

Discovering Birds

Lomo the Kori Bustard was slowly walking on the open plain, when he felt something pull at his tail feathers. He swung around and saw little monkey sitting on the ground. Little monkey put on an innocent face, rapidly blinking his eyes. "Oh, little monkey, I should have guessed it's you!" Lomo exclaimed. "Why do you have feathers and not fur like me?" little monkey asked. "Feathers make me a bird." "So, if you did not have feathers, you could not fly?" little monkey tugged on Lomo's wing feathers. "Feathers are unique to birds, but some insects and all bats can also fly, but they do not have feathers." Lomo answered. He opened his wing for little monkey to inspect.

"Why do you have feathers on your tail?" "Although I don't like flying that much, my tail feathers help me to steer when I do take to the air," Lomo patiently answered, wiggling his tail feathers. "And these soft feathers on your chest?" little monkey questioned. "Those are called down feathers and that is the soft feathers that keep me warm."

"Why is your bill different from a raptor's beak?" Little monkey turned his head to examine Lomo's bill. "We eat different types of food. I love gum and insects. Other small reptiles are also on my menu. I don't need a hook shaped bill for tearing meat. Look at my feet. I also don't have sharp talons like raptors for catching prey."

Little monkey looked down at Lomo's big feet and noticed three toes. "Do you also give birth to live young like mammals?" little monkey's questions continued. "No, birds lay eggs. In my case, the mother lays two eggs in a hollow on the ground and she sits on the eggs until they hatch. That is called incubation. She looks after the chicks, by bringing food to the nest."

Little monkey gave Lomo a last look over before he turned around and ran back to his troop. Lomo smiled and crouched down to suck up some water from a puddle. "Inquisitive little monkey!"

Discovering nature the BushyTale way!