

Name: _____

Strange Bird of the Rainforest

Rainforest Series, Part 2

By Mikki Sadil



Of all the beautiful, strange, and unique birds found in the rainforest, there is probably only one that might remind you of a punk rock star. This is the hoatzin (*wat-sin*), a living descendent

just like a cow does.

This digestive process leaves a very disagreeable manure-like odor that gives them the nickname of "stink bird."



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eyes in a featherless bright blue face, and a four-inch crest.

The hoatzin is known as the "stink bird" of the rainforest. Hoatzins eat primarily leaves and some fruits and flowers of the plants that grow in the marshy

areas of the rainforests where they live. They have a digestive system that is similar to a cow's, which means they use bacterial fermentation to break down the food they eat,



While these birds may be among the most beautiful in the rainforest, you won't see them soaring gracefully above the trees. In fact, they're clumsy fliers, who prefer to use their sharp claws to climb up and down trees, rather than fly freely one place to another. They spend much of their day clambering around on tree branches and taking long sunbaths, and only fly when it's absolutely necessary.

The hoatzin is a unique bird, and all of its different qualities make it a very interesting member of the tropical rainforest.

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1. Why is the hoatzin sometimes called a *stink bird*?
 - a. because its feathers have a pleasant aroma
 - b. because its manure and digestive system give off foul odors
 - c. because it makes its nest from materials that do not smell nice
 - d. because it spends much of its time near plants that give off noxious odors



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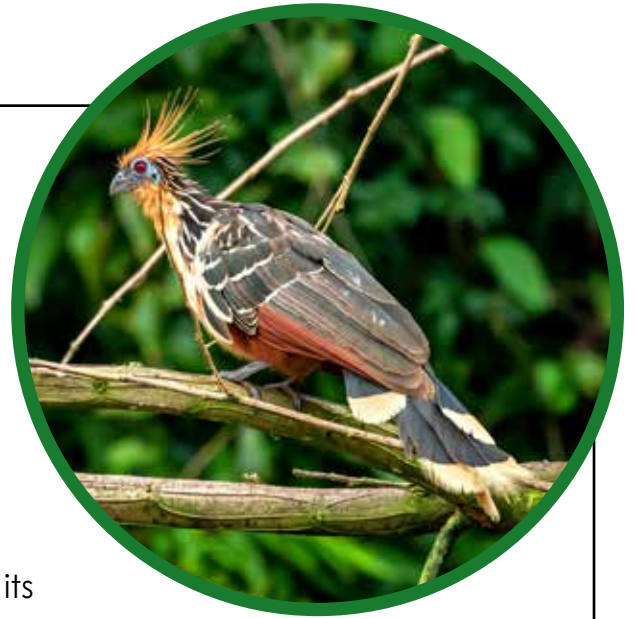
4. Hoatzins are most likely to be seen...
 - a. climbing trees and basking in the sun near a river
 - b. flying high in the sky above the rainforest
 - c. in underground burrows, near streams
 - d. on the ground, near a waterway in the rainforest
5. Tell whether each sentence below is a fact or opinion. Write **F** or **O** next to each one.
 - _____ Hoatzins use hisses, groans, croaks, and grunts to communicate.
 - _____ Hoatzins are among the most beautiful birds in the rainforest.
 - _____ Hoatzins have featherless faces.
 - _____ The hoatzin is a descendant of the *Archaeopteryx*, the first bird-like creature from the dinosaur age.

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Match each vocabulary word from the article with its correct definition on the right.

1. russet a. thick



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4. _____ crest

d. referring to a body's ability to take in and break down foods

5. _____ dense

e. light brown color; brownish-white color

6. _____ clumsy

f. light ax used by Native American people

7. _____ digestive

g. reddish-brown color; rust color

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In the article, "Strange Bird of the Rainforest," you learned about a colorful rainforest bird called the hoatzin.

In your opinion, what is the most beautiful wild bird that lives in your area? Write a short essay to describe the bird's appearance and habits.



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Color the picture of the hoatzin bird. Be sure the colors are consistent with the bird's actual coloring, which you learned in the passage.



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- Hoatzins are among the most beautiful birds in the rainforest.
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ANSWER KEY

Strange Bird of the Rainforest



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6. c clumsy

f. light ax used by Native American people

7. d digestive

g. reddish-brown color; rust color