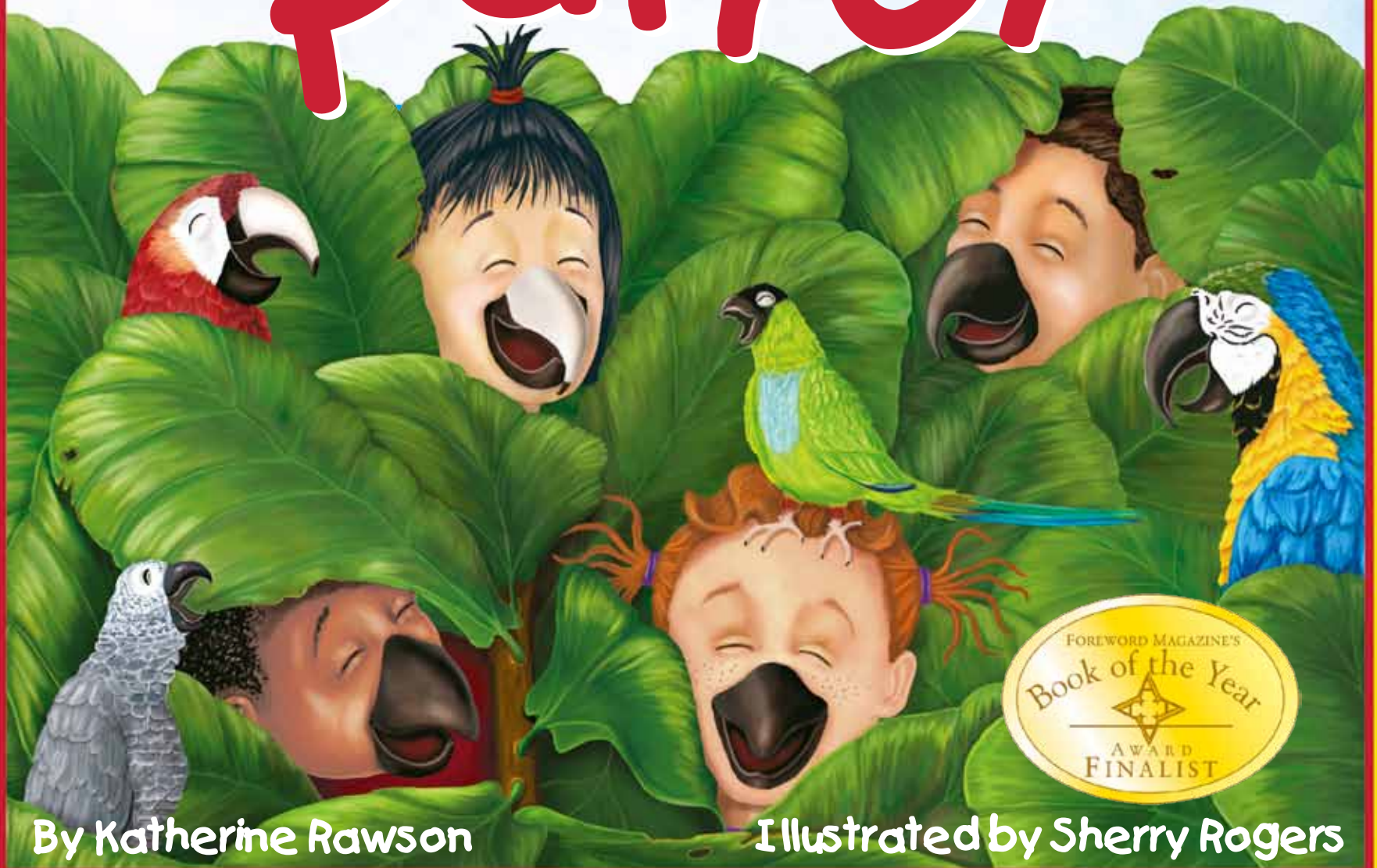


# If You Were a parrot



By Katherine Rawson

Illustrated by Sherry Rogers

# If You Were a Parrot

Just what does a pet parrot do all day? Join the fun as children imagine what life would be like as a pet parrot. Together parrots and children climb all around the house, over furniture and up the curtains with four-toed parrot feet, then chew wooden spoons, popsicles, and even a telephone directory with their hooked parrot beaks. The parrot fun continues with eating delicious vegetables like broccoli, squawking, talking, bathing, and finally snuggling down for the night.

It's so much more than a picture book . . . this book is specifically designed to be both a fun-to-read story and a launch pad for discussions and learning. Whether read at home or in a classroom, we encourage adults to do the activities with the young children in their lives. Free online resources and support at [www.ArbordalePublishing.com](http://www.ArbordalePublishing.com) include:

- For Creative Minds as seen in the book (in English & Spanish):
  - What is a Bird?
  - Parrot Adaptations
  - Where in the World?
  - Make-a-Beak Craft
  - Are You Ready for a Pet Parrot?
- Teaching Activities (to do at home or school):
  - Reading Questions
  - Language Arts
  - Science
  - Math
  - Geography
  - Coloring Pages
- Interactive Quizzes: Reading Comprehension, For Creative Minds, and Math Word Problems
- English and Spanish Audiobooks
- Related Websites
- Aligned to State Standards (searchable database)
- Accelerated Reader and Reading Counts! Quizzes
- Lexile and Fountas & Pinnell Reading Levels

eBooks with Auto-Flip, Auto-Read, and selectable English and Spanish text and audio available for purchase online.

Thanks to educators and scientists at SeaWorld Orlando and the National Aviary for verifying the accuracy of the information in this book as well as the For Creative Minds educational section.



**Katherine Rawson** is a parrot lover, writer, and teacher. She was inspired to write *If You Were a Parrot* while watching her pet parrot Shadow, a small green parrot with a big personality. When Katherine isn't playing with parrots, reading about them, or writing about them, she works as a freelance writer. She worked for many years as a teacher of English as a second Language, teaching students of all ages from kindergarten through college. After many years of city living, Katherine and Shadow have recently returned to life in Vermont, where they enjoy taking walks through the woods and watching the "outside" birds.

**Sherry Rogers** spent twelve years as a corporate graphic designer and artist before "leaving it all behind" for the freelance world. In addition to illustrating *If You Were a Parrot*, Sherry has illustrated *Paws, Claws, Hands & Feet*, *Moose and Maggie*, *Sort It Out!*, *Kersplatypus*, and *Burro's Tortillas*. for Arbordale and *Counting Little Geckos*. Sherry, her husband, and two children live in Northern California.



Katherine Rawson



Sherry Rogers

# If You Were a Parrot

By Katherine Rawson  
Illustrated by Sherry Rogers





In memory of Richard—KR  
To my brother Bill, who made me laugh more than anyone I have ever known—SR  
Thanks to educators and scientists at SeaWorld and the National Aviary for verifying the accuracy of the “For Creative Minds” section.

Publisher’s Cataloging-In-Publication Data  
Rawson, Katherine.  
If you were a parrot / by Katherine Rawson ; illustrated by Sherry Rogers.  
1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 23 x 27 cm.  
Summary: Just what does a parrot do all day? Children imagine what life would be like as a pet parrot. Includes “For Creative Minds” section with parrot fun facts, tips for taking care of a pet parrot and a make-a-beak craft.

ISBN: 978-0-976494-39-3 (Hardcover)  
ISBN: 978-1-607181-18-7 (paperback)  
ISBN: 978-1-607180-11-1 (English eBook)  
ISBN: 978-1-934359-46-4 (Spanish eBook)

Also available as eBooks featuring auto-flip, auto-read, 3D-page-curling, and selectable English and Spanish text and audio.

Interest level: 004-008 Grade level: P-3  
Lexile Level: 640 Lexile Code: AD  
1. Parrots--Juvenile literature. 2. Parrots. I. Rogers, Sherry. II. Title.  
SF473.P3 R39 2006  
636.6/86/5 2005931004

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Arbordale Publishing  
formerly Sylvan Dell Publishing  
Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464  
www.ArbordalePublishing.com

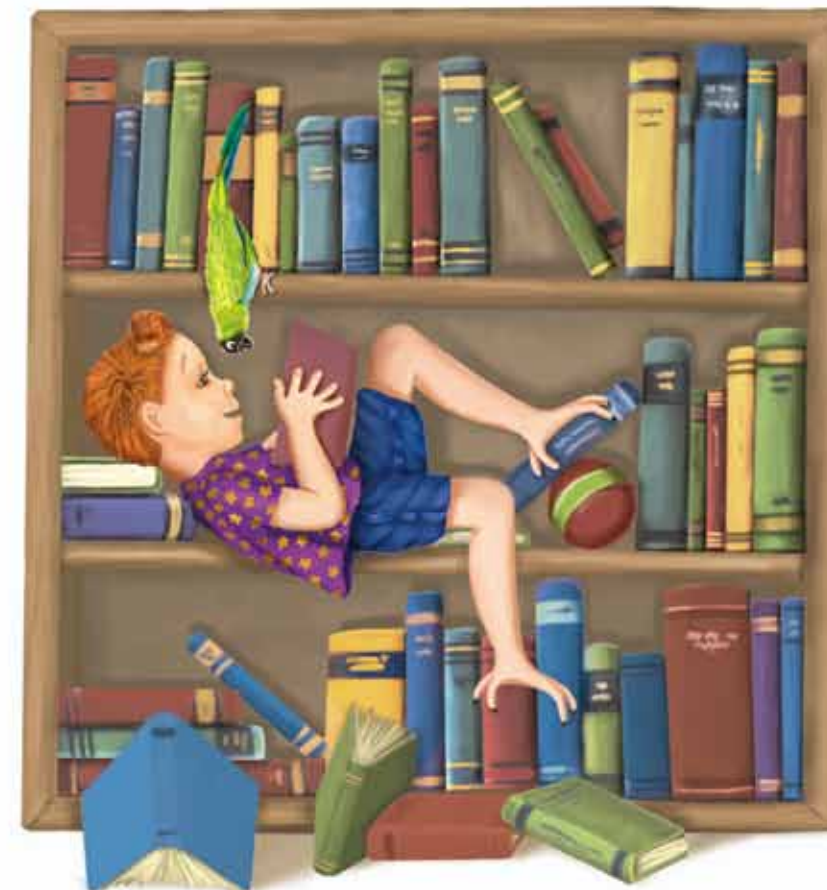
If you were a p̄arrot, you would have two feet, just like you do now, but . . . you would only have fOur tOES on each foot, and two of them would point bACKwards.





With feet like these,  
you could climb  
everywhere . . . Up the  
curtains,

all around  
the bookshelf,

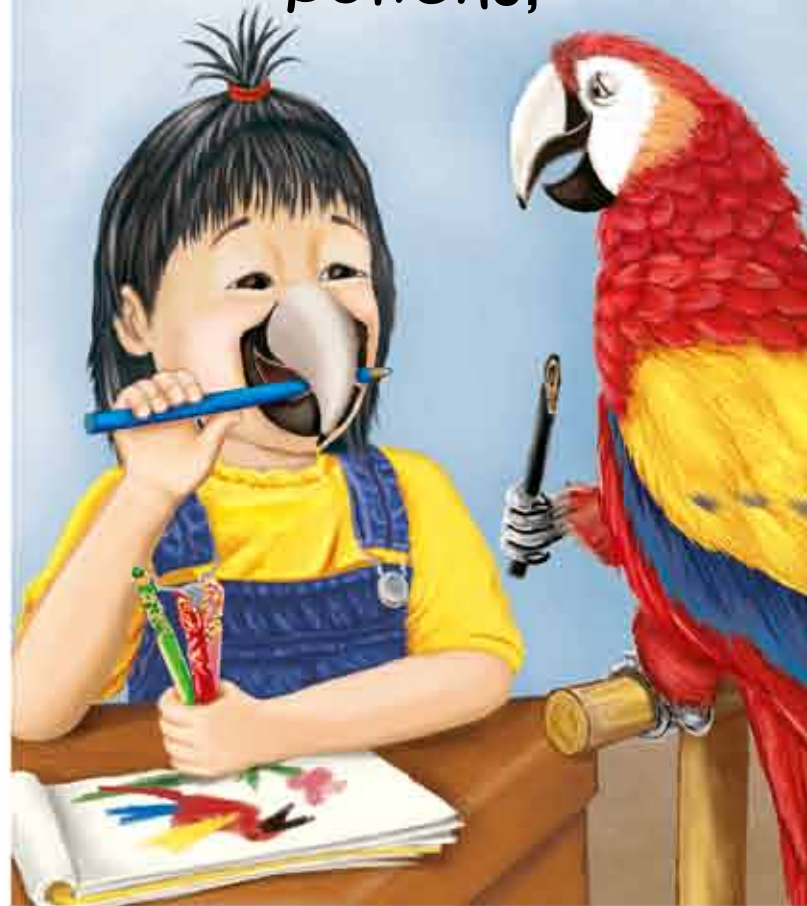


in and out  
of boxes,

even to the top of a potted fig tree.



If you were a parrOt,  
you would have a sharp,  
hooked beak. To keep  
your beak in shape, you  
would have to chew  
things . . .  
pencils,



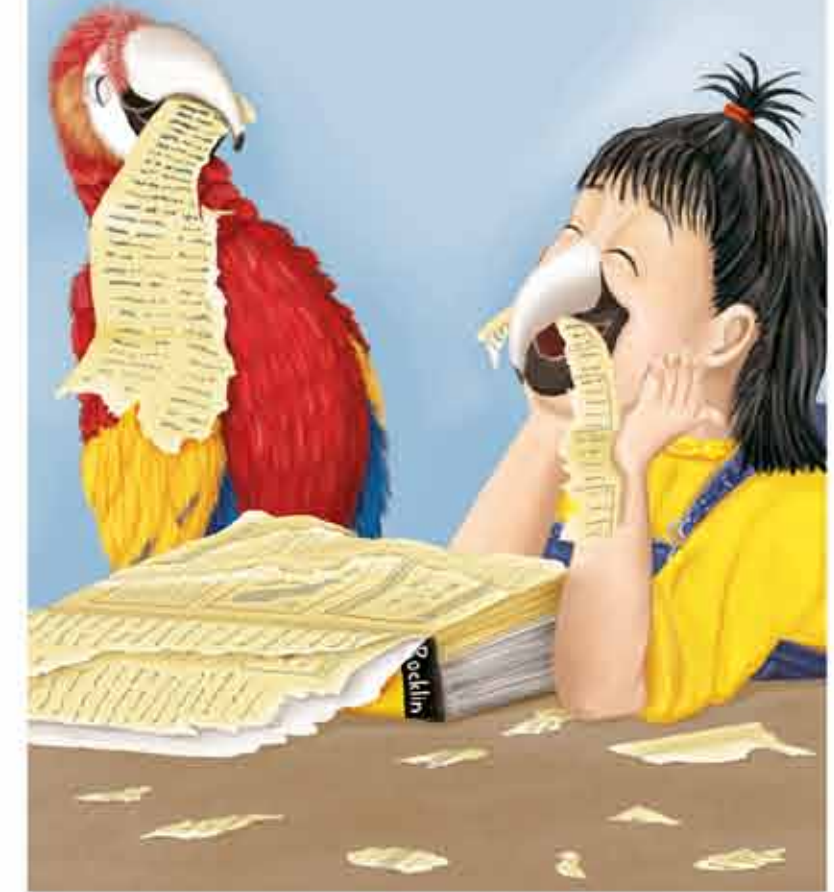
wooden spoons,



the legs of chairs,



and maybe even the entire  
telephone directory.



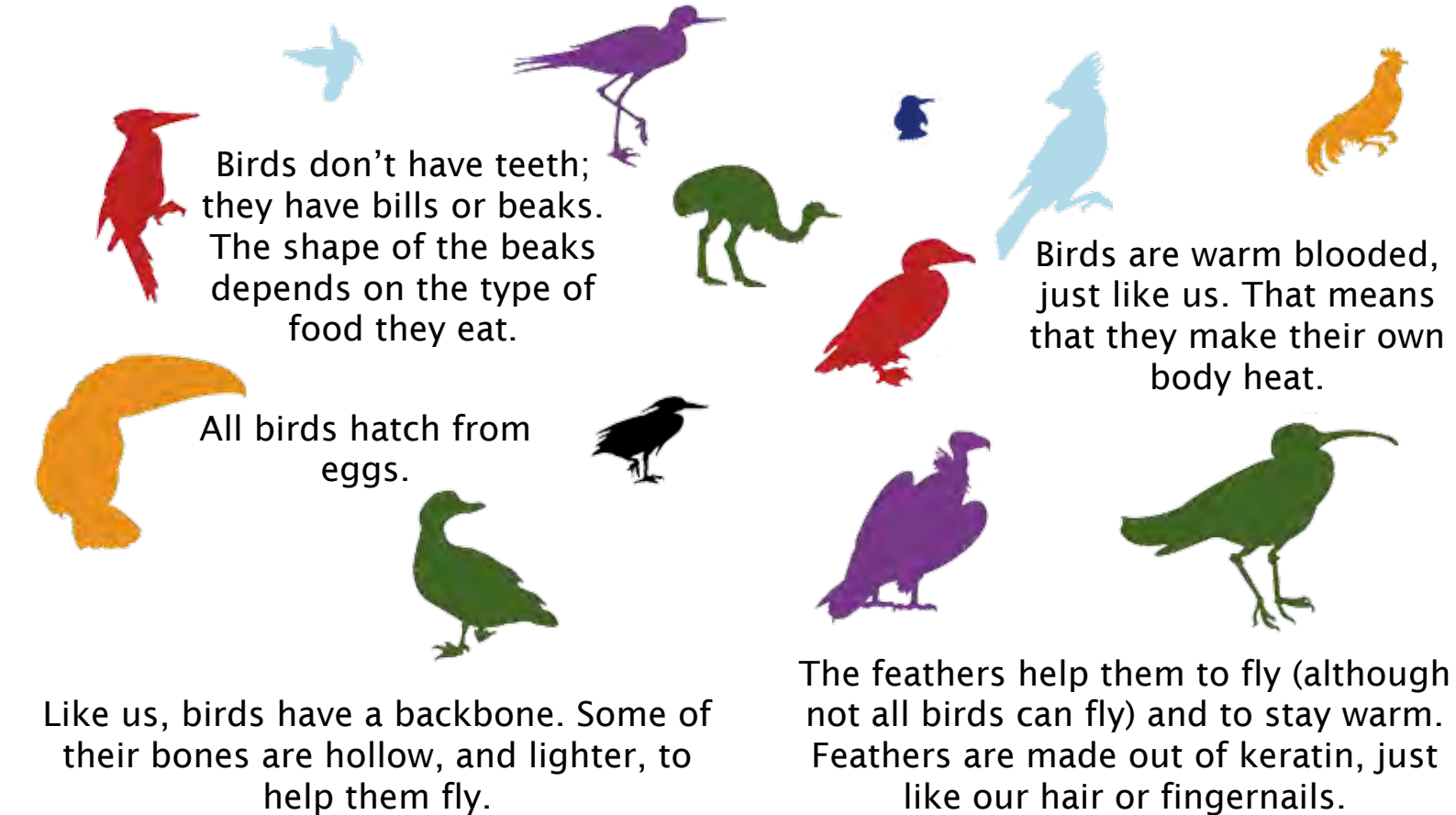
## For Creative Minds

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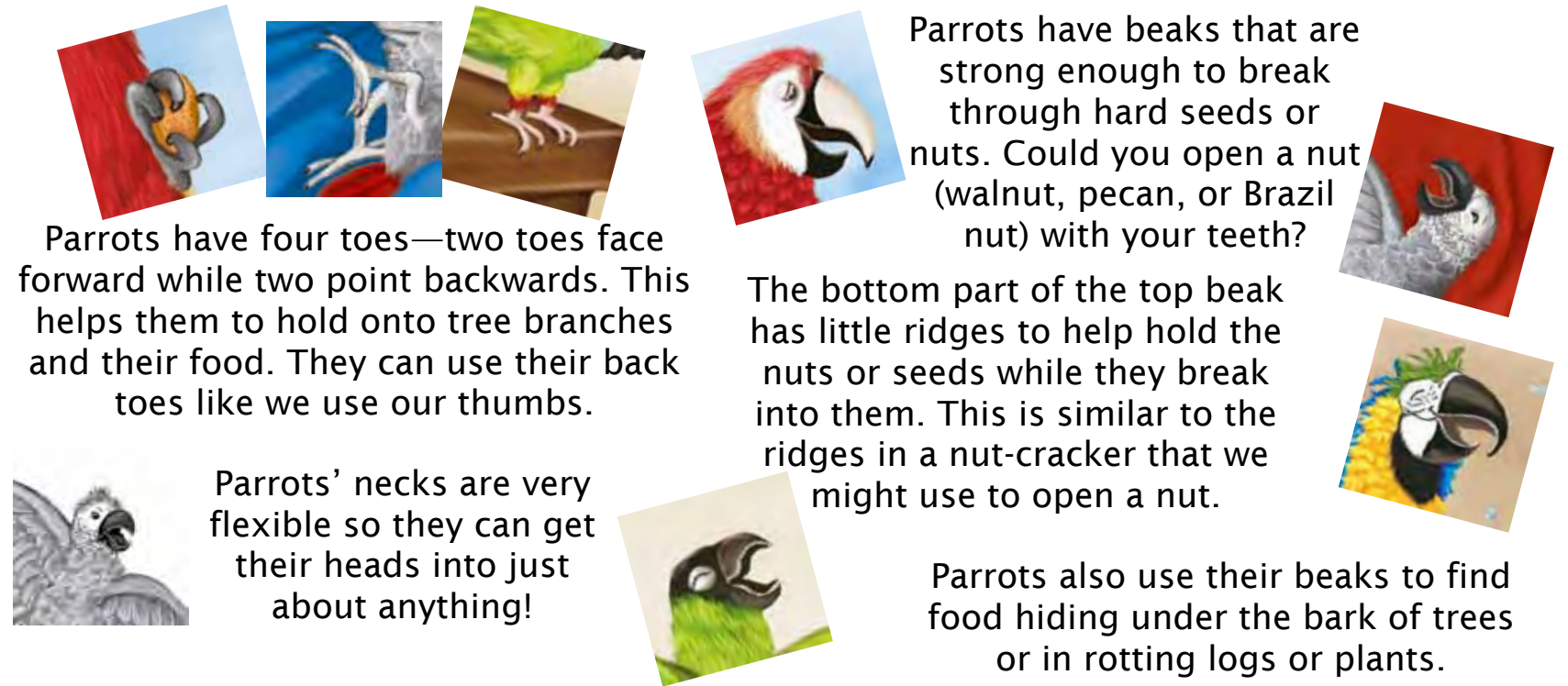
### What is a Bird?

Just like you might sort candy or cereal by color or shape, plants and animals can be sorted or classified into groups. Parrots are animals in the "Aves" class, which means they are birds.

Birds come in all different shapes and sizes but all birds have feathers. In fact, they are the only animals that have feathers.



### Parrot Adaptations



### Where in the World?

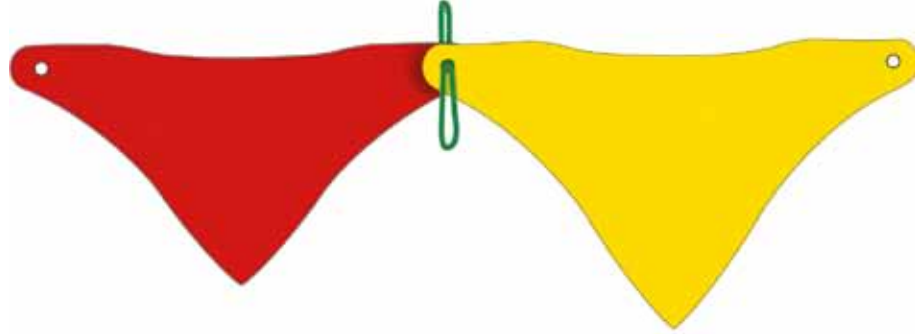


- There are over 300 different types, or species, of parrots. Four of the different types of parrots are shown in this book. See if you can find where these parrots come from on the map.
- Nanday conures (green) are from South America, south of the Amazon region.
  - Scarlet Macaws and Blue and Gold Macaws are both from Central and South American rainforests.
  - African Grey Parrots are from equatorial Africa.

## Make-a-Beak Craft

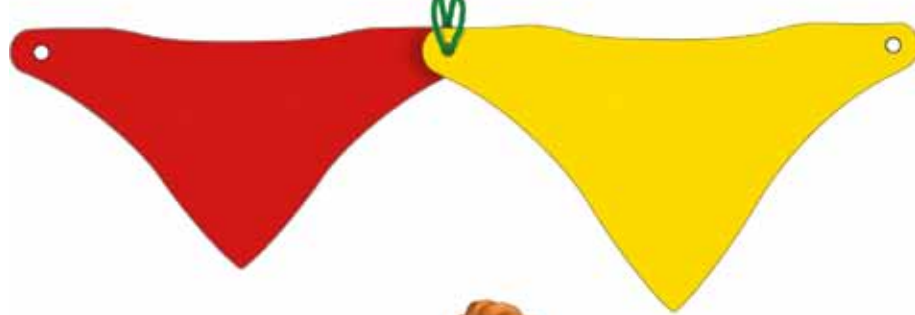
Bottom Beak

Top Beak



Bottom Beak

Top Beak



### You will need:

- Scissors (with adult supervision if necessary)
- Construction or heavyweight paper
- 2 thin rubber bands (2½ inches)
- Optional: a paper punch

### Directions:

Copy or trace the two beak shapes on the next page onto heavy weight paper and cut them out with the scissors.

Punch holes where shown.

Line up the two pieces as shown at top left. Put a rubber band in the hole as shown.

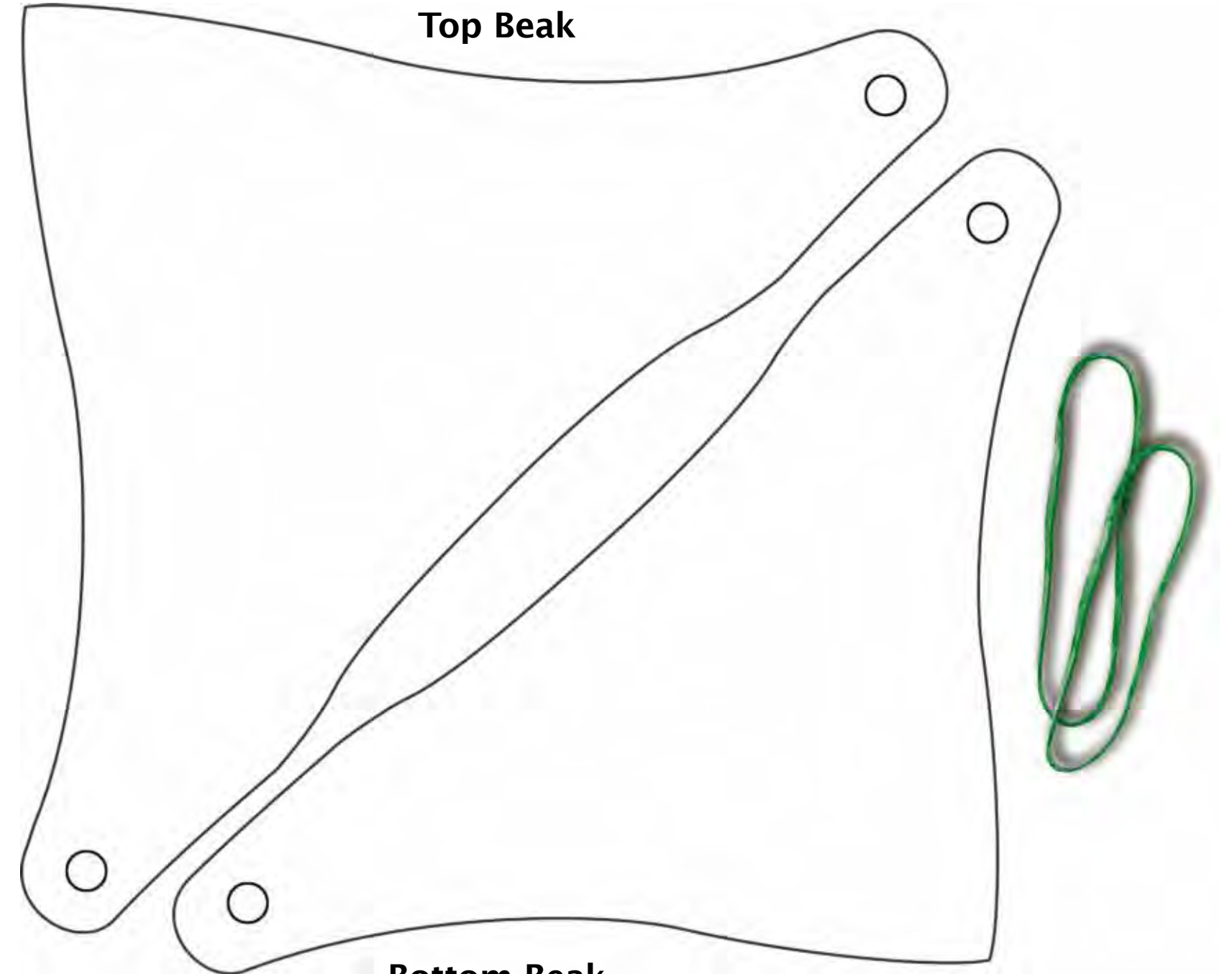
Slip one end of the rubber band through the other end. Pull to tighten but not so tight as to bend the paper.

Match the two remaining holes together and repeat the process.

Wrap the rubber bands around each ear.

Now start squawking and flapping those wings!

Top Beak



Bottom Beak





## Are you ready for a pet parrot?

Parrots make wonderful pets, but they are not for everyone. If you would like to share your home with a pet parrot, make sure you are ready to give it everything it needs. And keep in mind that this may be a lifetime commitment, as some parrots grow to be older than humans! Most parrots are intelligent and affectionate and some like to be with people, but they can be very noisy and very demanding. Most of all they need your love and dedication to be healthy and happy. Make sure you get your parrot from a bird breeder with a good reputation. Often parrots are smuggled in from the wild and sold as pets. That hurts wild parrot populations and has made some species endangered. You could also get a pet parrot from one of the many parrot rescue and adoption agencies. There are lots of pet parrots that need good homes.

### Cleanliness

Parrots love to make a mess. They throw their food around while they eat. Often the food lands outside the cage. This is natural behavior for a parrot, but it means extra cleaning work for you.

### A Cage

Your parrot needs a nice cage, even though it won't want to spend all its time there. The parrot's cage is its place to rest, eat, sleep, and feel safe. The cage needs to be big enough for the parrot to open its wings, and tall enough for the parrot to climb around. It needs to be sturdy enough to resist the parrot's chewing, (parrots chew everything). And, the bars on the cage need to be close enough together so a parrot's head can't get stuck in them.

### Food

Most parrots love to eat seeds, but they can't live on seeds alone. They need a variety of food, especially fresh fruit and vegetables. Wash these carefully before you feed them to your pet. Pellets are also important because they offer balanced nutrition for the bird. You can buy them at a pet store. Never feed your parrot chocolate, tomato, or avocado.

### Noise

Parrots have loud voices, and they love to use them. It is natural behavior for them. They need to have owners (and neighbors) who don't mind hearing a bit of squawking everyday.

### Toys

Parrots love to play and chew. You can buy parrot toys at the pet store. You can also find things around your house that your parrot will like to play with. Scraps of paper, phone books, magazines, untreated wood blocks, empty paper towel rolls, and wooden spoons are good examples. Make sure these things are clean and don't contain any plastic, toxic paint or other harmful material.

### Veterinarians

There are avian veterinarians that are specially trained to care for birds. Ask your vet if he/she is so trained or look in the yellow pages or on the internet to find one. As with any type of pet, it is important to take your parrot to a vet on a regular basis for checkups.

### Time

Parrots don't like being alone, so your parrot will want to spend a lot of time with you.

If you enjoy this book,  
look for other Arbordale books that may also be of interest:



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