

FLAMINGO



LAPBOOK

CLASSIFICATION

A. Class—Aves (birds).

B. Order—Ciconiiformes (also listed as Order Phoenicopteriformes).

Characteristics of this order have long legs and long necks. Order Ciconiiformes also includes storks, herons, and ibises.

C. Family—Phoenicopteridae.

Flamingos are the only members of the family Phoenicopteridae. Stand out characteristics include long legs; a long, curved neck; and a gooselike voice.

D. Genus, species. Write down your favorite or all 5 if you like

There are five species of flamingos:

1. *Phoenicopus ruber* includes the Caribbean flamingo and the greater flamingo
2. *Phoenicopus chilensis*, the Chilean flamingo
3. *Phoenicopus minor*, the lesser flamingo
4. *Phoenicoparrus jamesi*, the James' flamingo
5. *Phoenicoparrus andinus*, the Andean flamingo

DISTRIBUTION AND HABITAT

All flamingos are found in tropical and subtropical areas.

There are 3 main types of habitats for flamingos:

*mangrove swamps

These are found along tropical seacoasts on both sides of the equator. They are named for the Mangrove trees that grow there.

* tidal flats

Sandy or mud areas found in many estuarine areas (an arm of the sea at the lower end of a river) which usually lack plant life.

*seashores

MIGRATION

Flamingos don't usually migrate. If they do, it is due to changes in climate (water freezes) or drought. If they do migrate, they do so at night. They will go back to their native colony to breed.

FLIGHT

You don't always see them flying, but flamingos can fly. To take off, a flamingo runs several steps, begins flapping its wings, and lifts into the air. When landing, the procedure is reversed-- the bird touches down and then runs several paces. A flamingo flies with its head and neck stretched out in front and its legs trailing behind. They can fly around 31-37 mph.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Size

The greater flamingo is the tallest flamingo, standing 43–51 inches and weighing up to 7.7 lb. The lesser flamingo is the smallest flamingo, standing 31.5 in. and weighing 5.5 lb.

The wingspan of flamingos ranges from 37–39 in. for the lesser flamingo to 55–65 in. for the greater flamingo.

There are 12 principal flight feathers located on each wing. These black feathers are visible when the wings are extended. You could go outside and measure this with chalk on your sidewalk or driveway.

Feathers

There are 12 principal flight feathers located on each wing. These black feathers are visible when the wings are extended.

They have 12 to 16 tail feathers. Contour feathers cover all of the body except the bill and scaled parts of the legs and feet. They protect the skin and help with flight.

Flamingos molt (shed and replace) their wing and body feathers at irregular intervals ranging from twice a year to once every two years. The molt is related to the breeding cycle. Molted feathers lose their color.

Coloration (and **DIET**)

Feather color varies with species, ranging from pale pink to crimson.

Why are flamingos pink?

Feathers are pink due to the pigments found in a flamingo's food. Male and female flamingo coloration is the same. Newly-hatched chicks are gray or white. A flamingo's diet consists of diatoms (a type of algae), seeds, blue-green algae, crustaceans (pink!), and mollusks they filter out of the water.

How they eat:

1. A flamingo lowers its head into the water, upside-down.
2. It moves its head from side to side, collecting the food/water mixture.
3. The spiny, piston-like tongue pumps the water mixture past the tooth-like ridges on the outside of the beak and the lamellae, or finger-like projections, inside the beak.
4. The lamellae act as strainers to remove the food particles from the water.

Legs

The legs of adult flamingos are longer than the flamingo's body, measuring between 31.5–49 in. Because they have long legs, they can wade into much deeper water than most other birds. Their webbed feet support them in mud. The webbed feet also help with swimming and assist in stirring up food.

Why do flamingos stand on one leg?

Flamingos often stand on one leg. Curling a leg under the body keeps the foot warm and conserves body heat. Flamingos stand on one leg in both cool and warm environments.

Neck

The neck is very long. A flamingo has 19 neck bones allowing maximum movement and twisting. This is especially helpful when preening.

Bill

An adult flamingo's bill is black, pinkish, or cream-colored. The bill is used for filter feeding. Both the upper and lower jaws contain two rows of a bristled, comb-like or hair-like structure called lamellae. When the jaws come together, the lamellae mesh. The tongue is large and fleshy. It is covered with bristle-like projections that help filter water and food particles through the lamellae.

FLAMINGO SENSES

Hearing

Flamingos have good hearing. Vocalizations are important and may be used to keep flocks together and for parent-chick recognition. A chick can recognize its mother and the mother will only feed her chick.

Eyesight

They are very social birds and they rely on visual cues to follow each other's behavior (they also use vocal sounds for this). They see in color.

Tactile (touch)

Tactile organs on the tongue can be used to ensure that only food is ingested.

Taste

The sense of taste is poorly developed in birds.

Smell

Flamingos have little or no sense of smell.

SOCIAL BEHAVIOR

Flamingos are very social birds.

Here are some of their social behaviors that the flock will do together (at the same time!):

"Head-flag" involves stretching the neck and head up as high as possible, with the bill pointing upwards, and then rhythmically turning the head from one side to the other.

"Wing-salute" is performed by spreading the wings for a few seconds, showing their striking contrasted colors, while the tail is cocked and neck outstretched.

In the "inverted wing-salute", the flamingo angles its head down, cocks its tail, and orients its body so that the tail is higher than the chest. The wings are then held partially open above the back with the black flight feathers pointing up and the bend in the wing pointing down.

"Twist-preen" entails the bird twisting its neck back and appearing to preen quickly, with its bill behind a partly open wing.

"Wing-leg stretch" involves the leg and wing on the same side stretched out and to the rear.

"Marching" is performed by a large group of flamingos that cluster together, stand tall, and then move in quick, synchronized steps in first one direction and then another.

NESTING

Often a flamingo will "pair bond" and have only one partner, but they have been seen to have multiple mating partners.

Flamingos build nest mounds made of mud, small stones, straw, and feathers. The mounds protect against the extreme heat and flooding that occurs at ground level. The bird will continue to build the nest during incubation by grabbing what is near them with their bill. Once an egg is laid (usually only one at a time) both the male and female will take turns sitting on the egg. If it falls off the mound, they will not pick it up. The incubation time is from 27-31 days.

HATCHING

Hatching takes between 24 and 36 hours. The chick will call frequently as it breaks out of the shell. The chick breaks through the shell using a growth on its bill called an "egg tooth." The egg tooth is not actually a tooth and falls off soon after the chick hatches. The proud parents will anxiously look around and call back to the chick. While it is still hatching, they will start cleaning him off. Newly-hatched chicks have gray or white down feathers, a straight red bill, and plump, swollen red or pink legs.

The red bill and legs turn black in seven to ten days. After hatching, a flamingo chick can only push its wings or lift its head.

CARE OF YOUNG

Parents are able to recognize their own chick by sight and vocalizations. They will not feed chicks that don't belong to them. The chick will leave the nest after four to seven days, when it is strong enough to stand and walk. Parents keep a close, protective watch on the chick as it explores its surroundings. Chicks gather in large groups called *creches* (French for "crib"). Parents are able to locate their own chicks in the creche at feeding time. Adults feed their chicks a secretion of the upper digestive tract referred to as "milk." "Milk" secretion is caused by the hormone prolactin, which both the male and female flamingo produce. This "milk" is similar to mammal milk. It is red in color. Chicks store this pigment in the liver (to be deposited in their adult feathers when they grow).

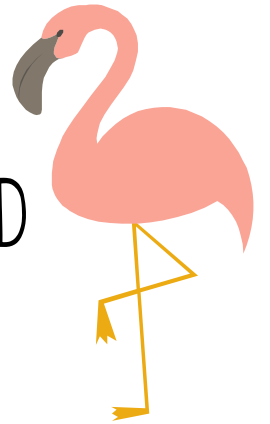
CHICK DEVELOPMENT

Flamingo chicks are able to swim before they are old enough to leave the nest for good. Chicks begin to grow their flight feathers and are able to feed themselves after 11 weeks. Chicks lose their gray or white color gradually over a two or three year period.



WHY IS a FLAMINGO PINK?

WHY DOES a
FLAMINGO STAND
ON ONE LEG?



HOW MANY
BONES are IN
a FLAMINGO'S
NECK?

Cut books out on solid lines. Fold in half on dotted lines.

Cut out book as one piece. Cut on dotted lines. Fold left side under. Fold right side so that it is the cover of your book.

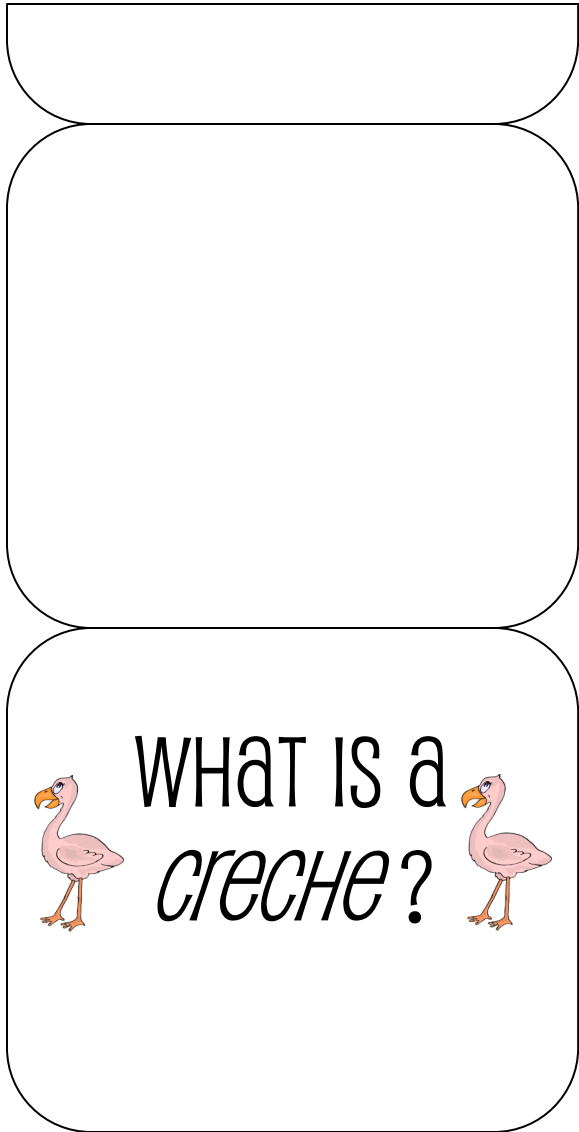
CLaSS		FLaMINGO
order		CLaSSIFICATION
FaMILY		
GENUS		

Cut book out. Fold on lines (matchbook style).

a FLAMINGO'S BEAK IS...

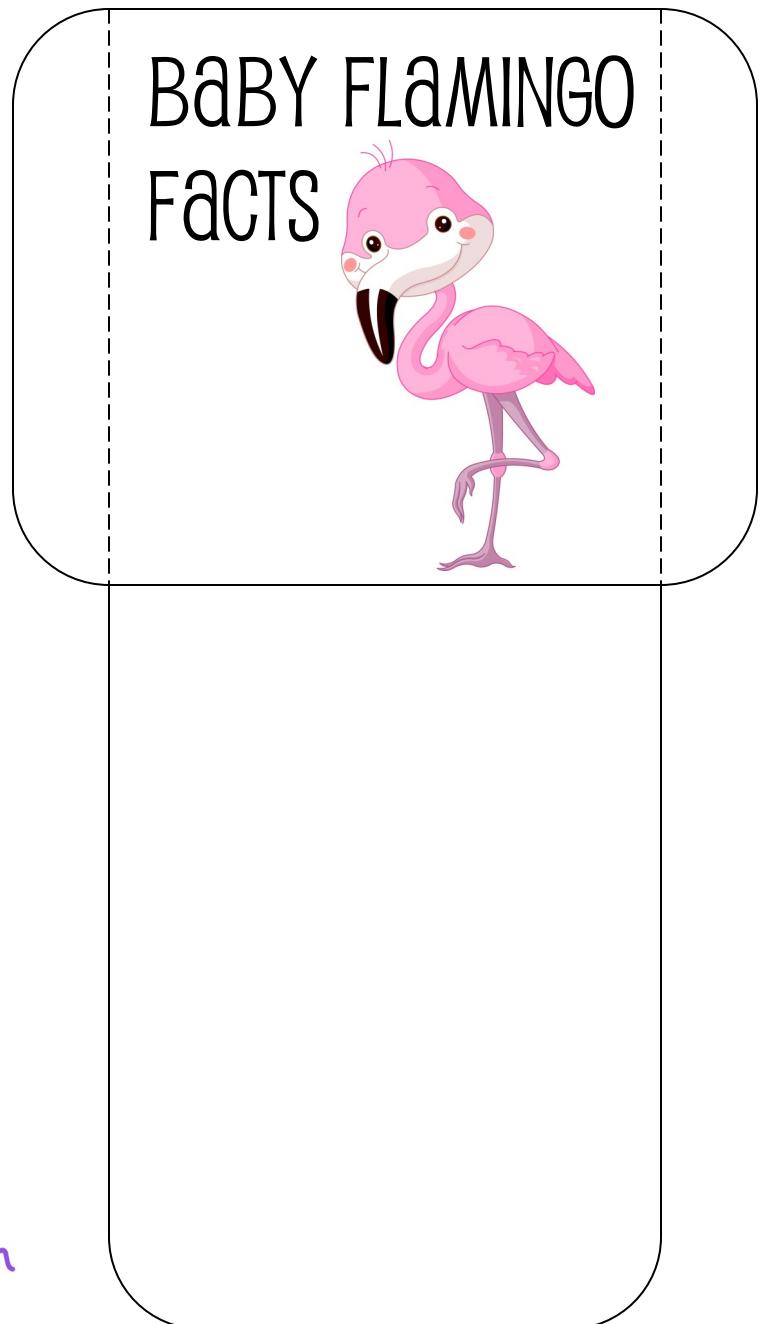










Cut book out. Fold matchbook style.



Cut pocket out. Fold back flap up and wrap side flaps around the back and glue down.

Glue the back of your pocket into your lapbook.



 _____ _____ _____	 _____ _____ _____	 _____ _____ _____	 _____ _____ _____
 _____ _____ _____	 _____ _____ _____	 _____ _____ _____	 _____ _____ _____

You are looking at the inside of the book. Cut out as one piece. Fold left side in. Fold right side in. Fold top down. Paste cover piece on top.

STEP 1



HOW a FLAMINGO eats

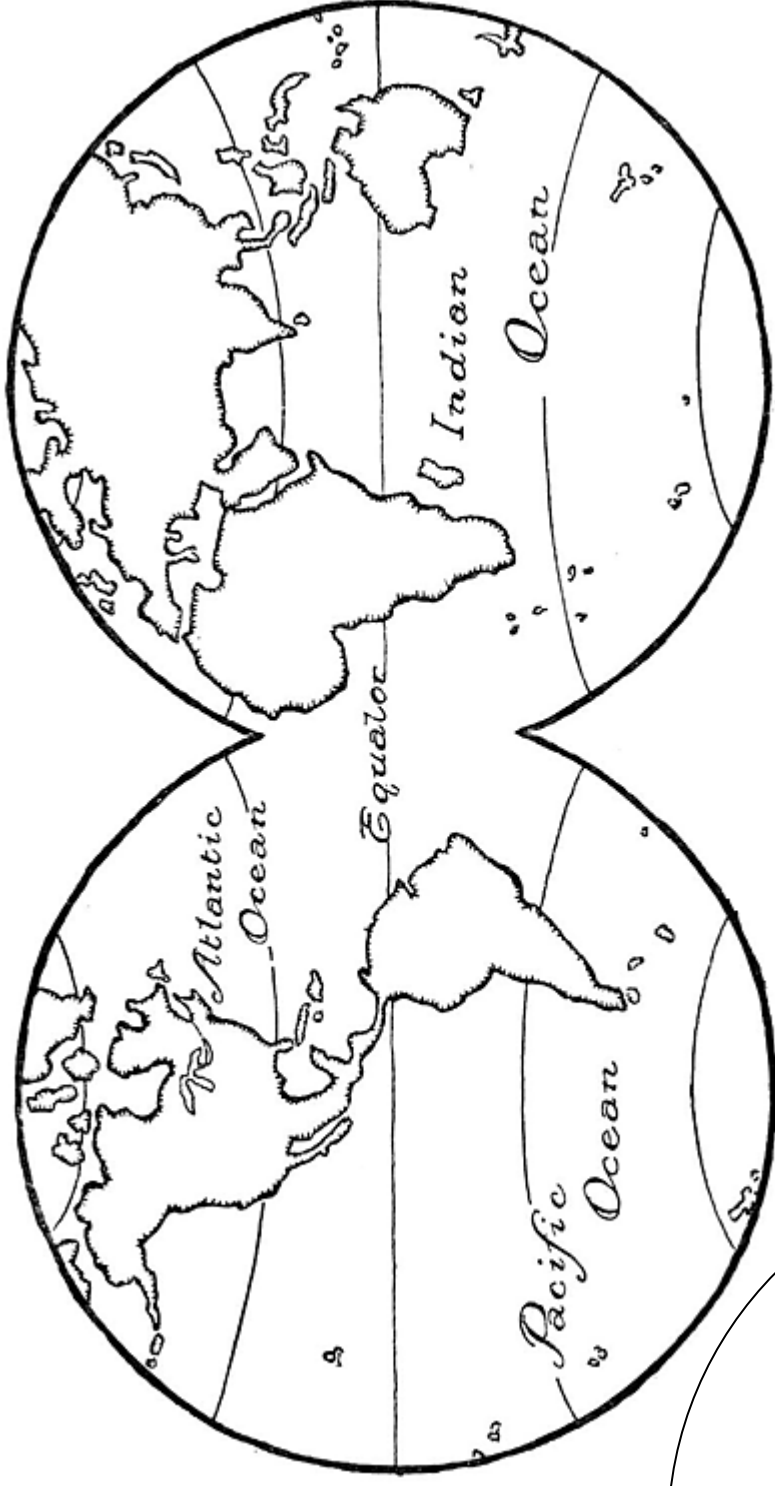
STEP 2

STEP 3

STEP 4

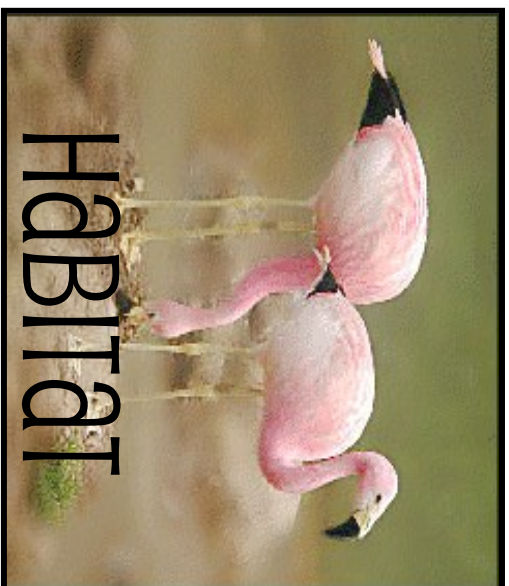
WHERE IN THE WORLD CAN YOU FIND FLAMINGOS?

Color in the places with pink!
Cut cover out and paste on outside fold.



Cut out as one piece. Fold left side in.
Fold right side in. Fold top down.

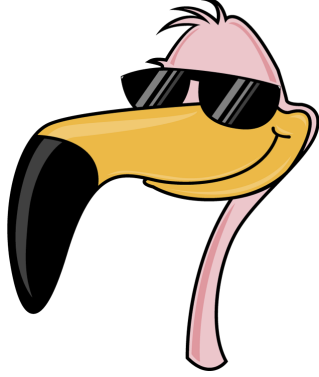
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Cut out rectangles. Stack together (smallest to largest) with cover on top and staple.

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FLAMINGO senses



Taste

SIGHT

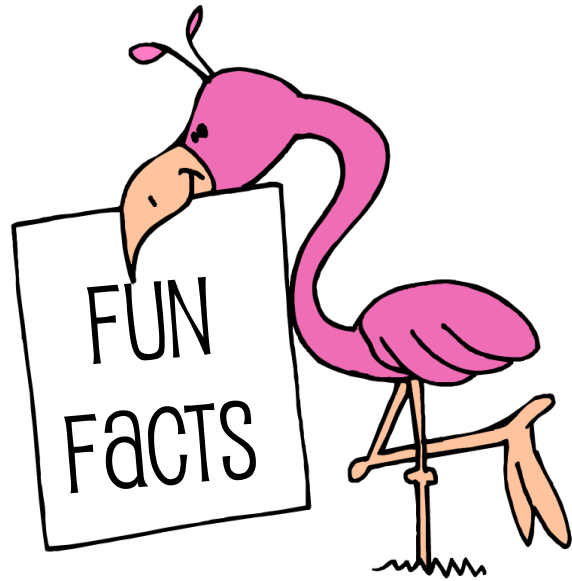
SMELL

TOUCH

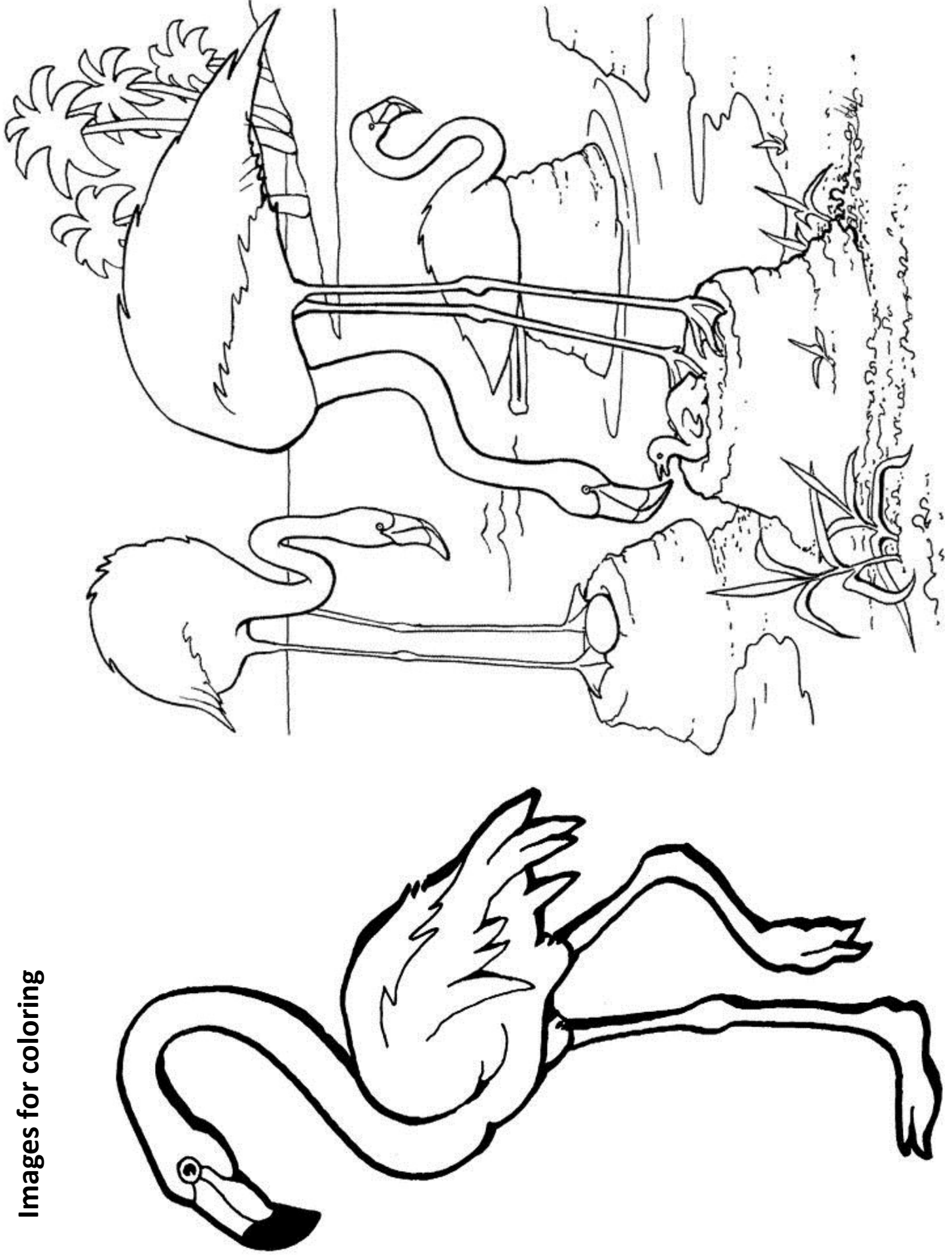
HEARING

Cut out top portion as one piece. Cut out long rectangle with an exacto knife. Cut out bottom portion as one piece. Cut on orange lines. Roll up bottom portion and stick them through the rectangle on the top portion. Video to help- http://www.liveandlearnpress.com/movies/000_0441.mov


FLAMINGO



Images for coloring



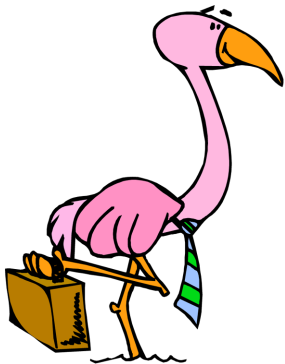
Cut on solid lines. Fold on dotted.

<p>How many principal flight feathers does a flamingo have?</p>	<p>How many tail feathers can a flamingo have?</p>	<p>When a flamingo molts, does it lose its pink color?</p>
<p>FLAMINGO FEATHER FACTS</p>		

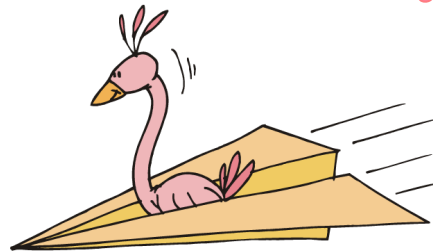
Directions: Cut books out. Fold matchbook style.

MIGRATION

DO THEY FLY?



FLAMINGOS...



Cut out book as one piece. Fold left side in. Fold right side in. Open book. Cut on dotted line to form two flaps. Refold book.

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Greater
FLAMINGO

Lesser
FLAMINGO

FLAMINGO
WINGSPAN



Cut book out. Fold on lines (matchbook style)

SOCIAL BEHAVIOR

