



## *The BLUES Go Birding Across America*

### Demonstration: What's your Wingspan

*(adapted from A Teacher's Guide to A Fly in the Sky)*

Objective: Children will understand the relative size of the birds in the book by comparing their wingspans.

#### Materials:

- Ball of string
- Masking tape
- Ruler or yardstick

#### Prep:

- Using the Field Guide information, cut pieces of string the length of each bird's wingspan. Not included in the Field Guide information is the Ruby-throated Hummingbird: 4 in., American Goldfinch: 8 in., and Northern Cardinal: 11 in.
- Use tape to label the string with the bird's name.

#### Directions

- Review the birds in the book with the children by looking at the illustrations. Identify each bird by name.
- Tell children that a bird's wingspan is the distance from one wingtip to the other. Ask a volunteer to hold out his/her arms. Have the child firmly pinch the end of a piece of string between the fingers of one hand while you unroll the ball of string to the fingers of the other hand. Cut the string and measure it. Explain that this is the length of the child's wingspan.
- Ask children to work in pairs to guess which bird from the book has the largest wingspan and which bird has the smallest wingspan.
- Show the children the illustration of the Bald Eagle. Tell them its wingspan is 80 inches. Have two children hold the ends of an 80-inch piece of string.
- Show the illustration of the Black-footed Albatross. Its wingspan is up to 85 inches. Have two children hold the ends of an 85-inch piece of string. Ask them to stand behind the eagle because its wingspan is longer.
- Proceed through the birds in the book, or you may only want to do selected birds. As children hold the string for the bird, they move to stand either in front of the "bird" with a wingspan larger than theirs, which will be behind the "bird" with the wingspan smaller than theirs. Birds with small wingspans will only require one child to hold the string.
- Conclude with the volunteer holding his/her own wingspan and finding the appropriate place among the birds.
- Once everyone is in place, have children say the names of their birds, beginning with the smallest wingspan (hummingbird) and ending with the largest (albatross).

For more teaching activities for *The BLUES Go Birding* visit [www.dawnpub.com](http://www.dawnpub.com).