

### **Birding Basics 3**

This activity is a good introduction to the world of bird watching. You never know what you might see going for a walk. Sometimes I'm not even expecting to watch birds, but they catch my attention. Birds can be fun to watch even if you don't know what they are. Sometimes, I know a bird because I've seen it before, either in a picture or photo or in real life.

Now get outside!

#### **Supplies:**

- A path or sit spot with birds
- Your better observer binocs
- A field guide to backyard birds
- A journal (optional)

#### **How To: field guide**

- by color
- Then look for markings

#### **To identify birds, you will need:**

- A path or sit spot with birds
- Your better observer binocs
- A field guide to backyard birds
- A journal (optional)

#### **To identify a bird:**

1. First, select on the bird you want to identify for at least a minute.
2. Notice the size of the bird. Sizes can range from smaller than a fist to as big as a cat.
3. Notice the color. Color can be "mostly" brown, black, white, gray, etc. or black with red markings on the wing.
4. Focus your attention on special features. Does the bird have a noticeably long tail? A white stripe above it's eye?
5. Try to identify the type of habitat the bird is in. Is it near the shore or river? Or is it in a neighborhood or park?
6. Describe what the bird is doing. Is it climbing a tree or hopping on a branch? Is it foraging on the ground? Is it swimming?
7. Become familiar with different Backyard Bird Calls
8. Consult an online tool or app to confirm what you think you found. Two helpful ones are: Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Merlin's Bird ID.
9. Remember, the goal is to become a better observer, not "win" a bird ID game!

Share your nature journal with us! [Facebook](#) or [Joy@acparks.org](mailto:Joy@acparks.org)

**Parent**

**Resources:**

John Muir Laws: <https://johnmuirlaws.com/>

Audubon Society: <https://www.audubon.org/news/easy-ways-get-kids-birding>

Audubon Field Ap: <https://www.audubon.org/app>

INaturalist: <https://www.inaturalist.org/>

Bird Watching: <https://www.birdwatchingdaily.com/beginners/getting-started/birdwatching-with-children/>

Audubon Birding: <https://www.audubon.org/birding/how-to-start-birding>

National Park Service: <https://www.nps.gov/articles/birding-for-beginners.htm>

The Bird School Project: <https://www.birdschoolproject.org/resources>

The School Garden Doctor: <https://gleaningthefield.org/2018/12/17/christmas-bird-count-celebrates-another-year/>

Become familiar with different <https://natureinnovato.com/2019/05/27/top-10-backyard-bird-calls/>

Cornell Lab of Ornithology <https://www.birds.cornell.edu/home/>

Merlin's ID. <https://merlin.allaboutbirds.org/>

Things to ask your kids.

1. Was it easy or difficult to find a birds with your eyes? Why?
2. Was it easy or difficult to find a bird by listening? Why?
3. What did your favorite bird look like?
4. What did your favorite bird sound like?
5. How many different birds did you see or hear?
6. Were you able to identify your bird?
7. What was your biggest surprise during this activity?