

Beautiful Birds!

Birds can be seen and heard all around us when we step outside. Have you ever wondered "what kind of bird is that?" when you hear singing up in the trees?

Springtime is a very noisy time in nature as the birds work to set up their territory and compete to see who is the loudest. A lot of birds have songs that sound like they are saying words (mnemonics).

A Black-capped Chickadee sometimes sounds like it is saying its name "chick-a-dee-dee-dee-dee" or it might sound like it is saying "cheeeese-burger."



A Northern Cardinal sounds like it is saying "purdy-purdy-purdy" .

An American Robin sounds like it is repeating "cheer-up, cheer-a-lee, cheer-ee-o" .



A Tufted Titmouse sounds like it says a loud, whistled "peter-peter-peter".

A Blue Jay sounds like it is calling its name "jay-jay-jay" .



A White-breasted Nuthatch's song says "Yank-Yank" almost like it is laughing.

A Gray Catbird sounds very much like a cat in the bushes with a "Meuw-Meuw-Meuw"



Putting a name and a song to a face can really help as you start to listen to the bird chorus around you. It can be a fun outdoor activity with kids to sit around and listen for birds and make up words to what they are saying. Happy Beginning Birding!

Websites for young birders:

[National Geographic Backyard Birding website:](http://www.animals.nationalgeographic.com/animals/birding)

www.animals.nationalgeographic.com/animals/birding

[Project FeederWatch website:](http://www.Feed-erwatch.org) www.Feed-erwatch.org

[NWF Certified Wildlife Habitat website:](http://www.nwf.org/How-to-Help/Garden-for-Wildlife/Create-a-Habitat.aspx) www.nwf.org/How-to-Help/Garden-for-Wildlife/Create-a-Habitat.aspx

[Environment for the Americas website:](http://www.birdday.org) www.birdday.org

Birding Apps for your phone:
MerlinID (free)
IBirdLite (free)
Chirp! Bird Song (\$3.99)
AudubonBirdsPro (\$9.99)
IBirdPro (\$14.99)

Stories and Guides for Bird Exploration

Here are some books to help explore the world of Birds in the classroom.

[Little Green](#) by Keith Baker

[About Birds: A Guide for Children](#) by Cathryn Sill and John Sill

[Vulture View](#) by April Sayre and Steve Jenkins

[Two Blue Jays](#) by Anne Rockwell and Megan Halsey

[Make Way for Ducklings](#) by Robert McCloskey

[Riki's Birdhouse](#) by Monica Wellington

[Crinkleroot's Guide to Knowing the Birds](#) by Jim Arnosky

[The Birdwatcher](#) by Simon James

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Beautiful Birds continued...

Eggshell collage

Use food coloring to color crushed eggshells. Use a few different colors. (You can use eggshells from eggs you have used. There is no need to hard boil these egg shells.) Let your child glue the eggshells to a piece a paper, after the dye has dried.

Bird Collages

Have the children cut out pictures of birds from magazines, and glue them onto a piece of paper for a collage.

Bird Memory

Find bird stickers or cut out pictures of birds from magazines. Place 2 identical stickers or pictures on the left and right sides of an index card. Cut the index in half, cut the index card in half. You can use these cards to play memory.

Neighborhood Bird Walk

Next time you go for a walk pay special attention to the birds that you see. Name the ones you can for your child. For those you don't know, see if you and the child can come up with a name for it based on what you can see.

Cracking Eggs

Ingredients and Items needed: Yes! Real Eggs! Why not????? Provide bowls and lots of eggs and let the kids practice cracking open eggs! Children NEVER get to crack eggs! Ask the parents to each donate a dozen eggs. Use some of the cracked eggs to make scrambled eggs for a snack. Be sure that they wash their hands thoroughly before and after this activity. And take lots of pictures!

Rubber Egg!

You will need 1 egg (still in the shell, uncooked); a clear, glass jar and white vinegar. Gently pass the egg around for the children to feel. Ask them to describe the shell--how it feels, smells, looks, etc. Place the egg in the clear jar. Let the children smell the vinegar then cover the egg with vinegar. Ask the children what they think will happen to the egg. Write down any guesses. Within minutes, you will see gas bubbles surrounding the egg shell. Place it where the children can see it but instruct them to not touch or move the jar. In about 24 hours, you will be able to see through the egg (the vinegar disintegrates the eggshell!) and you will be able to pick up the egg and it will feel rubbery (Caution--it will pop if you squeeze it....just sayin' from experience!!).

Activities for Further Learning and Fun

Kookaburra Song

Kookaburra sits in the old gum tree
Merry, merry king of the bush is he
Laugh, Kookaburra! Laugh, Kookaburra!
Gay your life must be
Kookaburra sits in the old gum tree
Eating all the gum drops he can see
Stop, Kookaburra! Stop, Kookaburra!
Leave some there for me
Kookaburra sits in the old gum tree
Counting all the monkeys he can see
Stop, Kookaburra! Stop, Kookaburra!
That's not a monkey that's me

Bird Song *To tune of "Here we go round the Mulberry Bush"*

This is the way we scratch for worms, scratch for worms, scratch for worms.

This is the way we scratch for worms so early in the morning.

This is the way we peck our food, peck our food, peck our food.

This is the way we peck our food so early in the morning.

This is the way we sit on our eggs, sit on our eggs, sit on our eggs.

This is the way we sit on our eggs so early in the morning.

This is the way we flap our wings, flap our wings, flap our wings.

This is the way we flap our wings so early in the morning.

Snacks for the Birds:

Cookie Cutter Bird Feeders

3/4 cup birdseed; 1/4 cup water;

1 small envelope of unflavored Knox gelatin; twine or string; cookie cutters; wax paper.

Make a loop of twine and knot ends. Pour water into a pot, add gelatin and heat while stirring until the gelatin is dissolved. Add birdseed and mix. Place cookie cutters on wax paper. Fill 1/2 way with birdseed mixture. Place twine on top of mixture. Finish filling them with birdseed mix. Be sure to press the mixture down well and let them sit to dry. Flip them over from time to time so they dry faster. When dry, take out of cutter and hang outside!

Snacks for Kids:

Bird Nests

1/3 cup chocolate morsels

1 cup chowmein noodles

Candy bird eggs (jelly beans)

Melt chocolate morsels in a medium microwave safe bowl.

Add chow mein noodles to melted morsels and mix. Shape into a circle on wax paper.

Use a large spoon to make indentation in center.

Let nests harden.

Add jelly beans or chocolate eggs.

