

**Penguins lost ability to taste fish**  
企鵝失去對魚的味覺

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企鵝只能品嚐到食物的酸味和鹹味。一項基因研究顯示，不會飛的鳥類進化過程中早就失去了大部分的味覺。以下是 BBC 記者 Helen Briggs 發回的報道：

With their **waddling gait** and **lack of flight**, penguins have long been an **odddity** in the **bird kingdom**. Now **zoologists** have discovered they're unusual too in their sense of taste.

Most birds can't **detect** sweet things. But penguins have also lost the taste for **bitter** and **umami**, or **meaty flavours**. Scientists think fish would taste of little but salt to a penguin. And because they swallow fish **whole** they may not be able to **discern** flavours at all.

They say the **puzzle** could be explained by the penguins' **evolution** in the **extreme** cold of Antarctica.

## Questions

1. What flavour can't be tasted by most birds?
2. How many flavours have penguins lost over time?
3. What do scientists say fish might taste like to a penguin?
4. True or false? *Scientists believe the development of penguins' sense of taste has been affected by the weather.*

## Vocabulary and definitions

<b>waddling</b>	(身体)摇摇摆摆的
<b>gait</b>	步态
<b>lack</b>	缺少
<b>flight</b>	飞翔的能力
<b>oddity</b>	奇特 (现象)
<b>bird kingdom</b>	鸟王国
<b>zoologists</b>	动物学家
<b>detect</b>	尝到
<b>bitter</b>	苦味
<b>umami</b>	鲜味
<b>meaty</b>	肉味
<b>whole</b>	整个的, (指整条鱼被吞下)
<b>discern</b>	辨别
<b>puzzle</b>	谜, 难题
<b>evolution</b>	进化
<b>extreme</b>	极端的

## Answers to the questions

1. What flavour can't be tasted by most birds?

**Answer: Most birds can't taste sweet things.**

2. How many flavours have penguins lost over time?

**Answer: Three. They have lost the ability to taste sweet, bitter and meaty flavours.**

3. What do scientists say fish might taste like to a penguin?

**Answer: They say fish would taste mainly of salt to a penguin.**

4. True or false? *Scientists believe the development of penguins' sense of taste has been affected by the weather.*

**Answer: True. They say penguins' evolution could be affected by the extreme cold in Antarctica.**