

THE WORLD OF ORNITHOLOGISTS

Ornithologists study everything to do with birds. They are interested in all of the different species, from their feathers and birdsong to their migration patterns, habitats, and lots of other things too!

Ornithologist
(or-nih-THO-luh-jist)



*Birdwatching is an important part of the ornithologist's role. Scientists often use **binoculars** to watch birds from afar without disturbing them in their natural habitats. They also make notes and write down their observations in a **field book**.*

WHAT DO ORNITHOLOGISTS DO?

An ornithologist's work is really interesting as it gives scientists a chance to learn all about our fascinating natural world.



LAB WORK

Ornithologists often conduct surveys, sending out requests to people in certain areas to tell them what birds they regularly see. They collect data and use computers to monitor bird populations. It is important to check on the numbers of birds, particularly for species that may be at risk or endangered. Ornithologists need to be good with data, managing reports, and communicating.

FIELDWORK

It's important to track birds to keep an eye on their migration journeys, so ornithologists often work outside. They may visit nature reserves or areas of specific scientific interest, where they can observe birds in their natural habitats and check their numbers. They may have to travel to other countries, and must be prepared to work outside in all weathers.



WHO DO ORNITHOLOGISTS WORK FOR?

Volunteering and work experience are really useful to have, so many ornithologists will help out at organisations, such as charities, that are linked to the protection of birds.

Some ornithologists may work in TV and radio to present nature programmes. However, more common places to work are in higher education, passing knowledge onto new students, zoos, conservation projects, and government agencies that are set up to look after birds.

FAMOUS DISCOVERIES

Ornithologists have made so many amazing discoveries that have changed our understanding of birds and their impact on our whole planet. Here's just a few of the biggest and best ornithology discoveries!



EMU

The national bird of Australia, the emu is also the second-largest living bird (by height). An emu egg can weigh up to 680 grams (1.5 lbs), which is the same as about 12 chicken eggs! Emus are also really fast - they can run at speeds of up to 30 miles per hour (48 km per hour).

DODO

The dodo is a lesson in extinction. The species was found by Dutch soldiers on an island in the Indian Ocean around the year 1600. Sadly, the dodo became extinct less than 80 years later because of deforestation, hunting, and destruction of their nests by animals brought to the island by humans.



RED-CROWNED CRANE

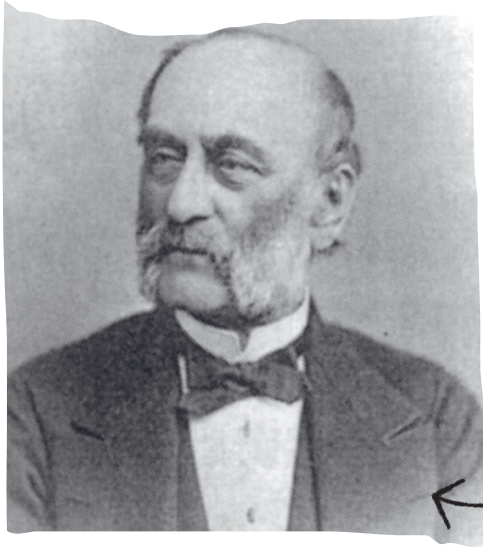
The red-crowned crane was chosen as China's official and national bird in 2003. Cranes are one of the longest-living birds, with a lifespan of between 25 to 40 years. Many people also think of them as a symbol of happiness and long-life.



**Ornithologists still have lots to learn about birds.
Who knows what they might discover next!**

FAMOUS ORNITHOLOGISTS

Ornithology has changed greatly over the years and many scientists have made a difference to the field with their discoveries. Here's just a few of the most well-known.



THOMAS BREWER

Thomas graduated from Harvard College in 1835 and from Harvard Medical School three years later.

He gave up medicine to work with birds, becoming an author and editor of several noteworthy ornithology publications.

FLORENCE MERRIAM BAILEY

An ornithologist and nature writer, Florence was the first woman to be elected as a Fellow in the American Ornithologists Union. She also made history as the first woman to receive the Brewster medal, awarded to authors for their exceptional works on birds.



PATRICIA ZURITA

Patricia is the Chief Executive Officer of BirdLife International, the world's largest nature conservation partnership, bringing together over 120 organisations worldwide to conserve birds, their habitats, and more.



These are just a few of the many ornithologists who have made a huge difference to the science.

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