

NATURE PROBE

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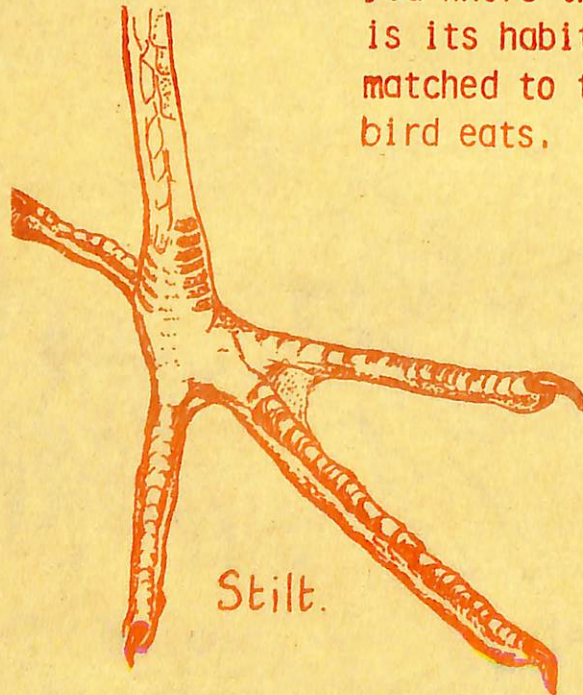


$\frac{1}{2}$ Webs Grebe.

FEET



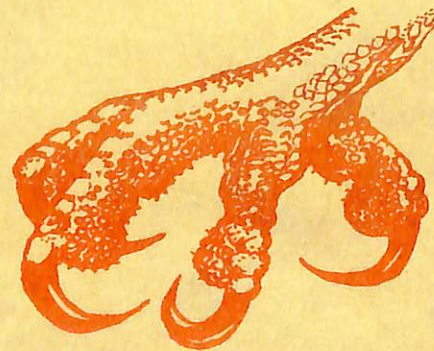
Mallard (duck)
Web feet.



Stilt.

Next time you see a bird take special notice of its feet and its beak. These can help to tell you what kind of bird it is. The feet of the bird help to tell you where the bird lives. This is its habitat. The beak is matched to the type of food the bird eats.

Bird of Prey.



Perching birds have 3 toes facing forward and a very strong toe facing backwards.

All Sea Birds have webbed feet.

All Waterbirds swim. They have webbed feet or "half-webs". Water hens have no webs.

Wading-birds have stilts. These are long legs with long toes.

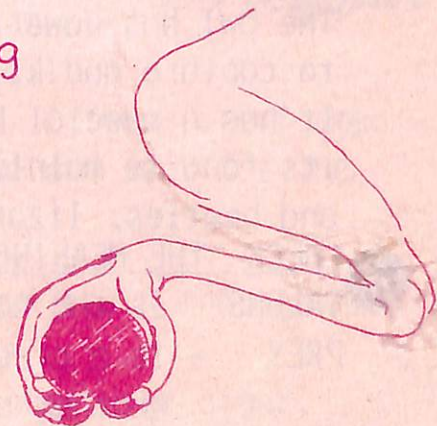
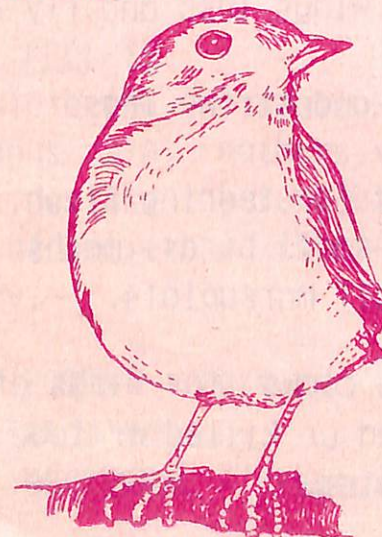
Cuckoos and Parrots have 2 toes facing forwards and 2 toes facing backwards.

Hawks and Owls Have very strong toes and sharp talons.

Woodpecker.



Perching Bird.





OWLS



living mousetraps

Most owls are nocturnal. They have special features that make them very good at finding and capturing their food in the dark.

EYES Owls cannot see in complete darkness, but there is usually light from the moon and stars.

They have large eyes to collect this light.

Their eyeballs cannot move. They are fixed in their sockets, but the owl can twist its head nearly all the way around.

The owl's night-time vision is 100 times better than man's.

EARS Owls have very good hearing. Because they make no sound when they fly they can hear movements and sounds of prey.

FLIGHT The owl has silent flight.

1. Soft feathers. The owl can move its wings silently because the feathers are soft. They do not make the noise that stiff feathers make as they move through the air.

2. Large wings and light weight.

The owl has very large wings but a lightweight body. This means that it can flap its wings less and fly slowly.

CAPTURE OF PREY

The owl has powerful talons and strong legs to capture and kill its prey.

It has a special hooked beak for tearing flesh. Its food is mainly rodents, small birds, moths and beetles, lizards and small marsupials.

CHECK THE MEANINGS

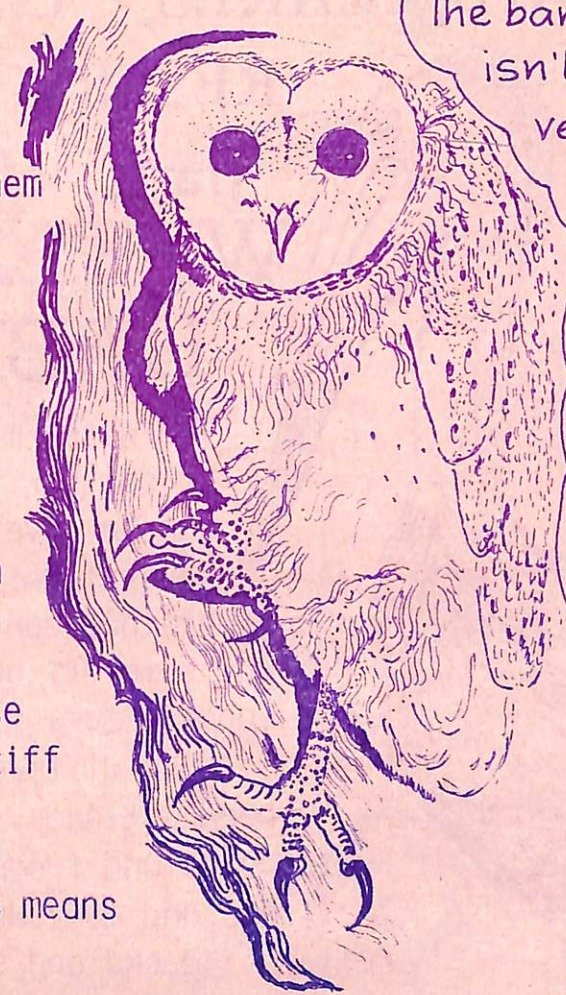
TALONS - is the name for the claws for birds of prey.

PREY - is a creature hunted or killed or food by another animal or bird.

OWL PELLETS

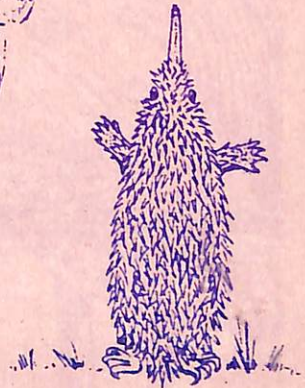
If possible the owl swallows its food whole. That means skin, feathers, bones and all.

It does not use the fur, etc for food. These are formed into oval pellets which are brought up and spat out the next day.

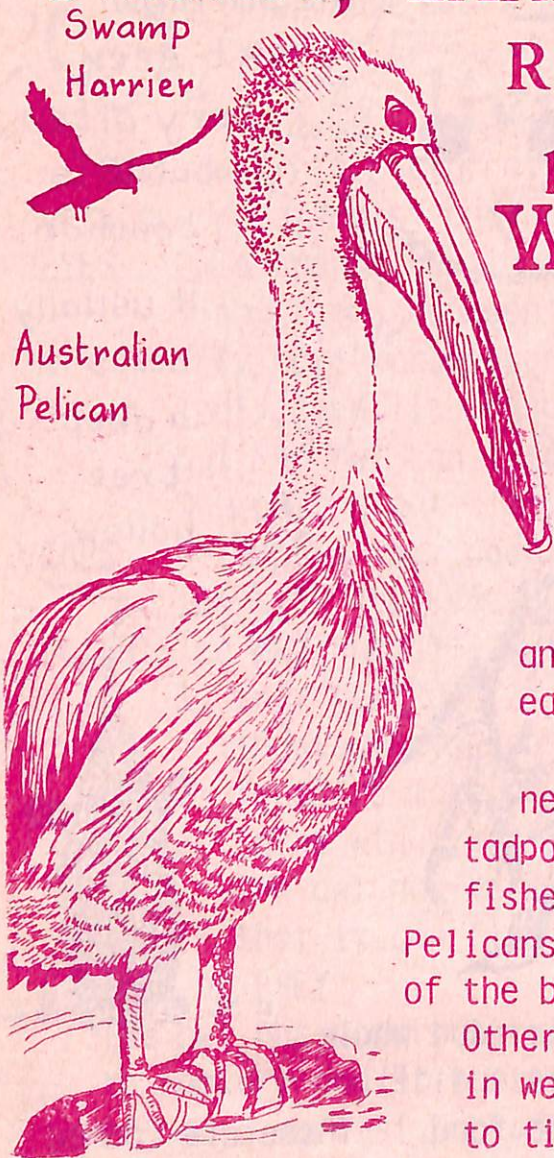


The barn owl isn't seen very often, but it is common.

It usually nests in a deep tree hollow.



SWAMPS, LAKES, DAMS and RESERVOIRS are part of the WETLANDS HABITAT.



Australian
Pelican

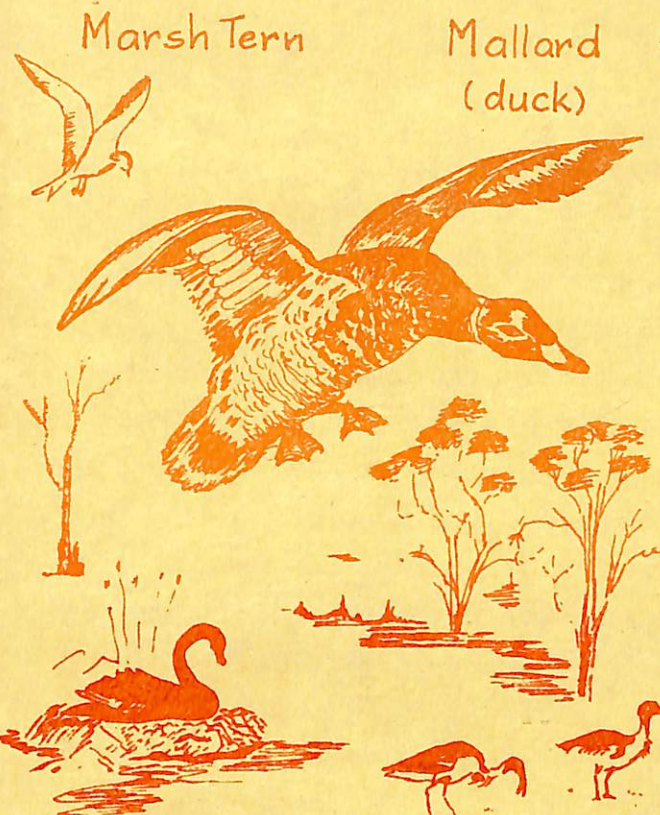
Swamp
Harrier

The water may be fresh or salty. Wetlands can be covered by several metres of water or they can be shallow, and some dry out completely each summer.

Many different animals need wetlands, including tadpoles and frogs, tortoises, fishes and many waterbirds. Pelicans, ducks and swans are some of the birds that need wetlands. Other animals that do not live in wetlands use them from time to time. People also use wetlands in different ways.

If we take care of our wetlands and look after the plants and animals and birds that live there we will still be able to enjoy them in the future.

Thank you to Rowena Myers from the Arthur Rylah Institute for Environmental Research, for this article.



Marsh Tern

Mallard
(duck)

Black Swan

The mallard was introduced from Europe.

It is a danger to our Black Duck.

It lives in the same habitat and eats the same food.

Straw-necked
Ibis

Royal
Spoonbill



Pied Stilt



This place is jumping with life!

PEOPLE CAUSE CHANGE

Each year there are more and more people on earth. Each year people are using more land for growing crops and grazing animals. Sometimes forests are destroyed and wetlands drained. People are using more and more land just to live on.

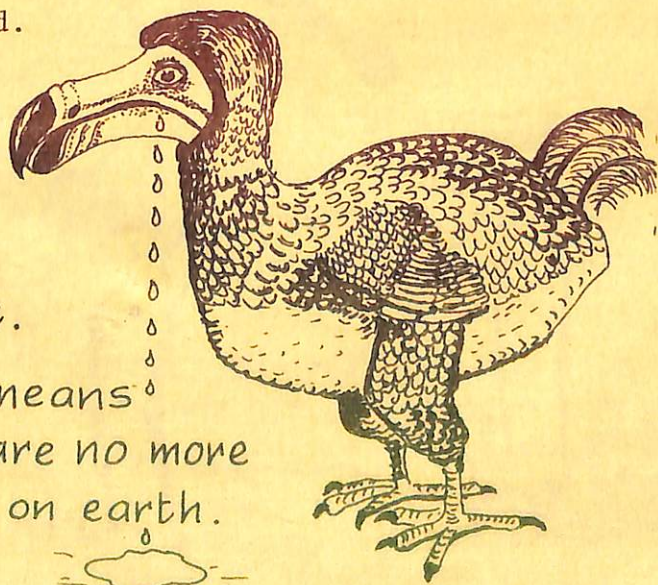
Man has made big changes to the world using the machines he has invented.

Man also pollutes the air and waters with wastes, garbage and chemicals.

Animals need places to live.

Animals and birds need food and water.

Over 80 species of birds have become extinct since 1600. The Dodo is a bird that is extinct. Man caused its extinction. Find out how this happened.



I am
extinct.

That means
there are no more
Dodo's on earth.

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