



WINTER BIRDS

Greenburgh Nature Center

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www.greenburghnaturecenter.org

10-2011

ABOUT OUR PROGRAMS

Our naturalists gear each program to the grade level of your students and accommodate any competency level if notified in advance. Our programs stress **hands-on and direct involvement learning**. All Classes begin in the Visitors Parking Lot.



WINTER BIRD BUDDIES (1 HOUR, DECEMBER TO MARCH ONLY) PRE-K - 3RD GRADES

Students learn how to identify some of our common winter residents, how birds adapt to winter life and some foods that local birds like to eat in winter. Children will walk outside by our feeders and around the grounds to view birds, and make suet or pine cone feeders. Live animals used.

NOTE: We are **peanut butter free** and use vegetable shortening to make pine cone feeders.

AVIAN ECOLOGY (90 MINUTES) GRADES 4-7

This class explores the ecology of birds through the use of living and mounted bird specimens, bird feathers, bones, and other "props". Students learn how to identify some of our common winter residents, how birds adapt to winter life, some foods that local birds like to eat in winter and the value and responsibility of winter feeding. Approximately half of the time will be spent looking for and studying birds in the wild. Students provided with binoculars.



bird adaptations - wings, feathers, hollow bones, all of which allow for flight.

great horned owl - large pupils for night vision, excellent hearing, strong beak and talons for grabbing and eating prey.

red-tail hawk - "binocular vision", sharp talons and beak for tearing flesh.

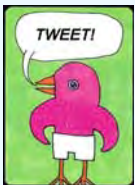
dove - bird adapted for perching, beak for picking up seeds.



SOME BIRD ACTIVITIES & IDEAS FOR TEACHING

(NOTE: Teachers should adapt material to their students grade level. Consult a naturalist about birdfeeding.)

Go outside and find evidence of the different ways birds and other animals cope with winter - Migration, hibernation, napping, storing fat, camouflage, growing a thick coat, *fluffing their feathers*, sleeping in tree cavities, storing food, *eating different foods* and shedding antlers are all ways animals adapt to winter.



Learn Some Bird Calls - A good way to find birds is to actually listen for them! Often we step into a forest, watch for movement, see none and decide there is no-one around. LISTEN! Find a spot around your school, close your eyes and listen. After you hear the bird calls, (you should if the background noise isn't too loud), you can then use your eyes to look for where the sounds are coming from.

You can use the pattern of the calls to help you figure out what bird is making the sound. Listen to the sound and see if it "speaks" to you. For example, a robin calls out "cheerio, cheer-y-up, cheerio" and a barred owl calls "Who cooks for you, who cooks for you all?". Connecting a phrase to a type of bird may help you to remember the sound the next time you hear it.



DID YOU KNOW?

Much like humans, birds shiver when they are cold, a simple but effective technique to generate short-term warmth.



Try this site for bird songs - <http://www.naturesongs.com/>
Great all around site: <http://www.allaboutbirds.org/>

COMMON BIRDS SEEN & HEARD AT THE GREENBURGH NATURE CENTER (& WESTCHESTER) IN WINTER

Wild Turkey
Hairy Woodpecker
Titmouse
House Sparrow

Rock Dove
American Goldfinch
Carolina Wren
House Finch
Northern Flicker

Mourning Dove
Pileated Woodpecker
American Tree Sparrow
Dark-eyed Junco
Northern Cardinal

Red-bellied Woodpecker
Blue Jay
Song Sparrow
White-breasted Nuthatch

Downy Woodpecker
Common Crow
Tufted
White-throated Sparrow
Black-capped Chickadee



RECIPE: Suet Balls

Materials:

- 1 cup suet (ask for it in the meat department of your grocery store) • 3 ½ cups cornmeal
- Small amount of birdseed • 3-6 large pinecones • 3-6 pieces of 12-inch long string or ribbon

Instructions: Melt the suet in a saucepan over medium heat. Add the peanut butter to the suet, stirring until it's melted and blended well, then take the saucepan off the stove. Add the cornmeal to the mixture and blend until it looks like dough. When the dough has cooled, use a spoon or your fingers to pack the dough into the openings of pinecones. Roll the dough-covered pinecones in birdseed. Tie a string or ribbon around each of the pinecones, leaving one end long enough to tie onto a tree branch. Hang your seed ball bird treats outside and watch your hungry feathered friends eat like a bird!



RECIPE: Cookie Cutter Treats For Birds

Take old bread slices and cut out shapes with cookie cutters. Let them dry and harden enough to spread with peanut butter (or Crisco). Cover the buttered shapes with black sunflower seeds and hang outdoors on trees or anywhere birds might come! Use a bird book to identify/draw the birds.

CRAFT: Simple Bird Feeders You Can Make

- Set a pie tin on a stool, flat topped tree trunk or hang it in a hanging plant hanger; dump it out after a rain, or punch drainage holes in it, and elevate it a little by placing small rocks or twigs beneath it (or hang it). (All birds, specially juncos, cardinals, jays, sparrows)
- Punch holes on either side of a plastic pop bottle, stick a twig all the way through with its ends sticking out for perches and poking more holes nearby for the birds to pull the seeds out. Then hang the bottle by tying a string around its neck. (finches really like these!)
- Stick a piece of bread/doughnut/or half of an orange, on a twiggy branch of the tree (orioles LOVE orange!)
- Tie a string around the neck of a baby food jar and fill with orange juice. Hang it from a tree. (It will hang tilted, but orioles will perch on the rim and take dainty sips).



MILK CARTON BIRD FEEDER

Materials: milk carton, non-toxic poster paints, yarn/string, stapler and staples, hole punch **1)** Wash & thoroughly dry the milk carton **2)** Cut a small section from the carton and then staple the top opening closed **3)** Paint the container, if desired, and let dry **4)** Poke a hole in the middle of the top of the carton, and thread a piece of string through it to use as a hanger. The string should be long enough for the feeder to hang where the branches don't rub against, but not so long that the feeder hangs too far away from the tree's leaf cover. Birds like to feel they have a hiding place to fly into quickly!) **5)** Add birdseed and hang the feeder.



SOME WEB SITES TO TRY FOR BIRD INFORMATION (REMEMBER TO TYPE IT EXACTLY AS WRITTEN)

Iowa Association of Naturalists - Iowa Winter Birds. Huge pdf file with everything you need to know about bird (winter) adaptations. <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/IAN602.pdf>

Science Made Simple - How DO Animals Spend The Winter? General winter animal information, including birds. <http://www.sciencemadesimple.com/animals.html>

Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology - New York's premier site on birds. <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/>