MEET THEM AT PLUMPTON PARK ZOO

RED GOLDEN PHEASANT

Chrysolophus pictus · *also called golden pheasant*

Teacher & Student Fact Sheet · **© 2026 Plumpton Park Zoological Gardens Inc.**
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Fast facts

ANIMAL GROUP	Bird (pheasant family, Phasianidae)
NATIVE REGION	Central and western China
HABITAT	Woodland and forest edges
DIET	Omnivore: grain, seeds, leaves, berries, invertebrates
LENGTH	20 to 30 inches
WEIGHT	2½ to 3½ lb
LIFESPAN	5 to 6 years in the wild
CLUTCH	4 to 12 eggs; 22 to 23 days to hatch
STATUS	Least Concern



Photo: Plumpton Park Zoo

Did you know?

- Males have a golden crest and feathers of orange, black, brown, blue, green, yellow and scarlet.
- Golden pheasants are called ruffed pheasants because males spread a “cape” around their necks.
- Females are mottled brown, which hides them while they nest on the ground.
- Golden pheasants can make short, fast flights, but they spend most of their time on the ground.
- Chicks hatch covered in down and can move about right away.

Words to know

Crest: A tuft of feathers on top of a bird’s head.
Courtship: How an animal attracts a mate.
Incubation: Keeping eggs warm until they hatch.
Mottled: Marked with spots or patches of color.

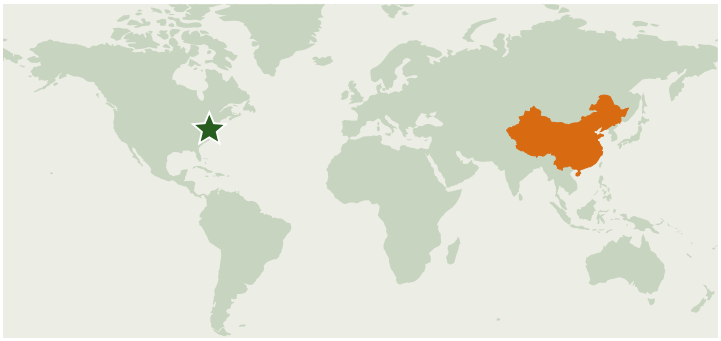
Think about it

1. Why is the golden pheasant called a ruffed pheasant?
2. What does the male do with his cape during courtship?
3. Why are female golden pheasants brown instead of bright?
4. How many days do the eggs take to hatch?
5. Where do golden pheasants live in the wild?

Draw it

Draw a male red golden pheasant spreading his cape. Label his golden crest, his striped orange-and-black cape and his scarlet underparts.

Where it lives in the wild



Lives in the wild ★ Plumpton Park Zoo, Rising Sun, MD

STANDARDS · GRADES 3–4 **WRITTEN FOR GRADES 3–5**

Maryland and Delaware (NGSS): **3-LS4-2 · 4-LS1-1 · 3-LS1-1**
Pennsylvania (STEELS): **3.1.3.F · 3.1.4.A · 3.1.3.A**

Draw here

Learn more: plumptonparkzoo.org/birds/red-golden-pheasant/ · **Sources:** Paignton Zoo; British Trust for Ornithology; Plumpton Park Zoo records.
Supports Maryland and Delaware (NGSS) and Pennsylvania (STEELS) standards: 3-LS4-2 (3.1.3.F) · 4-LS1-1 (3.1.4.A) · 3-LS1-1 (3.1.3.A)
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RED GOLDEN PHEASANT

Before and after your visit

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Before you visit · 5 minutes

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Predict: where in the wild does the red golden pheasant live?

Circle one (or more if it lives on more than one):

Africa | Asia | Australia | Europe | North America | South America

2. Predict: what does it eat?

☐ plants ☐ other animals ☐ both

3. Word hunt: find these words on page 1. Put a check by each one you already know.

☐ Crest ☐ Courtship ☐ Incubation ☐ Mottled

Pick one word and write what it means in your own words:

_____

_____

4. My question: one thing I want to find out when I see the red golden pheasant.

_____

_____

At the zoo · look closely

Watch for one minute. What is it doing?

☐ resting ☐ eating ☐ moving ☐ watching ☐ with others

Draw or describe one body part that helps it survive, and say how it helps.

Draw here

After your visit · talk it over

1. Check your prediction. Native region: Central and western China. Was your guess right?

☐ yes ☐ no ☐ partly

2. Diet check. The fact sheet says: Omnivore: grain, seeds, leaves, berries, invertebrates. What did you learn about how it finds or eats food?

_____

_____

3. Discuss with a partner, then write your best answer.

• What does the male do with his cape during courtship?

_____

• Why are female golden pheasants brown instead of bright?

_____

4. Exit ticket.

One thing I learned: _____

One thing I still wonder: _____

ADJUST IT

Grades K–2: talk and draw instead of writing; read the questions aloud. **Grades 6–8:** add evidence from the fact sheet and the animal page to every answer.

Learn more: plumptonparkzoo.org/birds/red-golden-pheasant/ · Fact sheet page 1 has the fast facts, map and vocabulary this page refers to.

Grades 3–4 · Maryland and Delaware (NGSS): **3-LS4-2 · 4-LS1-1 · 3-LS1-1** · Pennsylvania (STEELS): **3.1.3.F · 3.1.4.A · 3.1.3.A**

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