



Dear Family,

Birds are all around us. But how much do we really know about them? Our class is building language arts and math skills while learning lots of facts about bird migration, various species, bird conservation, and more.

Ask your child to share what he or she has learned. Then as you're out and about, pay special attention to birds. Who knows what unusual and beautiful species you'll encounter?

Sincerely,

PS: Did you know? The Ruby-throated Hummingbird is one of North America's smallest birds. It spends the winter in Central America; when it's time to fly north, the bird crosses the Gulf of Mexico without stopping. Share that the next time your child needs a little extra encouragement!

A few facts about migration

Migration is the seasonal movement of animals between areas where they breed and areas where they live during the rest of the year. Migration follows an annual pattern. Some birds migrate just a few miles. Others migrate thousands of miles.

Why do birds migrate?

Two factors include changes in the food that's available in an area during different seasons and changes in temperature. Songbirds tend to migrate at night, while larger birds tend to migrate during the day. Scientists believe the smaller birds fly at night to avoid predators.

Helping hands for our feathered friends

Here are some simple ways to help.

-  **Keep cats indoors.** They are the number-one cause of bird mortality in the US. Estimates show that ten million outdoor cats kill more than two billion birds each year.
-  **Watch your windows.** When birds see large windows, they think they are passing through an opening; too often they strike the windows and are injured or killed.
-  **Pay attention to habitat.** All birds need healthy natural habitats for survival.
-  **Know about threats.** Wind farms, pesticides, climate change, and development all pose threats to birds.

What's the best way to get a photo of a unique bird?
"Unique" up on it!



Why can't a hummingbird sing?
Because it doesn't know the words!



Which bird is least likely to need a haircut?
The Bald Eagle!



Bird-watching Basics

Ready to get started? You'll need just four basic items:

- a field guide
- binoculars
- a notebook to keep a record of the birds you see
- a bird feeder to attract birds to the area

