

THE BIRD OF THE THANKSGIVING DINNER

THANKSGIVING and roast turkey are synonyms in the United States. From the first Thanksgiving Day of the Pilgrims in the Massachusetts Colony, in 1621, when visiting Indians furnished wild turkeys for the feast, no Thanksgiving dinner in the United States is considered to be complete unless there is roast turkey.

The turkey is the only American representative of the Old World pheasant.

The tail is broad and round, with 14 to 18 blunt tipped feathers. These the male bird spreads fanwise (as shown in the illustration) and raises above his back in courting days.



Turkey-Gobblers

The dark plumage has metallic green, copper, and bronze reflections. The male bird has a special beardlike growth of black bristles hanging from the center of the upper breast. The call note, *turk, turk, turk*, doubtless gave the birds their name. The call of the turkey cock is *gobble, gobble*, and this has caused the bird to be known as the "turkey-gobbler."

The turkey-hen is wild and secretive. She prefers to live in a wild place. She hides her nest, even from the cock,

as he has a habit of breaking eggs. The hen usually lays about 12 eggs a year, and unless misfortune overtakes her first brood of young, she raises only one brood a year.

Turkeys are cared for in much the same way as other fowls, except that they are more delicate. The young in particular must be watched, because they are delicate. It is possible, though, to

raise turkeys in the Philippines, and a few are being raised in various parts of the islands.

Wild turkeys were once very plentiful all over temperate North America and Cen-

tral America. Now wild turkeys are very rare, but the domesticated turkey, the descendant of the wild species, is common in poultry yards both in America and in Europe, where it was brought from the New World early in the 16th century.

The American bronze turkey, the largest of the domestic birds, is from the stock of the Mexican wild turkey. At times it attains a weight of 40 pounds or more.

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BIRD INFORMATION

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makes the foot convenient for walking, as well as for swimming.

Birds are studied all over the world. Their cheerful songs, bright colors, and many pleasing ways are all very attractive. Birds are also very valuable because they destroy many injurious insects.

The study of the distribution of bird shows some are found all over the world and others in two or more different regions, but most species of birds are found in only one geographic region.

When we study the birds of the East Indian Islands (of which the Philippines are a part), we discover some very strange facts about the distribution of birds. A part of the East Indian Islands lies in the Australian region and a part in the Indian region; the line between the two is very sharp. Thus the islands of Bali and Lombok (in the Malay Archipelago just east of Java), though but 20 miles apart, differ as greatly in their animal life as do Africa and South America. This indicates that the two islands were separated ages ago, and the deep strait between them is the dividing line between Asia and what was once the

BIRD OF THANKSGIVING

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REVIEW

1. Where did the early colonists of America find the first turkeys?
2. Describe the turkey.
3. Tell of the habits of the turkey-hen.
4. Tell of the care of young turkeys.
5. What turkeys were the ancestors of the present domestic turkey?
6. Are any turkeys grown in the Philippines?

Australian continent. And so we find a difference in the birds of the two divisions.

There are today between 13,000 and 14,000 species of birds found in the world. These are classified and grouped, just as the books in a library are classified and placed on shelves according to their contents. Just as in the library the books are not arranged according to their size or the colors of their covers, so with birds—their classification is made according to the structure rather than upon similarity in appearance.

REVIEW

1. What is an invertebrate?
2. Is a bird an invertebrate?
3. Millions of years ago

THE PILGRIMS

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The Young Citizen, and then answer the following:

11. Did the early colonists have sufficient food? Why not?

12. What happened to many of the colonists?

13. What kind of weather did the colonists experience?

14. To whom did the colonists go for food?

15. Did they receive food from the Indians? Why not?

16. Where had the colonists sent for food?

17. Did the food ship finally return?

18. Do you think these colonists were brave?

19. Did they develop into a great nation?

20. What nation did they become?

21. Do you think that settlement has influenced the Philippines in any way? How?

22. Read again all the Thanksgiving material in this issue of *The Young Citizen*, and then answer all of these questions. Your teacher will help you with any which present difficulty.

what animals were the ancestors of birds?

4. Tell why there is a difference in the feet of birds.