



The Mini Page

Next Week:
Our states:
Tennessee

Issue 16, 2024

Founded by Betty Debnam

The Cool Penguin



photo by Beth Wilson

Mini Fact:

The rockhopper penguin has spiky feathers on its head that distinguish it from other penguins.

Thursday, April 25, is World Penguin Day. This celebration of penguins takes place during the annual migration of Adélie penguins from Antarctica northward. It was created by scientists at McMurdo Station, an American research center on Ross Island in Antarctica.

This week, The Mini Page learns more about these charming birds.

Penguin lands

All penguins have their homes in the Southern Hemisphere, but not all penguins live in cold areas. Some, such as the Galapagos penguin, live on tropical islands at the equator.

Most experts believe there are at least 17 species, or kinds, of penguins. The emperor penguin is the largest. It can be more than 3 1/2 feet tall and weigh from 60 to 90 pounds. It lives in the area of Antarctica. When it is at sea, it stays near floating ice packs.



Emperor penguins

Photo by Ian Duffy

The smallest penguin is the little blue penguin. It is only about 13 inches tall and weighs little more than 3 pounds. It lives in southern Australia and New Zealand. Its back feathers range from slate-blue to black.



Little blue penguins

Photo by Stephen Dunning

Born to swim

Penguins are birds that can't fly — but they almost do, underwater! Some can swim as fast as 15 miles per hour. They are also good divers.

Some emperor penguins have been known to dive deeper than 1,700 feet, a distance longer than five football fields, but most dive about 70 feet deep.

Most penguins spend much of their time in the water. Only a few come ashore every night. Others stay at sea for months. They come ashore only to breed in large colonies called **rookeries**. They sleep in the water.

Penguin bodies are specially adapted for swimming. They have:

- small, flipperlike wings
- webbed feet
- special glands

in their bills that get rid of excess salt. This allows the penguins to drink the salty ocean water.

• more feathers than most birds.

These feathers overlap like roof shingles to keep them warm and dry.

• coloring that helps protect them from predators and prey while they are swimming.



Penguin challenges

The average penguin can live 15 to 20 years, but a high number of chicks do not survive.

Many chicks starve during the winter. Also, there are many animals that are their enemies. When they are in the water, their enemies include:

- leopard seals
- fur seals
- sea lions
- sharks
- killer



Killer whale

whales.

When they are on land, their enemies include:

- dogs
- cats
- stoats (a relative of the weasel)
- Sea birds such as Antarctic skuas, sheathbills and petrels may eat chicks, eggs or the food meant for chicks.

All penguins are protected by international laws. It is illegal to hunt them or to collect their eggs.

Many nations have set up refuges to protect these birds. All wildlife in Antarctica is protected by international treaties. In addition, many zoos and aquariums work to protect these amazing birds.

Resources



On the Web:

- bit.ly/MPpenguins

At the library:

- "All About Penguins" by Charlotte Thorne
- "Penguins" by Marysa Storm

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Try 'n' Find

Words that remind us of penguins are hidden in this puzzle. Some words are hidden backward or diagonally, and some letters are used twice. See if you can find:



ANTARCTICA, BIRD, BLUE, COLOR, DIVER, EMPEROR, FEATHERS, FEET, GALAPAGOS, GLANDS, LITTLE, PENGUIN, PROTECTED, ROOKERY, SEAL, SHARK, SPECIES, SWIM, WHALE, WINGS.

X J A X Z D K P E N G U I N O
F Y S Y R T P R O T E C T E D
E R T I S P E C I E S E A L L
A E B E L T T I L W S G N I W
T K T E E F S O G A P A L A G
H O A C I T C R A T N A G Y F
E O O A B L U E Y G L A N D S
R R S H A R K I U V C O L O R
S M I W S M E M P E R O R B F
B R E V I D Y G B U W H A L E

Cook's Corner

Purple Pops

You'll need:

- vanilla ice cream, slightly softened
- grape juice
- 8 (3-ounce) paper cups
- 8 craft sticks

What to do:

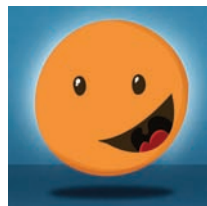
1. Fill small paper cups with ice cream to half full.
2. Fill remainder with grape juice almost to the top and gently stir.
3. Push a craft stick in the center of each cup.
4. Place in freezer for 3 hours or until frozen.
5. Remove from freezer and peel off the paper cup. Makes 8 purple pops.



* You'll need an adult's help with this recipe.

7 Little Words for Kids

Use the letters in the boxes to make a word with the same meaning as the clue. The numbers in parentheses represent the number of letters in the solution. Each letter combination can be used only once, but all letter combinations will be necessary to complete the puzzle.



1. anxious (7) _____
2. kind (6) _____
3. cows (6) _____
4. you fix your hair with it (4) _____
5. they store electricity (9) _____
6. not true (5) _____
7. empty inside (6) _____

IES	TLE	FAL	MB
TLE	WOR	TER	HOL
SE	CO	GEN	RI
ED	BAT	LOW	CAT

Answers: worried, gentle, cattle, comb, batteries, false, hollow.

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Mini Jokes



Paul: What's a pigeon's favorite salad ingredient?
Penny: Iceberg lettuce!

Eco Note



The recent unusual deaths of around 17,000 baby seals from avian influenza along Argentina's Patagonia coast suggest the highly contagious H5N1 strain of the virus is being transmitted between mammals. After emerging in China in 1996, H5N1 was initially confined to domesticated birds. But it began infecting wild bird species in 2021 and has since spread around the world, recently killing Antarctic penguins and one Arctic polar bear. Researchers warn that H5N1 is a growing threat to biodiversity, possibly including humans.

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For later:

Look in your newspaper for articles about endangered or threatened bird species.

Teachers: Follow and interact with The Mini Page on Facebook!



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