

# Penguins Are Like People

Penguins love a good crowd! If you've ever seen them at the zoo, you may have noticed how they huddle close together, like a little pack. Did you ever wonder why?

Most penguins seek out other penguins. They seek out their birth homes, too! You could say a penguin is a creature of habit. Once a year, penguins form large groups called **colonies** when they return to the land to mate and to nest. Colonies can have thousands of members. Penguins usually make their colonies near the place they were born. In fact, they will travel far and wide, even crossing the ocean, to return home!



Within colonies, penguins build **families**. First, penguins find **mates**. Mates are a male penguin and a female penguin that have babies together. Penguins stick closely to their mates, often mating with the same partner for life. Mates communicate feelings to each other by calling, flapping their wings, and touching.



Penguin mates also form close relationships around their nest, a mound of rocks, twigs, or grass where baby penguins, called **chicks**, are hatched. Mates work together to care for their chicks and take turns tending the nest. While one parent goes to feed, the other watches the nest. When he or she returns, the parent who has eaten first regurgitates, or spits back up, its food for the chicks to eat.

Penguins are very much like people. They form communities, find mates, and raise families.