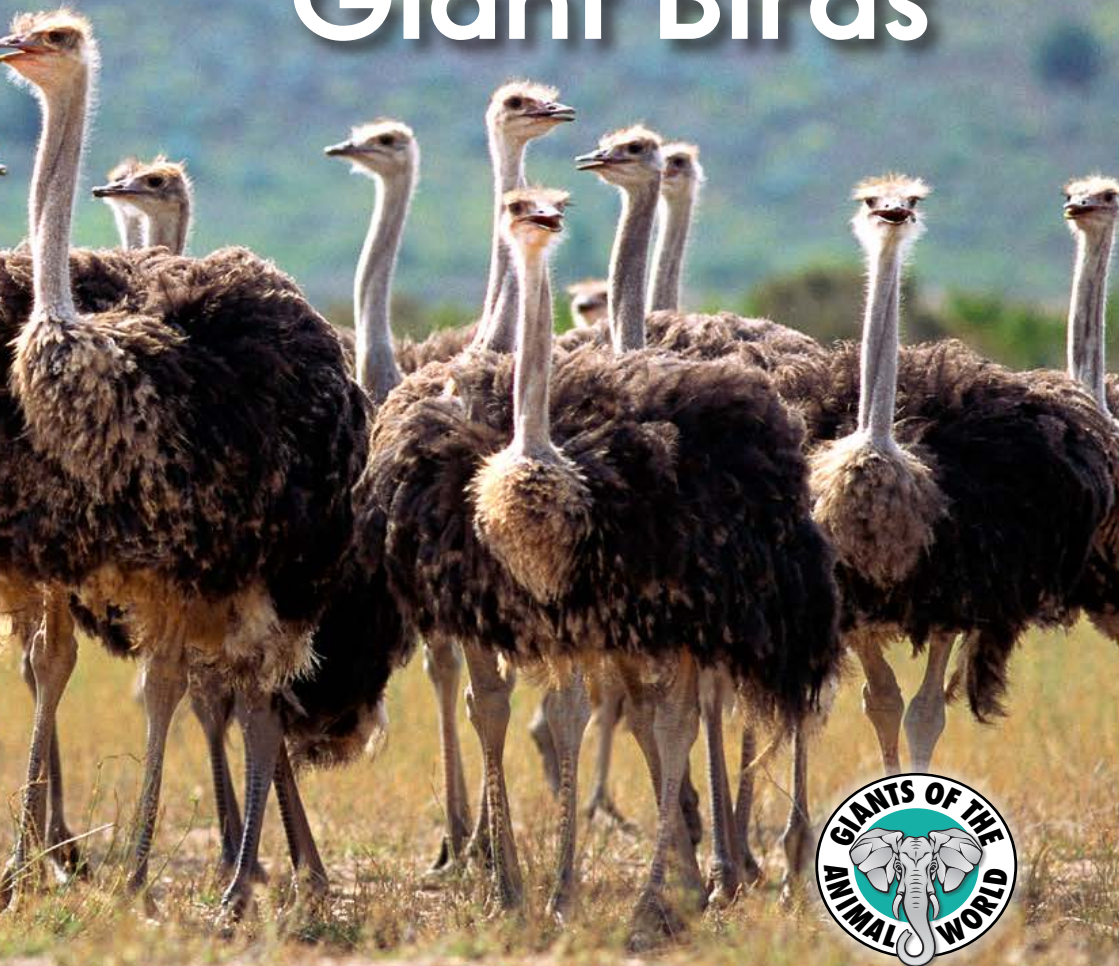


LEVELED BOOK • J

# Ostriches: Giant Birds



Written by Emilio Garcia

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## Focus Question

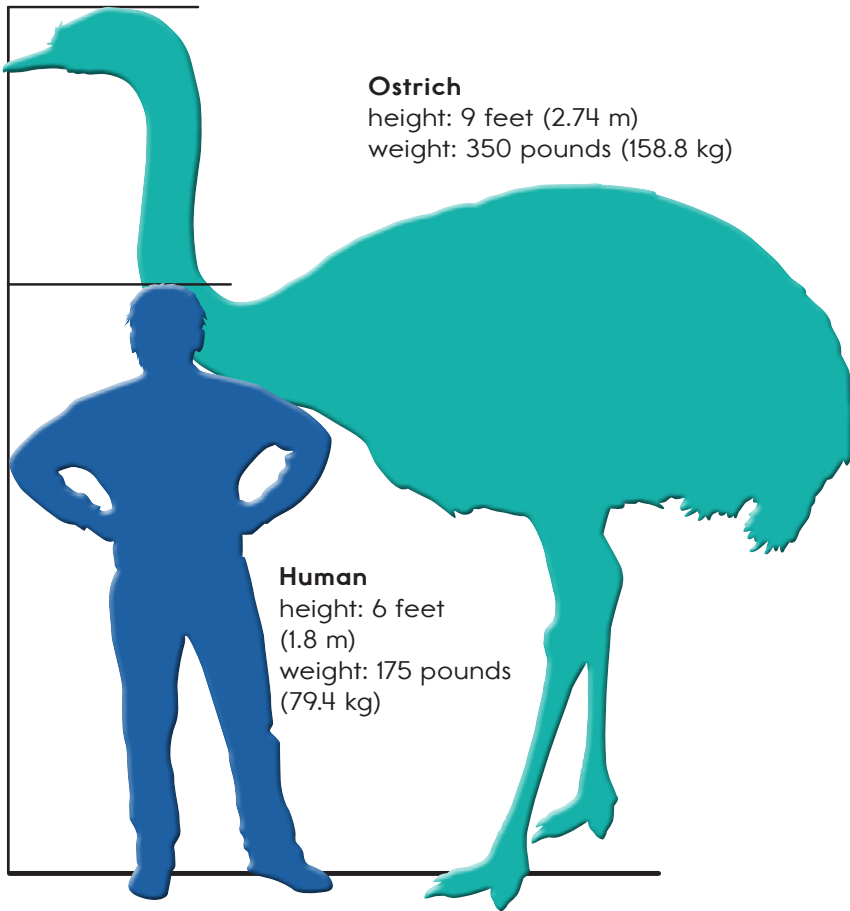
What advantages and disadvantages does the ostrich have because of its size?



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## How Big Is It?



### A Very Big Bird

The ostrich is the biggest bird in the world.

Most ostriches are taller than the tallest people.





An ostrich's wings help keep it from falling when it runs.

Ostriches have wings and feathers,  
but they can't fly.

An ostrich can run fast and far.

It is the fastest animal with two legs.  
It runs faster than most four-legged  
animals.

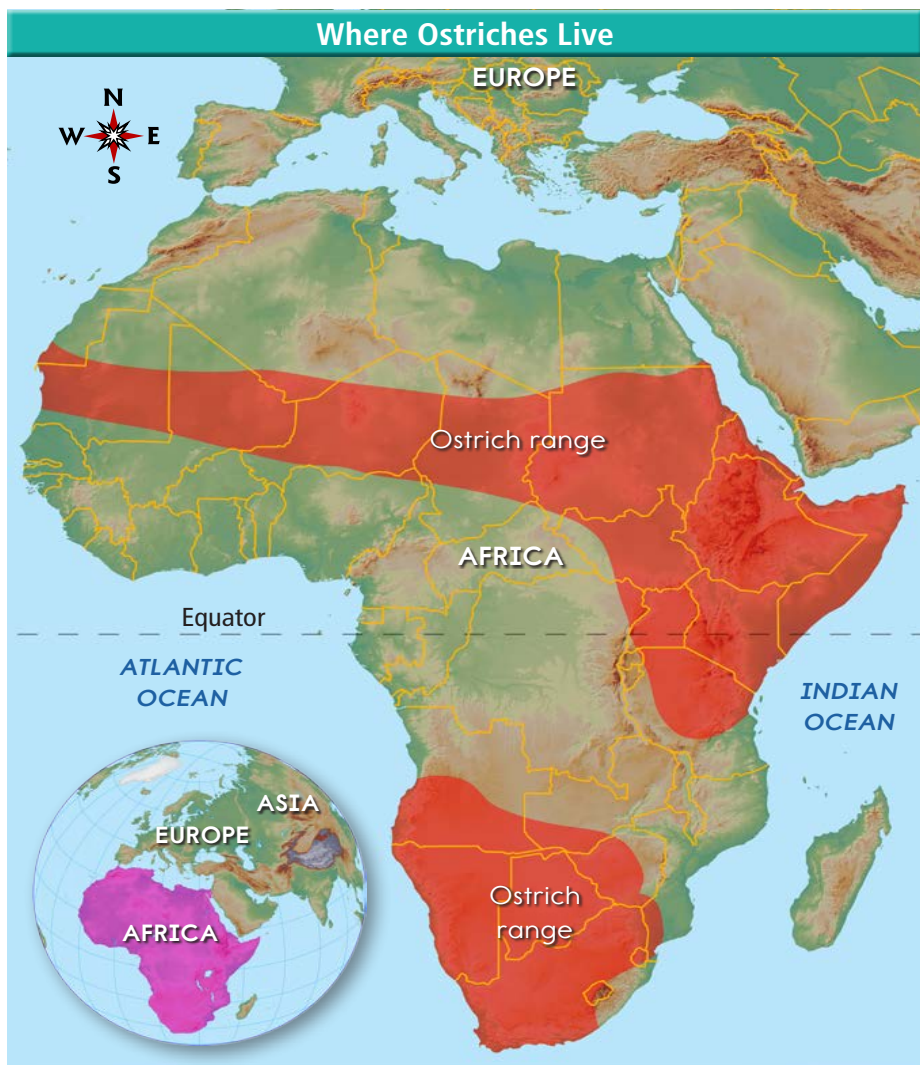


An ostrich eye is five times bigger than a human eye.

## **Eyes on the Prize**

Ostriches have small heads  
with big eyes.

Their eyes are bigger than those  
of any other land animal.



## Home, Sweet Home

Most **wild** ostriches live in Africa.  
They live in small **herds**  
of ten or more birds.





Ostriches live peacefully with many other wild animals.

Ostriches use teamwork to stay safe. Their sharp eyes and long necks help them spot danger from far away.





An ostrich's long neck helps it reach food on the ground.

## **What's on the Menu?**

Ostriches eat grass, other plants, and fruit.

They also eat bugs and other small animals.

Ostriches don't drink much water. They get water from the plants and fruit they eat.

## What Makes an Ostrich a Bird?



An ostrich has the biggest eyes of any bird.

An ostrich has two holes in its bill to breathe.

An ostrich has wings and feathers but cannot fly.

An ostrich has the largest eggs of any land animal.

An ostrich only has two toes on each foot.

### All birds

- have a backbone
- have feathers
- have wings
- have a bill
- lay eggs
- are warm-blooded



A lion is one of the ostrich's many enemies.

## Look Out! Run!

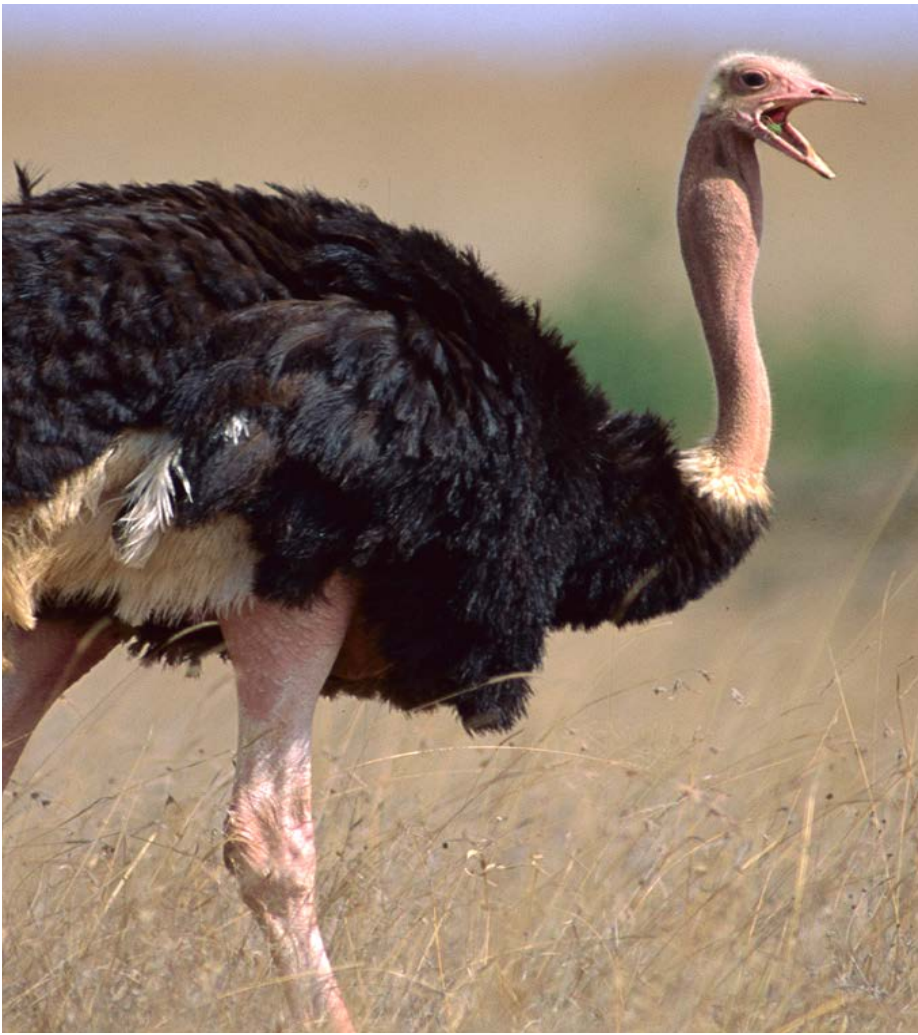
Lions and cheetahs  
hunt ostriches for food.  
Ostriches must be  
on the lookout.

Their long necks help  
them look far.

They have strong legs and big feet.  
An ostrich can kick very hard.  
Its kick can kill a lion.







An ostrich makes sound from deep in its throat.

Ostriches make a loud **noise** when they see a lion.

The noise **warns** other animals that lions are near.



A mother ostrich can lay forty to one hundred eggs every year.

## From Big Egg to Big Bird

A male ostrich digs a shallow pit in the dirt for a nest.

The mother lays her eggs in the pit. In six weeks, baby ostriches **hatch** from the eggs.

A baby ostrich is the size of a grown chicken.



Ostrich chicks grow 1 foot (30 cm) every month for six months.

An ostrich chick grows about 1 foot (30 cm) per month.

In six months, the baby ostrich will be grown.

It can live for fifty years or more.





An ostrich can run up to 45 miles per hour (72.4 kph).

## Conclusion

Ostriches are **special** birds.

They are strong and fast.

Ostriches are bigger than  
any other bird.

## Glossary

<b>hatch</b> (v.)	to break open, such as when a bird breaks out of an egg (p. 13)
<b>herds</b> (n.)	groups of large land animals (p. 7)
<b>noise</b> (n.)	a sound that is loud or unpleasant to hear (p. 12)
<b>special</b> (adj.)	better than or different from normal (p. 15)
<b>warns</b> (v.)	alerts to danger (p. 12)
<b>wild</b> (adj.)	in a natural state; not controlled by humans (p. 7)

# Words to Know

hatch

herds

noise

special

warns

wild

Front and back cover: A herd of ostriches gather on the African plains.

Title page: Ostriches are very curious birds. They like to explore new things, even cameras.

Page 3: A male ostrich (left) and a female ostrich (right) show off their different feathers.

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 Giants of the Animal World  
 Level J Leveled Book  
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# Ostriches: Giant Birds

*A Reading A-Z Level J Leveled Book*  
*Word Count: 273*

## Connections

### Writing and Art

Make a book with three facts or more that you learned about ostriches. Illustrate your book with drawings or pictures.

### Science

Compare ostrich eggs to chicken eggs, looking at the size, shape, and color of each. How are they the same? How are they different? Write a list.

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