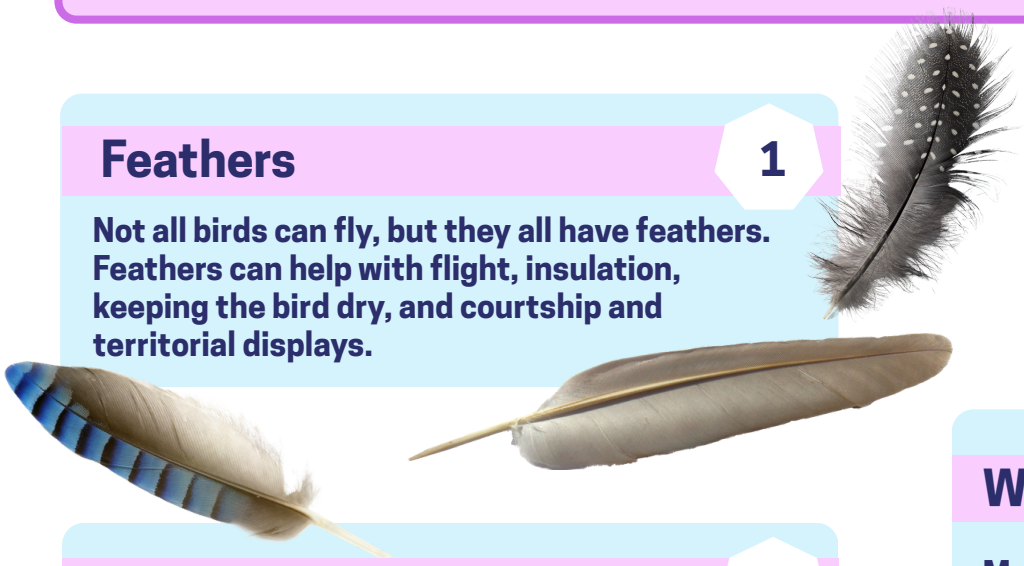
CHARACTERISTICS OF BIRDS

There are over 11,000 species of birds on Earth! Each species has their own unique traits and adaptations. Even though bird species are diverse, they all have the following characteristics in common:

Feathers 1

Not all birds can fly, but they all have feathers. Feathers can help with flight, insulation, keeping the bird dry, and courtship and territorial displays.



Wings 2

Many birds use their wings for flying. Some species use them for swimming or courtship displays.

Beaks or Bills 3

All birds have a beak, or bill. The words are synonyms; they mean the same thing.

Eggs 4

Birds hatch from eggs with a hard shell. Eggs must be kept at the right temperature in order for the chick to develop and survive.

Endothermic 5

Birds are endothermic, or warm blooded. This means that their body produces its own heat. Birds and mammals are endothermic, while reptiles and amphibians are ectothermic. Ectothermic animals regulate their temperature by using external environmental sources, such as warming up by basking on a sunny rock.