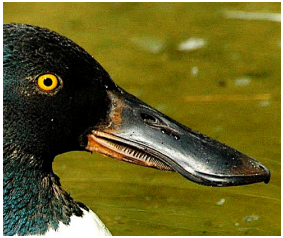
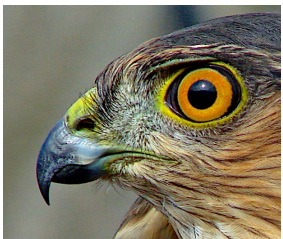









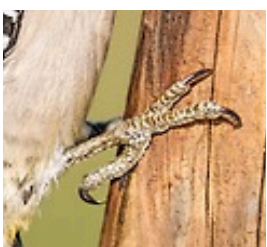
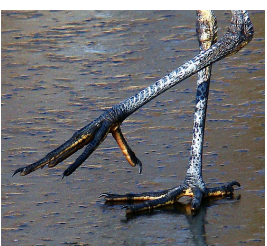
## Lesson 2: Urban Bird Diversity—Birdiversity!

# Beaks and Feet Background Sheet

These are some of the tool-like uses of beaks and feet. Beaks and feet are not actual tools, they only work like tools. Not all beaks fit neatly into the tool categories shown here. Some look like one tool but are used like another, and some beaks have multiple uses. The best way to find out how a bird uses its beak is to watch it!

	Beak works like a...	Description	How it helps the bird get food and/or eat
	Strainer	Wide and flat; has ridges along inner edges	Allows ducks and some other water birds to filter tiny plants and animals out of the water
	Shredder	Top of beak hooks sharply down over the bottom; very sharp	Helps meat-eating birds hook their prey and/or tear apart their food
	Nutcracker	Strong, short and thick; conical shape	Helps seed-eaters crack open seeds and nutshells
	Tweezers	Long and narrow, but strong	Allows insect-eaters to catch their prey
	Probe	Very long, slender beak	Helps nectar-eaters to slurp liquid out of flower buds and feeders
	Spear/Chisel	Thick, long and very sharp	Allows fish-eating birds to spear their prey in the water and woodpeckers to drill into wood for insects

This is a rough guide. Not all bird feet fit into a category shown here, and some birds have feet with multiple uses. The best way to find out how a bird uses its feet is to watch it!

Feet work like...	Description	How it helps the bird get food and/or eat
	<p>Foot has widespread toes; feet are larger than clingers</p>	<p>Allows birds to walk on flat ground; large and wide enough to provide stability</p>
	<p>Foot has narrow and slightly curved toes that are small but strong</p>	<p>Allows songbirds to grip tightly onto tree branches, cones and flower heads while they look for food (or even while they sleep!)</p>
	<p>Foot has webbed skin between each toe or partial webbing (lobes) on each toe</p>	<p>Allows aquatic birds to easily propel themselves through the water so they can catch their food</p>
	<p>Strong, muscular toes have long, sharp claws (talons)</p>	<p>Allows meat-eating birds to puncture and kill prey, then grip prey for transport; feet hold food in place as they tear at it with their beak</p>
	<p>Foot has two toes facing frontward and two toes facing backward (this is called zygodactyl)</p>	<p>Allows tree-climbing birds to easily move up and down tree trunks and branches as they look for places to peck for food</p>
	<p>Long and skinny legs with long, widespread toes</p>	<p>Allows long-legged birds to wade through water; long toes prevent birds from sinking into soft mud</p>