

# The **STONHAM SCREECHER**

Winter 2018/19

**Pungu the Bateleur Eagle**

**Moulting Matters**

**Testing Tura**

**Vowel Power**

**Write to Cobweb**

Cover photo by Aaron Stokes (16) - winner of  
the 2017 S.O.S. Photo Competition - junior section

The Schools Newsletter of the Suffolk Owl Sanctuary ~ [www.owl-help.org.uk](http://www.owl-help.org.uk)





Hello,  
My name is Pungu and i am a Bateleur Eagle.  
I live at the Suffolk Owl Sanctuary  
with lots of owls and other birds of prey.  
Here are some interesting Bateleur Eagle facts!

We come from Africa, where we  
live on savannah and in woodland.  
We are also found in south western Arabia

As well as hunting for food, we also eat  
carrion (dead carcasses) that other predators  
have left...mmm...delicious!!

The word "bateleur" is French for tumbler or acrobat.  
When we come in to land we rock our wings back  
and forth to gain our balance...  
...just like an acrobat with a pole!

When fully mature, we are very colourful  
birds. My red face is most vivid when I  
am contented and relaxed!

We mate for life and only lay one egg at a time.  
This egg is incubated for 55 days and is looked  
after carefully by both parents - we are spoilt babies!

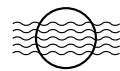
We are very territorial and will become  
quite aggressive if we feel threatened...  
...we will "dive bomb" unwanted guests!

In the wild, we can spend 8-9 hours in the air each day,  
looking for food - we can cover 300 miles in this time!

We like to eat snakes!! Our tail is very short so  
that we can jump backwards if a hunted snake  
strikes, without tripping over it!

**Got a question?? ASK AN OWL!**  
Do you have any questions about Owls or  
other Birds of Prey? Cobweb the Barn Owl  
is happy to answer and will personally  
respond to your letter or email!

Find out more about how we manage and respect your data  
@ [www.owl-help.org.uk/sos-privacy-policy/](http://www.owl-help.org.uk/sos-privacy-policy/)



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# MOULTING MATTERS

At the end of September the S.O.S. flying team birds return to their aviaries to rest and moult over the winter. All birds moult once their young have fledged and are independent.

In the wild, feathers can become damaged by rubbing together in flight, escaping predators, brushing against tree branches and by constantly entering and leaving the nest site during the breeding season.

During the moult, old and damaged feathers fall out. They are then replaced by the growth of new plumage. The new feathers are necessary for fast and efficient flight, to hunt effectively and for insulation.

In the wild the rate at which birds moult depends on their body condition, how plentiful food is and how warm the weather is. If a bird is too thin, it will not shed feathers until it has gained weight.



Falcons and hawks moult symmetrically, so that their flight remains smooth and aerodynamic. An uneven loss of feathers would cause them to wobble and lose height and speed when flying.

Within the sanctuary, birds enjoy a regular, plentiful food supply and sheltered accommodation so they moult more quickly than birds in the wild.

Large birds like eagles also moult more slowly than small birds as the loss of too many of their large feathers at once would compromise their hunting skills.





# VOWEL POWER



Phoenix and Huron the Great Horned Owls are trying to teach their son Birkett to spell his name!

"Your name has 2 vowels and 5 consonants" says Huron

How many vowels and consonants can you find in the names of Birkett's owl friends?

He has done the first two for you!

Auckland 3 vowels & 5 consonants

Cecil 2 vowels & 3 consonants

Bumble ... vowels & ... consonants

Alnwick ... vowels & ... consonants

Meluka ... vowels & ... consonants

Cobweb ... vowels & ... consonants

## TESTING TURA

Tura the Siberian Owl has just turned 2 years old. Some of her owl friends are MUCH older than her!

Lily the Little Owl.... 16 years  
Loki the Snowy Owl.... 14 years

Cecil the Spectacled Owl...9 years  
Rhea the European Owl....26 years  
Taiga the Great Grey Owl....14 years  
Bug the Tawny Owl....17 years

How many owls are older than Taiga?  
Which owl is 10 years older than Lily?  
Which owls are the same age?  
Is Loki older or younger than Bug?  
What is the sum of Rhea and Cecil's ages?  
Which owls ages total 61?

