

calculable. Jewelers aver that the stone is very susceptible to atmospheric conditions, fair or cloudy weather.

They are also said to be affected by the human aura or atmosphere, becoming a dull green with certain wearers.

Ill-health has been known to make them look faded, while with a healthy owner they regain their beautiful tint. The mystic union of the two colors of Venus is expressed in the turquoise, the emerald green of the earth, the azure blue of the sky, and wherever green and blue burn together, as in turquoise-blue and peacock-green, there is an added passion and mystery in the beauty of color.

Birds on Wing and Foot.

Birds are endowed with greater powers of locomotion than are the lower forms of life generally. They can fly and they can walk, and a very large number can swim.

Fishes can only swim, though one does not forget the capacities of the "flying" fish, which, however, does not fly in the sense that birds do; quadrupeds can walk and most of them can swim, but the powers of flight are absolutely confined to birds and insects.

The gift of flight is one of the most wonderful in the world of creation, and this faculty has been bestowed upon birds and insects for a very special reason which we need not now discuss.

You may have observed that the flight of birds is altogether different from the flight of insects. In the former the wings are of bone and sinew clothed with feathers, varying in size and shape.

In the insects the wing is composed of a thin, gauzy material stretched across a slightly built framework, very much in the shape of a fan.

You can see the wings of a bird move, or flop, when it is flying, but your eyesight will have to be very keen if you observe the movements of the fly's wings, which goes in a particular direction at a high rate of speed.

And yet both bird and insect can lift themselves easily from the ground and take any route they please. This subject of bird and insect flying is most interesting. I cannot, however, say more now by way of comparing and explaining these methods of aerial movements.

If you are observant I dare say some of you will have noticed that there are birds that hop and birds that walk when afoot. The sparrow when about the fields and gardens always hops, and so do the thrush and blackbird. The starling runs, and if he gets his eye on a worm that is disappearing in the soil he runs very fast to drag him out. The wagtails also run, and they can trot round so quickly that they can easily take the gnats and other small insects on the wing. The rooks and daws walk sedately, as do the wild pigeons, but the finches are mostly runners.

Some of the birds very rarely are seen afoot.

I doubt very much whether any of my readers have ever seen a swift on the ground. These beautiful birds, now wintering in tropical countries, have such wing-power that they never seem to want to come down from the clouds to rest.

But they do come down, all the same; and I dare say you have seen them visit their nests during the breeding season. If you are near the locality where the house-martin or the swallow builds, you may have seen these lovely birds gathering mud with which to construct their nest.

I have watched them frequently, and have noticed, as you may have done, that they walk with difficulty, as if they had lost control of their little feet.

The reason that swifts and swallows walk so indifferently is because they have little use for their feet.

They live entirely upon insects, which they catch in the air.

The bills of the swallow and the night-jar are short and wide, so that they can take the insects easily on the wing.

The corncrake does not fly a great deal during his stay in summer, not because he cannot use his wings, but rather because he is a capital runner.

He has learned to keep low among the growing grass for safety, and when flushed very rarely uses his wings.

That he does fly, and fly well, however, is evident in the fact that he migrates as regularly as other birds one might name.

When limbs are not used, however, they cease to develop, and, in course of time, even disappear altogether.

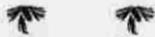
The apteryx, a New Zealand bird, has no wings, and the penguin, which lives in the polar region, has only short, stumpy wings, which are of very little use for flying.

The birds seen at this season are practically all ground feeders, so that when we see them on the wing they are not in pursuit of food, but removing from one feeding ground to another.



Riddle.

Pray tell me ladies, if you can,
Who is that highly favored man,
Who, though he's married many a wife,
May live a bachelor all his life?
(A CLERGYMAN.)



A LITTLE MAID FROM HOLLAND.

Last week's puzzle picture—Master William L. Cummings won the prize offered for the first correct solution.



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