



# A HOOPOE SAYS OOP!

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*A cow says moo, and a sheep says baa. But what do the ibex, hyrax, and other critters native to Israel say? (We bet you can already guess what a hoopoe says!)*

## JEWISH CONCEPTS

For a tiny sliver of desert land, Israel is home to a remarkable variety of wildlife. The animals in the book – some of which may be new to readers – are all indigenous to this part of the world, and their very diversity contributes to a rich and bustling ecosystem. The hoopoe is especially important to Israelis because it was chosen as their national bird in 2008. To learn more, visit [pjlibrary.org/hoopoe](http://pjlibrary.org/hoopoe).

Israel is a democratic state, so it's only natural that the process to pick a national bird be democratic, too. Bird lovers narrowed the feathered field down to 50 nominees, and the hoopoe took the title with 35% of the vote. It had stiff competition: there are more than 500 recorded species of birds in Israel! Birds must like it there—around 500 million of them pass through Israeli skies every year. “For such a small country, that’s a world record,” said Israel’s late prime minister Shimon Peres. “Today more than ever we need green scenery, fresh air, and the beautiful, multicolored birds that flock here.” The hoopoe almost seems aware of its lofty status, doesn’t it? With its fluffy crown and long, pointy beak, this little bird carries itself with a regal air. People may pronounce the word “hoopoe” differently, but when a hoopoe opens its beak, it still has only one thing to say: *oop!*