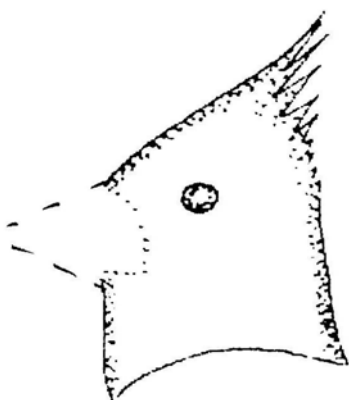
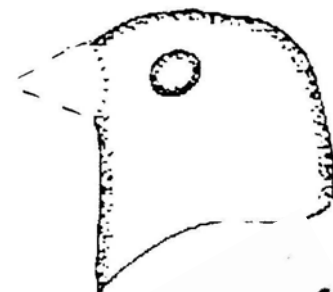
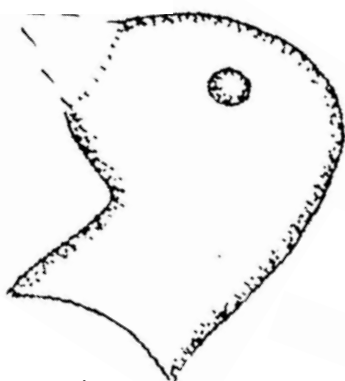


bodies



bodies: The shape of a bird is one of the things scientists use to classify them. First, birds are separated from all other animals into a group called an order. It's called Aves. They're then broken down into smaller and smaller groups, until you reach a point where every type of bird has its own name (there's 8,600 different ones!). Some things that help classify birds are their legs, size, neck and body shape, what they eat, and even their flying style.



feathers

feathers: The most important thing that makes a bird a bird is its feathers. All birds have feathers. Feathers are made of what's called keratin, the same thing that's found in hair, nails, and even scales. It's strong and flexible. But not all feathers are the same! Not only are they different sizes, colors, and shapes, but they also have different uses, like flying (flight feathers), attracting mates (contour feathers), protecting them from predators, and keeping them warm (down).

