

BIRDS OF A FEATHER



Grade Level: K-3, adjust for appropriate usage

Location: Classroom & possible field trips

Key Vocabulary: Endangered, Extinct, names of endangered bird species in Canada

Materials

- Photos of endangered birds of Canada (can be found at http://www.speciesatrisk.gc.ca/search/speciesResults_e.cfm http://www.cws-scf.ec.gc.ca/hww-fap/index_e.cfm http://www.speciesatrisk.gc.ca/default_e.cfm)
- Filmstrip or video on local birds (Audubon's *Animal Adventures*- 30 minute taped segment)
- Audio tape or CD with bird sounds
- Binoculars
- Collection of books and poems relating to birds
- Wall map of North America

Learning Outcomes

The student will be able to:

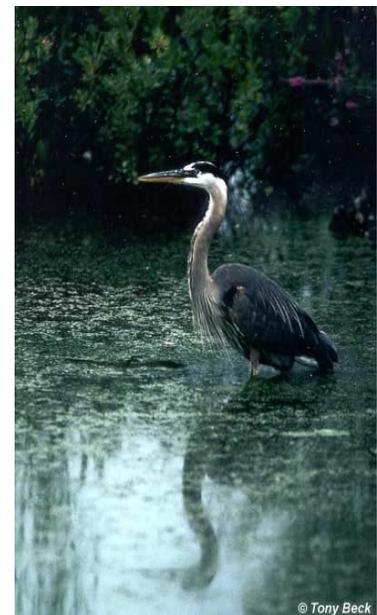
- describe the difference between the terms endangered/extinct
- identify by name 5 endangered birds
- identify and locate parts of a bird
- identify by sound some different birds
- show appreciation and respect for the environment and endangered species
- identify geographical region where the birds live

Method

Students will engage in various cross-curricular activities.

Background

Teacher will discuss and define the terms endangered and extinct and apply these terms to some bird species in Canada (see



background information via website lists included for additional resources).

Suggested Procedures and Activities

1. Use a **guessing game** to introduce birds to class. Give descriptions of some locally common birds one part at a time and have the students try to guess what you are describing. Use a sound tape of some very common bird songs in the game, too.

2. Watch **Audubon's Animal Adventures** taped segment on endangered birds. The segment is 30 minutes and explains why the bird is endangered, explores the dangers of parrots in the home, the various types of endangered birds, as well as possible solutions on how we can save our birds. (video, BBC Worldwide Productions, copyrighted in 1996 by the National Audubon society. Produced by Joan F. Woodard from Red Pepper Productions.) Order from: <http://www.audubon.org/market/licensed/childrensbooks.html>



3. Use a **large diagram of a bird** as a bulletin board to help students learn the parts of a bird. Also give them a handout to take home so that they can teach their parents about birds.

Give a verbal class quiz every day on the bird parts. This activity becomes a lot more fun if the teacher or a student draws the quiz bird on the chalkboard freehand. You can draw some wild and crazy birds and the students will learn to identify the parts on a wide variety of bird shapes. Discuss how birds are different from people.

4. **Bird Descriptions:** Using pictures as reference record and discuss the description of five or more kinds of endangered birds in Canada.

5. **Bird watching:** If possible use binoculars with wide angle lenses and insta-focus for birding. (If unavailable at your school, inquire if any students have access). Have students take the binoculars out of the cases and experiment with how they work. Through the discovery method they will find out how to focus the image. Encourage peer teaching if some students have used binoculars. Encourage research by way of the instruction sheets to find out how to clean the lenses and how to adjust the eye piece if one eye is stronger than the other. Emphasize that these are expensive pieces of equipment and help the class develop a set of rules for using the binoculars and penalties for misusing them. Contact a local member of a birdwatching or naturalist society such as Audubon to accompany the class on a birdwatching field trip.

5A. Use a set of cards with small letters and numbers printed on them to have binocular speed quizzes. To pass the quiz a student must take a pair of binoculars that is out of focus and set for the wrong eye width and adjust them so that they can read the card in 5 seconds or less. This activity can go very quickly if a relay game is set up. It is also a good time to practice the proper precautions in handling the binoculars.



Use the same type of activity for describing nests and eggs.

5B. **NOW YOU ARE READY TO GO OUT AND FIND THOSE BIRDS!!!** Arrange for a field trip to a bird sanctuary, park, or just a walk around the school neighbourhood. Pay attention to where birds land, how long they stay, where they go, what they do and where they fly. Can you identify any of these birds? Are any of the birds that you

see endangered species? If you can take along a tape recorder, record bird songs and try to identify the bird later in the classroom by the bird song.

5C. Possible post-trip discussion questions: From bird watching, what did you find the bird likes to do most? What does it eat? Why is it important to study endangered species? What are some steps you can take now to help preserve endangered birds? Do you think your efforts will make a difference? Take on a class project to help protect endangered species, for example: create an informative website or brochure for your school or community.



6. After **reading a story** about birds, divert from the text by continuing the story and creating a new storyline.

7. **The Habitats of the Birds:** Students learn the geographical location, on a wall map, of the birds they are studying. The map should be displayed throughout the duration of the project for the students to examine. Discuss climate and any interesting facts about the areas. Discuss: Which area are most of the endangered birds located? Which bird is your favourite and why? How can you show your appreciation for the environment as well as making it safer for birds?

8. **Sculptures:** Students will model clay birds with regular soft clay or create papier mache birds.

9. **Brown Bag Nests:** Students will create their own bird nests out of brown paper bags, twigs, and grass.

10. **Bird Feeders:** Students will create feeders out of pine cones, peanut butter and bird seed.