

Which bird beak is best?

There are six bowls each containing one of the following “food types” – **Juice**, **Marshmallows**, **Worms** (pieces of wool hidden in a sand mixture), **coloured rice** (mixed with normal rice), **Cheerios** (or similar), **plastic marbles** (floating in water)

In the chart below identify which beak shape is best suited to retrieving which “food type” from the list above. To make it more challenging, and using the bird list in the page below, which bird is most likely to have a beak shape that is best suited to retrieving a certain food?

Type of beak shape	Food type	Bird
Straw		
Scissors		
Chopsticks		
Tweezers		
Forceps		
Strainer		

Consider:

Long slender beaks are best adapted for probing flowers in order to suck out the nectar.

Shorter slightly hooked beaks are designed for ripping flesh away from bone. Sharp and pointed beaks helps them to grab the prey. It is extremely strong and powerful.

Insect eating birds have short, slender, tweezer-like beaks that enable them to grab insects out of the air and pick insects and spiders off leaves. In addition they can *probe* between the crevices of tree bark to find their multi-legged meals.

Chisel-like beaks helps a bird to bore into barks and selectively consume the insects. They help the bird hand pick *specifically* which insect they would like.

A seed eater needs a strong beak for cracking seeds. They can slice and crunch through a seed’s outer shell.

Some birds have beaks that so not allow them to be selective. They have to scoop up often more than they need in order to get their meal!



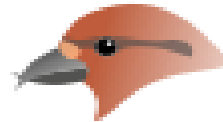
Generalist



Insect catching



Grain eating



Coniferous-seed eating



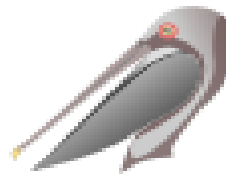
Nectar feeding



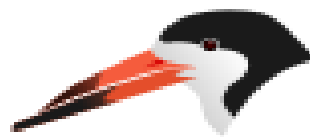
Fruit eating



Chiseling



Dip netting



Surface skimming



Scything



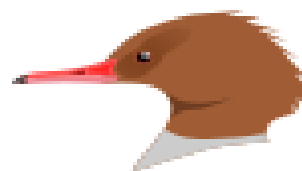
Probing



Filter feeding



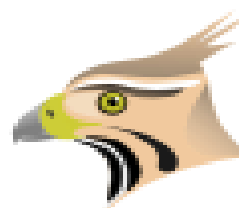
Aerial fishing



Pursuit fishing



Scavenging



Raptorial