



Ranger Rick

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

EDUCATIONAL EXTENSIONS FOR THE DECEMBER/JANUARY 2015 ISSUE OF RANGER RICK® MAGAZINE

EMPEROR PENGUINS

Several excellent films have been made about emperor penguins, including the award-winning documentary *March of the Penguins* and the two popular *Happy Feet* movies. Show one of these films in class and then have students read aloud the play, “Emperors on Ice” (pages 6-11). As a group, discuss how emperor penguins were presented in both the film and the play. What were some differences? Some similarities?

Extend the discussion by asking: (1) What’s the most challenging journey you’ve ever made? How did you do it? Was it worth it? (2) Do you think a pair of emperor penguins could raise more than one chick at a time? Why or why not? (3) Which set of parents have the tougher job—penguin or human parents? Why?

MORE IGUANA ADVENTURES

In *Ranger Rick’s Adventures* (pages 13-15), Ranger Rick and friends encounter a blue iguana while visiting a beach on Grand Cayman Island. After students have read the story, point out the Cayman Islands on a map, and Grand Cayman Island in particular. Tell the class that two other varieties of iguanas inhabit the islands: the common green and the Sister Islands rock iguana. Have children research these two types and then write a sequel to the blue iguana adventure featuring one of the other types.

HOORAY FOR SQUIRRELS!

After reading “Hooray for Squirrels! (pages 16-21), ask the following: What do people like about squirrels? What might they dislike?

No matter where you live, there are almost certainly squirrels to observe. So on National Squirrel Appreciation Day, January 21, head outside with the class to appreciate their amusing antics. Encourage students to look for the squirrel behaviors described on this issue’s Nature Notebook page, “[Spy on Squirrels.](#)” Have children record

their findings on their notebook page and rate themselves according to the chart provided.

Wrap up your celebration of National Squirrel Appreciation Day with one or more of the activities in “Got Squirrels?” (pages 22-23).

RAINFORESTS

After reading “Visit a Rainforest” (pages 24-31), have students complete the student page, “Think About Rainforests.”

Then, on a rainy day, take the class for a walk in a wooded area to see how forests of all types “process” rainwater. This walk will be more effective if leaves are on the trees, but if they aren’t, you can adjust the activity accordingly. First, ask students to point out how the tree leaves catch rainwater. Tell them that a small amount of this water evaporates off leaves. Then show them how some of the rainwater caught by leaves flows along the tree’s branches, down the trunk, and into the soil to be absorbed by its roots. And what happens to the rest of the rainwater? Point out how it drips off leaves and branches and falls to the forest floor. Some of this water seeps slowly into the soil and some runs downhill, eventually joining streams and rivers.

NEW YEAR’S RESOLUTIONS

Remind students that New Year’s Eve is often a time when people reflect on personal changes they want to make in the coming year and then resolve to follow through on those changes. Discuss typical New Year’s resolutions (e.g., save money, exercise more, make new friends, etc.). Now ask students to suppose that their New Year’s resolution is to make 2015 their best wildlife year ever. How would they do that? As a class, list at least 10 ways. Then select a few of these actions to carry out during the coming year.

For some funny New Year’s resolutions that animals might make, encourage students to read “New Year’s Resolutions,” pages 32-35.



MEET THE PARENTS



Raising kids can be a tough job for emperor penguin parents and for human parents. Read "Emperors on Ice," pages 6–11, then compare and contrast the duties of both kinds of parents in the chart below.

EMPEROR PENGUIN PARENTS

HUMAN PARENTS



HOW ARE THEIR JOBS ALIKE?



**HOW ARE THEIR JOBS DIFFERENT?
WHEN IT COMES TO:**



	FEEDING BABY	
	PROTECTING BABY	
	TEACHING BABY	
	OTHER	



THINK ABOUT RAINFORESTS



Use what you learned from reading "Visit a Rainforest," pages 24–31, to answer these questions. Be sure to answer in complete sentences. If you need more room for your answers, use the back of this paper.

1. What makes a rainforest different from other places on Earth?

2. What might happen if an emperor penguin found itself in a rainforest? What challenges would it face?

3. In which layer of the rainforest do more plant and animal species live than any other? Why do you think that is?

4. How might features of plants living in the understory layer differ from those living in the emergent layer? Why?

5. Why does our planet need rainforests?



SCARLET SONGSTER

THE MALE IS THE ONLY CRESTED RED BIRD IN THE U.S.

NORTHERN CARDINAL

CHOSEN BY SEVEN STATES IN THE U.S. AS THEIR OFFICIAL BIRD.

FOUND IN BACKYARDS, THICKETS, AND MEADOWS FROM CANADA TO AS FAR SOUTH AS BELIZE.

ITS SHORT, THICK BILL CAN CRACK OPEN HARD SEEDS.

ALSO KNOWN AS
REDBIRD

MALE

FEMALE

A cardinal on a winter day
Shines like a ruby through the gray.
With bright red feathers, pointed crest,
This bird stands out from all the rest.

A treat to see and also hear,
It might break out in song all year.
It does not migrate, does not roam,
Far from the place it calls home.

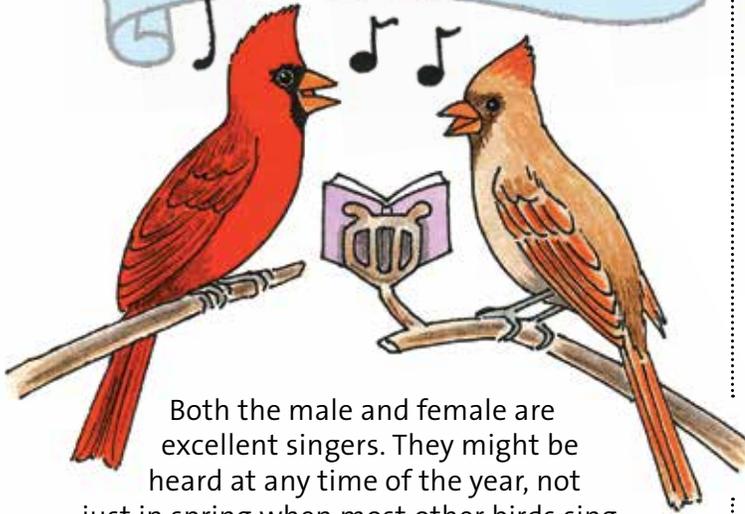
IN **SPRING**,
THE MALE WILL
FEED HIS MATE
AS SHE SITS ON
THE NEST.

AT FEEDERS
SUNFLOWER
SEEDS
ARE
FAVORITES.

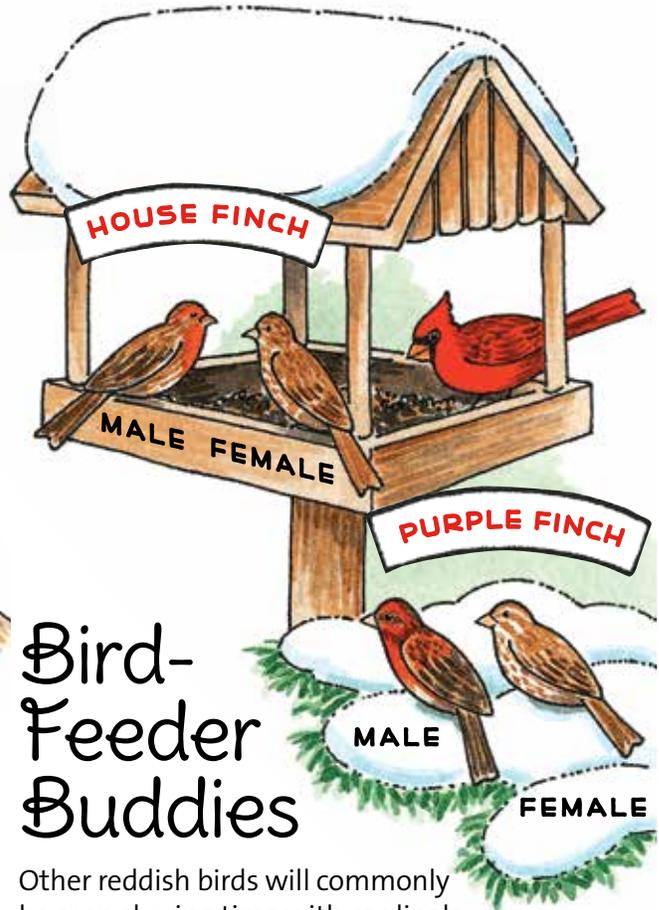
IN THE WILD
IT EATS
MOSTLY SEEDS
AND BERRIES,
BUT ALSO SOME
INSECTS.

HE WILL ALSO CARE FOR THE YOUNG
WHILE THE FEMALE NESTS AGAIN.

Constant Chorus

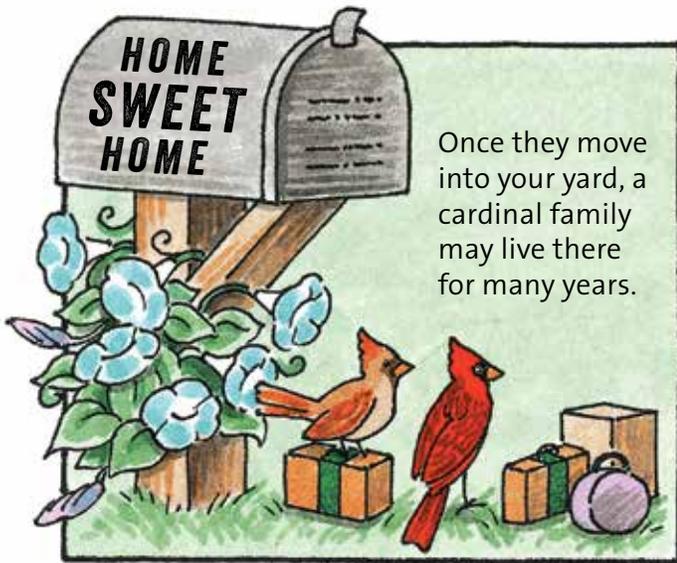


Both the male and female are excellent singers. They might be heard at any time of the year, not just in spring when most other birds sing.



Bird-Feeder Buddies

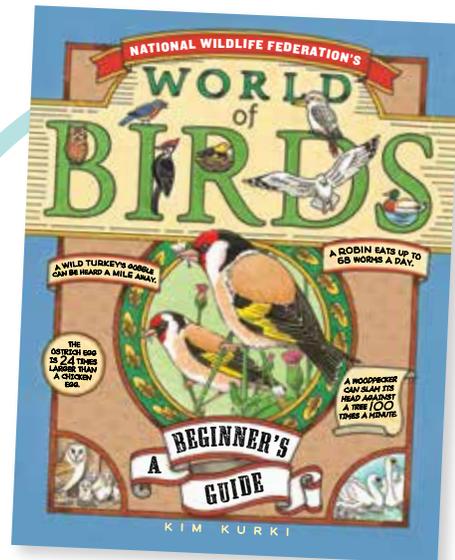
Other reddish birds will commonly be seen sharing time with cardinals at bird feeders in North America. Like the cardinal, these finches are seed eaters, which you can tell by their short, thick bills.



Once they move into your yard, a cardinal family may live there for many years.

Imaginary Foe

A male will fiercely defend his feeding territory. You may see him fighting his reflection in a car mirror or window, trying to scare off the "other" bird.



NEW BOOK!

FROM NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION

LEARN MORE AT

<http://nwf.org/worldofbirds>