

Peafowl

Find out more at:

<https://www.peacocksuk.com/>



The peafowl include three species of birds in the genera *Pavo* and *Afropavo* of the Phasianidae family, the pheasants and their allies.

There are two Asiatic species and one African species.



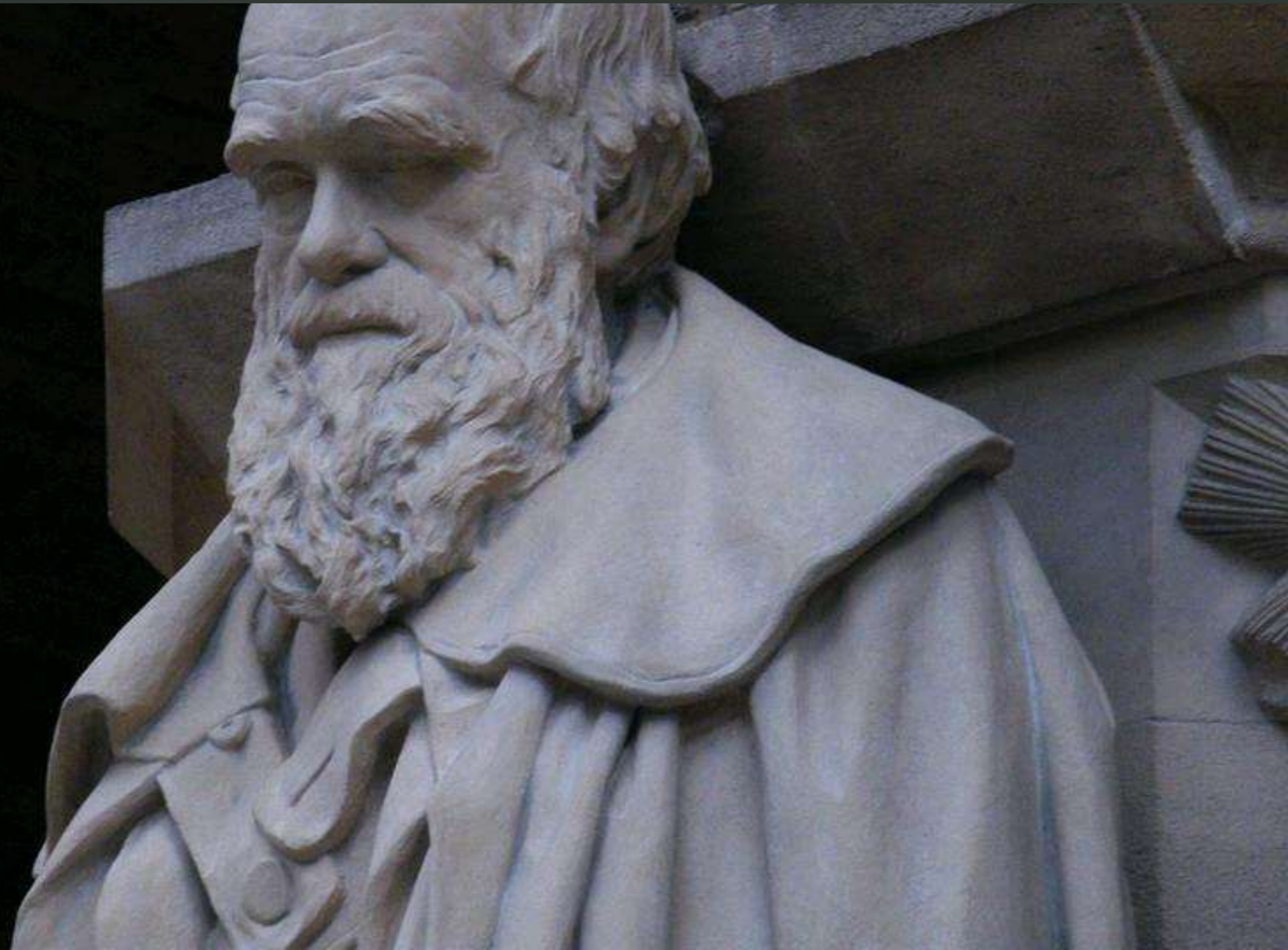


Male peafowl are known for their piercing call and their extravagant plumage.



The latter is especially prominent in the Asiatic species, who have an eye-spotted tail or train of covert feathers which they display as part of a courtship ritual.

Charles Darwin suggested they served to attract females, and the showy features of the males had evolved by sexual selection.



Plumage

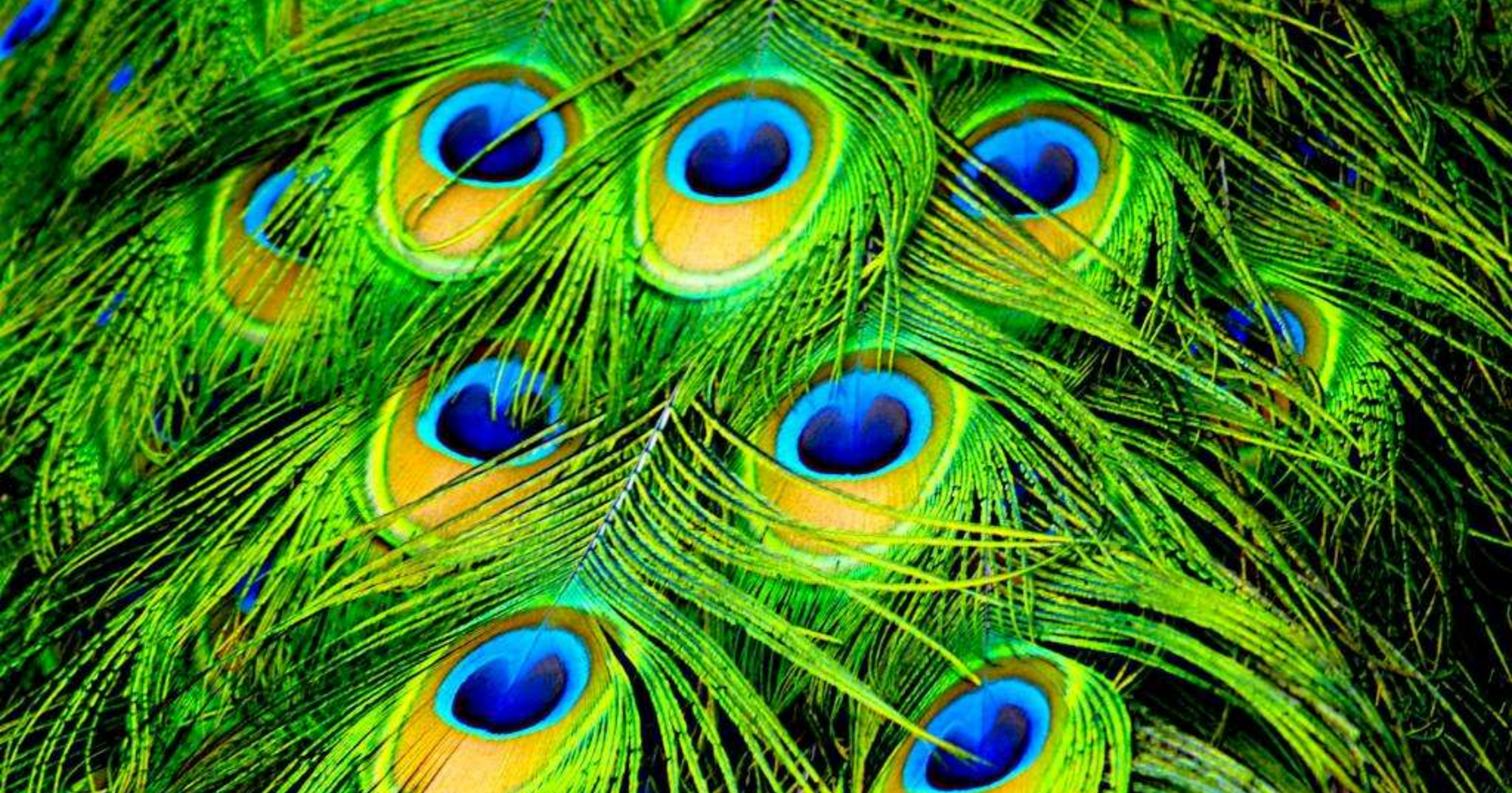


The Indian peacock has iridescent blue and green plumage.





The peacock tail, known as a train, consists not of tail quill feathers, but highly elongated upper tail coverts.



These feathers are marked with eyespots,  
best seen when a peacock fans his tail.

**Behaviour**



Peafowl are forest birds that nest on the ground, but roost in trees.

All species of peafowl are believed  
to be polygamous.



In common with other members of the Galliformes, the males possess metatarsal spurs or thorns on their legs used during intraspecific territorial fights with other members of their kind.

**Diet**





Peafowl are omnivores and eat mostly plant parts, flower petals, seed heads, insects and other arthropods, reptiles, and amphibians.

Wild peafowl look for their food scratching around in leaf litter either early in the morning or at dusk.





They retreat to the shade and security of the woods for the hottest portion of the day.

**Cultural significance**

In Hinduism, the peacock is the mount of the Lord Kartikeya, the god of war.



The peacock displays the divine shape of Omkara when it spreads its magnificent plumes into a full-blown circular form.





Peacock feathers also adorn the crest of Lord Krishna, an avatar of Lord Vishnu, one of the trimurti.

**Gastronomy**





During the Medieval period, various types of fowl were consumed as food, with the poorer populations consuming more common birds, such as chicken.

However, the more wealthy gentry were privileged to less usual foods, such as swan, and even peafowl were consumed.

On a king's table, a peacock would be for ostentatious display as much as for culinary consumption.

For more information on peacocks visit [www.peacocksuk.com](http://www.peacocksuk.com)