



Gotta Have a Habitat

Introduction

In the book *Noisy Birds*, the author introduces students to 12 different birds. In this activity, students survey the school grounds for appropriate bird habitat.

Note:

- This activity is adapted from Bird Sleuth's Feathered Friends Activities, a collection of monthly lessons about birds. You can download an entire year of activities at www.birdsleuth.org/pennington
- The title of this lesson is also the title of a song by the Banana Slug String Band. www.bananaslugstringband.com

Materials Needed

- ◆ The book *Noisy Birds*
- ◆ Habitat chart to write on board, included in this pdf
- ◆ Map of school grounds, one per student
Teacher Prep
Draw a simple map of the school grounds that shows the building(s) and roads. Make copies

Common Core Standards (ELA K-3)

- ◆ Reading: Informational Text
 - Craft and Structure (K.1, 1.1, 2.1, 3.1)
 - Integration and Knowledge of Ideas (K.7, 1.7, 2.7, 3.7)

Procedure

1. Read aloud *Noisy Birds*.
2. Ask students what birds need to survive and list their responses on the board. Group their suggestions into four categories: food, water, cover (shelter) and space. "Cover" includes nesting areas, places to sleep or rest, and places to hide or escape.
"Space" includes the amount and kind of area needed to hunt, feed, and live as well as migration routes. Tell students that a "habitat" is a place that gives birds these four things that birds need to in order to survive.
3. Read aloud *Noisy Birds* again, having students listen for the four components of a habitat. Also look at the illustrations for habitat information. After reading each page, fill in as many categories as possible on the chart. Compare the kinds of food, cover, and space each bird needs.
4. Read the information about each bird in the back of the book and add information to the chart.
5. Divide the class into pairs. Give each pair a map and pencils. Have students spread out around the school grounds to draw on the map any sources of food, water, cover, or space for birds.
6. Back inside, have students compare their maps. Ask students what kinds of birds might be attracted to the school grounds. Ask if there is anything they could do to make their school grounds a better habitat for birds.

Optional Extension: Follow through on any habitat suggestions that are possible to do.

Next Generation Science Standards (DCI K-3)

- ◆ LS1: From Molecules to Organisms: Structures and Processes
 - A: Structure and Function
 - B: Growth and Development of Organisms
 - C: Organization for Matter and Energy Flow in Organisms
 - D: Information Processing
- ◆ LS4: Biological Evolution: Unity and Diversity
 - D: Biodiversity and Humans
- ◆ ESS3: Earth's Systems
 - A: Natural Resources

Fun Facts About the Birds

Birds make all kinds of sounds. Sometimes males sing songs to attract females. Other times they sing to keep other males out of the area. Females and males make sounds so they know where each other is while they are looking for food. Many birds make noises to scare off predators.



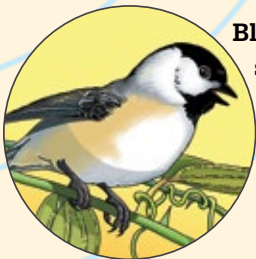
When **American Robins** hunt for food, they tip their head sideways. Are they listening for worms? No! One eye looks up for hawks. The other looks down for worms. One robin may eat 14 feet of earthworms a day.

Most birds sing in spring. But **White-throated Sparrows** also sing in winter. Look for the patch of white on the chin.



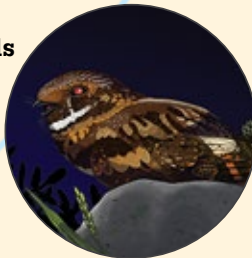
Yellow Warblers are small songbirds. They weigh less than a quarter. Sometimes they even get caught in an orb spider's web.

Barred Owls are nicknamed "Monkey Owls" because they make loud, monkey-like calls. They swallow small mammals whole. Then they cough up the bones and fur in a hard pellet. You can find the pellets at the bottom of a tree where they roost.



Black-capped Chickadees stash seeds to eat later. Each chickadee can remember thousands of hiding places. They like to come to bird feeders. You can even train them to take seeds from your hand!

Eastern Whip-poor-wills call at night. They can be hard to see. But in the beam of a flashlight you can see their eyes glow like fire. They hunt flying insects at dawn and dusk, catching them with their big, wide mouths.



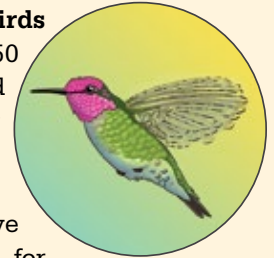
You can find **Mallards** paddling in lakes, rivers, puddles, and ponds. Look for the male's bright green head. And listen for the female's loud quack. The males make a quieter call.

Male American Woodcocks show off for females by doing a sky dance. In the spring they circle high in the air. The wind in their feathers makes a twittering sound. They end their dance with a steep dive to the ground.



White-breasted Nuthatches run up and down the sides of trees. Pinch your nose shut when you sing along with them in this book. You'll sound more like them!

Anna's Hummingbirds beat their wings 30-50 times per second. Hang a feeder filled with sugar water outside your window to get a close look.



House Sparrows have lived near people for hundreds of years. You'll see them wherever there are buildings. But you won't find them in natural places like forests.

Downy Woodpeckers are little birds that make a big sound. When they tap on hollow trees it's called drumming. The loud noise attracts females and warns other males to stay away.



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Bird	Food	Water	Cover	Space
American Robin				
White-throated Sparrow				
Yellow Warbler				
Barred Owl				
Black-capped Chickadee				
Eastern Whip-poor-will				
Mallard				
American Woodcock				
White-breasted Nuthatch				
Anna's Hummingbird				
House Sparrow				
Downy Woodpecker				

Handout: Bird Sounds

American Robin: Cheery up, Cheerio! Cheery up, Cheerio!

White-throated Sparrow: Oh Sweet Canada, Canada, Canada

Yellow Warbler: Sweet, sweet, sweet—I'm so sweet.

Barred Owl: Who Cooks For You? Who Cooks For Yooou-Allll?

Black-capped Chickadee: Chick-a-dee-dee-dee. Chick-a-dee-dee-dee”

Eastern Whip-poor-will: Whip-poor-WILL-whip-poor; WILL-whip-poor-WILL

Mallard: Quack. Quack. Quack-quack. Quack. Quack.

American Woodcock: Peeent..... Peeent.....Peeent.....

White-breasted Nuthatch: Yank...yank...yank-yank...yank...

Anna's Hummingbird: HMMMMmmmmMMMMMMmmmm...

House Sparrow: Cheerp Cheerp Cheerp

Downy Woodpecker: tap...tap....tap....tap...