



Birds

Bird species discovery

Age: 7-14

Topic: Biology and Creative Writing

Time: 1-2 hours



What should learners already know?

- Birds are a very diverse group of animals, and can have many different shapes, colours, and sizes.

What equipment will I need?

- Pens and pencils
- Colouring pencils
- Paper

How will learners explore this?

1. Ask children to imagine that they are scientists and they have just discovered a new species of bird - how exciting!
2. Children need to report their discovery back to other scientists, describing all the unique identifying characteristics of the bird.
3. Ask children to create an identification sheet for this new bird, complete with drawings and descriptions of the species. Feel free to use the prompts below:

Habitat	What habitat does the bird live in? What foods are available in its habitat? What nesting sites are available in its habitat?
Appearance	What does the bird look like? What physical features has the bird evolved for its habitat?
Behaviour	What behavioural characteristics has the bird evolved for its habitat? What does the bird eat? How does the bird's song sound? How does the bird attract mates? How does the bird raise young?

How can we show the learning?

- Encourage children to explain to the class why they have given their species certain behavioural and anatomical adaptations to the environment. Why is it important that animals are adapted to their surroundings? What would happen if animals could not adapt to their surroundings?
- Ask children to think about current threats that birds around the world are facing. Some birds species are in decline due to habitat loss, as well as drought and wildfires caused by climate change.
- Challenge children by asking them to explain why it is important to keep scientific records of species (like they have just done). Why is it important to accurately describe new species we discover, and share our learning with the world?
- A useful point to focus on is the link to biodiversity loss. If we do not have scientific records of a species, then we will not be able to notice when it goes extinct! This is a major problem facing biodiversity today.
- Extension: This activity could be extended to learn about the discovery of 10 new bird species in Indonesia in 2020. This was the largest discovery of bird species in over 100 years!

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Did you know:

Birds are very diverse, with most bird species specialised towards a certain habitat.

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Reflection point:

Why do we feel excited when new animal species are discovered?



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