

Basic information on ostrich and emu

[Science](#), [Biology](#)



OSTRICH Did you know? * The Ostrich is the largest living bird in the world. * It is of the Ratite family, which means flightless bird. * The Ostrich is native to Africa, yet thrives in countries all over the world. * Adult males are eight to ten feet in height and weigh 350-400 pounds. * A male Ostrich is called a rooster and a female Ostrich is called a hen. * The male is black with white wing tips and tail plumes. * The female has light brown and grey plumage and is slightly smaller than the male. * This great bird has two toes, all other birds have three or four toes. The Ostrich can run at speeds of up to 40 MPH for sustained times. * An Ostrich will live to be 50 - 75 years old. * Although an ostrich egg is the largest of all eggs, it is the smallest egg in relation to the size of the bird. * The Ostrich egg will weigh 1600 gm and is equivalent to 2 dozen chicken eggs. * An Ostrich Hen can lay 40 -100 eggs per year, averaging about 60 eggs per year. * Ostrich eggs hatch in 42 days. * An Ostrich chick grows one foot taller each month until it is 7-8 months old. * Females sit on eggs by day; males sit on eggs by night. To soft boil a fresh egg would take one hour. To hard boil would take 1 1/2 hours. * Ostrich farming is a viable alternative agriculture industry, with fine quality leather, feathers and gourmet meat as the principal products. EMU Introducing the Emu Emu (pronounced either e-mew or e-moo depending on where you're from) are a large flightless bird native to Australia. These birds, known for their curious nature, have been around since the time of the dinosaurs. Emu (*Dromaius novaehollandiae*) are a member of the ratite, which means flightless bird, family.

Other ratites include the ostrich, moa, rhea, cassowary, and kiwi, as well as the extinct *Aepyornis* (click to read more about this bird). Emu are the

largest bird on the Australian continent and the second largest in the world.

What bird is the largest bird? That would be the emu's cousin the ostrich.

Emus eat insects and caterpillars as well as seeds, nuts, shoots, flowers, and small rodents and lizards. They are picky eaters and would rather starve than eat old leaves or grass. They are shy birds that prefer to use their long legs to run than to fight. They are known for their curiosity and have been known to eat nails and bits of tin!

Hunters can easily persuade a wild emu to come close by hiding in long grass and waving a colored handkerchief on the end of a stick. Where They Live Today emus live around the world on farms and ranches and in zoos.

They can still be found running wild in the western part of Australia where the land is rugged and less-populated. Emus tend to avoid thick forest and desert areas and can live well in temperature extremes from 100° to below zero. They generally live mainly on grassy plains and dry open forests.

Before humans came to Australia thousands of years ago, emus wandered all over the country.

Emus are frequently on the move from place to place looking for new water and food sources and don't stay in one place for very long. They are able to travel great distances at a fast pace. The only time they're not on the move is when the males are sitting on the eggs and a short time after the chicks are born. After the chicks get old enough the flock begins to move again, though slowly. While emus usually travel in flocks they generally prefer to be alone with little to no need for company and mutual grooming. What They

Look Like Some emus have an attractive bluish hue on their mostly featherless neck.

The intensity of the color varies based on the season of the year, changes in surroundings and behavior of nearby birds. When females are getting ready to lay their eggs their head and neck are covered with black feathers. They have two dull brown, hair-like feathers that grow out of each opening in the emu's skin. The feathers are brown but after they shed their feathers, or molting, appear nearly black. They fade to a pale brown as the emu ages (just like humans get grey hair as they get older). The feathers are downy with no stiff vein running through the center like most other birds, which is part of why they're flightless.

The feathers towards the base of the spine are longer and are set wide apart, giving it a mop-like appearance. Emus only have tiny wings that are hidden under the feathers and are one-tenth the size of its total body. The emu's short, pointed bill and three-toed feet are brown with a flat bottom that has a broad pad. They typically have golden brown eyes. Making Babies In the summer, when the hen finds a partner they will guard an area of about 30 square kilometers then scoop out a hole in the ground and build a nest. The nest is made of trampled grass in open or lightly covered country.

The breeding doesn't take place until cooler months. As the days get cooler and shorter, the males (or cocks) undergo a hormonal change and start to lose their appetites in preparation for sitting on the nest. The pair will mate every day or two and every second or third day the female will lay an egg in the nest. After the seventh egg is laid the male will get broody and will start

to sit on the eggs. The male will not sit on a nest until at least five eggs have been laid. While the male emu sits on the eggs he will not eat, drink or even go to the bathroom. He can lose up to 20 pounds during this time, or about one-fifth its weight.

They only stand long enough to turn the eggs, which is done about 10 times a day. Over the next eight weeks the male will survive only on accumulated body fat and the morning dew reachable from the nest. Emu eggs are easily identifiable due to their rather large size, about the size of a grapefruit, and greenish-black color. The eggs are not a uniform shade and can range from a light shade of green to almost black. The color of the eggs depends on the hen. A Baby Is Born... After pecking its way out of the shell, a very active 10-inch tall, cream-colored emu chick emerges.

They have brown stripes and dark dots on the head. The chicks go through a remarkable color-metamorphosis. As three-month-old chicks they turn an almost solid black color, and then change to a tan, brown and black mixture as they grow. The chick will leave the nest two to three days after hatching. The chicks will be guarded by the male for up to 18 months and he is the one who will teach them what and how to eat. If a male comes across a strange chick wandering, he will most likely adopt it providing it isn't bigger than the chicks already in his care.

Interesting Fact: Ratites are the only birds known to hatch identical twins. Two birds actually hatch from the same egg! This is not normal for birds and in the wild the hatchlings would rarely live more than a day or two. In captivity scientists have been able to watch emu identical twins live beyond

<https://assignbuster.com/basic-information-on-ostrich-and-emu/>

18 months. * The Emu is native to Australia and it is believed to have existed almost unchanged for over 80 million years. * Emus grow to approximately 6 feet tall and is the second largest bird in the world. * Emu and ostrich are totally different birds. The only similarity they share is that they are both flightless. The Emu is an omnivore. In the wild its diet consists of grains and seeds and small rodents, reptiles and birds. * Females can lay up to 60 eggs per season. The average egg production for a hen is 30 to 40 eggs. * The eggs are dark green and weigh 1 to 1 1/2 pounds (500 to 780 grams). * The male Emu incubates the eggs 50 to 60 days and then raises the chicks. * An Emu grows quickly and reaches its full height in one year. * Emus love water and are excellent swimmers. * Emus grow to approximately 6 feet tall.

WRITTEN REPORT IN HEALTH AND SCIENCES Submitted By: Kyrin Aeiou U.

Hernaes