

Feathers

Feathers come in different shapes and have different functions or jobs to help birds. There are six general types of feathers.



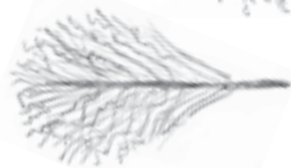
Flight feathers are found on the bird's wing and tail. They are shaped to fan the air and give the bird "lift" to help it take-off and land.



Contour feathers cover the wings, body and tail. They give shape and color to the bird.



Down feathers are fluffy, located close to the body and underneath the contour feathers, and help keep the bird warm by trapping heat close to the skin.



Semiplume feathers combine the qualities of down and contour feathers. These are used for added insulation.



Bristle feathers are very stiff and are found around the mouth acting like a funnel to make the mouth larger. They are also found around the eyes and work like eyelashes.



Filoplume feathers are very small and are attached to the birds nerves. These feathers send messages to the brain about feather placement, insulation, and preening. They help keep the feathers in the right order.

Can you identify the feathers in the box below? Write their names on the lines.

1		2	
3		4	

answer key: 1. down feather, 2. flight feather, 3. bristle, 4. contour feather