

8 The photograph below shows a greater flamingo.



Magnification $\times 0.1$

The greater flamingo is one species of flamingo.

Greater flamingos are large, wading birds found in Africa.

They are filter feeders. They feed on microscopic organisms in very salty, alkaline lakes.

Very few other organisms can survive in these lakes.

Below are some more facts about greater flamingos:

- young adults are whitish-grey in colour
- older adults have pink pigments (colours) in their feathers
- the pink pigments come from the carotenoids in the food that the flamingos eat
- the carotenoids are broken down into the pink pigments by the liver
- glands near the base of the tail feathers also contain these pigments
- in the breeding season, the flamingos spread secretions from these glands over their feathers.