____, white, and blue like a flag.
chest, jelly, red, yellow

2. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Its head, neck, and _____ are red. It eats _____ grubs.
chest, fences, pesky, telephones

3. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Jelly coats keep _____ and nuts in their _____.

chests, eggs, fences, nests

4. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

The red-headed woodpecker can nest in _____. It can also nest in
_____ poles and trees.

fences, nest, peck, telephone

5. What does the red-headed woodpecker do with nuts?

Word List

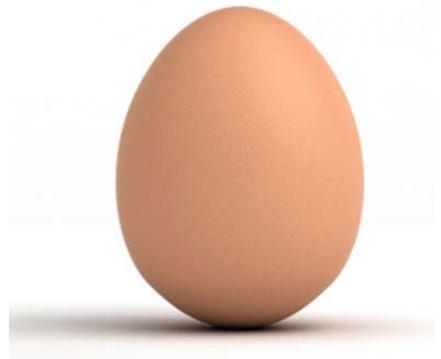
nest	pecks	fence
best	specks	hence
chest	necks	pence
check	Ned	whence
neck	red	jelly
peck	fed	belly
speck	fled	smelly

The Strength of an Egg

Why don't eggs break when a hen sits on them? A hen sits on a nest of eggs to keep the eggs warm. This helps them get ready to hatch. The shells of the eggs are thin. Thin shells are easy for chicks to peck open. Yet the shells do not break when the hen gets on them. Why not?

The shape of the egg gives it strength. The egg shape spreads the pressure of the hen in all directions. This pressure is not set on one spot of the egg. It is sent all around the egg.

People use nature's egg shape to make things strong. For example, light-bulbs are egg-shaped. Light-bulbs are made of thin glass. Yet they do not break when held tightly. Their shape gives them strength. Can you think of other things that are shaped like eggs?



Quiz Questions

1. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

The _____ of an egg is thin so that a chick can _____ it open.
peck, pressure, shell, strength

2. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Shells are strong so _____ can sit on them. The shell of an
_____ can be thin and strong at the same time.
egg, helps, hens, nests

3. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

An egg's shape gives it _____. The egg's shape keeps the hen from putting
too much _____ on one spot.

pecking, pressure, shells, strength

4. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Light-bulbs are a good _____ of the strength of the egg shape. They are thin glass, yet they do not break when they are _____ tightly.

example, held, helped, sent

5. Why can a hen sit on an egg and not break it?

Word List

hen	help	shells
when	kelp	sells
men	yelp	yells
met	whelp	wells
get	weld	welt
yet	held	belt
bet	meld	felt