

THE ARTICLE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2105/210504-bird-photos.html>

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: <https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-56946165>
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/apr/30/researchers-find-frogmouth-is-worlds-most-instagrammable-bird>
<https://www.businessinsider.com/photos-of-the-bird-that-researchers-deemed-most-instagrammable-2021-4>

WARM-UPS

1. BIRD PHOTOS: Students walk around the class and talk to other students about bird photos. Change partners often and share your findings.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, talk about these topics or words from the article. What will the article say about them? What can you say about these words and your life?

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

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. SOCIAL MEDIA: Students A **strongly** believe animals and birds are the best things to post on social media; Students B **strongly** believe other things are better. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

4. SHARING: What is interesting about these kinds of photos on social media? How interested are you in them? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners often and share what you wrote.

	What Is Interesting?	How Interested Are You?
Birds		
Breakfast		
People's new shoes		
Other people's children		
Puppies and kittens		
Cars		

5. BREAKFAST: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "breakfast". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

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

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

VOCABULARY MATCHING

Paragraph 1

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 1. seems | a. At a time near to now; not long ago. |
| 2. recently | b. Able to be looked at or inspected. |
| 3. published | c. A picture obtained by a camera, telescope, microscope, or other device, or displayed on a computer or video screen. |
| 4. image | d. Prepared and issued a book, journal, piece of music, or other work for public sale. |
| 5. viewable | e. Gives the feeling or sensation of being something or having a particular quality. |
| 6. discovered | f. Done, occurring, or active at night. |
| 7. nocturnal | g. Found. |

Paragraph 2

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| 8. analysed | h. Put or arranged someone or something in a particular place or way. |
| 9. popular | i. Examined something, especially information, to explain something. |
| 10. algorithm | j. A bird's horny projecting jaws; a bill. |
| 11. attracted | k. Cute and pleasant to hold close to your body. |
| 12. beak | l. A process or set of rules to be followed in calculations or other problem-solving operations, especially by a computer. |
| 13. positioned | m. Caused to come to a place or participate in something by offering something of interest, favorable conditions, or opportunities. |
| 14. cuddly | n. Liked, admired, or enjoyed by many people or by a particular person or group. |

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2105/210504-bird-photos.html>

1. TRUE / FALSE: Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

- 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**

2. 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 |

3. PHRASE MATCH: (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 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 |

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2105/210504-bird-photos.html>

1. What two things does the article say we share photos of online?
2. What have researchers recently published?
3. For how long do Instagram photos stay online?
4. In which country is the university that did this research?
5. When is the frogmouth most active?
6. How many photos of birds did the researchers look at?
7. What did the researchers use to analyse the bird photos?
8. What part of the frogmouth did an ornithologist say was wide?
9. Where on the frogmouth's face are its eyes?
10. What did a photographer say evokes something in human nature?

AFTER READING / LISTENING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2105/210504-bird-photos.html>

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionary / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'bird' and 'photos'.

bird	photos

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• share• recently• service• looked• find• found	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• nearly• special• platform• wide• appear• nature
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BIRD PHOTOS DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

1. What did you think when you read the headline?
2. What images are in your mind when you hear the word 'bird'?
3. What do you think of birds?
4. What are your favourite birds?
5. Do you like taking photos of birds?
6. What do you think of social media?
7. What kinds of photos do you post on social media?
8. What do you think of Instagram?
9. What do you think of the frogmouth?
10. What do you think of the national bird of your country?

Researchers find most 'instagrammable' bird – 4th May, 2021
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BIRD PHOTOS DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

11. Did you like reading this article? Why/not?
12. What do you think of when you hear the word 'photo'?
13. What do you think about what you read?
14. Why do people like ornithology?
15. Are animals with large eyes cuter than those with small eyes?
16. What do you think of the name 'frogmouth'?
17. What are the cutest and cuddliest animals and birds?
18. Do you think birds are good pets?
19. What birds don't you like?
20. What questions would you like to ask an ornithologist?