

LEVELED BOOK • N

# WEIRD BIRD BEAKS



**Multi  
level  
H•N•R**

Written by Joe Slade

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## **Bearded Barbet**

I am a bearded barbet.

I have a large, thick beak that has pointed parts on the bottom like sharp teeth. Hairlike feathers look like a beard on my beak.

I live where it is dry in Africa, where I build my nest in a dead tree.

I feed on fruit and sometimes on insects.



## Crossbill

I am a crossbill.

My beak is crossed like an X, which helps me to pull the seeds out of a pinecone.

Pinecones grow on trees called conifers, but conifers don't produce good pinecones every year.

I travel all over to find pinecones instead of living in one place.



## **Rhinoceros Hornbill**

I am a rhinoceros hornbill.

I have a horn on the top of my beak that I use to knock down fruit.

I also use my horn to fight and sometimes to attract a mate.

I bring food to my mate when she sits on our eggs.

If you think my horn looks weird, you should see my eyelashes! I am one of the few birds that have them.



## Huia

We are huias (HOO-yuhs). We lived in New Zealand until we became **extinct**.

“I am the male. My beak is thick and strong.”

“I am the female. My beak is thin and curved.”

Our beaks are so different that for a long time, people thought we were completely different types of birds.



## **Sword-Billed Hummingbird**

I am a sword-billed hummingbird.

I am a very small bird with a very long beak. I'm the only bird with a bill that is longer than my body!

I use my long beak and even longer tongue to get nectar from tube-shaped flowers.

I can stick my tongue out and pull it back in again about 13 times per second!





## Brown Pelican

I am a brown pelican.

I have a pouch of skin under my beak that can hold a lot of fish.

I hunt in the ocean, diving down from the air.

I sometimes steal fish from other birds, but they steal from me, too. Gulls even sit on my head and back while they take fish right out of my pouch!



## Shoebill Stork

I am a shoebill stork.

My beak is shaped like a shoe  
with a hook on the end that helps  
me eat fish.

Sometimes, I'll eat frogs and  
even small crocodiles.

I hunt fish by waiting for one to  
swim by and then falling onto it  
with my mouth open.



## Spoonbill

I am a spoonbill.

I have a long beak that flattens out at the end like a spoon.

Because I am white and pink, people sometimes think I'm a flamingo.

To find food, I sweep my beak back and forth in the mud and shallow water.

I like to eat frogs, **shellfish**, seaweed, and small fish.



## Toucan

I am a toucan.

My huge and colorful beak is actually very light because it's full of **air pockets**.

I eat fruit, seeds, insects, and eggs.

My beak helps me to reach fruit while I sit in rainforest trees. I have two claws that point forward and two that point backward to help me hold onto branches.



Many of us have weird beaks.

Sometimes they help us to catch  
or eat food.

Sometimes they just look wild!



## Glossary

- extinct** (*adj.*) having died out completely (p. 7)
- shellfish** (*n.*) animals that have shells and live in the water (p. 11)
- air pockets** (*n.*) areas of air surrounded by matter (p. 12)

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