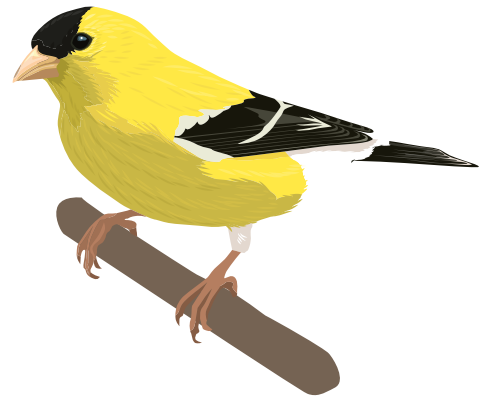


Kid's Guide To Birdwatching



Where to Watch Birds

Birds can be found almost everywhere!

They are at the playground, along the sidewalk, and in your local park. Here are some more ideas of where you can go birdwatching.

OPEN AREAS: Gardens, lawns, small meadows, and field edges

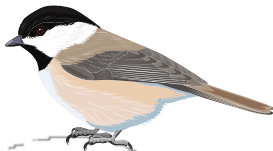
For birds that nest in the woods, these nearby openings are great places to find seeds and worms, grubs, and other insects.

WOODLANDS: Places where many trees grow close together

Tree branches form a canopy, shading the plants and animals below. A number of different kinds of birds make their home in woodland areas. This is where they find a variety of food: insects, spiders, seeds, berries, and even small mammals such as mice.

FRESHWATER HABITATS: Lakes, small streams, and rivers

Birds depend on fresh water for drinking and bathing. Some birds also rely on it for food: fish, aquatic insects, or underwater vegetation. The water's edge or islands can also provide shelter from predators or nesting sites.



When to Watch Birds

Time of Day

Most birds are more active in the early morning and late afternoon, although there will be some activity throughout the day.

Weather Conditions

- On sunny days, it's easier to see birds if you stand with your back to the Sun.
- On cloudy or rainy days, look for birds bathing in puddles.
- Storms can force migrating birds to land for shelter, so look for birds after bad weather.

What to Bring



a field guide of birds in your area



notebook and pencil to record what you see



binoculars if you have them



amnh.org/ology



How to Watch Birds



LOOK

Birds can be found year-round. When you spot one, use these tips to help you observe it.

- Where is the bird? Is it on the ground, in a tree, on the water, or overhead?
- What color is the bird? What parts of the bird are different colors?
- Is the bird large or small?
- What is the shape and length of the bird's beak?
- How does the bird move? Does it walk or hop when on the ground? Does it flap or soar when flying? Does it fly in large groups or by itself?
- Does it have special features, such as a crest on its head?
- Does it have easily-seen marks, such as red patches on the wings?

LISTEN

Birds make many sounds: whistles, warbles, trills, rattles. Since each bird species' song is different, you can learn to identify birds by their songs. You can tell what birds are present without even seeing them!

Watch singing birds to find out what sounds they make. You'll hear more songs in the spring. This is when male birds sing to attract a mate and defend their nesting territories.



How to Be a Good Birdwatcher

- Watch quietly and move slowly—you'll see much more.
- Do not disturb resting birds or birds on their nests.
- Respect the habitat. Do not litter, remove plants, or disturb animals. Please stay on paved paths and do not climb over fences.

