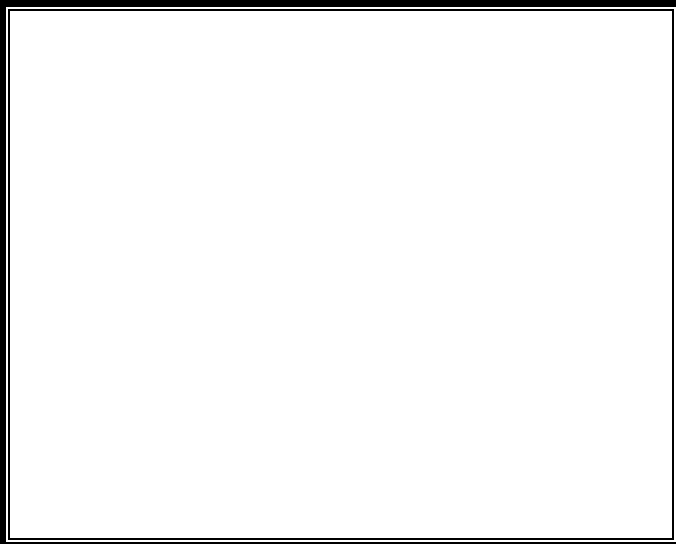


BIRD TALES - Adventures With Audubon

What is your favorite wild bird that lives in your neighborhood? Draw a picture of this bird in its natural habitat:



Add a nest, eggs, and a picture of its young. Highlight the differences between male and female birds of this species.

On a separate sheet of paper answer as many of these questions as you can: What does it look like? How big or little? What are the different colorations of male and female species? Where does it live? Nest? Feed? Migrate? What does it do? How does it feed? Mate? Tend its nest? Raise its young? What are its enemies? How does it survive? What does it do in each season? What is it good at doing; what is its role in the ecosystem? For the questions you cannot answer, either look them up in a book, surf the web, or better yet go outside and observe the bird to learn directly from your favorite bird!

Audubon spent many months living in the wildest places in America studying and drawing birds. Spend some time each day over the next few weeks collecting data about your favorite bird. Observe it at different times of day and take notes on its behavior. Ask yourself questions and then look for answers. Keep a journal of your observations always noting the time, temperature and any weather conditions. How does this affect behavior? What are your theories about what you observe?

Use this information to write a biography of your favorite bird describing its life from egg to wing.

Audubon kept a journal with extensive notes about what each bird ate and how it fed. Put a few different kinds of bird feeders outside your classroom or living room window. Fill each feeder with a different kind of food. Keep a bird book next to the window with a clipboard and pencil. Make a chart so you can keep track of how many different types of birds come to your feeder and how many of each species. Keep notes on which types of birds prefer which types of seeds. Again, note the time of day and weather. Compare your charts over time to see which birds are seasonal visitors and which are year round residents. Each year Cornell Labs at Cornell University conducts a bird feeder study and you can help scientists track long term population trends by sending your data to www.birds.cornell.edu/PFW

Audubon was also the first scientist in America to band a bird. He put a small silver thread on the ankle of a phoebe before it left in the fall to see if it returned in the spring. It did. Use the map to chart bird migrations. Draw a line from the nesting grounds to the winter home. Use a different color for each bird.

Bald Eagle: Nest in

Canada, winters in the Mississippi Valley.

Wood Thrush: Nests in Illinois, winters in Central America.

Ruby Throated

Hummingbird: Nests in New England and winters in the Caribbean.

Whooping Crane: Nests in Northern Rockies, winters on the Gulf Coast.

Add your favorite bird to this map and begin to keep track of which birds pass through your neighborhood and where they are traveling to or from. For more information about migration and to help with global monitoring check out www.learner.org/jnorth/

Imagine making an annual migration. Write a story or poem about the perils of the trip and the adventures you would have along the way. Send your stories and pictures to:

