

SEEING THE WORLD THROUGH NATURE

SCHOOL WORK SHEETS

BLOCK 5:

BIRDS LIVING

NEXT TO US



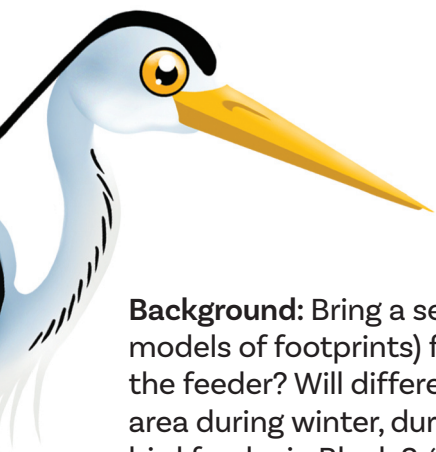


Download the project's app

To complete some of the tasks outlined in the school work sheets you will need our special smartphone app.
To download this app, please go to the online app store (App Store for iOS or Google Play for Android)
and enter the name "Meet the Birds" in the search field.



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BLOCK 5

BIRDS LIVING NEXT TO US

Background: Bring a selection of bird feeders, feathers and other traces that birds leave (e.g., models of footprints) for the students to see and touch. **Questions to discuss:** Which birds will use the feeder? Will different types of food attract different bird species? Which birds are found in your area during winter, during summer and during the whole year? You can find ideas on how to make a bird feeder in Block 3, 'What do birds eat?'

DETAILED PROBLEMS	How can you tell that birds are present?	What birds visit your feeder? What birds come to Ireland for the winter?
<p>Activities in the field</p>	<p>Watching and hearing birds takes patience, knowledge and a bit of luck. It is important to look and listen carefully to discover traces of their presence. The most frequently encountered traces are footprints left on soft surfaces such as mud, wet sand or snow.</p> <p>It's worth collecting various other traces of bird presence or to document them with photos.</p> <p>A collector's guide will be helpful. You can use the one included in Block 1, 'How to be a good birdwatcher' (S1/A/3).</p>	<p>A feeder placed so that it can be easily watched through windows will yield many interesting observations.</p> <p>Encourage students to observe and listen to the birds that visit the feeder. You can play call recordings of birds that may visit the feeder. Use the project's smartphone app to find bird recordings relevant to your area and to the time of year.</p> <p>Ask the students these questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Did you hear any birds? ● Do you think they are small or not? ● Can you identify the birds you have just heard? ● Which of the birds would be unable to use the feeder? <p>Take a trip to bird wintering sites (waterbodies in a park, rivers, seashore). During the trip, focus on watching and listening to birds. What do they do? How do they manage?</p> <p>Use the app to show the most common birds in your country. Encourage students to remember which of these bird species they have seen or heard near the bird feeder or during their trip. For each bird species, you can play their song or call.</p>
<p>Indoor observations and experiments</p>	<p>Section S5/B/1 contains a list of different places and elements of habitats. Read out loud the description of each photo and then ask the students which places they think are friendly for birds and which are not.</p> <p>For each place (where applicable) you can play bird sounds, using our smartphone app.</p> <p>Ask the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Did you hear any birds? ● Do you think they are small or not? ● Can you identify the birds you have just heard? 	<p>If birds are provided with suitable food, watching a feeder will yield interesting observations as to the looks, preferences and behaviour of the winged visitors.</p>



School Work Sheets Block 5

Artistic tasks	<p>Art tasks using bird feathers, e.g., Christmas trees (for inspiration, visit the website https://bit.ly/feather-tree), plumes for a carnival ball, etc.</p> <p>Writing or drawing with a bird's feather (the following link gives tips on how to prepare a feather for writing: https://bit.ly/quill-pen).</p> <p>Ask the students to discuss what we can do to make an urban area bird-friendly.</p>	<p>Make an album about the birds visiting your feeder. Gather photos, drawings and descriptions for the album.</p> <p>Encourage students to make window decorations that will prevent birds from hitting the glass (S5/B/4). Hang them in the windows.</p> <p>Discuss with the students how sighted people can also hit against a glass window if they walk very fast.</p> <p>You may then turn the discussion into how to make world friendlier for birds and humans: in the case of blind people, they use touch and hearing to gain information. Partially sighted people also benefit from proper lighting and contrasting colours.</p>
Linguistic and written tasks	<p>Make a play (dramatisation, stage design) in which the main roles are played by the children acting as the birds that visit your feeder. Use your observations and information that you find in other sources.</p>	
Mathematical tasks	<p>Repeat the concept of space with your children, e.g., under, above, right, left.</p> <p>In the park, the woods or the school yard, encourage students to close their eyes and count how many sounds they can hear around them. Ask questions: how many different sounds did they hear? How many of them were bird calls? How many of them were manmade?</p>	
Games and competitions	<p>Design a shadow theatre in which the actors are the shapes of birds from the feeder that you watched.</p>	



BIRDS LIVING NEXT TO US: GET TO KNOW WHAT THEY SOUND LIKE

Guidelines for teachers

- Blind, visually impaired and sighted students can all learn to recognise and identify the birds that occur around their homes and school by listening carefully to and recording their songs and calls.

Using our special smartphone app, select the birds that most commonly occur in your local area at the relevant time of year. Play a selection of their songs and calls for your students, then go for a nature walk outside to see how many of them the students can hear in the wild. Use the app to record some of the unknown bird sounds so that you can try to identify them later in the classroom.

How many different species of birds did you hear?

Repeat the task at a different time of the year. Do you notice any similarities and any differences?



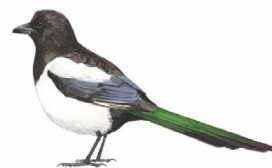
(JV)

BLACKBIRD



(JV)

JACKDAW



(JV)

MAGPIE



(JV)

HOUSE SPARROW



(JV)

FERAL PIGEON



(JV)

GREAT TIT



(JV)

BLUE TIT



(JV)

MALLARD



(JV)

SWIFT



(JV)

SPARROWHAWK

OTHER

OTHER

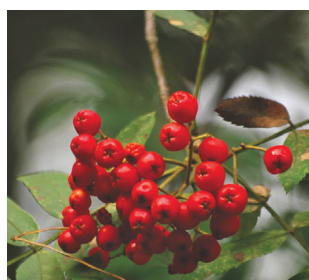


BIRDS FOUND AROUND OUR SCHOOL

Guidelines for teachers: For visually impaired students, we recommend creating large PowerPoint images for each of the elements pictured in this section. For blind students, provide verbal descriptions.

Places where birds live

Check where birds are found near your school.



BUSHES AND TREES
WITH FRUITS (IM)



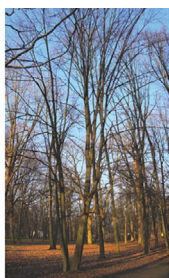
PONDS



LUSH THICKETS (JM)



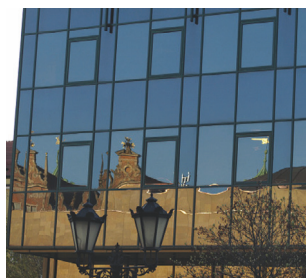
CLIMBING PLANTS (JM)



HIGH TREES (JM)



FIELDS OR MEADOWS



BIG WINDOWS



CATS (NK)



BIRD NESTING BOXES (M)



WIRES



LITTER AND RUBBISH (PX)



POWER LINES (M)

Consider all of the features above:

- Which elements are bird-friendly?
- Which elements can be dangerous for birds? Why?



DO WINDOWS AND GLASS SURFACES POSE A DANGER TO BIRDS?

Guidelines for teachers: Unfortunately birds sometimes collide with windows, as they are unable to see the glass. Is this something that blind and visually impaired students in your class can relate to? How do they avoid hitting glass panes? How do the students think that birds can do it?

For the exercise below, it may be difficult for blind students fully to participate. Explain the issues to the class and lead a discussion of the problems that glass can pose to wildlife.

EXPERIENCE

What you will need

- Mirrors
- Small glass plates (with protected edges)
- White and black cards

Tasks and questions

- 1 Investigate if and how the surroundings are reflected in the mirrors.
- 2 Repeat the test using glass plates and glass plates with black or light backgrounds.
- 3 Is the intensity of light of importance (good lighting, poor lighting)? Think about how to check this.

OBSERVATION

What you will need

- Exhibition windows, residential windows, glass facades, etc.

Tasks and questions

- 1 Look at glass surfaces in buildings.
- 2 See:
 - a. Are they transparent?
 - b. Can you see the inside?
 - c. Are the surroundings reflected?
 - d. Is it possible to think that there is no glass, only the surroundings?

Consider:

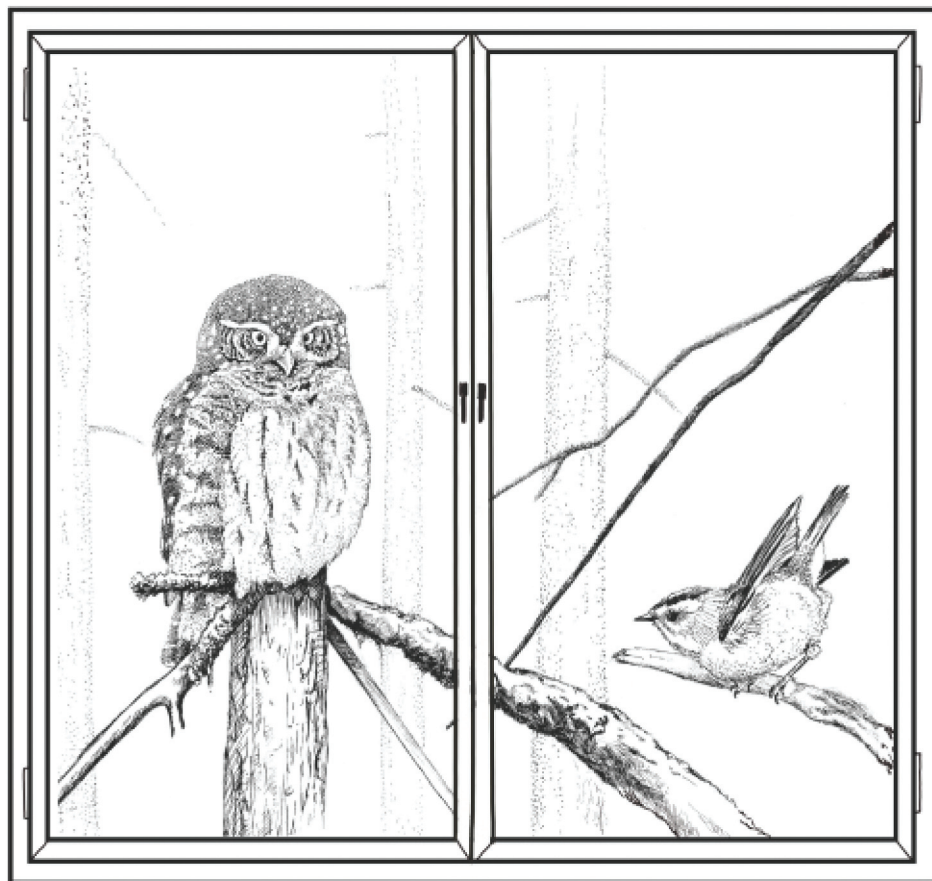
- How do people and birds see large glass surfaces?
- Is the size of windows important for birds to see them?
- Are the curtains in the windows visible to the birds?
- What can we do to help birds see glass surfaces?



HOW CAN WE MAKE OUR HOMES AND SCHOOLS SAFER FOR BIRDS?

Guidelines for teachers

- Lead a discussion about the different environmental hazards that birds face around our homes and schools.
- Ask the students to identify as many risks as they can, and then to put them each into one of two categories: natural hazards and human-made hazards.
- What could people do to reduce the risks to birds and other wildlife?





MAKING WINDOWS MORE OBVIOUS TO BIRDS

Guidelines for teachers

- Help blind and visually impaired pupils to understand the benefits of the exercise below, both verbally and using their sense of touch.

What you will need

- Recycled CDs drilled with two holes
- Pieces of string or soft wire
- Waterproof markers of different colours

Tasks and questions

- 1 Using string, connect no more than four CDs in such a way as to keep the distance between each one about 15 cm.
- 2 At the end of the string, make a knot and, before the first one, a loop allowing you to hang the CDs in front of the window panes.
- 3 How can you decorate the CDs to make them more obvious?

Decorative designs

What you will need

- Paper in any colour
- Patterns of silhouettes of birds and other animals
- Pencils

Tasks and questions

- 1 Draw an outline of the shape of twigs and birds on paper.
- 2 Cut them out of paper.
- 3 Decorate your figure.
- 4 Place them on the inside of the windows.

Consider:

- How do your decorations make glass surfaces visible?
- Are the windows in your home safe for birds?



LET'S MEASURE SAFE DISTANCES FOR BIRDS

Guidelines for teachers

- This task may work well for visually impaired students if the image below can be made as large as possible for them, but for blind students it would be better to lead a discussion on the environmental hazards illustrated by the picture.

Tasks and questions

- 1 Which bird is closer to the cat?
- 2 How could you measure the distance without a ruler?





These materials for teachers working with blind and visually impaired children have been prepared within the project “Seeing the World Through Nature.” These are based on the educational resources that resulted from the project “Empowering Teachers and Pupils for a Better Life Through Nature,” and the suggestions contained therein have been adapted to work with children with impaired vision in order to enable them to learn as much as possible about nature through direct contact with it.

Non-governmental organisations involved in bird protection, partners in international federation BirdLife International, participated in the project. The Polish Society for the Protection of Birds (OTOP) was the leader of this educational initiative, which also involved the associations BirdWatch Ireland, BirdLife Malta and BirdLife Cyprus. The Polish Association for the Blind was the partner cooperating in the field of adaptation of source materials for the needs of teaching blind and visually impaired children.

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BIRDWATCH IRELAND is the largest independent conservation organisation in Ireland. A registered charity, its aim is the conservation of wild birds and their natural habitats. It has over 15,000 members and a network of 30 local branches. It manages nature reserves which protect threatened habitats and their wildlife, works to conserve Ireland's biodiversity, and carries out education, survey and research work. For more information, go to www.birdwatchireland.ie

