



Hey, have you ever spotted a bird with a zebra-like pattern on its wings and a brilliant bright red cap? That's our friend, the Gila woodpecker! These unique fellows are medium-sized woodpeckers with a round head, straight pointed bill, and a stiff, spiky tail which they use for support when they're pecking away. They have striking black and white bars on their wings and tail, and don't forget to look for that dash of red on the heads of the males!

Now that we've met our winged buddy, let's fly off to its home. These birds are residents of the hot and dry desert areas of the southwestern United States and Mexico. Their favorite hangout spots are the giant cactus plants, known as saguaros, where they drill holes to nest. Fun fact, these holes later serve as homes for other desert animals too, talk about being good neighbors!

Speaking of being good neighbors, what do you think these birds like to snack on? Their diet mainly consists of insects, but they also enjoy a mix of fruits and berries. Sometimes, they can even be seen sipping nectar from cactus flowers, just like hummingbirds! And during the breeding season, both mom and dad share the responsibility of feeding the little ones.



In the world of birds, these woodpeckers have some cool features that set them apart. Unlike many other woodpeckers, Gilas have a very special relationship with humans as they often nest in telephone poles and are even known to visit bird feeders. Also, their tongue is long and sticky, perfect for snatching up those tasty bugs! So next time you spot a bird with a funky pattern and a red cap, you'll know that's our friend, the Gila woodpecker, one of the desert's most interesting residents.





**Solve each problem.**

**Use the article to answer the question.**

- 1) What color cap does the Gila woodpecker have?
  - A. Red
  - B. Purple
  - C. Green
  - D. Blue
  
- 2) How are Gila woodpeckers like good neighbors?
  - A. They sing beautiful songs
  - B. They share their food
  - C. They leave their holes for other desert animals to use
  - D. They protect other animals
  
- 3) What human-made structures do Gila woodpeckers nest in?
  - A. Mailboxes
  - B. Barns and sheds
  - C. Telephone poles
  - D. Chimneys and roofs
  
- 4) What giant plants do Gila woodpeckers drill holes in to nest?
  - A. Oak trees
  - B. Palm trees
  - C. Bamboo plants
  - D. Saguaros
  
- 5) What distinguishes male Gila woodpeckers from females?
  - A. A dash of red on their heads
  - B. A long, colourful tail
  - C. Bright, bold feathers
  - D. Their larger size
  
- 6) Where does the Gila woodpecker live?
  - A. On the coastlines of Australia
  - B. In the rainforests of South America
  - C. Desert areas of the Mexico
  - D. In the cold tundras of Siberia
  
- 7) What kind of tongue does the Gila woodpecker have?
  - A. Short and rough
  - B. Short and spiky
  - C. Long and sticky
  - D. Long and smooth
  
- 8) Who shares the responsibility of feeding the little ones during the breeding season?
  - A. The eldest baby woodpecker
  - B. Only dad
  - C. Both mom and dad
  - D. Only mom
  
- 9) What do Gila woodpeckers mainly eat?
  - A. Meat
  - B. Insects
  - C. Seeds
  - D. Grains
  
- 10) What do Gila woodpeckers use their tongues for?
  - A. To drill holes in cactus
  - B. To carry their young
  - C. To snatch up bugs
  - D. To pick up twigs

**Determine if the statements is something the animal would say (W) or it is not something the animal would say (N).**

- 11) "Not only do I eat insects, sometimes I enjoy sipping sweet nectar from cactus flowers. It's my special dessert."



- 12) "You see the holes in the saguaro cacti? Yes, we made those. We're quite the carpenters, aren't we?"
- 13) "You see that flash of red on my head? If you do, then you're looking at a male, that's me!"
- 14) "I only eat nectar from cactus flowers during the breeding season."
- 15) "I'm an insect lover, that's my favorite meal!"
- 16) "Only females feed the little ones, dad is responsible for making nests."
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- 18) "I have been known to use telephone poles for nesting."
- 19) "My tongue isn't just long, it's sticky too! It's the perfect tool for catching wiggly insects."
- 20) "Sometimes some other animals use the holes I made as a home."
- 21) "I prefer damp and cool climates, the desert is too hot for me."
- 22) "My meal is quite varied, I enjoy nibbling on a mix of fruits and berries when I'm not catching insects."
- 23) "I don't really like cactus, they're too prickly for me."
- 24) "Unlike some birds, my tails isn't fluffy, it's stiff."
- 25) "I live in a cold and wet environment."
- 26) "My tongue is short and slippery."
- 27) "I have a beak that's sharp and straight, perfect for drilling into cactus plants!"

**Determine if the statement is a fact or opinion based on the information in the article.**

- 28) Other animals may use the holes drilled by Gila woodpeckers in cactuses as homes.
- 29) It's interesting how both mom and dad Gila woodpeckers share the responsibility of feeding their young ones.
- 30) Gila woodpeckers create holes in saguaro cactuses to make nests.
- 31) The ability of Gila woodpeckers to drill holes in saguaro cacti is remarkable.
- 32) Male Gila woodpeckers have a dash of red on their heads.
- 33) The Gila woodpecker's long, sticky tongue is a very impressive adaptation.
- 34) Both male and female Gila woodpeckers feed their young.
- 35) Gila woodpeckers inhabit the desert regions of the southwestern United States and Mexico.
- 36) The red cap on a gila woodpecker is definitely the most beautiful feature of any bird.
- 37) The zebra-like pattern on Gila woodpeckers' wings is incredibly beautiful.

**Determine if the statement is true or false.**

- 38) Gila woodpeckers can be seen sipping nectar from cactus flowers.
- 39) The female Gila woodpecker is responsible for feeding the little ones.
- 40) Gila woodpeckers have a long and sticky tongue.
- 41) Gila woodpeckers live in cold and icy regions.
- 42) Gila woodpeckers drill holes in cactus plants to live in.





- 65) They use their strong beaks to drill holes into cacti, it's phenomenal!
- 66) The Gila woodpecker is known to share its cactus home with several other bird species, it's extraordinary!
- 67) Even in the harsh desert environment, Gila woodpeckers thrive, which is quite remarkable!
- 68) It's hard to believe that Gila woodpeckers line their nests with grass and feathers!



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|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1. <u>    <b>A</b>    </u>      | 26. <u>    <b>false</b>    </u>   | 51. <u>    <b>A</b>    </u>             |
| 2. <u>    <b>C</b>    </u>      | 27. <u>    <b>true</b>    </u>    | 52. <u>    <b>C</b>    </u>             |
| 3. <u>    <b>C</b>    </u>      | 28. <u>    <b>fact</b>    </u>    | 53. <u>    <b>declarative</b>    </u>   |
| 4. <u>    <b>D</b>    </u>      | 29. <u>    <b>opinion</b>    </u> | 54. <u>    <b>exclamatory</b>    </u>   |
| 5. <u>    <b>A</b>    </u>      | 30. <u>    <b>fact</b>    </u>    | 55. <u>    <b>exclamatory</b>    </u>   |
| 6. <u>    <b>C</b>    </u>      | 31. <u>    <b>opinion</b>    </u> | 56. <u>    <b>exclamatory</b>    </u>   |
| 7. <u>    <b>C</b>    </u>      | 32. <u>    <b>fact</b>    </u>    | 57. <u>    <b>exclamatory</b>    </u>   |
| 8. <u>    <b>C</b>    </u>      | 33. <u>    <b>opinion</b>    </u> | 58. <u>    <b>declarative</b>    </u>   |
| 9. <u>    <b>B</b>    </u>      | 34. <u>    <b>fact</b>    </u>    | 59. <u>    <b>interrogative</b>    </u> |
| 10. <u>    <b>C</b>    </u>     | 35. <u>    <b>fact</b>    </u>    | 60. <u>    <b>exclamatory</b>    </u>   |
| 11. <u>    <b>true</b>    </u>  | 36. <u>    <b>opinion</b>    </u> | 61. <u>    <b>declarative</b>    </u>   |
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| 24. <u>    <b>true</b>    </u>  | 49. <u>    <b>A</b>    </u>       |   |
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