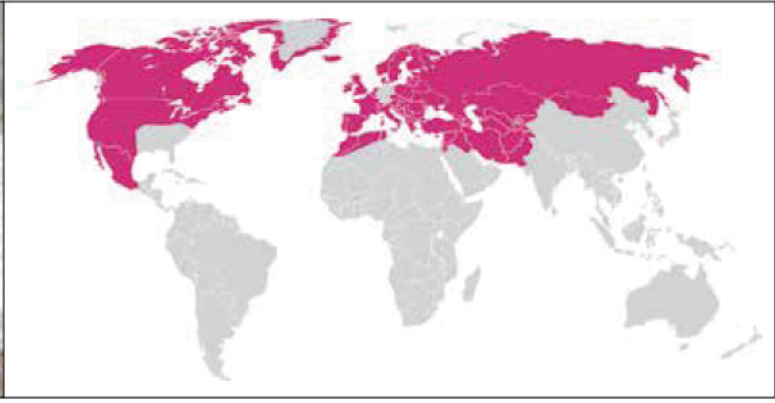


COMMON RAVEN

updated March 2017



Range	Northern hemisphere (one of the most widespread, naturally occurring birds worldwide)
Habitat	Forests, tundra, seacoast, grasslands, and rural cities
Diet (wild)	Active scavengers that can rip through the hide of even the largest carcasses. Also feed on small mammals, eggs, fish, grain, insects, almost anything else they find.
Diet (captivity)	Bird of prey diet
Description	Length: 22–27 inches; wingspan: 4 feet; weight: 1½–3½ pounds. Completely black feathers. Eyes are dark brown. Feathers on the throat are shaggy and their beaks are large and slightly curved. They have a wedged shape tail and their plumage has an iridescent shine to it.
Lifespan	Wild: 10–15 years. Captivity: up to 40 years
Reproduction	The female incubates 3–7 eggs for 18–20 days. After 35–42 days, the young fledge, but stay with their parents for six months or so. Before the nest is built, a mating pair will establish a territory and aggressively defend it. The nest is built in a tree or on a platform like a cliff's ledge and are often reused by the same couple or other birds such as hawks. Males will court females for a few years before deciding on a partner. Ravens usually mate for life.
Behavior	When it comes to intelligence, ravens rate up there with chimpanzees and dolphins, able to solve ever more complicated problems invented by ever more creative scientists. Ravens are usually solitary birds, but can be found in pairs or, as youngsters, gathering in flocks. They are very vocal and researchers have recorded 15–30 categories of vocalization. Ravens are also adept mimics and can learn to talk better than some parrots.
Our animals	1 female, 1 male. Arrived at PPZ in 2009 (male) and 2015 (female)
Cool stuff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ravens are the largest song birds (passerines). • A flock of ravens is called an “unkindness.” • Ravens are acrobatic fliers, often doing rolls and somersaults in the air. One bird was seen flying upside down for more than a half-mile. Young birds are fond of playing games with sticks, repeatedly dropping them, then diving to catch them in midair. • Ravens are clever and dangerous predators. They will work in pairs to raid seabird colonies, with one bird distracting an incubating adult and the other waiting to grab an egg or chick as soon as it's unguarded. They've also been seen waiting as ewes give birth, then attacking the newborn lambs. • If a raven thinks another raven is watching, it will pretend to hide food in one place while really hiding it somewhere else. Since other ravens are just as smart, this ruse doesn't always work. • Ravens use their beaks and wings to gesture and point to objects, much like humans use their hands. This is the first time researchers have observed naturally occurring gestures in any animal other than primates. Ravens also demonstrate the ability to follow another's gaze, e.g., if you glance at a cookie with interest, a raven will turn to see what you're looking at. • Ravens have been known to imitate the vocalizations of wolves to attract them to carcasses that the ravens aren't strong enough to open. When the wolves are done eating, the ravens get the leftovers. • Ravens are very playful. They will use snow-covered roofs as slides, roll down snowy hills and even play keep-away with animals like wolves, otters and dogs. Ravens also make toys by using sticks, pine cones, golf balls and rocks to play with each other. • Ravens are tool users. They poke sticks into bug holes and bend wires into hooks to retrieve food from between cracks. They will club small prey with rocks or sticks and will snatch up snakes and drop them from the sky. • Ravens can pick out and recognize individual human beings (often humans that have harassed or banded the birds), knowing them by facial features. Ravens will even pass this information to their offspring. • The captive ravens at the Tower of London are beloved and perhaps a little feared; legend has it that, “If the Tower of London ravens are lost or fly away, the Crown will fall and Britain with it.”

Phylum
ChordataClass
AvesOrder
PasseriformesFamily
CorvidaeGenus
Corvusspecies
C. corax