

## It's a bird, it's a plane, it's a robot bird (w/ video)

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(PhysOrg.com) -- The great thing about robots is that they come in all shapes and sizes. Of course, that is also one of the creepiest things about robots too. You never know what is going to be a robot these days. There are people shaped robots, there are robots that are designed to explore the depths of space. That bird that you see on the building. It could be a robot too.

The robot bird, who has been given the to-the-point name of SmartBird,

was shown off by robotics company Festo. Festo is a robotics company that seems to enjoy making bots that are shaped like animals. They have previously created both a [robotic elephants trunk](#) that is sensitive enough to grab items, and a set of [robot](#) penguins that have learned to avoid each other.

The SmartBird design is based on a real life bird, a herring gull, who is able to take off, with the help of an on board motor. Then the wings begin to flap. Once they get beating at the right speed, the wings begin to imitate the way that real [birds](#) fly. The front edge of the wing twists, and generates thrust, and the tail acts the same way that a rudder would, steering the bird in different directions.



Who knows, maybe this remote controlled gull will be the spy bot of the future. One, slightly more pragmatic goal may be to co-opt the wing technology to create what are known as 'stroke wing generators', which can use this same motion in order to generate power from water. So, this little bird may actually be green.

**More information:** [www.festo.com/cms/en\\_corp/11369.htm](http://www.festo.com/cms/en_corp/11369.htm)  
via [IEEE](#)

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