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Bird Watching for Kids – Activities & Tips

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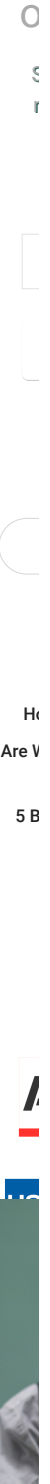


Birdwatching is a fun and educational pastime that the whole family can enjoy! Even young children can enjoy birding. To help them get started, we've compiled this list of tips and activities to make their introductory birdwatching experience more enjoyable. From binoculars and field guides to tracking migration patterns, these 10 tips will ensure that your kids have an incredible time while learning about our feathered friends.

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Backyard Birding Tips: Top Ten List

Depending on the age or ages of your children you might have to cater things either up or down to make it fun and interesting for them. However, most of the activities are perfect for kids ages 8 and up. Check out these top ten tips and activities to help your kids get started with backyard birdwatching.

1. Collecting Bird Feathers



Seeing bird feathers is one of the fascinating things to see for kids when birdwatching. When making a feather collection, you can take and save photos of different kinds of feathers while on a hike or just around the neighborhood and your yard. After that, you can compare their various colors, shapes, and sizes.

However, be mindful that collecting feathers is only allowed for nonmigratory birds not covered by the [Migratory Bird Act](#). In the United States, it is totally illegal to collect bird feathers from native migratory birds. It is best to limit your feather collection of domestic birds.

If your kids get curious about identifying from which type of bird your collected feathers came from, here are fun activities they can perform.

Identifying a feather under a microscope

The minutest details can be better seen when observed under a microscope. You can also ask your neighbors and family if they own ducks and chickens for your first specimens to examine.

Sketching a feather

After seeing what is under the microscope, ask your kids to sketch what they see. They can also add more details by coloring it using crayons and colored pencils.

Feather labeling

After finishing your kid's drawing, their next task is to identify the parts of the feather and label each of them. Feather labeling is a good way to learn about the parts and take note of their observations.

2. Collecting Bird Books



This is the best alternative to hunting for live bird specimens; people nowadays can now resort to collecting bird books. These could give great sightings, guides, realistic illustrations of birds, and can also be a great addition to your hobbies. The best thing is that you have access to them even when staying indoors.

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Crafting bird nests is a fun way for the kids to learn about the design and building of bird habitats. It is an exciting activity to be creative and be resourceful. They can also experiment with building a nest that can hold actual eggs. You might be surprised and even get baby birds in your nest!

The materials you can use are pom poms, cardboards, yarn, feathers, and string. You can also add more materials to this project's final texture and excitement. However, it is not meant to replace real natural made nests.

Here are the instructions for crafting a birds nest:

Step 1. Use the circular cut out of a cardboard box to serve the nest base.

Step 2. Use glue to spread all over the circle's outer edge to hold and stack the materials together.

Step 3. Plan the size of the nest, the color of the egg, and additional materials to use.

Step 4. Start layering the materials in a circle and then add some glue between the material rows.

Step 5. Use feathers to align the nest's insides. You can use single-colored or multicolored ones, depending on your preference.

Step 6. Put the pom poms in the eggs.

This project is a creative way for children to experiment and explore with different materials. It can also improve their motor skills and sensory play using various materials and colors.

4. Taking Bird Photos/ Creating a Photo Album



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Taking beautiful photos of birds used to require a great knowledge of your equipment. However, now the common iPhone can be sufficient to capture these beautiful creatures. For children they'll be satisfied just getting pictures, it won't matter so much about the technical factors like ISO, shutter speed and lighting.

If you as the parent want to get into Expert bird photography, it's is not that simple. Although there are many published articles online on doing this, they are not that detailed and informative to educate people, especially amateur ones.

The best camera to use for fast-action photoshoots is capable of handling a shutter speed of 1/2000 seconds that has six to nine frames per second. It also has to have a high camera buffer to produce large photo bursts.

After setting up your camera and other equipment, you have to locate your desired birds to take a photograph of. It is best to start with the typical birds like sparrows, robins, and finches. These birds are used to being around people and will not bother posing randomly and cooperating with your shoots. You can also learn new techniques and skills to take pictures of these birds while flying, eating, and staying on branches of trees or benches.

The most appropriate times to take photos and spot some birds are during early mornings and late noon. Early mornings are great because it is the time birds go out searching for food.

5. Identifying Common Types

Birds are found every day and everywhere. We can see them flying and hear them chirping. However, despite their omnipresence, not everyone can accurately identify what kind birds they are. Here is a list of the most common birds you can see in all places, even in your feeders and backyard.

North American Bird



These are medium-sized birds with gray-colored backs and orange bellies common in Alaska and the provinces of Canada, often hunting for worms and wandering around towns, forests, and parks.

Blue Jay



Blue Jays are one of the loudest birds that thrive in the eastern United States. They are very easy to spot because of their crest and vivid colors. You can also notice their black, blue, and white wing patterns. Some of the most distinct jays are present all year long with their light-scattering feathers.

Northern Cardinal



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You can familiarize yourself with bird songs and calls by making a survey of your surroundings and paying more attention to sounds that you have never heard of. Here are tips to help you easily identify bird songs.

Familiarize the details

As you listen to the bird songs, you can categorize them into parts, their varying qualities, pitch, tone, repetition, and rhythm while familiarizing them.

Listen closely

When hearing bird songs, put your mind to connecting between the tunes and the bird.

Seek expert help

Going on field trips, dropping by the bird clubs in your area, or seeking assistance from professional bird watchers can help as it may be a lot harder to master bird songs out of nothing.

Make a recording

Have several recordings and listen to them often. Bird guides on the internet also have a great collection of sounds that can be helpful.

Repeat it yourself

Because some songs can sound a lot like words, you can construct a mnemonic to help you remember them easily.

Use Merlin Bird ID's Sound ID Feature

After you finish a record of birds singing, you can utilize the [Merlin Sound ID](#), this free app has vast information about songbirds and let you effortlessly identify them.

7. Learn Your Backyard Birds



There is no doubt that almost everyone loves [watching birds](#), especially in the United States. If you want to learn about the most typical birds found in home backyards, here is the top 4 on the list. Remember birds native to your area might differ, but you can always find common birds in your state.

Mourning Dove

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American Goldfinch



This backyard bird are very easy to spot during the summer and spring because of their bright yellow and black colors. However, their coloration tends to go muted during the winter season. You can place thistle feeders in your backyard to attract them.

Ruby-Throated Hummingbird



This is everyone's favorite backyard bird because of their mesmerizing fast-flying wings. You can attract them by placing sugar-flavored water or planting nectar-rich flowers because they don't feed on seeds.

Black-Capped Chickadee



These birds are one of the friendliest you will find as they tend to land on your hand while feeding on a seed! The rest of the six chickadees are found in North America. Placing sunflower seeds in your feeders can attract them easily.

There are many more amazing North American birds including ducks, common loon, and owls. Watching these birds fly, learning about how they are affected by habitat climate change can really inspire your child in life and ultimate get them thinking about the world.

8. Hanging Bird Feeders





Setting out trees is one of the most vital parts of building a bird landscape. Trees are great for attracting various bird species, especially in your yard, as they provide all the important nesting sites, food, and water for birds.

Things to Consider When Choosing a Bird Tree

The next thing to do after knowing how important trees are is to know the tips on choosing the right tree for your bird-friendly landscape.

1. Pick suitable trees for your regional and soil conditions. Native trees will be the ideal option as they will thrive faster, be familiar to local birds, and grow healthier.
2. Choose at least three various trees good for every season to keep attracting birds and provide them shelter and food all year round.
3. Plan trees that differ in shape, thickness, and height to have enough variety in your landscape and provide shelter to birds according to their preferences.
4. Choose healthy and fruitful trees with enough watering and sunlight so it will be easier for the birds to settle down in your yard.
5. Be mindful of where you plant your trees and keep them away from lines and wires. You can also make use of it for energy-saving purposes.

Gifts for Bird Watching Kids



Binoculars: Make sure that your kids have a pair of binoculars before heading out on the trail, as they are often an essential piece of equipment for both kids and adults.

Field Guides: There are many different types of field guides out there, so take some time to do your research before choosing the best one for you or your child. Some guides can be intimidating for young readers.

Identification Cards: Many birdwatchers carry identification cards with them when they head outside in order to help identify birds that don't fly right over their heads – this can be a fun way for kids especially younger children to learn more about various species!

Bird Resources for Children

Bird Watching for Kids Q & A

How do you become a bird watcher for kids?

Birdwatching is a great activity for kids as it gives them the chance to study their surroundings and nature and gain knowledge of the native bird species in their area. They will need binoculars and a journal to let them easily jot down their experiences and learnings. Buy them a bird book to help them easily identify when it comes their way.

You can encourage your child to practice identifying bird calls of every species in your surroundings. Familiarizing bird songs can also help them easier identify even those birds hiding behind trees or humming at night.

Why is bird watching good for kids?

Children can be easily enticed as they discover more about nature. Bird watching is great for kids as it teaches them how to be wise in nature. It also lets them take their time to completely get a good grasp of how they share the environments with birds.

Bird watching is a worthwhile pastime for everybody as it's educational, fun, and can teach lots of valuable lessons in giving their utmost compassion and respect to all the living things around them.

Besides, birdwatching can be done wherever your location may be, whether in cornfields, farms, subdivisions or near bodies of water. You can always teach them the basic lessons and manners in birdwatching.

What are the benefits of bird watching?

Going outside for birdwatching can help kids get some fresh air and improve their concentration. In addition, it can help them get some Vitamin D from the sun. Birdwatching can be a great bonding for friends and family to improve their relationship.

Hearing birdsongs can instill these tunes in a child's memory to help keep calm and soothe themselves so that they can remember even when they get older. Birdwatching does not only encourage kids to be physically active, but it can also give the feeling of satisfaction of being able to replace the feeders themselves and get more attached to nature and living things.

What is the average age of a bird watcher?

Most people perceive bird watching as a hobby that is only exclusive for middle-aged people and senior citizens. However, according to a survey from the Fish and Wildlife Service, Away-from-Home birdwatchers have an average age of 49 with approximately 50% pointing to ages of under 45. Meanwhile, around-the-home watchers have ages averaging 54, and around 30% are aged below 45.

Several groups, clubs, and events are also built for the younger age groups. There is an e-Bird event that is focused on gathering all teenagers that are bird enthusiasts and are open to pursuing a career path related to this field. Younger generations keep enticed by this activity by the use of modern technology and certain applications.

How do you start bird watching with kids?

Birdwatching for kids can be both exciting and rewarding for them. The important thing is it gets them to stay outdoors. The moment they experience the thrills of birdwatching, going outdoors for them will never be the same.

You can get them started by asking them which birds they are already familiar with. Next is to ask them to take the time to learn at least a single species of bird every week. This will get you both researching together or even visiting the library or wherever local birds are easily spotted, such as cities, towns, and suburbs.

What is birding for kids?

Birding for kids is a game that has a quest to see as many birds as possible. For them, it is counting the different kinds of birds and anything that flies. This alone can help you stay excited and focused at the same time.

To enhance their observation skills, list your birds of interest before spotting birds in the park or yard. Provide them with general groups such as ducklings, chickens, and even hawks, and then classify them into fours or fives.

Kids tend to do everything to have their way. Besides, exploring will always be a good opportunity for them to embrace independence, which means letting them choose the areas to birdwatch and which spot to stay on.

Is birding the same as bird watching?

Most people may mistake the terms birding and bird watching as the same, but they are not. Birders are the ones who take the time to nurture long lists of birds and will go out of their way even during extreme weather conditions and even travel far distances just to have the opportunity of spotting those exotic and life birds.

On the other hand, bird watchers are the ones who are on the side of excitement and amusement. A common example of their interest in birds is an old lady wearing fashionable shoes while taking adventures around random parks which can easily spot birds that usually visit their backyard feeders now and then.

Why is birding important?

This activity is essential for many reasons concerning conservation, personal, and societal reasons. In addition, it is a great way to gather unlimited data from conservation scientists and researchers. Also, it is substantial for people's aspects of health while having a greatly positive impact. Lastly, it lets people connect with nature.

What is the easiest way to identify a bird?

To easily identify birds is to get enough practice because how often you surround yourself with birds will determine how fast you can master this skill. It doesn't necessarily require going for long walks at the park. You can also pay attention to their color, beaks, size, tails, and crest.

From there, you can easily familiarize your ears and eyes with what is happening in your surroundings. All it takes is a drink and a 30-minute walk to your garden. However, there may be times you won't easily identify them, so always remember bird watching as a fun idea for leisure time instead.

How do I identify a bird in my backyard?

The first thing to identify birds in your backyard is to make a balanced observation, including taking notes on their field marking, voice, color, and behavior. You can also use field guides to help you easily identify the most usual birds visiting in your area.

If you are just starting with identifying birds, paying close attention to your bird visitors can help you understand the different characteristics of every species from one another. This simple method of spotting the subtle differences can greatly help improve your identification skills and even impress your family and friends!

What are the best size binoculars for bird watching?

A binocular with 7 to 10x magnification is a good size to use for birdwatching. There are also variables to consider aside from the magnification, and the other is the objective lens size. These factors are the light gathering ability, size, weight, cost, and field of view.

The objective lens size controls the amount of light that will pass your binoculars and the image's brightness. To see better in dark conditions or during twilight, getting a larger objective lens can help.

The safest binocular size to get must have a 1:5 magnification ratio to the objective lens size, such as 10x50 and 7x35.

Can 4-year-Olds use binoculars?

Using binoculars is perfect for young children of ages 5 and below. There are many [binoculars](#) specially designed for children, toddlers, and preschoolers, where an adult's eyes would not fit in these and get a clear look through the lenses. At the same time, these binoculars just have the right size and weight for kids to carry while using them.

It is a given that kids can experience some struggles keeping the image in place for average-sized binoculars, so it is recommended to stick to pairs with a weight of fewer than 10 ounces for kids of 4 to 7 years of age.

Birdwatching is a Fun Kids Activity

Remember that birdwatching and teaching your kids about the basics of this activity is not like doing their homework. It should be a fun activity with lots of fun and exploration. Children are young and energetic creatures and like their senses being stimulated. Use these to keep them interested and have a memorable experience together! Feel free to share this content!

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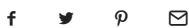
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