

## Birds, Nests and Eggs

Spring has sprung and nesting season is here for many bird species. Birds are busy gathering materials or claiming territory, and preparing to raise their young. Nests are often only used for one nesting season, but some birds like robins will re-



turn to the same neighborhood every year to build their nests. If there is an old nest, they may add new nesting material to the old one. It's OK to look at the nests, but please do not touch the nest, eggs, or young. Adult birds can get very territorial and aggressive.

Some of the common

birds around Northeast Ohio have a variety of nest types. Robins tend to use mud, grass, twigs, and even scraps of rags or string. The females usually lay 4 green-blue eggs just under the size of a quarter. After sitting on the eggs for 12-14 days, the young hatch and will be ready to fly in 9-12 days.



Northern Cardinals make a nest of twigs, roots, bark, and leaves that is lined with grass or animal hair. They nest early and often. Sometimes they have 4 broods by



the end of summer, each with 3 or 4 eggs in them. Cardinal eggs are about the size of a quarter and bluish-white with reddish-brown spots. The female sits on the eggs for 12-13 days and young cardinals fly 10 days after hatching.



Blue Jays build a shaggy-looking nest of sticks and line it with grass, feathers and have been known to add shiny materials to adorn the border. Females lay 4-5 eggs that are green with brown spots that are a



little bigger than a quarter.



Incubation is done by both the male and female for about 17 days. After another 17 days, the young start to fly.

Black-capped Chickadees are cavity dwellers that look for hollow trees or nesting boxes. They line it with moss, plant down, hair, fur, and wool. There are usually 5-8 penny-sized eggs that are white with red-



brown speckles. After sitting 12 days, the eggs will hatch and leave the nest 2 weeks later.



## Books about Birds, Nests and Eggs

Here are some books to learn more about birds, eggs and their nests:

**Birdsong** by Audrey Wood

**Hatch** by Roxie Munro

**Birds** by Jill Bailey

**The Book of Eggs** by Mark Hauber

**Birds & Their Nests** by Linda Tagliaferro

**What Will Hatch?** By Jennifer Ward

**An Egg is Quiet** by Dianna Hutts Aston

**Mama Built a Little Nest** by Jennifer Ward

**Eggs and Chicks** by Fiona Patchett

**Guess What is Growing Inside This Egg** by Mia Posada

**Egg: Nature's Perfect Package** by Steve Jenkins

**Nest** by Jorey Hurley

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# Birds, Nests and Eggs Activities and Crafts



## Paper Bag Nests

Grab a pair of scissors and a paper bag. Begin by trimming off the top of your paper bag. This will remove some of the bulk, making the bag easier to work with. You'll want to leave at least leaving 3 or 4 inches of the bottom part of the bag to work with. Now, taking care so you don't

rip the bag, fold or roll the top edge of the bag outward. Continue to loosely roll the bag until you get to the bottom. Give it a squeeze here and there to shape your nest.

## Nest Hand prints

Using brown paint, paint the side of a child's arm including the side of the pinky and front of the ring finger. Press down on a piece of white paper, being sure to spread out the ring and pinky fingers to make branches. Then paint the palm and fingers of their hand and have them "place their nest" on the branch. Using blue or red paint, Have the child press their fingers up to the second knuckle in paint and then "put the baby birds in the nest". Add the eyes and beak to each bird.

N is for Nest



## Vanishing Egg Shell

Take a raw egg and put it in a glass bowl and cover it in white vinegar. Put in the refrigerator for up to 2 hours. The egg shell will dissolve. Be careful holding it, it is still a raw egg.

## Jelly Bean Color Matching

Look at pictures of real eggs with different colored spots.



Discuss with the children why eggs have spots (to help them camouflage in the nest). Cut out a big egg shape. Using crayons, markers or Dot-a-Dot's, have the children make spots on their egg (give them colors that match the jelly beans you have for them). Give each child a cup of jelly beans and have them match the colors of the jelly beans to the spots on the eggs.

## Colorful Birds

You will need a paper plate, glue, tissue paper, curly ribbon, construction paper and a stapler. Cut out or tear different colors of tissue paper for gluing onto your bird. Fold the paper plate in half and apply a thin layer of glue on the outside of your bird. Cut out a triangle of orange construction paper for the beak. Pick a color for your construction paper wings. Fold the paper accordion style along the long side to make long wings. Make an eye using white cut out circles and black marker dots. Glue an eye on either side of the folded bird body. Glue the fold of the paper plate into the fold of the paper plate. Cut a slit into the side of each of the bird bodies to insert the wings into the bird, so the paper can slide across to make the wings. Take a few lengths of curly ribbon and tie them together. Staple the "tail" into the opposite fold of the paper plate from the beak.



# Activities for Further Learning and Fun

## Bird Songs and Poems

### Eggs

Lots of animals come from eggs  
Some with fins  
And some with legs.

Some that chatter  
And some that cheep  
Some that fly  
And some that creep.

Some that slither  
And some that run  
Some with feathers  
And some with none.

Animal eggs can be quite small  
Or just as big as a tennis ball.

The animals here  
They're quite a few  
Hatch from eggs  
And lay them, too.



## BUILD A NEST

Tune: "The Hokey Pokey"

You weave some grass in.  
You pull some twigs out.

You weave some string in  
And you feather it about.

You build a lovely nest,  
Sturdy 'cause you know -  
That's where your eggs will go!

## Bird Snacks

### Rice Krispy Nests



Make a batch of rice Krispy treats according to package directions. Scoop a spoonful of the mix and put into a greased muffin pan (spray the spoon before scooping too). Press the spoon in the center of the treat to make an indent. Let cool. Fill with broken edible grass and egg shaped candies or blueberries.

### Noodle Nests

Boil a package of fettucine or linguine noodles. Once drained, add a small amount of oil or butter. Give each child a scoop of pasta and have them move the noodles around to create a nest suitable for a bird. Can use plastic eggs or a peeled hard boiled egg to put an egg in their nest. Enjoy!



### Egg snacks

Hard boil some eggs and have the children peel the eggs. They can cut



them in half to see the parts of the egg before they eat it. Add some carrot sticks to give the eggs feet or cut the

