

Penguin breeding cycle



Cut each strip and put the events in the correct order

There are no nesting materials on the ice. The male is given the egg to look after.
He keeps it warm resting on his feet and covered by a layer of skin.

In April after the sea ice has reformed emperor penguins meet up with their lifelong mate.
If they haven't bred before, they find one.

After forming a breeding pair the emperor penguins mate
and eventually the female produces one egg.

Penguins wander the colony, singing their songs and performing courtship behaviours.

In early December the chicks are nearly as big as their parents.
The young begin to grow real feathers and start to lose their downy covering.

By September the chicks need a lot of food so both parents go out to find food.
When the young are left at the colony they huddle together.

The females return to the colony in July. They find their mate by calling.
The female now takes care of the egg or newly hatched chick.

Around January to February emperor penguins have finished their moult.
They return to sea to fatten again in preparation for the next breeding season.

Both parents look after the young chick as it grows a thick cover of down and gets bigger.

It is time to moult. This is when they shed old feathers and grow new ones.
At this time the feathers are not waterproof so they cannot go out to sea.

Around the end of May females leave the colony to feed.
The male stays behind and incubates the eggs.

Once the young has feathers the parents leave to fatten up for their moult.

It takes 65–75 days for the eggs to hatch and in that time the father penguins have not eaten.
They survive the winter by using up their body fat.

The chicks are very small when they hatch.
They have a thin layer of fluffy down so they need their parents to keep them warm.