

MEET THE PENGUIN

ABOUT ME

I'm an African Penguin. I am a member of the banded group of penguins. We are also known as the Black-footed Penguin and the Jackass Penguin (from the braying sound we make).

I have a black face and nape with a white stripe that runs around the back of my face and connects at my throat and chest.

My eyes are brown and my legs and feet are black with spots of pink.

What colour are your eyes?

WHY WE ARE IMPORTANT

We are only found on the south-western coast of Africa. We move large amounts of nutrients from the ocean to our colonies, which helps our ecosystem and other marine areas to work well. Our poop is washed into the sea, which helps algae growth. This helps the growth of other marine life which supports shorebirds and other marine invertebrates. We help with the access to food for other species, like herding schools of fish upwards where other birds can feed on them.

DID YOU KNOW?

I have small pink glands above my eyes, which helps me to cope with high temperatures. Blood is sent to the glands where it is cooled by the surrounding air, which keeps me cooler. The glands get pinker the hotter it gets.

How do you protect yourself from the sun when it is too hot?

DID YOU KNOW?

We are great divers!

When I dive, I can stay under water for about two to three minutes, and I can dive about 30m deep. Some penguins have reached up to 130m deep! That's really deep.

How long can you hold your breath under water?



MY NAMES

My name, '**PENGUIN**', comes from two Welsh words, pen and gwyn, which mean "head" and "white". We are also known as the **JACKASS PENGUIN** (from the braying sound we make).

How many names do you have?

WHAT WE LIKE TO EAT

We are **CARNIVORES**. We like to eat small fish such as pilchards, anchovies, horse mackerel and herring and sometimes we eat squid and crustaceans in places where there are few fish left, due to overfishing.

Do you like to eat seafood?

TOP THREATS

We have SO many threats! In the water our biggest threats are leopard seals, sharks and killer whales to name a few. On land we are hunted by snakes, feral dogs and cats. Our eggs get taken by predator birds. Our species has been in danger for a long time due to overfishing, habitat destruction, coastal development and a number of other human influences. This has resulted in over 70% of us disappearing in the last 30 years!

MY FAMILY

A group of penguins in the water is called a raft but on land we're called waddles. Other names for a group of penguins include rookery, colony, and huddle.

Most penguins are monogamous we have one mate for life.

