

Unit  
15

# Feathered Record Breakers

### Biggest alive

The giant of the bird world is the ostrich, from Africa.



It grows up to 2.7 metres and can weigh over 155 kilograms. Its eggs are also the biggest, weighing in at 1.5 kilograms.

### Heaviest extinct bird

The roc, or elephant bird, lived in Madagascar until 300 years ago. It weighed over 420 kilograms, and laid eggs 7 times as big as the ostrich.

### Heaviest flier

The African Kori bustard has been known to weigh 18 kilograms.

### Tallest extinct bird

Some species of the New Zealand moa grew to over 4 metres, but they died out about 700 years ago.

### Fastest flier

Spine-tailed swifts can reach 170 kilometres per hour.

### Fastest runner

Ostriches can run at 65 kph.

### Greatest wingspan

The wandering albatross has a wingspan up to 3 metres.



### Smallest bird

The bee hummingbird measures less than 6 centimetres from beak to tail and weighs 2 grams.

### Deepest divers

Emperor penguins have been known to reach depths of over 250 metres.



## Do you remember?

These questions have already been answered. Copy the questions and fill each gap.

1. Where are \_\_\_\_\_ found in the wild? **Africa**
2. How fast can the \_\_\_\_\_ fly? **170 kilometres per hour**
3. Which bird has the \_\_\_\_\_? **Wandering albatross**

4. How long is a \_\_\_\_\_ from beak to tail? **6 centimetres**
5. Which birds have dived to \_\_\_\_\_? **Emperor penguins**

## More to think about

Using the information from the passage, write 'true', 'false' or 'can't tell' for each of these statements.

1. Ostriches are the biggest birds ever to have lived. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Ostriches are bigger than emus. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Emperor penguins can't live in shallow water. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Albatrosses can fly faster than buzzards. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Bee hummingbirds only live in jungles. \_\_\_\_\_
6. An ostrich's egg is bigger than that of the African Kori bustard. \_\_\_\_\_
7. The tallest person who ever lived was 2 metres 72 centimetres, more than a metre shorter than the extinct New Zealand moa. \_\_\_\_\_
8. London Zoo has a breeding pair of elephant birds. \_\_\_\_\_

## Now try these

1. Imagine that you could be a record breaker. Write some sentences about which records you would like to break, and say why.
2. These words all describe size.

large colossal dwarf massive wee  
little midget bulky miniature great mini  
minute tiny enormous mighty huge

- a) Use a dictionary to help you sort them into two lists, like this:

Words meaning big	Words meaning small

- b) Take a word from each list and write each one in a sentence to add to a reference book.