

A serene sunset scene over a calm ocean. The sun is a large, glowing orb of orange and red, positioned centrally on the horizon. Its light reflects on the water's surface. Three birds are silhouetted against the sky, flying in a loose formation. On the left, a small, dark structure, possibly a lighthouse or marker, stands on the horizon. The sky transitions from a deep orange near the sun to a dark, almost black, at the top.

Coastal Birds

By Casey Landers

Phylum; Chordate / Class; Aves

- Animals in this rank are species with invertebrates, but what separates them from other taxonomical classes are five defining characteristics: a notochord, dorsal hollow nerve cord, thyroid, post tail and pharyngeal slits.



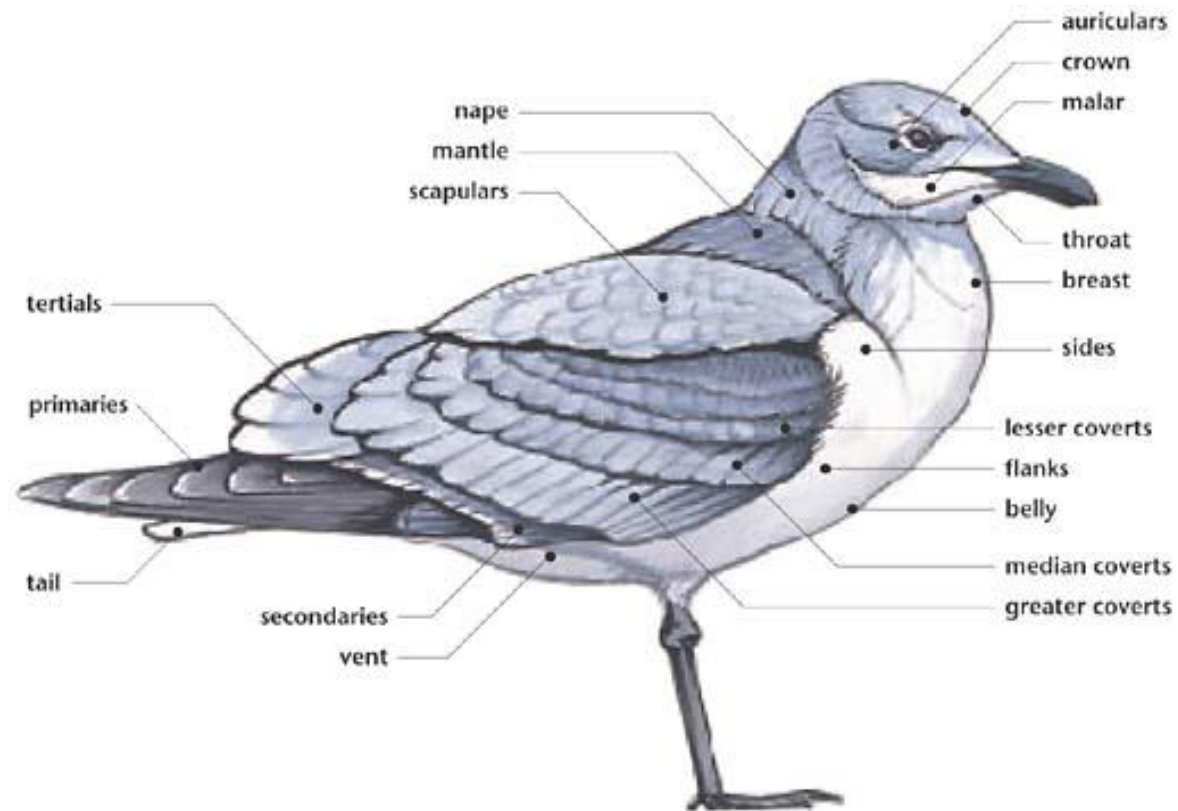
General Information

- Habitat: Coasts and beaches
- Reproduction: Most avians use songs or dances to attract mates, often relying on eye-catching plumage.
- Symmetry: bilateral symmetry, like as insects, fish, mammals and many crustaceans.
- Feeding: The most well-known feeding strategy is nosediving into the ocean and resurfacing with a fish, some birds like the sanderlings run along the retreating waves and prod the loose sand for clams and other small creatures.
- Predator/ Prey: The sociable pelican will often hunt cooperatively, which is why they are often seen in flocks of 5 up to 20, this way they can easily herd fish into shoals for easier and more rewarding dives.



Diagram

- Birds generally have the same internal structure.



Adaptations

- “brown, rust, black, and white plumage makes them less conspicuous to predators. Their bi-coloration, dark on the back and lighter on the belly, further camouflages them from predators.”
- “The long, pointed shape of a shorebird’s wing is designed for flying long distances at fast speeds.”
- “Many shorebirds, like the common Killdeer, use distraction displays to protect their nests and chicks from predators. One such display is the “broken wing act.” In this case, the shorebird parent, who is faster and less naïve when it comes to predator evasion, lures the predator away from its nest or young chicks by pretending to have a broken wing. “
- “Shorebirds have long legs for wading.”
- Source: https://migration.pwnet.org/pdf/Shorebird_Adaptations.pdf

Examples

- Killdeer: a type of plover, acquired their name from the loud chattering kill-deer wail they often use. Also known as the chattering plover or the noisy plover.
- Black headed gull: one of the most abundant occupants of Europe and northern Asia, also a recent invader of America. Essentially a better version of seagulls.
- Piping Plover: another type of plover that digs through the sand in the wake of receding waves. They feed on small clams and insects.





Human Impact

- Generally speaking, humans have a fairly negative impact on all life, including our own. Unfortunately, this includes costal avians.
- Overfishing and pollution are major threats to divers, while human foot traffic and littering keeps shorebirds from the beaches. While efforts are being made to preserve these species, it'll be a long way to go until they're completely safe from the threats humans pose.



Final Analysis

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