

# Avian Adventures

GRADES: K-2

## Key Words and Definitions

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**PREENING** : grooming with the beak, especially by rearranging the barbs and barbules of the feathers and by distributing oil.

**PERCHING** : to rest on something safely, away from the ground.

**PREDATOR** : animal that obtains food by hunting and eating other animals.

**PREY** : animal eaten by a predator.

**HABITAT** : environment where a plant or animal naturally lives and grows.

**MIGRATION** : seasonal movement of animals from one region to another in search of warmth, food and habitat.

**COMMUNITY SCIENCE** : a type of science in which everyday people collect and share data with a larger community, including scientists.

*Look for keywords—**BOLDED**—throughout this lesson extension!*

## Activity 1: Community Science Bird Count!

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*One, approximately 40-minute session; pre-visit*

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Students sharpen their observational skills as they participate in a nationwide community science project.



## MATERIALS

- [Bird count data form](#)
- [Local bird images](#)
- [eBird App](#)
- Pencils
- Clipboards
- Counter (if available)

## PROCEDURE

Create an account for your class on eBird.com or by downloading the eBird app.

Share with students that they are going to study and protect birds by participating in something called **COMMUNITY SCIENCE**. Take a moment to define this term. Add that one way to participate in community science is to observe birds in their habitat, count them and share that information. This helps scientists keep track of birds and protect them better!

Before going out to count, go over the best practices for finding birds (i.e. slow and quiet movement—open ears and eyes). Discuss common bird behaviors like **PREENING**, **PERCHING**, flying, hunting **PREY** and hiding from **PREDATORS**. Being aware of such behaviors helps prepare your students to find birds. Lastly, show some images of local bird species (i.e. American crow, American robin, blue jay, grackle, European starling, house sparrow, rock dove/pigeon, mourning dove).

Bring students outside (schoolyard, nearby park or surrounding neighborhood) for a bird walk. Students can identify and record the birds that they see using either the eBird app or the provided data collection form.

NOTE: Students can count birds all year long. This can be on a daily or weekly outing to see if there is a difference in the number/kinds of birds in different seasons. Listed in the resources section is a data form for The Great Backyard Bird Count that occurs each February. Students can use the form as a guideline, and you can adjust it as needed for younger grades. The most important sections to keep are species, estimated number, time of day and location. The class can then submit the data online.

## SOURCES

Del-Colle, Andrew. "Get to Know These 15 Common Birds." *Audubon*, Audubon, 31 Jan. 2018, [www.audubon.org/news/get-know-these-15-common-birds](http://www.audubon.org/news/get-know-these-15-common-birds).

"Great Backyard Bird Count." *GBBC*, Cornell University, 2014, <http://gbbc.birdcount.org/>.

"eBird." *eBird*, The Cornell Lab, 2018, <http://ebird.org/home>.



## Activity 2: "Anti-Strike" Decals

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*One, approximately 30-minute session; post-visit*

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Students take action to protect local birds by making "anti-strike" window decals.

### MATERIALS

- Colored contact paper
- Markers/other decorating materials
- Safety scissors
- [Bird templates](#).

### PROCEDURE

Begin by asking students to share some memories from their fieldtrip to Wave Hill. Then ask: why might a city like New York be a good place for travelling birds to live? Why might it be dangerous? Identify window strikes as a serious threat to birds. It is very difficult for birds to see windows as they fly; they actually see the reflection of the outdoors in the window and think they are flying through more open air. As a result, birds can fly into windows, causing them very serious injuries. Each year, more than one billion birds are injured by flying into windows!

Let the class know that you are going to make your classroom windows bird-safe. Show students that by drawing on colorful contact paper and sticking it onto the inside of your classroom windows, they can alert birds to the presence of the windows and keep them safe.

Give students time to trace templates, cut out their decals and decorate them. Then, peel and place them on classroom windows.

### SOURCES

"Printable Bird Templates." *Printable Shield Template*, <http://patternuniverse.com/category/bird/page/2/>.

### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

[PBS Bird Migration Game](#)

"Migration Challenge." *PBS Kids*, WGBH Educational Foundation, 2017, [http://pbskids.org/plumlanding/educators/activities/pdf/MigrationChallenge\\_FAA\\_Eng\\_Span.pdf](http://pbskids.org/plumlanding/educators/activities/pdf/MigrationChallenge_FAA_Eng_Span.pdf).



### Cornell "Feathered Friends" Curriculum

"Free Download: Feathered Friends." *BirdSleuth K-12*, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, 2019, <http://dl.allaboutbirds.org/feathered-friends#ga=2.55760107.1791183912.1549297041-1686598645.1546974080>.

### Fixin' To Teach Bird Beak Investigation

Robinson, Courtney. "Get Your Own Food! A Bird Beak Adaptation Activity." *Fixin' to Teach*, 1 May 2016, [www.fixintoteach.com/2016/05/get-your-own-food-bird-beak-adaptation.html?sref=pi](http://www.fixintoteach.com/2016/05/get-your-own-food-bird-beak-adaptation.html?sref=pi).

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### How Birds Fly (Video For Kids)

"How Birds Fly? - The Dr. Binocs Show | Best Learning Videos For Kids | Peekaboo Kidz." *YouTube*, Peekaboo Kidz, 24 Aug. 2018, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=cg007y9JIE&feature=youtu.be](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cg007y9JIE&feature=youtu.be).

### Migratory Birds (Video for Kids)

"Migratory Birds | The Dr. Binocs Show | Learn Videos For Kids." *YouTube*, Peekaboo Kidz, 22 July 2016, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=jLzprml1l2o&feature=youtu.be](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jLzprml1l2o&feature=youtu.be).

### Bird Migration (Video for Educators)

"Bird Migration, a Perilous Journey - Alyssa Klavans." *YouTube*, TED-Ed, 17 Sept. 2013, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q-mMMpl\\_T8o&feature=youtu.be](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q-mMMpl_T8o&feature=youtu.be).

### Project Beak (General Bird Information)

"Project Beak: Bird Education & Awareness for Kids." *Project Beak*, Interactive Media - Nebraska Educational Telecommunications, 2019, [www.projectbeak.org/](http://www.projectbeak.org/).

