

# STUDY QUESTIONS

## TO “PECK, PLUCK, PROBE, PREEN”

Study and learn facts and ideas based on this Young Naturalists nonfiction story in *Minnesota Conservation Volunteer*, July-August 2019, [www.mndnr.gov/mcvmagazine](http://www.mndnr.gov/mcvmagazine).

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*Minnesota Conservation Volunteer* magazine is your guide to wild things. Every other month, six times a year, the magazine arrives in your school library. Each one has a story for Young Naturalists like you. **Are you curious about wild things?** Young Naturalists tells true stories that can answer all kinds of questions such as these—

**Have you ever heard of a purple wartyback?** How about a pink heelsplitter, pimple-back, or monkeyface? All are Minnesota freshwater mussels. Read Young Naturalists stories to learn which species (kinds) of critters live in Minnesota—frogs, salamanders, snakes, wild cats, wild dogs, weasels, mice, and rabbits.

Want to **peek inside the den of a red fox** and see how the kits grow up? Are you a rock hound searching for agates? Have you ever wondered what’s alive under snow? How animals see? Why is a bluebird blue? How birds fly?

Would you like to hear the true story of **giants of the ice age**? Young Naturalists also tells you about the underground universe. You can read the story of a tiny owl that went to a hospital with an injured wing. Find out about a boy who worked in a logging camp. Read the story of Ojibwe children today hunting and gathering like their ancestors did.

Learn how to get started **camping, snowshoeing, ice fishing, or canoeing**.

**Find these stories and more online** at [www.mndnr.gov/young\\_naturalists](http://www.mndnr.gov/young_naturalists).

*Your knowledge of wild things helps you explore and enjoy the outdoors. Have fun!*

# “PECK, PLUCK, PROBE, PREEN” STUDY QUESTIONS

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1. NAME FOUR ACTIVITIES A BIRD USES ITS BEAK OR BILL FOR. \_\_\_\_\_

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2. HOW DOES RHYNCHOKINESIS HELP A HUMMINGBIRD SURVIVE?

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3. MATCH THE BIRD BEAK TO ITS CORRESPONDING HUMAN TOOL:

barn swallow	sieve
common loon	chisel
hummingbird	needle-nose pliers
pelican	butterfly net
goldfinch	scoop
peregrine falcon	scissors
great blue heron	toothpick
yellow-rumped warbler	nutcracker
mallard	tweezers
hairy woodpecker	spear
snipe	soda straw

**4. THE BUMPS ON A LOON'S BILL THAT HELP IT GRASP FOOD ARE CALLED**

- a. rynchokinesis
- b. denticles
- c. gular sacs
- d. talons

5. True or false: A pelican uses its bill to scoop fish from a lake or river.

**6. WHAT IS A MALLARD'S NAIL? \_\_\_\_\_**

\_\_\_\_\_

**7. HOW DO THE HAIRLIKE FEATHERS AROUND THE BASE OF A HAIRY WOODPECKER'S BILL HELP IT SURVIVE?**

- a. They help the bird attract mates.
- b. They help the bird keep wood chips out of its nostrils.
- c. They help prevent headaches.
- d. They let the bird know when it has chiseled far enough into wood.

**8. WHAT DO THE NERVES IN A SNIPE'S BILL ALLOW IT TO DO? \_\_\_\_\_**

\_\_\_\_\_

**9. WHY CAN'T A SNIPE SEE ITS FOOD?**

- a. Because the food is underground.
- b. Because its eyes are on the sides of its head.
- c. Because its bill gets in the way.
- d. Because it shuts its eyes when it eats.

**10. MATCH THE BIRD BEAK OR BILL TO THE SPECIAL FEATURE:**

snipe	crevice on the top bill for cracking open seeds
hairy woodpecker	comblike structures called lamellae
mallard	hairlike feathers where the bill meets the rest of the head
peregrine falcon	nerve-containing dents at the tip
goldfinch	tomial tooth

**CHALLENGE: THE ARTICLE STATES THAT BIRDS IN COLD CLIMATES TEND TO HAVE SMALLER BILLS THAN THOSE IN WARMER CLIMATES. HOW MIGHT A SMALLER BILL HELP A BIRD SURVIVE IN COLD? \_\_\_\_\_**

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# MINNESOTA COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PERIOD \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**1. WHAT TWO BIRDS DESCRIBED HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO USE THEIR BILLS LIKE SPEARS?**

- a. hummingbird and barn swallow
- b. pelican and peregrine falcon
- c. snipe and hairy woodpecker
- d. loon and great blue heron

**2. THE ARTICLE CALLS THE BARN SWALLOW'S BILL "VERSATILE." WHAT EVIDENCE DOES IT PROVIDE TO SUPPORT THIS?** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**3. PLACE THE THISTLE SEED-EATING STEPS FOR A GOLDFINCH IN THE RIGHT ORDER.**

- use top bill to separate the hull and the seed
- use tongue to place the seed between the top and bottom bill
- swallow the seed
- close mouth
- spit out the hull
- remove the seed from the thistle

**4. ANIMALS THAT MAINLY EAT OTHER ANIMALS ARE CALLED CARNIVORES. ANIMALS THAT EAT PLANT MATERIALS ARE CALLED HERBIVORES. ANIMALS THAT COMMONLY EAT BOTH ARE CALLED OMNIVORES. BASED ON THE INFORMATION IN THIS STORY, CLASSIFY THE BIRDS IN THIS STORY:**

- Carnivore:
- Herbivore:
- Omnivore:

**5. True or false: Birds have tongues.**

## STUDENT STUDY GUIDE: VOCABULARY CARDS

Cut along horizontal lines, fold in the middle and tape or staple. Blanks are provided to allow you or your students to add new words or phrases

**AN AERIAL ACROBAT**  
is one that

An acrobat that  
**IS ACTIVE IN THE AIR**  
can be called

FOLD

**A CRACK**  
in a rock is also  
known as

**A CREVICE**  
in a rock is

FOLD

The  
**GRUBS**  
some birds eat are

Some  
**INSECT LARVAE**  
are

FOLD

**A MORSEL**  
is

**A TINY BIT OF FOOD**  
is known as

FOLD

When a bird  
**PREENS,**  
it

When a bird  
**GROOMS ITS FEATHERS**  
**WITH ITS BILL,**  
it

FOLD

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**TO POKE WITH  
SOMETHING SHARP**  
is

FOLD

**TO PROBE**  
is

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A feature that  
**DRAWS ATTENTION**  
is

FOLD

A  
**STRIKING**  
feature

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**A FEATURE THAT  
IS ADDED ON**  
to something is a

FOLD

**A SUPPLEMENT**  
is

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**A VERSATILE**  
tool is one that

FOLD

A tool that  
**CAN SERVE DIFFERENT PURPOSES**  
is

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FOLD

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FOLD