



Highlands-Cashiers LAND TRUST

"Saving Special Places since 1909"

Backyard Birding Adventures

Learn what to look for when identifying birds and practice identifying common birds in your backyard.



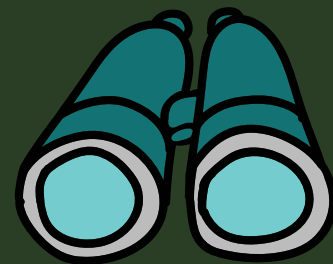
Anyone Can Bird Watch!

You do not have to be an expert to enjoy bird watching. It is an activity that anyone can do, in any place, and during any time of the year. Let's learn some tips on how to identify birds and learn about some of the residents that might live right in your own backyard!



Birding Supplies

Birds are shy! So when watching birds, make sure to stay as quiet and as still as possible so you don't scare them away. Here are some items that might help you find and identify birds:



Binoculars – Binoculars help narrow your focus and have magnifiers in them so you can view birds better from a distance.

Bird ID books – When just starting out, you may not be familiar with all the different birds you see, but the more you look at birds and match them to ID photos, the more you will start to recognize them.

Bird Feeders – You don't necessarily have to go far to find birds. Bird feeders can be used to attract birds to your yard. Just be careful because bird feeders sometimes attract other animals such as squirrels, raccoon, or even bears. You may have to bring the feeder inside at night or take it down if other animals start showing up!



Tips for Bird Identification

Each bird species is unique. Here are some things to keep in mind when trying to identify birds:



Sound – Each bird has a unique song or call.



Silhouette – Look at the size and shape of the bird.



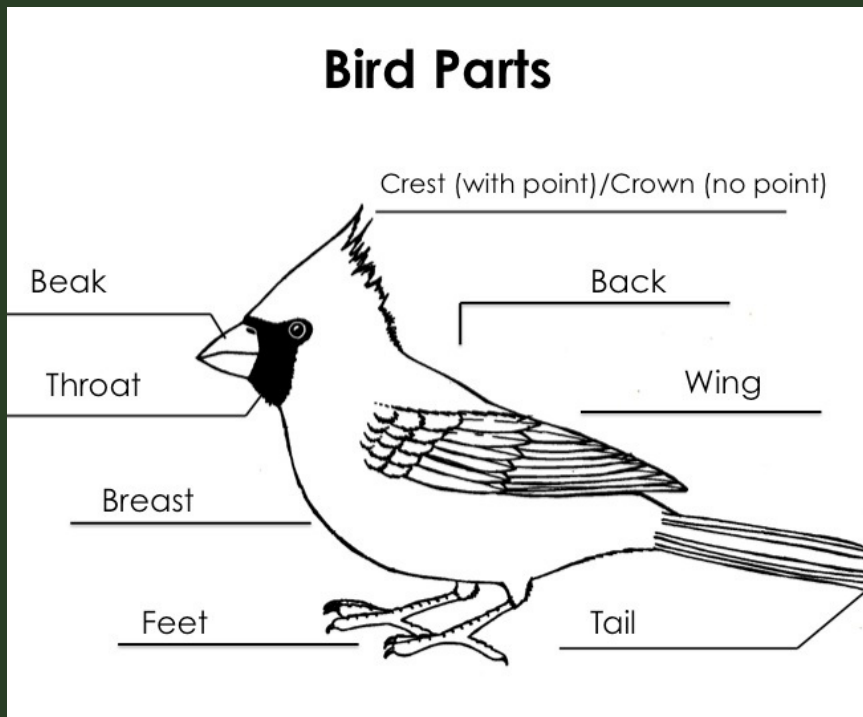
Plumage – Look at the color and color patterns of the feathers.



Habitat – Where did you see the bird?



Behaviors – What was the bird doing?



ACTIVITIES

Make Your Own Binoculars!



Supplies Needed

- 2 cardboard craft rolls, toilet paper rolls, or 1 paper towel roll cut in half
- Construction paper cut in half lengthwise
- String
- Stapler
- Tape or glue
- Hole puncher
- Stickers and/or markers for decorating

Instructions:

1. Glue or staple craft rolls together.
2. Wrap the paper around the cardboard rolls and glue or tape it to make it secure.
3. Punch a hole on the outside of each roll near one end.
4. Tie the string through each of the holes to make a neck strap.
5. Decorate your binoculars any way you like using stickers, markers, colored pencils, or anything else you would like to use.



PINECONE BIRD FEEDER

BIRD FEEDERS ARE LOVELY DECORATIONS THAT ALLOW US TO APPRECIATE AND FEED LOCAL BIRDS IN OUR OWN BACKYARDS! HERE IS A BIRD FEEDER YOU CAN MAKE AT HOME.

Ingredients:

- 1 Fallen Pine Cone
- 2-3 tablespoon (tbsp) Cornmeal
- 2-3 tbsp Peanut Butter
- 1 tbsp Flour
- Handfuls of Bird Seed
- Ziploc plastic bag
- 12 in. Piece of String
- Spoon
- Bowl

Adapted from:
Flying Wild, An Educator's Guide to Celebrating Birds

Bird Feeder Instructions



Tie a string to the end of the pinecone. Mix peanut butter, flour, and cornmeal together in a bowl. Use a spoon to smear the mixture all over the pinecone.

Place the pinecone in the plastic bag, allowing the string to hang out. Pour birdseed in the bag and seal it up. Coat the pinecone in birdseed, pressing the birdseed into the peanut butter. When you are done, remove it from the bag and hang the pinecone bird feeder in a tree.

Make sure it is high enough off the ground so that other animals won't get it. Enjoy birding!

How can you get more into Birding?

Participate in Community Science:

- eBird – You can use this online database on a computer or smartphone to record what birds you see and where and help scientists and researchers learn more about what birds are found where.

Learn from Online Resources:

- Cornell Lab of Ornithology
- National Audubon Society



Birding Bingo

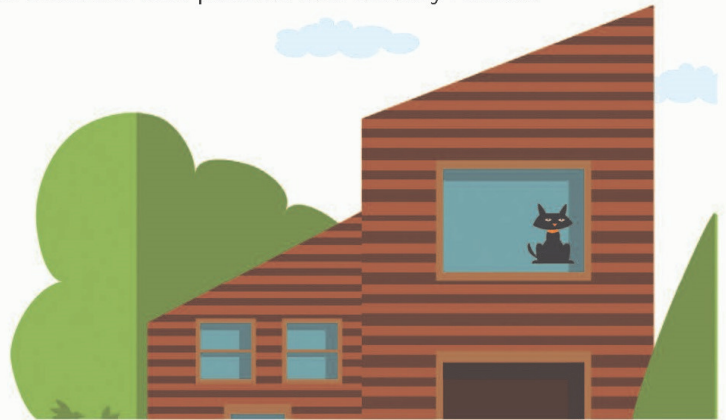
Use this handout as a guide to find four backyard birds in a row! Take a walk in your backyard, along a trail, or simply sit quietly in your yard or by a window. Wait, listen, and look. Morning is the best time to view birds because that is when they are most active.



How can you help Birds?

Be a Friend to Birds

Some birds live in your neighborhood year-round, some stay for a season, and others pass through once or twice a year on their seasonal migrations. Here are some actions you can take in your own yard, schoolyard, or neighborhood to make the best possible bird-friendly habitat.



1. Prevent Window Crashes

Stop birds from hitting windows by putting up screens, closing drapes and blinds, or sticking decals on the outside of the glass.

2. Keep Kitty In

Cats that go outdoors kill birds and don't live as long as indoor pets.

3. Go Native

Planting native plants provides birds with the foods they need, including fruits, seeds, and tasty bugs.

4. Water the Birds

Provide birdbaths and protect natural water sources in your yard. Be sure to replace the water regularly to prevent mosquitoes from moving in!

5. Let It Be

Leaving dead trees, fallen branches, and brush piles creates nesting habitat and provides birds with shelter to keep them safe from predators and bad weather.



6. Lights Out

Bright lights at night can confuse night-migrating birds, so close your curtains or blinds and turn off unneeded lights.

Birding Bingo

Photos from Cornell Lab of Ornithology:
www.allaboutbirds.org/guide



Blue Jay



American Robin



Carolina Chickadee



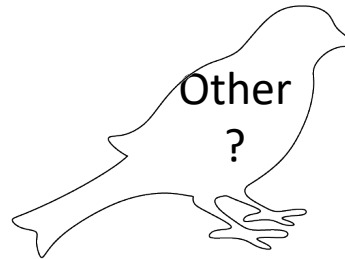
Carolina Wren



Eastern Towhee



White-Breasted Nuthatch



Northern Cardinal



Pileated Woodpecker



Song Sparrow



American Crow



Eastern Bluebird



Tufted Titmouse



Mourning Dove



Dark-Eyed Junco



American Goldfinch