Idioms with Bird Imagery
An activity of "A little bird comes under the wings of the Bugun tribe"

"A little bird comes under the wings of the Bugun tribe" (page 17, *What's Up* July 2024) tells us about an Indian tribe protecting an endangered songbird. In other cultures too, humans have a soft spot for birds. You can see this in how we use bird imagery in our speech. For example, there are many English idioms referring to birds. Here are ten such idioms with their meanings. Browse through the list.

- **birds of a feather flock together** (*people of similar interests tend to be friends*)

- **rule the roost** (*to lead the group*)

- **the canary in the coal mine** (*something which alerts people to danger*)

- **a bird in hand is better than two in the bush** (*having one thing for sure is better than aiming for two but with no guarantee of getting either*)

- **pecking order** (*clearly defined rank of importance in a group*)

- **wing it** (*doing something through guesswork, without preparation*)

- **ruffle someone's feathers** (*upset or annoy someone*)

- **flown the coop** (*escaped to freedom*)

- **like water off a duck's back** (*having no negative impact*)

- **swan song** (*an artist or performer's final piece of work*)

Complete each sentence below with one of the idioms. Adjust its grammar if needed.

1) Anxious not to _____ during his first day in his new school, Akash was careful to be polite and pleasant to all.

2) Everyone starts from the bottom, but the hope is to gradually ascend the _____.

3) Friendship apps can help shy students find friends with similar hobbies online. After all, _____.

4) The concert was White Blue's _____. No wonder their fans were in tears.

5) In my family, it is my grandmother who _____. It may be because she is the oldest family member, with the most experience.

6) Amirah knew not to let the bullies get to her. She treated their insults _____.

7) Mosses and lichens are said to be _____ for urban pollution. Their bright colours dull in the presence of poor air quality in cities.

8) Darn, I did not know that the container had a hole. My pet cockroach has _____.