



EMU:SPECIES OF THE DAY

News: Researchers have discovered a mechanism behind the reduction and asymmetry of emu wing bones.

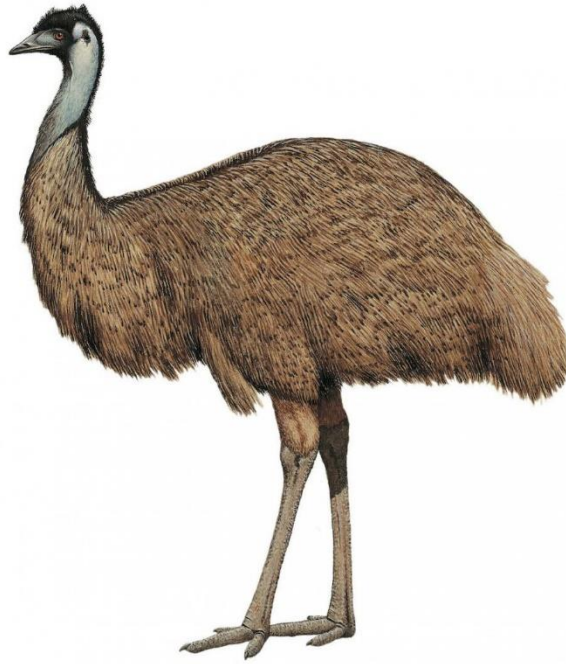
About	The emu belongs to a group of flightless running birds known as ratites , the most primitive of the modern bird families. The ratite family includes the kiwi, ostrich, cassowary, and rhea , all birds found only in the Southern Hemisphere.
Scientific Name	<i>Dromaius novaehollandiae</i>
Size	They are tall and majestic. The emu is the second-largest living bird in the world (the ostrich is the largest) . Adult female emus are larger and heavier than the males.
Characteristic feature	Emus have tiny, useless wings, but their legs are long and powerful. They can travel long distances at a fast trot and can sprint at 30 miles (48 kilometres) per hour for quite a distance . Their strong legs also allow the bird to jump 7 feet (2.1 metres) straight up. With good eyesight and amazing agility, emus can escape almost any trouble . In defence, emus can strike and rip with their heavy feet and nails.
Distribution	Emus are common throughout most of mainland Australia . In Western Australia, emus move northward in the summer and southward in the winter. The emu's range also includes New Guinea, Indonesia, the Solomon Islands, and the Philippines .
Diet	They are omnivores.
Ecological role	They are called the seed dispersal specialist . Seeds eaten whole come out whole; as the emu wanders about, it leaves fertilised seed-carrying deposits behind in its droppings.
Lifespan	Five to ten years
Conservation Status	IUCN Red List: Least Concern

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