

There are many different types of birds on Earth. All of these birds have beaks. However, their beaks can look very different. Some birds have a beak that is long and thin. Other birds have a beak that is short and wide. The shape of a bird's beak is one of the bird's *traits*.

All living things have traits. Traits are the features or characteristics of a living thing. Parents pass the information for traits on to their young. So, birds get the shape of their beak from their parents. Why do you think different kinds of birds have differently shaped beaks?

Birds use their beaks to help them get food. Because birds live in different places, they eat different types of food. The shape of its beak helps a bird get food in its surroundings. Woodpeckers find insects under the bark of trees. They have beaks that are sharp and strong. Woodpeckers use their beaks to peck holes in tree trunks and eat the insects underneath. A hummingbird eats nectar from inside flowers. It has a beak that is long and thin. Hummingbirds use their beaks to reach nectar deep inside flowers.

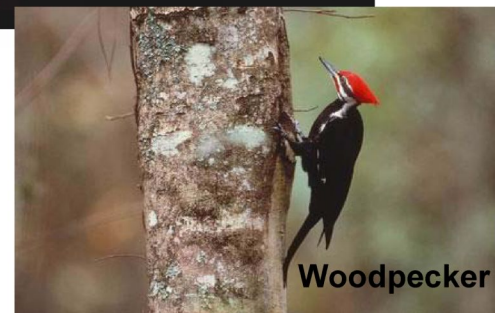
The shape of a woodpecker's beak and the shape of a hummingbird's beak help these birds survive. Birds develop different beak shapes over time. The process of developing traits that help living things survive is called **adaptation**. Adaptation helps living things survive in their surroundings. If living things do not develop traits through adaptation, they will die.



The beaks of different types of birds are shaped differently.



Hummingbird



Woodpecker

Birds have differently shaped beaks to get food from different places.