

AFRICA TALES

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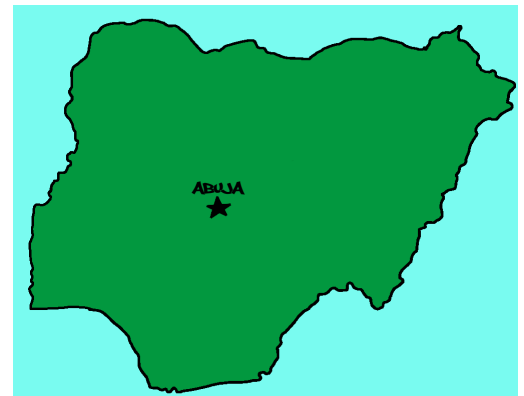
JOS

Jos (JAHS) is an Abyssinian roller, from the country of Nigeria. His name is also the name of a large city there. He is a bold, adventurous bird, and even though he is small, he is very brave. He is a very pretty bird, so sometimes he is vain about how he looks. He wears a smart bowler hat, of which he is very proud.

Abyssinian rollers are a kind of bird found in Africa, in countries just below the Sahara Desert. They are beautiful birds, mostly bright blue in color, with purple and brown in their wings. They are also very brave—if any animals or people come into their territory, the rollers will dive at them from the sky, spinning and rolling in the air to chase them away. Sometimes rollers will even fly into a forest fire so that they can eat the bugs that are running away from the fire! Even though they are very pretty birds, they don't make a pretty sound. They make a noise that sounds like "gak!" or "aargh!"—like a crow.



Nigeria (nai-JEER-ee-ah), officially the Federal Republic of Nigeria,



is a country in West Africa. The capital city of Nigeria is Abuja (ah-BOO-jah). Nigeria has more people than any other country in Africa, and is the seventh most populated country in the whole world. Although the official language is English, 510 different languages are spoken in Nigeria, and the most common languages are Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. In the north of the country, the main religion is Islam; in the south the main religion is Christianity; and all through the country, there are people who still follow old tribal religions. These groups have a hard time getting along with each other, so Nigeria is not always a peaceful place. Lately, Nigeria has become well-known for making movies—the place where they are made is called Nollywood.

The currency in Nigeria is called the *naira*.