

A Silly Stork Story

The Silly family is a family of storks, and as you'll see, they really live up to their name. It's hard to say which member of this family is the silliest, so see what you think after you read about some of their antics.



On the left is Maria the mother, next to her is Savina, her daughter, to her right is Dimitar her brother. At the end, standing in profile, is Stephan, the father.

This family picture was taken right after Dimitar had played a joke on his family. He'd found a rubber band on the road and wove it into their nest. He's strumming it in this picture, trying to convince his family that it was a magical vine that made music when you plucked it with a wing. Sure enough, when Dimitar gently pulled on it a few times and the notes made his sister and father laugh.

But after the picture was taken, Dimitar told his sister that if she plucked the magical vine with her beak, it would play an entire song. When Savina pulled hard on it, the rubber band snapped back and flipped her out of the nest!

The next day Savina flew to a home near their nest and found a very colorful sweater hanging on a wire in the yard along with some other clothing. Savina loved all the pretty pieces of yarn and decided they would make the family nest very beautiful. She pulled a red strand out and flew back to the nest, carefully weaving it among the sticks. This was followed by yellow, purple, green, and blue

pieces of yarn. When Maria, Stephan and Dimitar returned from a day of fishing in the Struma River, their home was so colorful they almost didn't recognize it.



The Struma River in southern Bulgaria

Maria Silly decided to braid a red strand through her feathers. Her husband Stephan decided to start flying with a blue piece of yarn to the Struma River so Dimitir could find him if they became separated. He had so much fun flying around with the piece of yarn, he started bringing it wherever he went.

The Silly family live in southern Bulgaria and the people there are very patient with the storks. In fact, storks are considered by the Bulgarians to represent hope. Still, when the woman that owned the sweater saw that it had been reduced to just a few strands, she was very upset.

"I knitted that sweater for my son! When I find out who did this, they are really going to regret it!"

The next day, the woman's son was walking to school when he saw the colorful nest. He told his friends that the colorful nest was created from his sweater.

"I always hated that sweater. I've got to find a way to thank those storks."

"Hey, look at that big one pulling on a rubber band," the boy's friend said.

"It's like a toy for them. Maybe that's what you should give them to thank them for taking apart your sweater."

Over the next few days, the boy searched for rubber bands in his father's big desk and at school. He collected seven different rubber bands, including a long, red rubber band and a short yellow one. His friend found a very broad, blue band in his grandfather's barn, holding two pieces of wood together. His grandfather couldn't figure out what had happened to the rubber band.

The boys were puzzled about how they could get the rubber bands into the stork's nest. They didn't want to attach the bands to arrows because those could hurt the birds. Finally, the boy that owned the sweater decided to put the rubber bands on the clothes line.

"Those birds went there once for nesting material, they'll come get these too."

Sure enough, a few hours after they put the bands on the line, Savina swooped down and brought the bands back to her nest one by one. She let Dimitar place the bands throughout the nest, each one stretched between two sticks. After he had them all set up, each member of the family learned how to play them. They even learned how to play some songs they heard the humans sing. In the picture below, the Silly family is singing a song that Stephan composed. The other birds in the area used to ignore the Silly family but they grew to like the concerts they often heard coming from the very colorful nest that was the Silly family's home.



The Silly stork family singing a silly song