

Brown Pelicans

- smallest member of the 7 species of pelicans
- scientists believe they may have lived up to 65 million years ago
- measure 4 to 6 ft. from bill to tail
- weigh from 8 lbs. up to 13 lbs.
- wingspan is 6 ft. to 8 ft.
- live 25 to 30 years
- mother lays 3 eggs and both parents take turns keeping the eggs warm with their feet
- learn to fly 10-12 weeks after hatching
- only type of pelican that plunge dives for food
- can dive from 100 feet up in the air
- dive into the water with such force that fish as far down as 6 ft. are stunned
- have air sacs throughout their bodies that help them bob to the surface like a cork. These air sacs also regulate their body temperature

- other birds, such as seagulls, sit on the pelican's head and steal fish from the pouch, when the pelican tips head down to drain water before swallowing
- they can carry up to 12 quarts of water or 30 lbs. of fish at a time
- all 4 of their toes are webbed, while most swimming birds have only 3 webbed toes
- pelicans must hop on the water, beating their huge wings and pounding the surface of the water with their feet, to get the speed for rising into the air
- they have extra strong muscles in their chest area that allow them to glide and soar for long periods of time. They can travel up to 100 miles at a time
- usually fly in a single line, although sometimes make a "V" formation