



Nature at School Pre-lesson Birds Are My Peeps

See what your students know:

Use this fun [Kahoot](#) to help the DNR understand what your students know on this topic before the program.



Learning outcomes:

Join DNR educator Karen Gourlay from southeast Michigan to connect with nature and learn more about local birds, how to observe them, and ways to identify them using simple tools. We will also discuss things you can do to help birds and other wildlife in your community. This 30-minute presentation will meet these learning outcomes:

- Learn to recognize a variety of local birds by sight, sound, and behavior.
- Review resources you can use to help identify birds.
- Acquire skills of scientific observation and data collection.
- Understand the role birds play in a balanced ecosystem and actions you can take to help.

Background information:

Birds provide a familiar and easily accessible connection to nature all year long. By learning about local birds, students will become more aware of their own outdoor environment and the connection between all living things. Birds are key indicators of healthy habitats and provide important ecological services like seed dispersal, insect control, and pollination.

Although a few simple tools like binoculars and field guides can be used, the best way to learn about birds is by observation, listening, and getting to know the nature of a space that is important to you. Basic clues such as size and shape, color and pattern, behavior, and song, can help us learn more about the birds we see each day.

Resources:

- [Learn about birds and bird watching](#)
- [Audubon for Kids](#)
- [Michigan Birds](#)
- [Smart device app Merlin Bird ID](#)

Suggested pre-activity:

- [Birds Are My Peeps pre-activity](#)

Directions for your *DNR Nature at School* virtual program:

1. You will receive a reminder email from SignUp Genius three days prior to your scheduled *DNR Nature at School* program. Please read and follow the directions, so we all can have a successful program.
2. At least one day prior to your lesson, send your instructor the link to your Zoom/Google Meet/Skype/Teams for your lesson time. Starting 10 minutes early with just your instructor is encouraged.

Day Of

3. Make sure students have their sound muted and their cameras on to participate (with thumbs up, number on fingers.)
4. If you use the chat feature, we encourage the students to ask their questions there, and the teacher can ask them at the end of the program.
5. See further directions in your SignUp Genius confirmation.

Nature at School NGSS Correlation Birds are my Peeps



Learn to observe, identify and record birds in your neighborhood and why biologists use these skills, from downtown Detroit to the wilds of the Upper Peninsula.

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Guiding question/phenomenon:

What are some of the unique features of birds?

How do birds interact with their environment and what are the effects of those interactions?

Science and Engineering Practice

Planning and Carrying Out Investigations

Select appropriate tools to collect, record, analyze, and evaluate data.

- Through observations at home, and/or in the schoolyard, students will collect data about different birds and their traits.

Analyzing and Interpreting Data

Analyze data using tools, technologies, and/or models in order to make valid and reliable scientific claims or determine an optimal design solution.

- Students share and compile the data collected at their study sites, determining species inventory, preferred habitats, comparing seasonal impacts on sightings, etc.

Disciplinary Core Idea

LS3.B: Variations of Traits

Different organisms vary in how they look and function because they have different inherited information. The environment also affects the traits that an organism develops.

- Students understand how bird beak, coloration, and size adaptations allow different species to survive in their particular habitat.

Cross Cutting Concepts

Patterns

Patterns of change can be used to make predictions.

- Students will predict where they are most likely to observe different bird species based on their adaptations.

Systems and Systems Models

A system can be described in terms of its components and their interactions.

- Birds, plants, insects and other animals are part of an interconnected ecosystem. Students understand that the specific components will vary depending on region, habitat and time of year. The abundance or scarcity of each is interdependent on the other components and habitat needs for each.

Recommended grade band(s): upper elementary and middle school

All Nature At School virtual programs have been created to introduce students at any grade level to life and/or earth science core ideas, when used with pre- and post-lesson suggestions.



Nature at School Post-lesson Birds are my Peeps

See what your students learned:

Use this fun [Kahoot!](#) to help the DNR understand what your students know on this topic, after the program. This data helps the DNR create and update free programming for teachers across the state.



Activity wrap-up:

Michigan has a wide variety of bird life that can be observed throughout the year. By learning more about the common birds we see every day, we gain a better understanding of the spaces we share with wildlife and the importance of doing our part to contribute to maintaining successful habitats to support all species.

In addition, there are simple actions students can take to enhance the space we share with birds. Participation in citizen science projects can provide useful data for scientists and conservation partners. Providing wildlife-friendly spaces at home or in the community improves the habitat connections needed for birds and other animals. Conservation and stewardship projects in parks and public lands benefit wildlife and people.

Resources:

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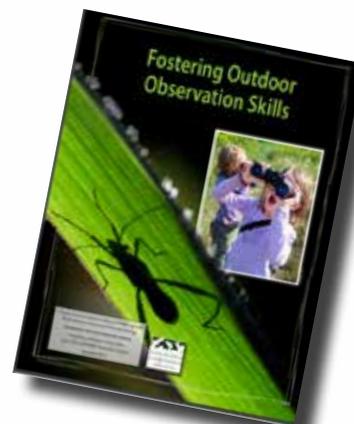


Connect to home:

Expand your students' knowledge about birds and nature, with a student choice board ([grade 3-5](#), or [grades 6-12](#)) with nine STEAM concept activities.

Post-activities:

- [Birdsleuth](#) has great activities and resources for school and home
- Find simple activities to help students with [Fostering Outdoor Observation Skills](#) using these free lessons.
- Build your students scientific practice skills by developing, recording and analyzing "Essential Questions" about schoolyard or neighborhood phenomena using the free lessons in [Field Investigations](#).



Connect with DNR content:

For a daily dose of nature, like [MiNatureDNR](#) on Facebook.

Visit the [DNR Nature at Home page](#) for educational video series, resources, lessons, virtual tours and more.