

Birding Basics

Activity Packet



Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge

Grade Level: 3-6

Activities

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- Download: [Birding Basics Field Guide](#)



Video Links

- Book Reading: "About Birds" <https://youtu.be/RTvXpv2JzDI> (with [audio descriptions](#))
- How to be a Bird Detective <https://youtu.be/xVY0DYTzxTQ> (with [audio descriptions](#))
- All About Bird Habitats <https://youtu.be/3hdBI-EWKDI> (with [audio descriptions](#))
- Go Birding with Nicole https://youtu.be/4_igxhrji-8 (with [audio descriptions](#))

Resources

- Learn common bird songs, https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/mcvmagazine/bird_songs_interactive/index.html
- Download the Merlin bird app, <https://merlin.allaboutbirds.org/>

Other Activities

- Minnesota Birds Coloring Book, <https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/features/dnrkids/mn-bird-coloring-book.pdf>

Birding Basics

Make a Bird Feeder



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Gather these materials:

- Toilet paper rolls
- Peanut butter, sunflower butter, lard, or shortening
- Bird seed
- Butter knife or popsicle stick for spreading
- String, twine, ribbon, or yarn



Instructions:

1. Clean off any extra bits of paper from your toilet paper roll, then use your knife or popsicle stick to cover it in a thin layer of peanut butter; take care not to add too much.
2. Put some bird seed on a plate and then roll the peanut butter-covered tube in the seed until completely covered with seed.
3. Thread a piece of string through the middle of the tube, and then tie the two ends together so that the tube can hang from a tree branch.
4. Hang from a tree branch and watch for birds to enjoy!
5. When the birds have finished their buffet, compost your bird feeder.

Birding Basics

Start a Birding Journal



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Gather these materials:

- Nature Journal, notebook, or blank paper
- Pencil/crayons/colored pencils/markers
- An area to observe birds out your window, in your yard, or at a local park
- Binoculars (optional)
- Bird field guide (optional)

Birding Journal:

1. Find a “sit spot” where you can observe birds. This could be from a window in your home, out in your yard, or at a local park. Sit quietly and use your eyes and ears to observe birds.
2. At the top of your page record the date, location, and weather.
3. As you sit, record whatever you’d like about the birds you are seeing or hearing. You can write down the size, shape, and color to help you identify them later, draw pictures, write bird poetry, or write about how you are feeling. It’s all up to you!
 - If you have been journaling for more than one season compare your observations: have the types of birds changed? Have their behaviors changed?
 - What are the birds doing? Are they eating? What are they eating? Are they singing?

May 20, 2020

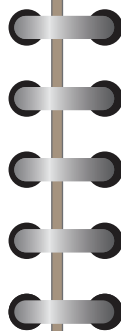
My backyard 65°F Sunny

I saw a cardinal eating seed from my bird feeder! It was bright red.

I heard a lot of birds singing but I couldn't see where they were. I want to learn more bird calls!

Birds I saw today:


1 cardinal
2 robins eating worms
a small yellow and black bird
an eagle flying overhead



Birding Scavenger Hunt

Date: _____

Check the box when you find an item below



Identify 3 different birds




Flying



On the ground




Colorful bird



In a tree/bush



Singing or calling



Pair of birds




Bird eating




All or mostly black bird



Group of 3 or more birds



A bird nest



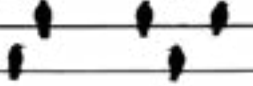
Bird that swims




A raptor



Feather



On a wire, building, fence, or lamppost



Bird preening



Birding Basics

Be a Bird Detective



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Gather these materials:

- A pen or pencil
- Bird mystery cases - [PDF](#) or [DOCX](#)
- [Birding Basics field guide](#), your own bird field guide, [Merlin ID app](#), or [The Cornell Lab's online bird guide](#)

Instructions:

1. Watch the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge video "[How to be a Bird Detective](#)"
2. Download the bird mystery cases. You can print them, or fill them out on your computer.
3. Download the Birding Basics field guide to do your research.
4. Choose a bird case, read the description and then answer any questions you can just from the description (hint: you will not be able to answer all of them!)
5. After you have gathered information, use the Birding Basics field guide or your own field guide to determine what your mystery bird is.
6. Using the new information you've found, fill out the rest of the questions.
7. Use [The Cornell Lab's online bird guide](#) to find an interesting fact about your mystery bird for the last question.
8. Great job, detective! Why not try another case?



Bird Word Search

Scan the letters below to find bird-related words.

S N P M R A N E V L N Q L F K F A L L P
 O N V F E W E G A Z D M I G R A T I O N
 N Q V E D O S R Z G D J Z V K U P N B Y
 G S A A T O T W C O R M O R A N T B D R
 S F P T A D U T R U M P E T E R S W A N
 G S F H I D A M E R I C A N C R O W Q D
 K S Q E L U N K F H T V C L A J Y E G P
 C U E R E C G V S E E D S C C I M X R R
 P G C S D K T B I N O C U L A R S H E Y
 S A N D H I L L C R A N E L N U Y L W T
 K H H T A P D I T M M G R T A Z B N R G
 T Q X A W E K H P M Q I P W D R Z O I W
 R P V Q K E E E G R Y S U J A I D Z S O
 C H A E Z J L P Y W H V L W G V N Y M R
 E J W I L D T U R K E Y W N O K R F N M
 T P E L I C A N E N X O F O O Y Q S P S
 L G T C A R X R Q M L Q B D S Q U F U B
 E T K U C T G U G L W I N G E B A A S J
 B M U P B A L D E A G L E B I K T W W F
 Q T G A R Y O Y Y E O F H F K V Z P L Z

nest

feathers

migration

songs

seeds

worms

northern cardinal

yellow warbler

red-tailed hawk

sandhill crane

trumpeter swan

American crow

Canada goose

chickadee

cormorant

pelican

bald eagle

wild turkey

wood duck

binoculars

wing

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