

Researchers find most 'instagrammable' bird

4th May, 2021



Creative Commons 2.0
via Rae Allen on flickr.com

It seems we share photos online of everything these days, from what we eat for breakfast to the new shoes we have bought. Researchers have recently published a study about what kinds of bird photos we like on the social media site

Instagram. This is a photo and video-sharing social networking service on which uploaded images are viewable for just 24 hours. The researchers are from the University of Konstanz in Germany. They looked into the question: "What makes a great bird photo?" They tried to find the most 'instagrammable' bird. They discovered that the frogmouth is our favourite. This is a nocturnal bird that is found from India, across Southeast Asia to Australia.

The researchers analysed nearly 30,000 bird photos from nine popular bird photography Instagram accounts. They created a special computer algorithm to find which photos attracted the most "likes" on the photo-sharing platform. Ornithologist Tim Snyder suggested the frogmouth was the most liked bird because of its large eyes and wide beak. He said that while most birds' eyes are positioned on the sides of their head, the frogmouth's eyes are more in the centre of its face, which makes the bird appear more "humanlike". Wildlife photographer Graeme Purdy told the BBC: "Anything cute and cuddly evokes something in human nature - and particularly anything with big eyes."

Sources: bbc.com / theguardian.com / businessinsider.com

Writing

Bird photos on social media are better than breakfast photos. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

share / photos / online / breakfast / social network / 24 hours / birds / favourite / photography / computer / algorithm / platform / large eyes / beak / wildlife / cute

True / False

- a) The article says the most popular photos to put online are of breakfasts. T / F
- b) The article says some Instagram posts stay online for over 24 hours. T / F
- c) The research is from a university in Germany. T / F
- d) Researchers found the most 'instagrammable' bird to be the mouthfrog. T / F
- e) Researchers looked at over 30,000 photos of birds in their research. T / F
- f) Researchers used a special algorithm to find the 'best' bird. T / F
- g) The 'winning' bird has big eyes and a narrow beak. T / F
- h) A photographer said animals with large eyes are cute and cuddly. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| 1. seems | a. examined |
| 2. study | b. found |
| 3. uploaded | c. indicated |
| 4. tried | d. especially |
| 5. discovered | e. paper |
| 6. analysed | f. located |
| 7. popular | g. posted |
| 8. suggested | h. attempted |
| 9. positioned | i. well-liked |
| 10. particularly | j. appears |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think of birds?
- b) What are your favourite birds?
- c) Do you like taking photos of birds?
- d) What do you think of social media?
- e) What kinds of photos do you post on social media?
- f) What do you think of Instagram?
- g) What do you think of the frogmouth?
- h) What do you think of the national bird of your country?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. It seems we share photos online of | a. 30,000 bird photos |
| 2. Researchers have recently published | b. networking service |
| 3. a photo and video-sharing social | c. cuddly |
| 4. uploaded images are viewable | d. bird |
| 5. This is a nocturnal | e. wide beak |
| 6. The researchers analysed nearly | f. everything these days |
| 7. computer | g. sides of their head |
| 8. its large eyes and | h. a study |
| 9. most birds' eyes are positioned on the | i. algorithm |
| 10. cute and | j. for just 24 hours |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- Why do people like ornithology?
- Are animals with large eyes cuter than those with small eyes?
- What do you think of the name 'frogmouth'?
- What are the cutest and cuddliest animals and birds?
- Do you think birds are good pets?
- What birds don't you like?
- What questions would you like to ask an ornithologist?

Spelling

- recently bpehidlus a study
- a photo and video-sharing social rotewnikgn service
- which uploaded images are eaiwlevb
- rherrcsaese are from the university
- They viseedcodr that the frogmouth is our favourite
- This is a aclrnnuot bird
- nine popular bird ghohyprotpa Instagram accounts
- a special computer higltmrao
- which photos taedtcrta the most "likes"
- eyes are dnipotisoe on the sides
- Anything cute and ucyddl
- arupcrllyai anything with big eyes

Answers – Synonym Match

1. j	2. e	3. g	4. h	5. b
6. a	7. i	8. c	9. f	10. d

Role Play

Role A – Frogmouth

You think a frogmouth is the best bird. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their birds. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): eagle, hummingbird or kiwi.

Role B – Eagle

You think an eagle is the best bird. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their birds. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): frogmouth, hummingbird or kiwi.

Role C – Hummingbird

You think a hummingbird is the best bird. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their birds. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): eagle, frogmouth or kiwi.

Role D – Kiwi

You think a kiwi is the best bird. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their birds. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): eagle, hummingbird or frogmouth.

Speaking – Birds

Rank these with your partner. Put the best birds at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|---------------|-----------|
| • Frogmouth | • Seagull |
| • Eagle | • Parrot |
| • Pigeon | • Ostrich |
| • Hummingbird | • Kiwi |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	T	d	F	e	F	f	T	g	F	h	T
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.