A few Interesting Facts about Penguins and Their Habitat by Annphilip

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Whenever we see penguins, it will be either floating in the water or sliding with their bellies. Naturally a question that comes to our mind is whether the penguin is a bird or not. We have to describe the penguin as a type of flightless bird that spends a major part of its life in the sea. That is the reason why advertisers use penguins as their models in advertisements related to air conditioners or air coolers.

They look just like a human wearing a dark coat, with a mix of black, yellow and white look, while their bellies are snow-white. The top layer of a penguin's skin has thick layers of stiff feathers and this helps them keep warm, even they are sliding through ice covered terrain. Just like peacocks, penguins also go through a molting process, where they shed their feathers and grow new ones. They even have an oil secreting gland above their tail that helps it to make its outer thick coat more wind proof and water proof.

Unfortunately, recently a container ship Rena was grounded on a reef on Mount Maunganui beach in New Zealand and the oil spilled from it affected some 360 birds living there, including nearly 40 penguins. Wildlife rescuers did as much as they could by cleaning and scrubbing those penguins and releasing them back in its habitat after clearing the oil coat.

Some of the body features that help the bird to adapt to the aquatic lifestyle in the sea are its wings, feet and tail. The wings of penguins are just like airplane wings and are called flippers. They use flippers to propel through the water and at that time penguin gets an appearance of a bird flying inside the water. Meanwhile, penguinâ€™s feet are web-shaped and very short, which help them move in the water very quickly. The game they play in the ice is referred to as tobogganing. They use its feet and flippers for this, which will help them to move swiftly and glide smoothly over the ice using their belly.

Based on their size, color, habits and habitats nearly seventeen penguin species are identified in the world. Among them, Emperor penguins are the largest and they will have a black cap, blue-grey neck, orange colored patch on the ear and yellow breasts. Meanwhile, the most common penguin in Antarctica is the King penguin and is regarded as the second largest penguin species in that region. Some other penguin varieties are Galapagos penguin, Adelie penguin, Chinstrap penguin, Gentoo penguin, Rockhopper penguin and Macaroni penguin.

Most of these elfin creatures are found in the southern hemisphere. The Galapagos penguins can be found in the Galapagos Islands, while certain other species can also be seen in the islands near New Zealand and Australia, the coast of South America and the icy waters near Antarctica.

Big time movies based on penguins were very rare, but only until the release of the movie Happy Feet. I missed to watch the movie in cinema, but nevertheless I had chance to watch it in high definition on my LED TV powered by Dish TV. If you had watched the movie, you may know the story which circles around a little penguin named Mumble, who can do tap dance. All Emperor penguins are supposed to have a heart song to express their true love in their world, but poor Mumble has a terrible voice and that becomes a problem for him to express his true love. As he doesnâ€™t have a heart song, he gets ousted from the family and he gets neglected in his neighborhood. The movie faired very well across the world and kids thronged to the theaters to catch a glimpse of their hero, Mumble. This positive acclamation made the entire world turn their heads towards penguin conservation and habitat.

Most penguins spend nearly 75% of their lives in the sea. They come to shore only during breeding and molting season. While in water they will feed on fish, cephalopods and krill, and they swallow their food as a whole. The total penguin population in the world is predicted to be about 100 million and it is only a matter of time that people will get to understand this wonderful bird.

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