Give Backyard Birds Something to Sing About
Educator Guide

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Surely the most watched and beloved of Canada's wildlife species are the birds we see in our backyards. Robins and woodpeckers, hummingbirds and goldfinches intrigue us with their antics or cheer us with their songs. We may take our birds for granted, yet they have a lot to teach us. They are often our first introduction to the ways of the wild.

Which species live in your area? What do they need to thrive? How can you improve their habitat? Engage students in learning about birds through observation, identification and research. Then put that learning into practice to help them solve problems for birds in their own neighbourhood!

This kit has been reviewed by Canadian educators and scientists. It is suitable for a wide range of elementary and secondary students.

Learning Outcomes
Students will:

1. Learn basic bird-identification skills.

2. Understand the challenges that birds face.

3. Learn about bird ranges, migration, and biodiversity.

4. Create maps as a tool to learn about and help birds.
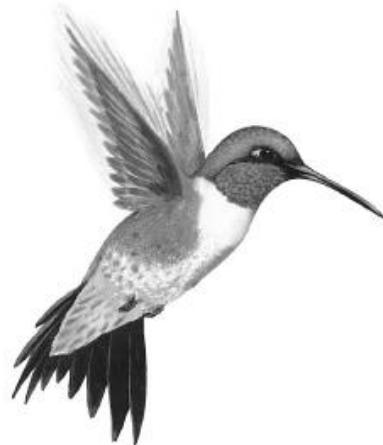
Learning Journey

Understand Birds in Your Community

- **Wingy About Birds** – Students develop their observational skills by looking for basic features of bird species.

- **Bird Banquets** - Students erect a platform birdfeeder and observe which foods are preferred by which birds.

- **Home on the Range** – Through research, roleplaying, and interviewing, students learn why birds live or range where they do.

- **Say It With a Song** – Students will become familiar with some common birdsongs and their meanings.

Understand Survival Needs and Challenges

- **Buddy Up to Birds** - Students will research different areas of Canada and become familiar with some species of birds that these areas support.

For additional resources visit:

CanadianWildlifeFederation.ca/Education

- **Map That Habitat** - Students select an area to map with birds in mind. They will map bird-friendly physical features, such as cavity nesting trees, food sources, sheltering trees, and water, as well as threats such as cats, pesticide-treated grass, and polluted water.

- **Migrators** - Students discuss various ways in which birds have adapted to winter, with emphasis on migration. Students will choose several migrators common to their area, then draw maps or murals tracing the migration routes.

- **Are We Disturbing Birds?** - Students will identify changes that have taken place in their community in the recent past. Based on their findings, they will suggest how the changes may have affected local birds and how to improve conditions for them through specific habitat projects or changes in land use policies. Older students could develop a map-based plan of recommended action.

- **Boost the Boreal Forest** - Students investigate the importance of the Boreal forest region to wildlife, and birds in particular, and organize a display to make others aware of their findings.

- **Community Survey for Birds** - Students will conduct a survey to determine what habitat elements for birds are available or missing in their community. Results will be distributed to survey participants to help spread awareness about habitat conditions for local birds.

Map Your Role for Birds in Your Community

- **Celebrate Birds!** - Students will complete a creative master map that is a mural, map, exhibit, and display all rolled into one! The master map will integrate what students have learned about birds.

- Now that students have a deeper understanding of birds, encourage them to take action in support of their conservation! Have them brainstorm projects they can do to enhance habitat in the backyards, schoolyards and communities, or search through CWF's library of **Conservation Projects** for ideas.

Vocabulary

Adaptation, beak, breeding range, cartographer, cartography, ecosystem, ecozone, fly, flyway, food, habitat, migration, range, shelter, space, territory, water, wings, wintering range

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