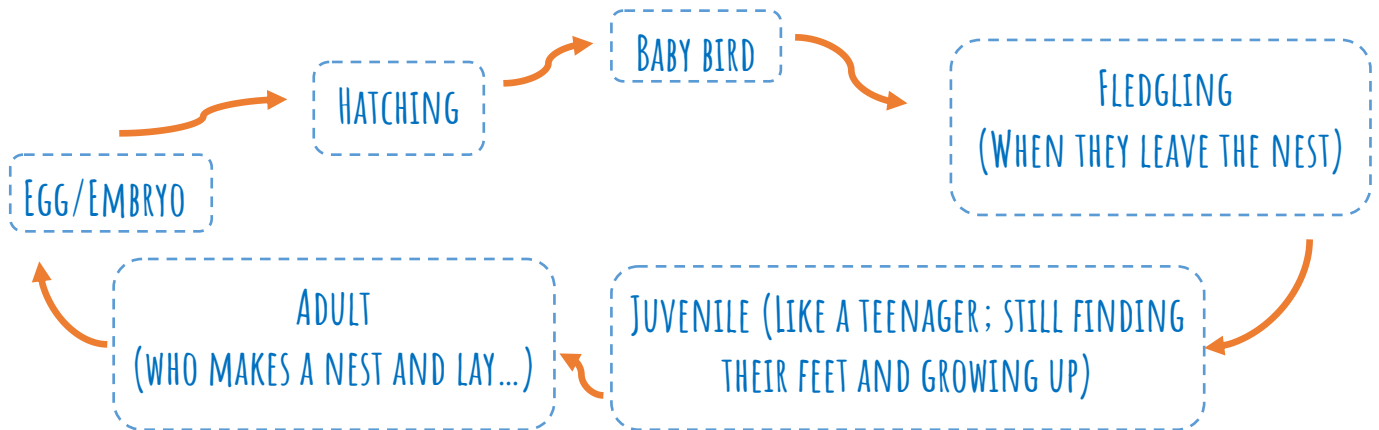


LIFE CYCLE STRETCHES

Every living thing has a life cycle. For birds, it goes like this:



This is a never ending cycle, because as one bird comes to the end of their life, another is always hatching!

HERE'S A 'LIFE CYCLE' OF STRETCHES TO PRACTICE:

Remember to keep breathing evenly when you're stretching, and to keep your neck muscles nice and relaxed.



In the egg. Eggs have to be incubated to grow properly - this means either one or both of the parent birds sit on the eggs in the nest to keep them nice and warm.



Hatching. stretch your arms forward to hatch! Chicks have a hook at the end of their beaks called an egg tooth to help them break through the egg's shell. This falls off as they get older and the rest of their beak gets stronger. When chicks hatch, they barely have any feathers, and might not even be able to see yet!



Be a baby bird - raising your head for food, then snuggling into the nest. Chicks are like human babies; they need a lot of looking after. They can't feed themselves, and have very soft feathers called down.
(Move between these two poses slowly to stretch your spine!)



Crouch in the nest, then stretch out your legs to become a **fledgling**, keeping your hands on the floor. Young birds are called fledglings when they start to explore the outside world; they still rely on their parents, but have grown the feathers and muscle needed to learn how to fly.

Then curl your spine up to standing to **grow** into a Juvenile bird



Cycle your arms to practice flying - **Juvenile** birds have left the nest for good, but are still a bit awkward - they need more practice at flapping! Swing your arms up and around, keeping your shoulders nice and loose, and bending your knees as you do so.



Build your nest. When a bird matures to **adulthood**, they grow their proper feathers (Called plumage) and start looking for a good place to build a nest of their own.

And then the cycle starts all over again!

Show us your life cycle stretching in our shared gallery, and then learn more about Moorhens' life cycles by making a pop-up poster with Sally!