

# Parrots

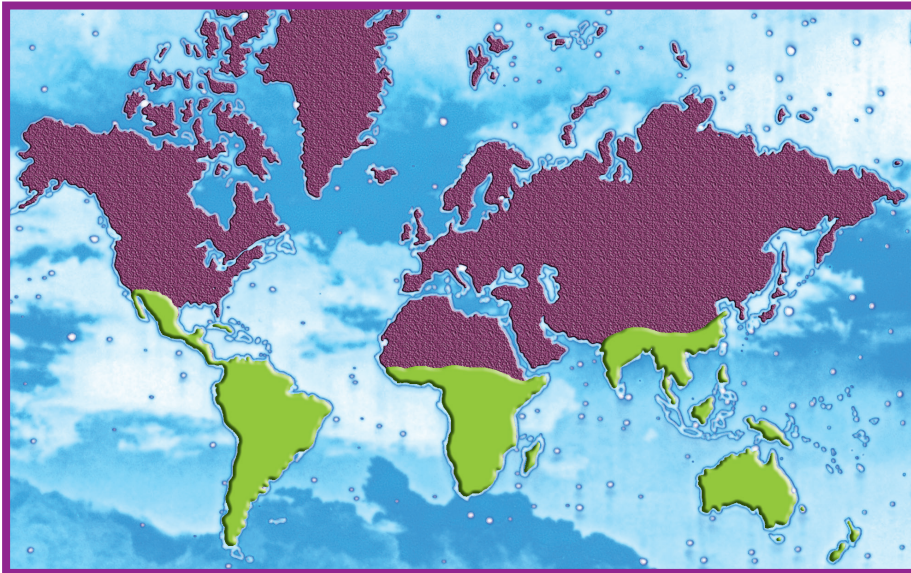


You can find the color **blue** throughout these pages. Identifying colors is an important part of cognitive development, and labeling colors enhances linguistic development, too. Help your child find something **blue** on each page. Hunt for **blue** things around the house. Combine color-labeling with counting by asking your child to bring you "6 **blue** things." You can even explore **blue's** "murky edges," where it becomes purple or turquoise, or even white or black.



Parrots features the letter "p." Learning to identify letters and phonemes is key to developing early reading skills. To make a "puh" sound, our mouths make the same shape as they do to make the "buh" sound that goes with the letter "b"—but a "buh" is voiced, while a "puh" makes only a puff of air. Help your child locate and identify the "puh" sound throughout this issue, and distinguish it from "buh." Play a game: you say pairs of words, such as pat and bat, and ask your child which begin with "puh" and which begins with "buh." You can use silly words, too, such as "pix" and "bix."

## Where in the WORLD? ● Parrots



Parrots have been introduced to other parts of the world, too. They can even be found in some parts of the United States—in Florida, California, even Chicago, Illinois!

## It's a ZOO out there!

Parrots are wonderful to watch—and to hear. If you're fortunate to live near a zoo or park that has a spacious, humane bird habitat, your family may enjoy a trip there after reading *Parrots*. You'll reinforce learning and foster careful observation skills if you look for the parrot features and behaviors mentioned in this issue:

- Look for hooked beaks and rings of skin around the eyes.
- Notice how their toes point forward and backward so they can grip their perches.
- Name all of the bright colors you see on their bodies.
- Listen to the various sounds and squawks the parrots make, and have fun imitating them.

## Reading Resource

Every title in the *Ranger Rick Zootles* series is designed to be used for fun and learning, and as a reading resource as well. The pages are written simply and address various stages of emerging literacy, and they encourage new readers to exercise their new skills at just the right level. Reading *Ranger Rick Zootles* together will provide "together time" for you and your child—and reinforce vocabulary, comprehension, and early reading skills, too.

# The Case of the Missing "P"



These words are all missing letters.  
 Can you help solve the mystery?  
 Put a "p" in each blank to make a word.

In which word does the letter "p" appear the most times?



\_\_ie



\_\_lane



a\_\_e



ca\_\_



lolly\_\_o\_\_



\_\_lant



\_\_u\_\_y



news\_\_a\_\_er



**Pp**

- Sometimes the letter "p" is found at the beginning of a word, as in "parrot." How many of the words above begin with the letter "p"?
- Other times, the letter "p" is found in the middle of the word, as in "super." How many of the words above have the letter "p" in the middle?
- Now, how many words above end with the letter "p"?

# COLOR My World

**Blue**

Rain forests are home to some of the most colorful animals on earth. Following the key below, color each numbered space with the corresponding color. You can put the color back in this forest!

1=Blue

2=Red

3=Green

4=Yellow



## What ELSE can we DO?

- **Parrot Parts (p. 2-3)** Birds and humans are quite different—but we have things in common, too. Help your child explore and discover the many ways birds and humans are different, but also the same.

- **ZOOTLES TO-DO:** Parrots use their toes to get a tight grip. Humans use their fingers. Next time you're at the playground, ask your child to notice how we use our thumbs to grip monkey bars or swings. Show your child the different ways we grip a pencil, a spoon, or a screwdriver—the variety of ways humans hold things is amazing. Come up with a new way to hold something familiar!

- **See Me? (p. 4-5)** Those bright feathers are not only beautiful—they also provide camouflage. Hidden picture games help children develop visual discrimination, or the ability to tell one object from another.

- **ZOOTLES TO-DO:** Collect several pictures—of parrots, family members, and familiar objects and places—without letting your child see them. Cover one photo at a time with a piece of paper. Slowly move the paper aside until your child guesses what it is.

- **Parrot Hall of Fame (p. 6-7)** Those parrots are quite a diverse bunch. Check out those unique hairdos, homesteads, and heights!

- **ZOOTLES TO-DO:** Check YOUR bird brain: Help your child measure her head's circumference with a tape measure. Whose head is bigger? Hers or Dad's?

*Be a cockatoo:* Get out the gel and punk it up!

*Nesting instinct:* Make a monk-parakeet-sized nest with couch pillows, blankets, and whatever. Provide room for lots of stuffed-animal friends and neighbors.

*Who's bigger, the macaw or me?* Help your child measure 40 inches from the floor and mark it in pencil on a doorway. See if you are as tall as a hyacinth macaw.

- **So Many Parrots (p. 8-9)** There are so many parrots in the world that even scientists have not achieved consensus about the exact number of species. Most agree that it is well over 300.

- **ZOOTLES TO-DO:** Kids love to count, but wrapping their minds around “300” can be daunting. Help your child count to three hundred by using pennies, cereal pieces, or toothpicks. If your child can only count to ten, assist her in counting out 30 groups of 10. It'll be slow, but very revealing—both about the nature of big numbers and the number of parrots!

- **Straight from the Parrot's Beak (p. 10-11)** Ever been bitten by a parakeet? Those beaks are strong! (All the better to crack seeds and nuts, my dear!)

- **ZOOTLES TO-DO:** Has your child ever seen a nut in a shell? Starting mid-fall and all through the winter, you can usually find fresh in-shell nuts in the produce section of the supermarket. Give your child a cutting board and a hammer, and help him “eat like a parrot.”

- **Growing Up (p. 12-15)** Small children are fascinated by what it means to be a baby. “At Home in the Nest” describes what it's like to be a baby parrot, and explores how it feels to get big!

- **ZOOTLES TO-DO:** Your child will love acting out this story as you read it aloud. Let a blanket be an egg, and she can peck her way out. Have her peek out of a nest of pillows as she pretends to wait for her parents to bring her food. At the end of the story, she can fly away, all around the house.

- **Hangin' Around (p.16-17)** Scientist Don Brightsmith has a great job. How wonderful to hang in trees and watch birds all day!

- **ZOOTLES TO-DO:** Make a simple bird feeder out of a stale bagel. Help your child cover the bagel with a mixture made of equal parts peanut butter and margarine. Then roll the gooey bagel in birdseed. Loop some string through the hole, hang it from a branch, and wait a day or two until the “neighbors” come a-callin'!

