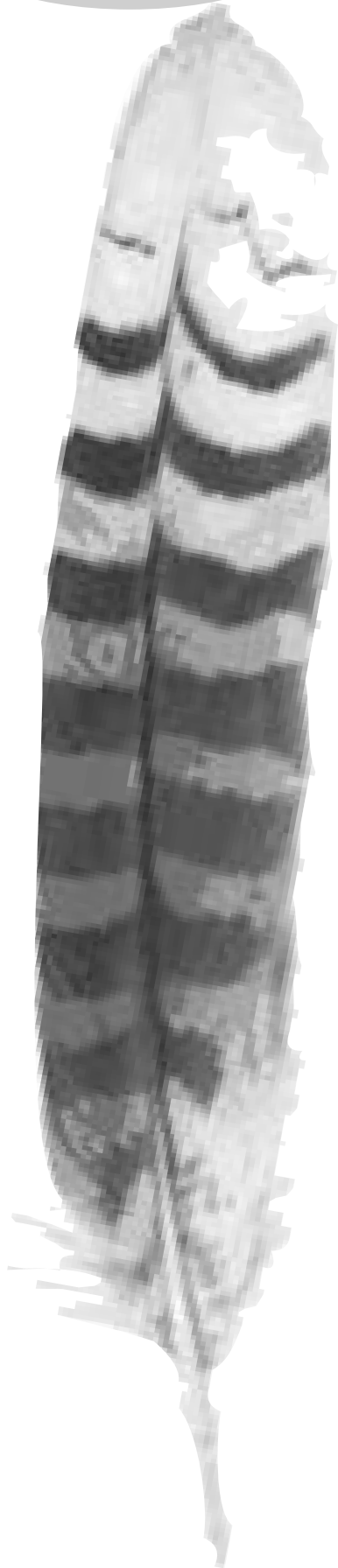


Birds of a Feather

DID YOU KNOW?

A fully grown feather is dead matter like a finger nail.



Unique in the animal world, birds are covered in feathers. Feathers keep birds insulated, waterproofed and protected from UV light, provide colour for camouflage and social display and most importantly, some are specially adapted for flight.

Flight feathers are longer and stiffer than other feathers. They are symmetrically paired on the wings or tail of a bird. Those on the wings are called remiges and those on the tail, rectrices. Their primary purpose is to help develop both thrust and lift forces, thereby allowing flight.

Each individual feather is asymmetrical and is attached to the body by a muscle which lets it move individually. Feathers become worn over time and are replaced by a moult every six to twelve months. New feathers grow quickly and then seal off at the base.

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

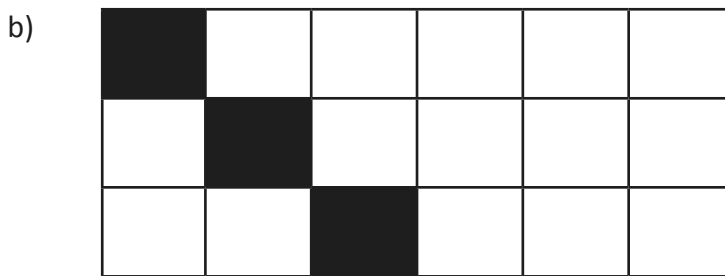
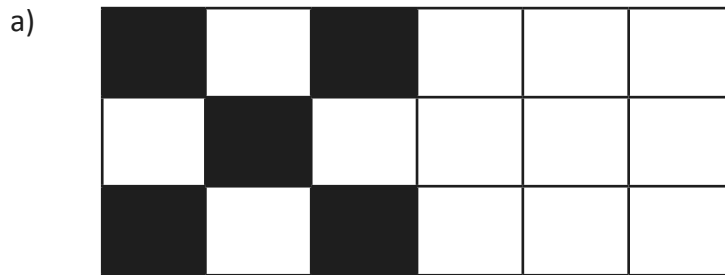
1. Find the meaning of all underlined words.

2. Label the feather at left with the following names:

- Quill (calamis) Stem (rachis) Vane
Afterfeather Barb

2. Complete the following diagrams to show the meaning of:

- a) Symmetrical b) Asymmetrical



3. Explain the meaning of the following idioms:

- a) Birds of a feather flock together
-
- b) It's not only fine feathers that make fine birds
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- c) A feather in your cap
-
- d) You could have knocked me down with a feather
-
- e) Feather your nest
-
- f) Ruffle someone's feathers
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