



Bird Watching



ACTIVITY

North America is home to an incredibly diverse range of birds, from the majestic national icon—the bald eagle—to the remarkably resilient whooping crane. More than 800 bird species occur in the United States. Some live here year-round, others migrate here seasonally, and some just stop in on their migratory routes to other countries. Of these birds, dozens are listed on the U.S. endangered species list, facing threats such as climate change, habitat loss, pollution, and invasive species. The National Wildlife Federation works to defend the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, which provides protections for more than a thousand species.

Perhaps the easiest way to identify a bird is the presence of feathers—but they share several other characteristics too. Birds are vertebrates, meaning they have backbones. All female birds lay eggs, in which the young develop before hatching. These animals are warm-blooded and can regulate their body temperature. All birds have wings, but not all birds use them to fly. Penguins and ostriches, for example, do not fly.

Source: The National Wildlife Federation Wildlife Guide

GET STARTED

- **Sit in your backyard, on the balcony, or at a window at home and observe the birds you see.**
- **Make a list.**
- **Choose 2-4 birds from your list and learn more about them**

MY BIRD RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What do they eat?** _____
- What does their nest look like?** _____
- Do they migrate?** _____
- What is their conservation status?** _____
- What can you do to support birds in your community?** _____
- _____
- _____

Photo by: Carol DiQuilio



Downy Woodpecker
5¾" □ ♥



Tufted Titmouse
5½" ♥ □



Northern Cardinal
7¾" ♥

Dark-eyed Junco
5¼" ● ▲



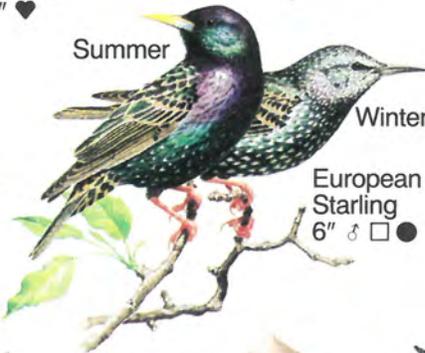
Evening Grosbeak
7¼" ♥



Mourning Dove ● ▲
10½"



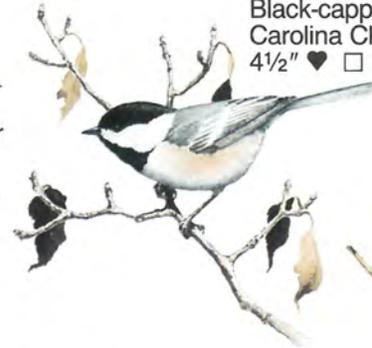
Blue Jay
10" ♥ ▲ □



Summer

Winter

European Starling
6" ♂ □ ●



Black-capped/
Carolina Chickadee
4½" ♥ □



House Sparrow
5¼" ● ▲



White-breasted Nuthatch
5" ♂ ♥ □



American Goldfinch
4¼" ♥ ★

John Sill



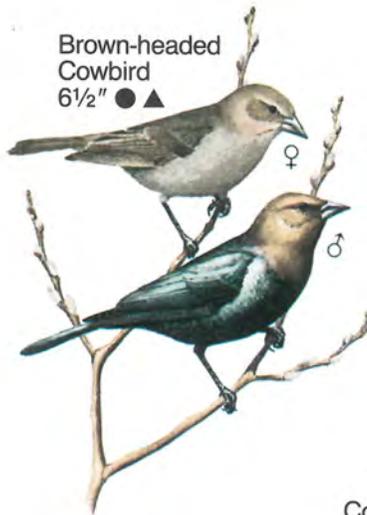
Bird Identifier

nwf.org/Eco-Schools-USA

- Food Preference Key
- ♥ = Sunflower Seed
 - ★ = Thistle (Niger)
 - = Millet
 - = Suet
 - ▲ = Cracked Corn
 - ◆ = Berries
 - * = Earthworms
 - = Insects



Purple Finch
5½" ♥ ★



Brown-headed
Cowbird
6½" ● ▲



American
Tree
Sparrow
5¼" ● ▲



Song Sparrow
5½" ● ▲



House Finch
5¼" ♥ ★



White-throated
Sparrow
5¾" ● ▲



Common
Grackle
11" ♂
▲ ●



Red-breasted
Nuthatch
4" ♂ ♥ □



Pine Siskin
4¼" ♥ ★



Hairy
Woodpecker
7½" □ ♥



Northern
Mockingbird
9" ◆ ■



Red-winged
Blackbird
7¼" ● ▲



American
Robin
8½" ♂ ◆ *

John Sill

For further information on how to make your home and neighborhood more attractive to birds, visit us online at nwf.org/Eco-Schools-USA



nwf.org

11100 Wildlife Center Dr.
Reston, VA 20190-5362

The Bird Identifier is a handy reference designed to help you identify 25 kinds of birds often seen around your home. To identify a bird, simply compare the bird you see with John Sill's beautiful and technically accurate illustrations. If you can't find it on the chart, it could be a young bird which sometimes has a distinctive plumage of its own, but, close inspection usually reveals its similarity to one or both of its parents. Depending on the time of year and your location in North America, there are a great many other species that you could see. To identify these will require the services of one of the several popular field guides.