

# Birds Feathers

All birds have feathers, and are the only animals that do!

- Feathers provide protection (from weather and injury).
- Feathers serve as insulation from cold and heat.
- Feathers help birds attract mates.

Feathers wear out and get old so birds must replace them every so often. Birds molt once or twice a year depending on the species. When a bird molts the old feathers will fall out or are pushed out by the growth of new feathers. Birds will generally molt before they mate. The new feathers look bright and attractive and help males attract a female.

## **Did you know?**

In late summer and fall, when a bird molts, it usually grows and replaces all its feathers gradually, but sometimes a bird loses all the feathers on its head at once. The result is a very strange looking bald bird! Don't worry—usually the feathers grow back just fine.