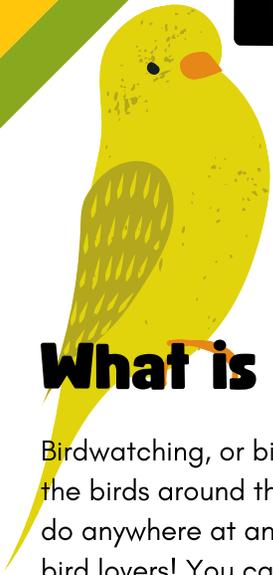


Birding is for Everybody!



What is birdwatching?

Birdwatching, or birding, is when a person takes time to notice the birds around them. Birdwatching is an activity that you can do anywhere at any time, on your own or with a group of other bird lovers! You can look for birds from a window at home or on the bus. You can birdwatch in your backyard or a neighborhood park. Birds are everywhere.

There are about 11,000 species of birds! Birds come in different shapes, sizes and colors. They live in a lot of different habitats too. When we birdwatch, we learn about the sounds birds make, foods they eat, ways they behave and what makes each bird unique.

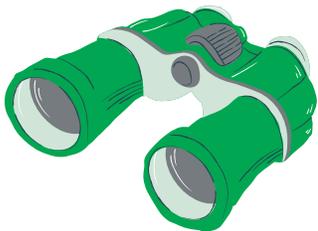
Because there are so many types of birds, each with their own names, some birdwatchers like to keep a "life list" to record the many birds they see throughout their lives.

List or no list, one of the greatest joys of birdwatching is discovering new birds wherever you go. So, take a walk today with a favorite adult or bird-loving friend and see how many kinds of birds you can find, hear and watch!



Build a birdwatching kit!

You don't need much to begin birdwatching! Bird watching can happen just by going outside and looking around. However, there are a few items that may help you get the most out of your next bird walk. Build a birdwatching kit with the suggested items below:



Binoculars

Binoculars help you get a better look at birds that are in the sky or far away.



Water Bottle

It's important to stay hydrated while walking!

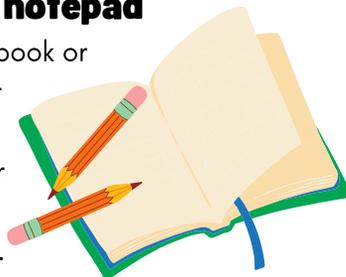


Bird Guide

A bird guide or book can help you to identify and learn more about the birds you see.

Sketch book or notepad

Birdwatchers often use a sketchbook or notepad to help them remember the birds they see. They can use notes or drawings to record their observations and to help them find the birds in their guide later.



Neighborhood Bird Guide

Have you seen these birds before? Below is a list of birds that are common in neighborhoods across the United States! Some you'll see in trees or on the sidewalk right outside your door. Some you'll find closer to water. Others you'll have to slow down and really look carefully for! Take this guide along with you on your next walk or drive and see how many birds you can spot.



Mallard*



House Sparrow*



**Rock Dove
(Pigeon)**



Gull



Blue Jay



Northern Cardinal*

*Male and female birds can often look different from each other. Males tend to have brighter colors or more detailed feathers than females do but sometimes it can be really hard to tell the difference between males and females because they look very similar! The male birds marked with a star will look different from the females of their same species.

How to Birdwatch



When you go on a bird walk, you may see birds right away or you may need to wait and look around very carefully before you see a bird. The steps below will help you to find birds and learn more about them once you spot one!

1 Pause.

Look out a window or go outside for a walk. Slow down. Then, pause. Look and listen carefully.

2 Look!

Can you see any birds? Some birds may be on the ground, in water, flying or perched up high like in a tree.

3 Listen.

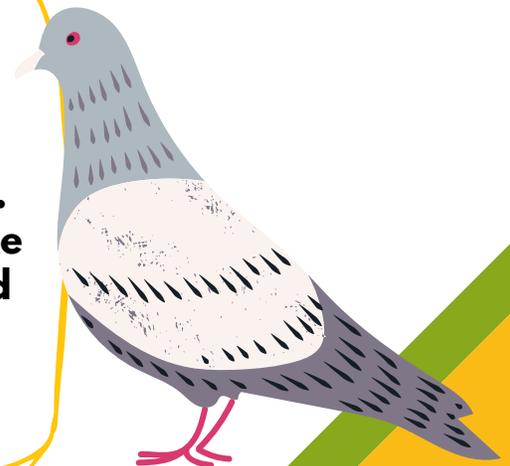
Can you hear any birds? Notice the different sounds they make. You may hear quick chirps, soft coos or loud caws or screeches.

4 Use your words.

Talk about the birds' colors, moves and different body parts. If you know the kind of bird it is, say the name out loud.

5 Draw & Write!

Bring along a sketchbook or notepad and something to draw or write with. Then, draw a picture of the bird. Write words to describe their color, size and other details that stand out to you.



Birds in the NMAAHC Collection



Bald Eagles

The bald eagle is the United State's national bird. Often shown on money, monuments, or medals like this one, bald eagles symbolize U.S. values like bravery, strength and independence. The Tuskegee Airmen were honored with this Congressional Gold Medal for the great bravery and strength they showed as pilots flying for the U.S. Army Air Forces during World War II. The Congressional Gold Medal is the highest civilian recognition awarded by the U.S. Congress.

When are you brave and strong?

Hummingbirds

Did you know hummingbirds can flap their wings 60 to 200 times in 1 second? That fast flapping makes a humming sound.



Try flapping your arms fast like hummingbird wings!

The Dixie Hummingbirds is a gospel music group that sings around the world. When the singers first became a group, they decided to name themselves after hummingbirds because they admired how the birds seemed to be making music non-stop - and like hummingbirds, the music group loved singing and sharing their music with everyone, all the time. This suit was worn by Ira Tucker, a Dixie Hummingbirds singer.

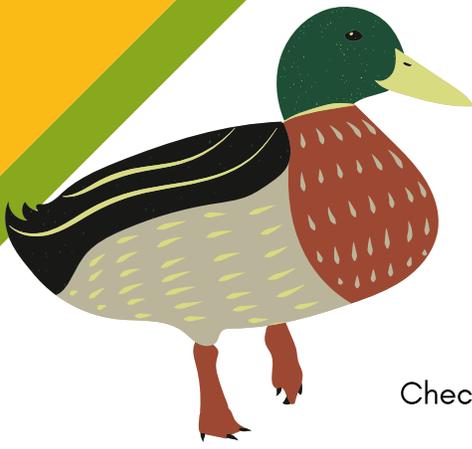


Ducks

For most of her life, artist Clementine Hunter lived and worked on a plantation in Louisiana. After working all day, Clementine enjoyed painting pictures from her life. Her paintings often include pictures of people doing work like washing clothes or community activities like dancing. This painting shows someone named Miss Cammie with ducks.

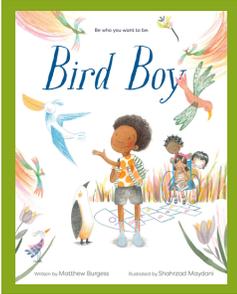
What work or activity could Miss Cammie be doing in this painting?

All objects are from the Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture: Gift from Ira Tucker, Jr. of the Dixie Hummingbirds, Gift from the Collection of Sabra Brown Martin, © Cane River Art Corporation

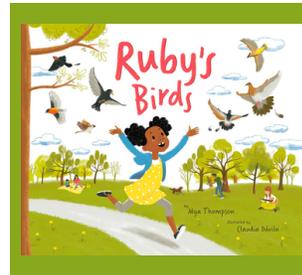


Books for Young Birders

Check out this collection of books to inspire your next bird watching adventure!



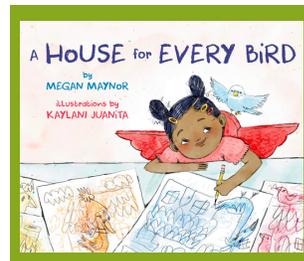
Bird Boy
by Matthew Burgess
illustrated by
Shahrzad Maydani



Ruby's Birds
by Mya Thompson
illustrated by
Claudia Darila



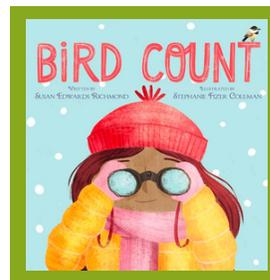
Bird House
by Blanca Gomez



A House for Every Bird
by Megan Maynor
illustrated by
Kaylani Juanita



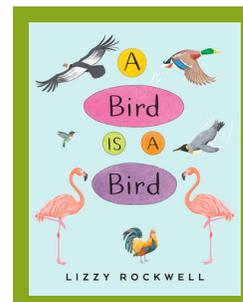
Birds
by Carme Lamniscates



Bird Count
by Susan Edwards Richmond
illustrated by
Stephanie Fizer Coleman



Mama Built A Little Nest
by Jennifer Ward
illustrated by Steve Jenkins



A Bird is A Bird
by Lizzy Rockwell