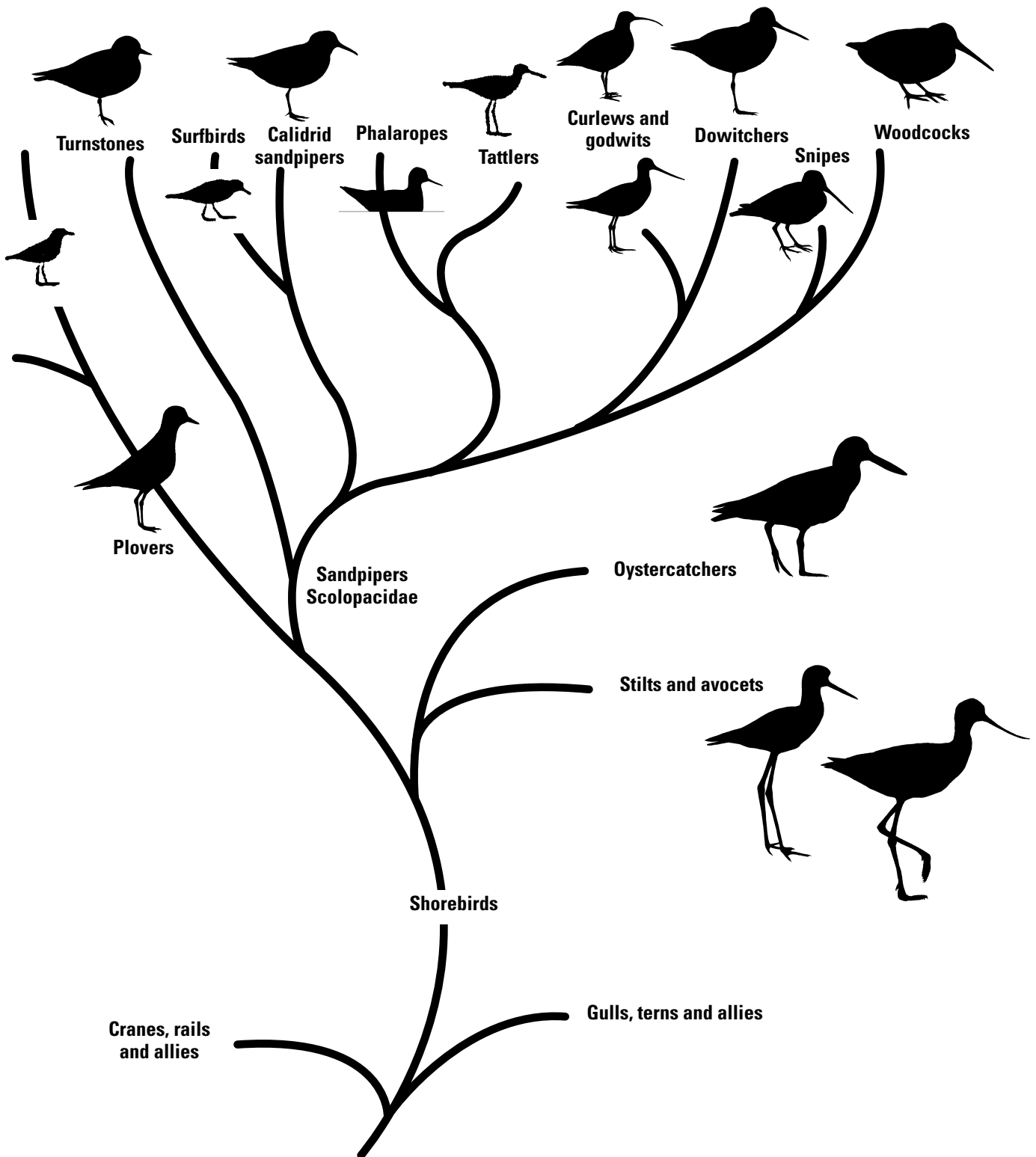
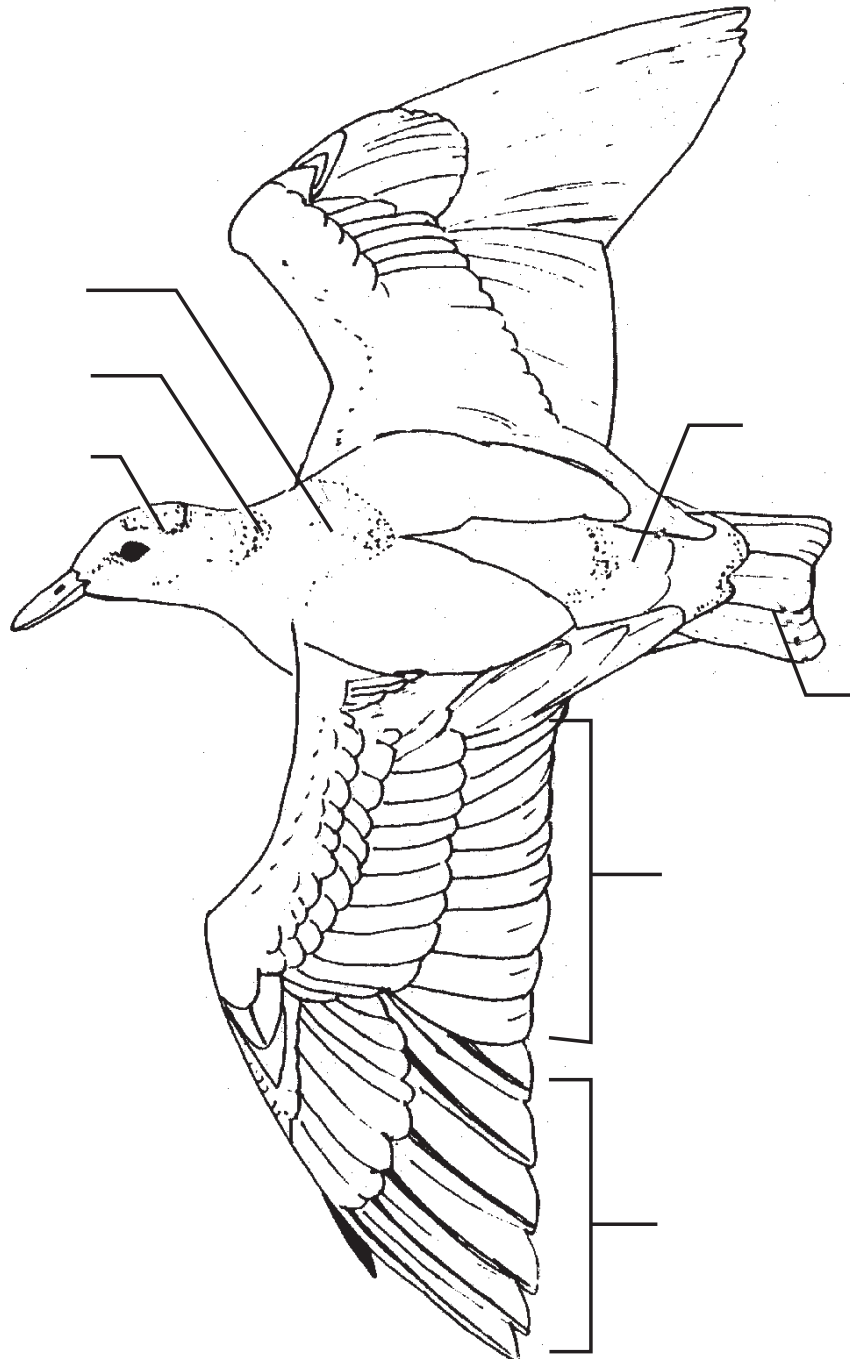


# North American Shorebird Taxonomy— An Aid to Identification

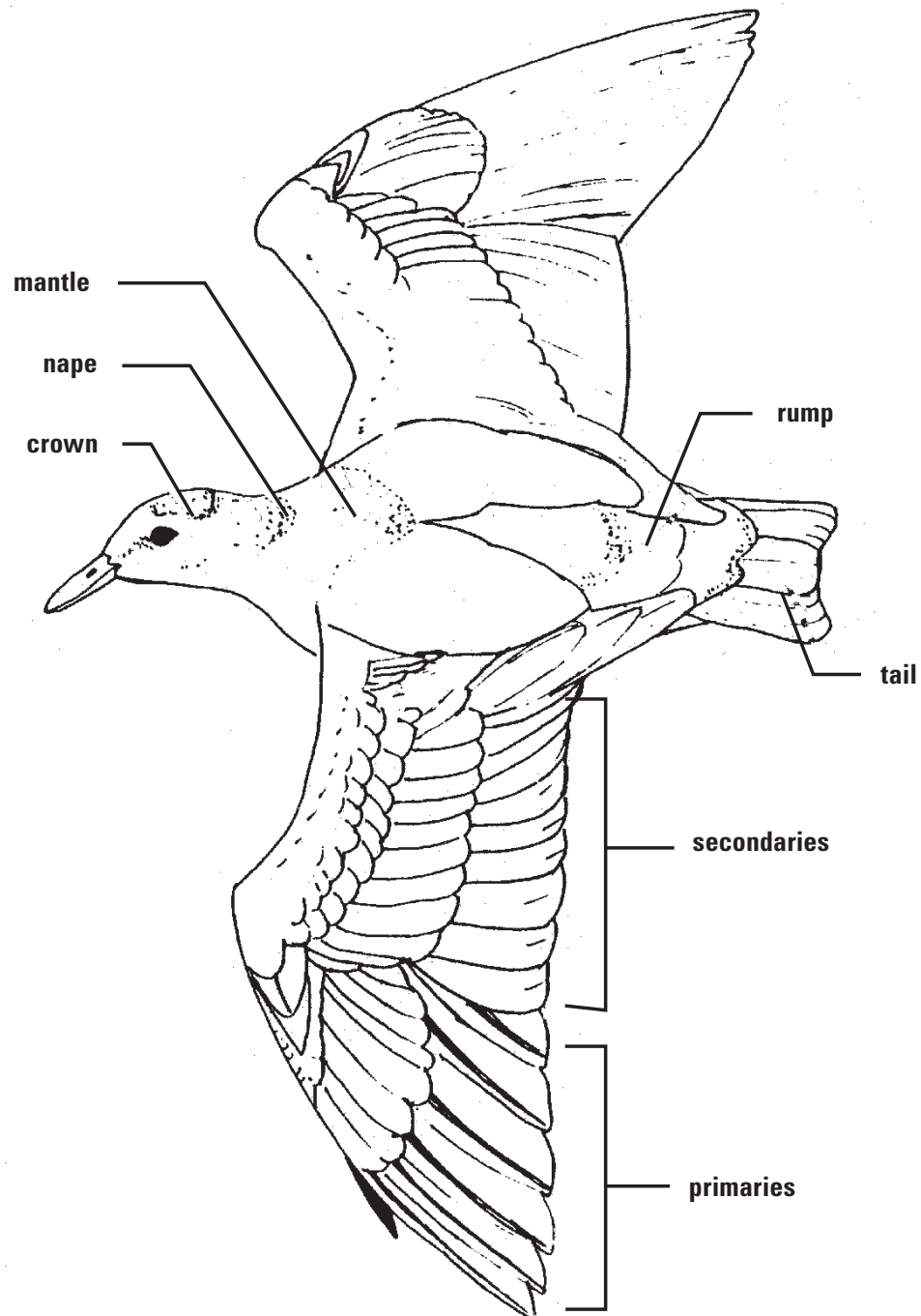


# Shorebird Morphology: Flying

Directions: Fill in the blanks with the names of the correct body part.

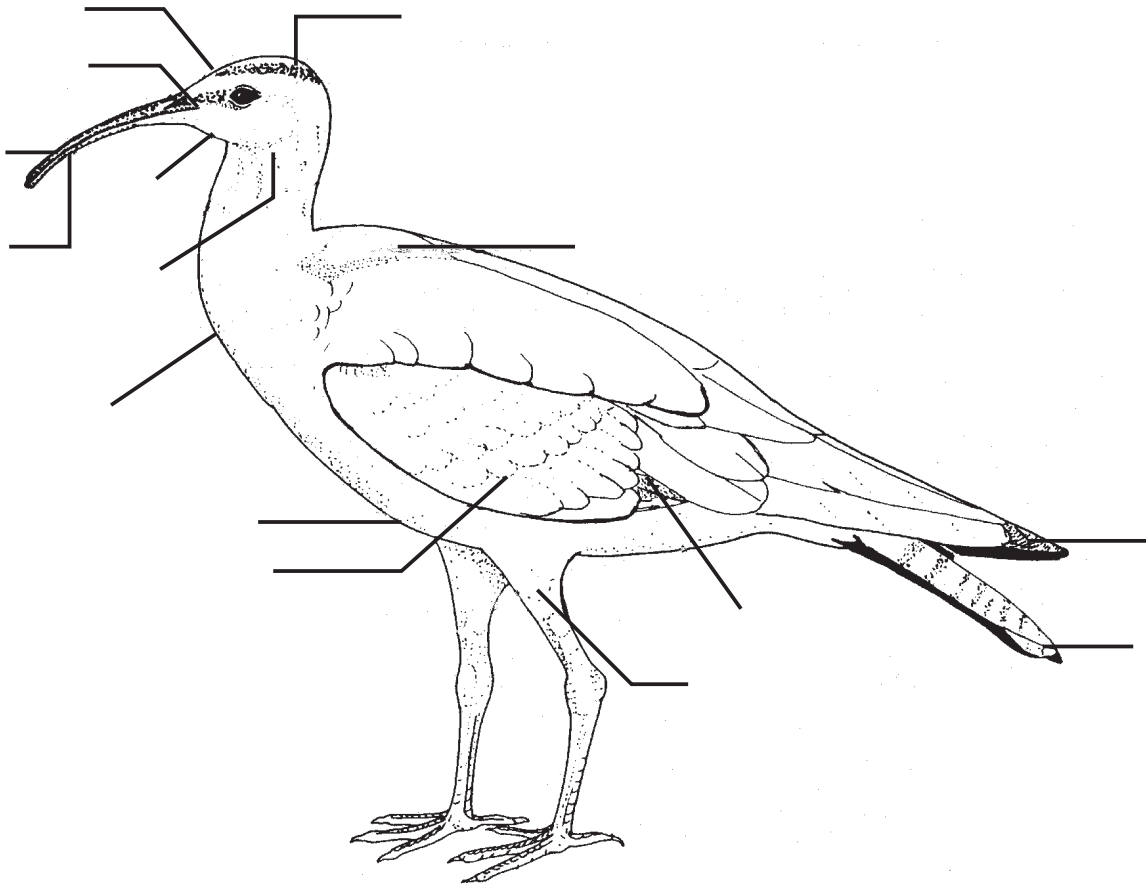


# Shorebird Morphology: Flying

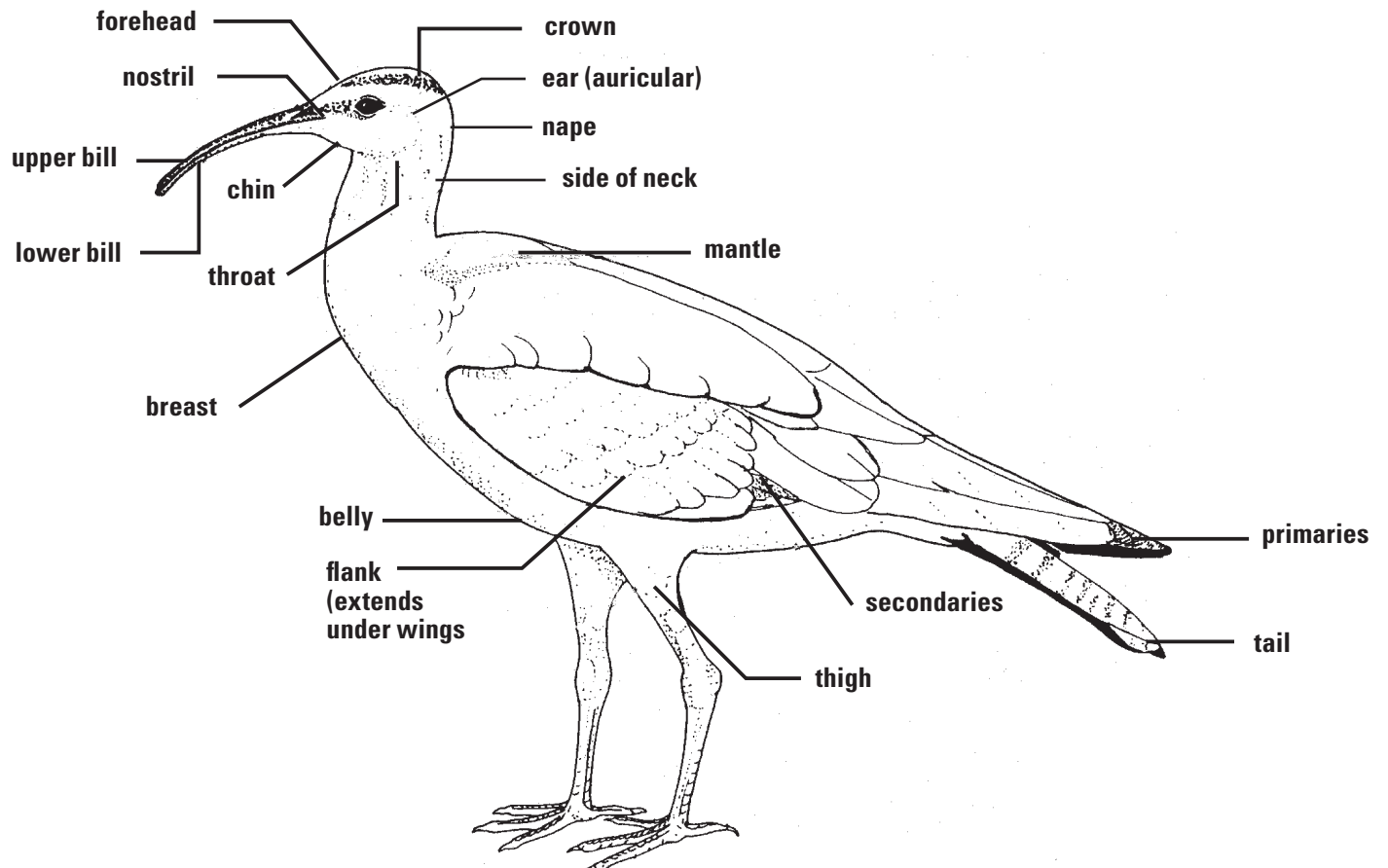


# Shorebird Morphology: Standing

Directions: Fill in the blanks with the names of the correct body part.

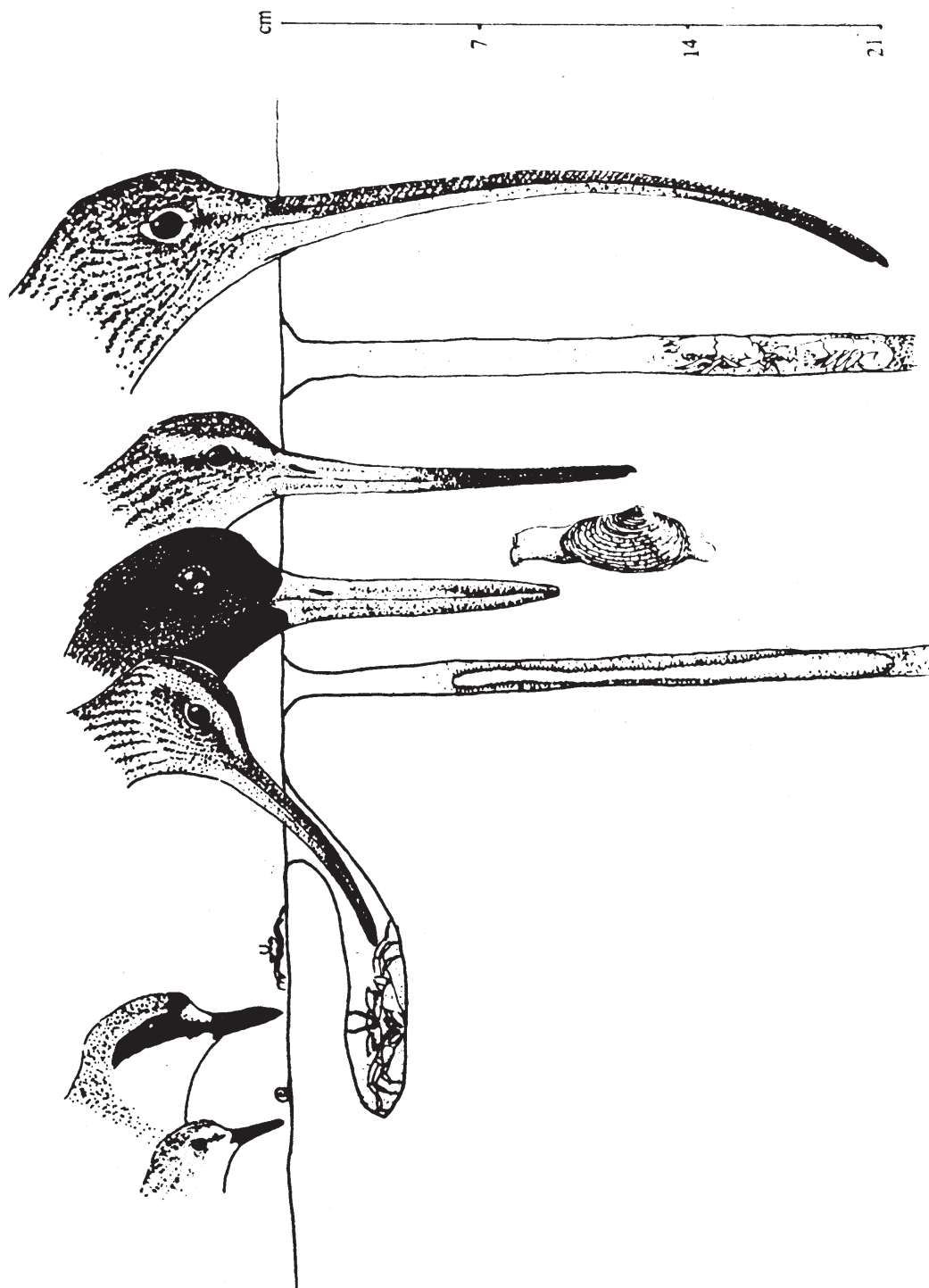


# Shorebird Morphology: Standing



# Shorebird Beaks

*Designed for What  
They Eat and How  
They Feed*



# Shorebird Feeding Styles Answers to Journal Pages

Watch the different ways shorebirds feed. Draw a line from the feeding techniques you see to the style of beaks they have (shown across the page). Then take a guess at what types of foods they are looking for (or “they eat”). Record the names of the shorebirds you are watching, if you know them.

■ **Shallow probing in the mud or sand**  
These shorebirds are looking for insects and crustaceans.  
Species: sandpipers

■ **Deep probing in the mud or sand**  
These shorebirds are looking for aquatic worms, snails, and crustaceans.  
Species: curlews, avocets, stilts, godwits,

■ **Picking things off the surface**  
These shorebirds are looking for insects, crustaceans, horseshoe crab eggs.  
Species: plovers, killdeer, turnstones

■ **Breaking or crushing open shelled animals**  
These shorebirds are looking for mollusks and clams  
Species: oystercatchers

## Shorebird Feeding Styles

Watch the different ways shorebirds feed. Draw lines from the feeding techniques you see to the styles of beaks they have (shown across the page). Then take a guess at what types of foods they are after. Record the names of the shorebirds you are watching if you know them.

### Shallow probing in the mud or sand

These shorebirds are looking for: \_\_\_\_\_

Species: \_\_\_\_\_

### Deep probing in the mud or sand

These shorebirds are looking for: \_\_\_\_\_

Species: \_\_\_\_\_

### Picking things off the surface

These shorebirds are looking for: \_\_\_\_\_

Species: \_\_\_\_\_

### Breaking or crushing open shelled animals

These shorebirds are looking for: \_\_\_\_\_

Species: \_\_\_\_\_

### Other types of beaks and feeding styles you notice:

\_\_\_\_\_

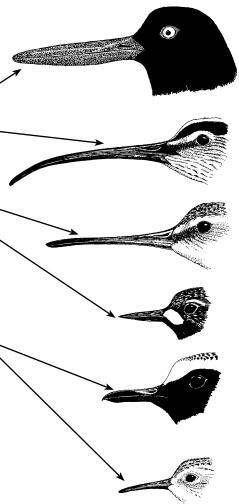
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## Shorebird Beaks

Designed for What They Eat  
and How They Feed



# Shorebirds, Wading Birds, Seabirds

## General Physical and Behavioral Characteristics

	<i>Shorebirds</i> (sandpipers, plovers, stilts, oystercatchers, avocets)	<i>Seabirds</i> (gulls and terns)	<i>Wading Birds</i> (herons and egrets)
Physical	Description	Description	Description
Size	Small to medium	Small to large	Large
Color	Brown or gray above; pale or white below	Gray, white above with some black; white below	Color varies (blue, white, etc.)
Toes	Long	Webbed	Long
Legs	Long Color important in identification	Short Color important in identification	Long Color important in identification
Beak	Long, slender	Robust to slender; in gulls, color important in identification	Long, pointed
Neck	Short	Short	Long
Tail	Short, square	Short and square (gulls) or long and forked (terns)	Short and square
Breeding plumage	Red or orange in plumage	Black usually on head, bill may become red	Long “plumes” often present on head and/or throat
Behavioral	Description	Description	Description
Nest Location	Ground	Ground, cliffs	Trees near wetlands
Nest	Independently	Colonial	Colonial
Nesting Habitat	Wetlands, grasslands, beaches, open areas, tundra	Shore, lakes, oceans, islands, tropics to arctic	Wetlands in temperate areas
Prey	Invertebrates, worms, insects	Fish, eggs, chicks, garbage	Fish, frogs, crabs, insects
Feeding Behavior	Gregarious and solitary, feed by probing in mud, water, sand	Gregarious and may form interspecies flocks; feed by diving into water	Solitary and may stalk or actively chase prey in shallow water.
Vocalizations	Peeps, whistles, short trills	Raucous cries	Croaks, grunts, trumpeting
Migration	Long distance	Long distance, short distance, & non-migratory	Short distance or non-migratory
Wintering Habitat	Coasts, wetlands, ponds, primarily in tropics	Shore, lakes, oceans, islands, landfills, urban areas	Wetlands, coasts, rivers
Summary	The 48 species have relatively long legs and thin bills and are common in shoreline habitats. They may be seen running in and out with ocean waves, probing for food on beaches, or feeding in pastures and other open areas. <b>THINK QUICK AND SMALL!</b>	There are 27 gull species and 18 tern and skimmer species. Gulls are conspicuous and usually gregarious. Terns are smaller, more slender, and have straighter, pointed bills. They are not as raucous as gulls. Seabirds are often seen and heard in flight. <b>THINK AERIAL, GRAY &amp; BLACK!</b>	The 20 species of waders are all long-legged, most with long necks and long, pointed bills for spearing fish or other prey. They often stalk slowly, with head thrust forward. <b>THINK LONG!</b>