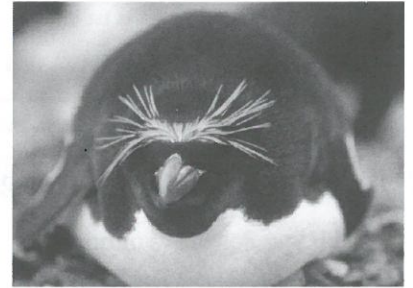


Penguins Around the World

There are around 17 different species of penguin in the world — and not all of them live in Antarctica. This extract gives some details about two different types of penguin, which are distinctive for either their eye-catching headgear or their rather unusual choice of habitat...

Macaroni Penguins

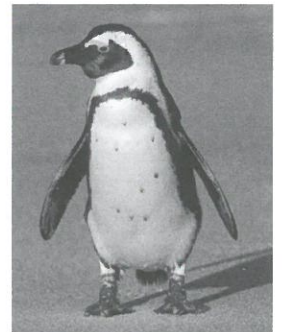
Showing off with their bright tufts of yellow feathers, macaroni penguins are easy to spot against the rocky, frozen landscape of their broad kingdom, which stretches from Antarctica, through numerous Subantarctic islands*, and all the way to the southernmost tip of South America. The penguins' tufts, starting from just above the eyes and beak, are akin to extravagantly styled eyebrows, fanning out magnificently across the backs of their heads.



- However, the macaronis' talents are not limited to their expert hair styling — these birds are also highly skilled disco dancers, putting on flamboyant shows (known as courtship displays) to try to attract a mate. Dipping and shaking their heads like they're the kings of the dance floor, macaronis take full advantage of their luscious locks to impress their partners. As they whirl their golden plumage, the penguins throw back their heads and screech at the top of their lungs. This clamorous call sounds like the cackle of a gleeful witch, piercing the air as other penguins gurgle around them.
- During the breeding season, macaroni penguins pile onto the shore in colonies of up to 100 000, and each pair hurriedly claims a patch of rock to squash their nest onto. With so many other penguins around to cramp their style, conflicts are common. The miniature combatants lock beaks with each other in vicious wrestling competitions, or swipe at each other with their flippers in order to keep other penguins off their turf. Ouch!

20 African Penguins

- Far from the icy terrain that many penguins call home, African penguins splash through the surf on sandy shores. These rule breakers have swapped the biting winds of Antarctica for the sweltering heat of Africa's south-west coast. Found on beaches, and sporting bright pink glands above their eyes, these holidaying penguins have the permanent air of tourists who forgot their sun cream.



- However, living the high life in the African sun brings some unique challenges. To prevent themselves and their eggs from frying in the heat, these adventurous birds must seek out shady sites for their nests. Piles of their own droppings, called guano, make the perfect place for these penguins to nest. Sadly, a lot of this precious guano has been grabbed by greedy humans to fertilise crops, so the penguins often have to bed down elsewhere. They'll happily nest under rocks and bushes, but when all the best spots have been snapped up, many penguins have no choice but to incubate their eggs out in the open. Baking in the sun, the parched birds must brave temperatures of up to 30°C while they wait for their eggs to hatch — yikes!

By Zoe Fenwick.

Glossary

Subantarctic islands — islands just outside of the Antarctic region

1 Find and copy a metaphor from lines 9-10. Why do you think the author chose to describe macaroni penguins in this way?

.....

.....

2 marks

2 Identify two techniques used in the phrase "This clamorous call sounds like the cackle of a gleeful witch" (lines 13-14).

.....

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2 marks

3 Read lines 15-19. What impression do you get of macaroni penguins from this paragraph? Explain your answer.

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2 marks

4 In your own words, summarise lines 26-33.

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2 marks

5 This text uses a lot of informal language. Why do you think the author writes in this way?

.....

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2 marks

Total
out of 10

Extra Activities

- If you were making a nature documentary, which of these species of penguin would you want to film? Write an argument for one of the species, explaining why it is the best choice.
- Choose one paragraph from this extract and rewrite it using more formal language.
- Write a paragraph about your favourite animal in a similar style to this text. You could include where it lives, what it looks like and some interesting facts about it.
- Imagine that you have found some penguins living in an unexpected place. Write a letter to a wildlife magazine about your discovery. Include a description of where you discovered the penguins, and explain why it was so surprising. Think about how the penguins might have adapted to their new environment.