

# ANIMAL OF THE MONTH

Stephenson's Natural History Museum (Since 1906)

## EMU (*Dromaius novaehollandiae*) Flightless Bird

Second-largest living bird by height, after its ratite relative, the ostrich.

### Distribution:

- Endemic to Australia where it is the largest native bird and the only extant member of the genus *Dromaius*.

### Habitat:

- Inhabited in inland as well as near the coast particularly savannah, woodland and sclerophyll forest
- Adapted to arid conditions.

### Facts:

- Body Mass: 36 – 40 kg
- Body Length: 1.8 m
- Soft-feathered, brown, long necks and legs, and can reach up to 1.9 m (6.2 ft) in height.
- Life Span up to 35 years in zoos, 10 to 20 years in the wild

### Fun Facts:

- They have two sets of eyelids one which they use for blinking and one to keep out the dust.
- Emus are good swimmers and don't mind taking a dip in a pond or lake.
- The first occurrence of identical bird twins was discovered in the emu.
- More than 600 places in Australia are named after the emu.



- An emu's body contains 3 gallons (13.6 liters) of oil, used in lotions, soaps, shampoo, and health care products.
- It forms breeding pairs during the summer months of December and January, and may remain together for about five months.
- It lays several clutches of eggs in one season.

### Nutrition:

- Omnivores usually feed on a variety of native and introduced plant species as well as insects.

### Status:

- Least Concern (Population Stable)