



CLOVERBUDS

Cloverbud Connection: August/September

Hi Cloverbud!

This month, we'll learn about Birds! It is almost impossible to not see a bird when looking out your window or stepping outdoors. Birds are all around us.

This newsletter will give you tips and tricks on how to identify birds in your backyard, share with you some tools to assist in bird identification, and discover the art of birding!

Also included are some activities that you can do at home related to birds. Don't forget to take a picture of your work and share it with your 4-H educator!

Until next time, get outdoors and explore the birds around you!

Sara, Donna, Karrie, & Beth



**Winner of the May Drawing is:
Reid Zajac**

Don't forget to email us any pictures from your June/July newsletter activities by the end of August for the next Newsletter and your August/September activities for October. We would love to see you in the picture too!

This Month:

- **Birds: identification, beaks, and more**
- **Discovering Skills**

Reminders:

- **Share a picture of your work**
- **Save whatever activity work you do in your green folder**
- **Have Fun!**



Being Yourself



Belonging Together



Building Connections



Discovering Skills



Exploring New Opportunities



Giving Back to Your Community



Cloverbud Connection - August/September 2025

Dear Family

The August/September Cloverbud Connection Newsletter and Activity Guide is here! Every month, Cloverbuds (kids in kindergarten to second grade) in Barron, Burnett, Rusk, Sawyer, and Washburn Counties can join 4-H projects at home and connect with others. Families can choose how much they want to participate. Throughout the year, there will be opportunities to have a PenPal, connect online, and attend a Cloverbud Day-Camp in August (save the date-August 19).

This month: Cloverbuds will learn about *Discovering Skills* by trying out some birding techniques to identify birds in their neighborhood.

Cloverbud Record Books

Remember to save your great work in your green folder, let your educator know if you need one. These can be kept as a record of learning throughout the year, but is completely optional. Cloverbud record books vary by county. Please check your county's guidelines for record book completion. Ask your club leader or county educator for more information.

Share photos and feedback, get prizes!

We love to see your work and your smiling face working on your activities. Please share photos with your local educator for a chance to win a 4-H prize!

In Wisconsin 4-H we value:



Being Yourself: Find and share your authentic sparks and interests.



Belonging Together: Recognize, understand, respect, and appreciate each other.



Building Connection: Grow positive relationships with peers and adults.



Discovering Skills: Develop skills through hands-on learning to help you succeed and thrive.



Exploring New Opportunities: Open the door to new experiences, projects, and places.



Giving Back to Your Community: Make meaningful contributions through community service and leadership.

Questions? Contact:

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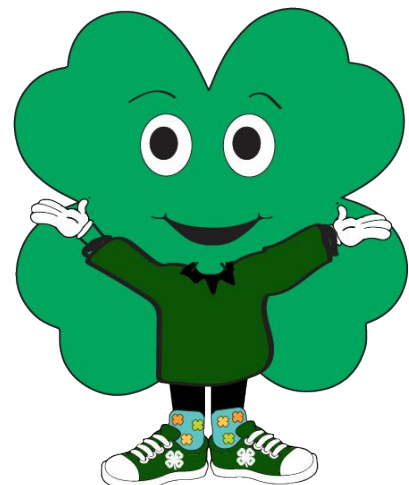
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Burnett &

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August/September Lesson: Bird Watching

Activity #1: Bird Watching/Identification

Did you know that the Fall is a great time of year for bird watching? Can you think why? It is because of migration.

- Migration means animals or people moving from one place to another, often seasonally or for a specific reason like finding food or a better climate.
- Birding, also known as bird watching, is a fun hobby where you observe birds in their natural environment, either for enjoyment or to learn about them. It's a great way to connect with nature, and you can do it anywhere, even in your backyard!

There are apps that can be used to assist in birding to help identify birds. The apps listed below can be downloaded from your phone or tablet app store:

Merlin Bird ID App:



Merlin Bird ID
From the Cornell Lab of Ornithology

<http://bit.ly/MerlinApp>

- **Photo ID:** Allows users to upload or take photos of birds and receive identification suggestions.
- **Sound ID:** Listens to bird songs and calls and provides real-time identification suggestions.
- **Step-by-Step ID:** Users answer a few simple questions about a bird's size, color, and behavior to get a list of possible matches.
- **eBird Integration:** Merlin leverages the extensive eBird database for accurate identification, especially in regions with abundant bird observations.

eBird App:

- Find more birds
- Keep track of your bird lists, photos, and sounds
- Explore latest sightings from around the world
- Join the world's largest birding community
- Contribute to science and conservation





August/September Lesson: Bird Watching

Activity #1: Bird Watching/Identification (continued)

Not everyone has access to apps on their phone. There are several resources available to use for birding that can be done without downloading an app.

1. The Audubon has several activities on their website that children can access. The website includes information about birds, short videos, DIY activities using supplies that families have at home and more.
<https://www.audubon.org/get-outside/activities/audubon-for-kids>
2. Build or hang a bird feeder in a visible area in the yard and observe the birds that visit the feeder.
3. Take a nature walk and listen/observe birds.
4. Create a nature journal.
5. Learn bird songs.
6. Check out your local library as many have bird identification guides and books. There are some libraries that have birding kits that can be checked out.

When birding with your family, here are some things to notice:

Behavior and Activity

What's the weather like? What time of day is it? What's this bird doing? Why might it be doing that? How is the bird moving? (Hopping, walking, flying, hovering, diving, climbing?) Is it interacting with other birds? If so, how? (Chasing, feeding, fighting, courting?)

Appearance and Identification

Is this a male or female? How can you tell? What shape is the beak, and what might that say about its diet? What colors, patterns, or markings stand out?

Habitat and Environment

What kind of habitat is it in? (Forest, wetland, field, urban area?) Is this a typical place to see this species? Are there specific plants, water sources, or food nearby that might attract it?

Flight and Movement

How does it fly? (Straight, erratic, gliding, flapping constantly?) Does it have any unique takeoff or landing behaviors?

Feed and Foraging

How is it finding food? (Picking from leaves, diving, probing, snatching insects?) If eating, how does it handle its food? (Swallow whole, break it apart, cache it?)

Season and Life Cycle Clue

Is this species always here, or is it migrating through? Does it seem to be in breeding condition? (Bright colors, singing, courtship displays?)



August/September Lesson: Bird Watching

Activity #1: Bird Watching/Identification (continued)

Use this sheet the next time that you are out in nature and observe a bird in its natural habitat.



Birding Worksheet

Name: _____

Date: _____



Bird Observations

Bird Number	Location Spotted	Description (Size, Color, Behavior)	Sketch Your Bird	Notes
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				



Habitat Exploration

- Where did you go birding? (e.g., forest, backyard, park)
- What was the weather like? (circle one): ☀ Sunny ☁ Cloudy 🌧 Rainy ❄ Snowy 🌬 Windy



My Favorite Bird Today

Was... _____



August/September Lesson: Bird Beaks

Activity #2: Tool Time: Bird Beaks

Birds use their beaks for many different jobs, like picking up food or building nests. Did you know that the shape of a bird's beak helps it eat certain kinds of food?

In this activity, you will learn about different kinds of bird beaks. First, you will read about each type of bird beak. Then, you will cut out the pictures of birds from the "Bird Beak Sorting Cards" pages. After that, you will sort the bird pictures into groups based on the shape of their beaks.

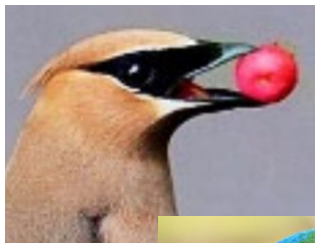


Carnivorous (*Hooked Beaks*)

Carnivorous birds are meat eaters. Birds like eagles, owls, hawks, and falcons hunt live prey and use their strong beaks to clamp prey tightly and pull it apart. Their upper bill protrudes over their lower bill giving it a hooked shape.

Granivorous (*Cracker Beaks*)

Granivorous birds are seed eaters. Birds like goldfinch, sparrows, and cardinals eat grains and seeds of flowers. They use their solid beaks to crack open the seeds. Their short, tapered beaks give them a triangle shape.



Frugivorous (*Plier Beaks*) (*Tong Beaks*)

Frugivorous birds are mostly fruit eaters. They may have different shaped beaks designed for the fruit they eat. Waxwings have narrow beaks for picking berries from plants. Parrots have the ability to move both their upper and lower beaks, making it easier to get past the skins on their favorite fruits.



August/September Lesson: Bird Beaks

Insectivorous (*Tweezer Beaks*) (*Net Beaks*)

Insectivorous birds are insect eaters. Their beaks help them hunt and catch insects. Birds like woodpeckers have long, hard beaks and drill holes into dead trees to find insects. Birds like barn swallows have short, wide, flat beaks and catch insects while they're flying.



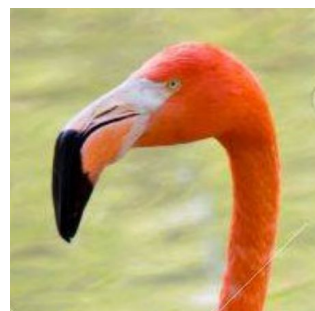
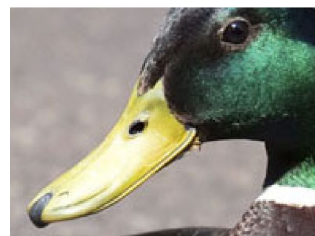
Piscivorous (*Spear Beaks*)

Piscivorous birds are fish eaters. They use their beaks to catch and hold onto slippery prey. Birds like great blue herons have large, strong, sharp beaks which they use to stab their prey. Penguins have sharp, curve-tip beaks that help them catch prey.



Filter (*Strainer Beaks*)

Filter feeders eat tiny organisms and plant matter in the water. Their flat, wide bills have a special filtering system that acts like a food strainer. They take in large amounts of water or even mud and keep food while straining out the rest. Most ducks and many waterfowl have this type of beak.





August/September Lesson: Bird Beaks

Nectarivorous (*Probing Beaks*)

Nectarivorous birds are nectar feeders. Birds like hummingbirds use their beak and tongue to lap up nectar from flowers. There are many kinds of hummingbirds; some have longer bills, some have shorter bills, and some even have curved bills to reach into special flowers.



Other

There are so many different species of birds that some have developed specialized beaks that are like no other. The Rhinoceros Hornbill is one of these. Scientists are not sure about the function of the bill, but there is a theory that it may amplify the bird's call during courtship. Toucans have the largest bill of all birds at 7.5 inches long. It uses this big bill to reach fruit on small branches and to toss fruit to its mate.

What's the difference between a beak and a bill?

According to the American Bird Conservancy, there is no difference! A long, long time ago, people used to say "beak" when talking about the hooked noses of birds that hunt, like eagles, and "bill" when talking about water birds, like ducks. But now, you can use either word, "beak" or "bill," to talk about a bird's nose. They mean the same thing!

Source:

<https://abcbirds.org/blog/bird-breaks/#:~:text=Bird%20beaks%20are%20made%20mostly,up%20your%20hair%20and%20fingernails.>

Adapted by Beth Rank and Karen Olson from:

https://gallia.osu.edu/sites/gallia/files/imce/Program_Pages/4H/Cloverbuds/2020%20June%20Tweeting%20about%20beaks%2010.28.pdf

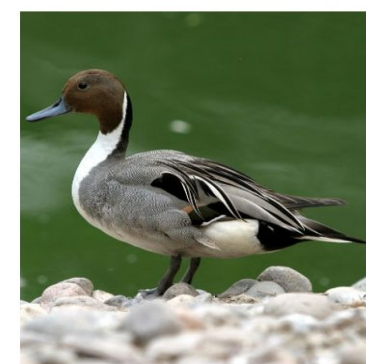
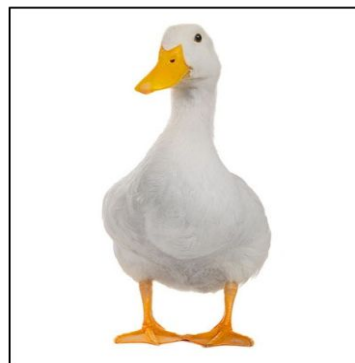


August/September Lesson: Bird Beaks

Bird Beak Sorting Cards

Cut around each bird square below on this page and the next.

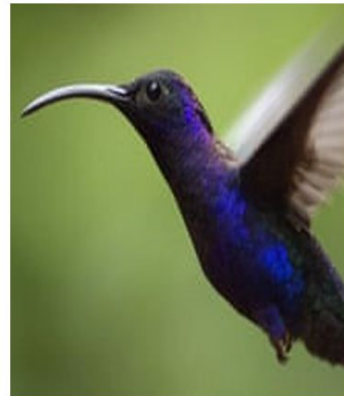
Then, try to sort the birds based on their type of beak.



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August/September Lesson: Bird Beaks



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August/September Lesson: Bird Beaks

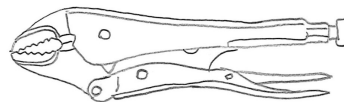
Expanded Learning (Optional): Bird Beaks - Tool Time!

After reading the bird beak descriptions on pages 6-8, look through your house and try to find a human tool that matches each type of beak. Below are some pictures to give you inspiration. Example: "A pliers could crack open the nuts, just like an Oriole, and other Frugivorous birds."

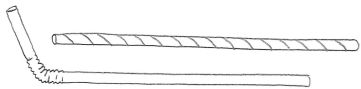
Test different tools, trying to pick up, crack, or eat human food that resembles the bird food equivalent (examples: gummy worms instead of real worms, water instead of nectar, gummy fish instead of real fish) to determine which is the best tool/beak for the job.



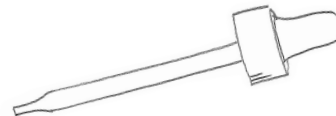
Pliers



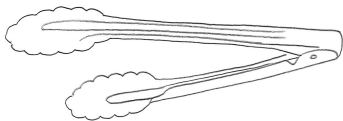
Locking Pliers



Drinking Straw



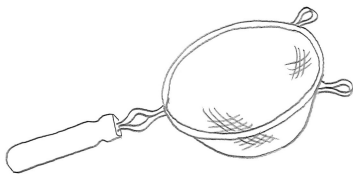
Eye Dropper



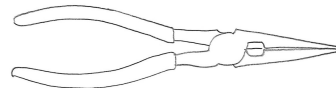
Tongs



Tweezers



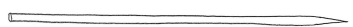
Strainer



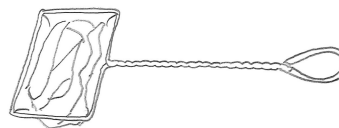
Needle Nose Pliers



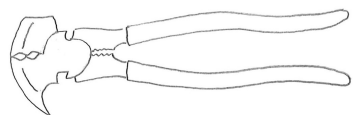
Tooth Pick



BBQ Skewer



Fish Net



Fence Pliers



Tongue-And-Groove Pliers



Meat Fork

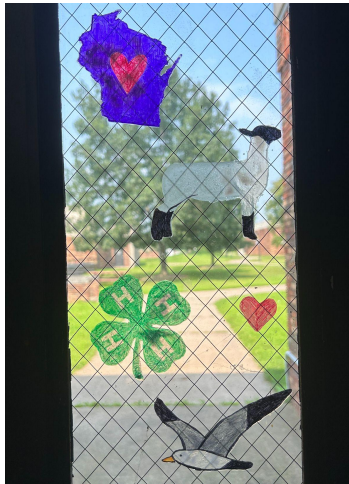


Aug/Sept Lesson: Bird Watching-migration

Activity #3: Migration friendly Window Decorations

When birds fly from one place to another, they sometimes crash into windows because they can't see the glass. They think they're flying into the sky or trees, but it's really just a reflection. This can hurt them badly.

We can help birds by making special decals (decorations) to put on our windows. These decals that stick to the window help birds see the glass so they don't fly into it. Plus, it's a fun way to decorate your home!



Instructions:

1. Pick a Design! On a piece of paper you can draw your own design, use stencils or print a design. Any design you choose will divert birds.
 - Try to cover your window with lots of designs—leave only little spaces (no bigger than 2 inches apart).
2. Lay your clear plastic sheet on top of your design so you can see the design underneath. (Figure 1)
3. Get your glue ready! If you're using puff paint, you're all set! If you're using Elmer's glue, mix 2 tablespoons of glue with a few drops of dish soap in a cup. Stir until the soap is fully mixed in.
4. Use your paint or glue to trace your design on the plastic sheet, then fill it in. If you're using puff paint, squeeze it from the bottle and smooth it out with a paintbrush. If using glue, use a paintbrush to paint it on. (Figure 2)
 - Make sure all parts of your design are connected and thick enough so they won't break. You might need 2 coats!

Supplies

- Puff paint OR Elmer's glue + dish soap
- Paper and something to draw with
- markers
- A smooth plastic surface like a sheet protector, sandwich bag, or plastic wrap.
- A paintbrush
- A small cup for mixing (if using Elmer's glue)



Aug/Sept Lesson: Bird Watching-migration

Activity #3: Migration friendly Window Decorations

Instructions (continued):

5. Let the glue dry (we recommend waiting at least 24 hours). The homemade glue will look transparent (clear) and smooth when it is dry.
6. (Only for homemade glue decals, If you used puff paint, skip this step!) Once the decals are entirely dry, use markers (any type) to color the decals on the plastic.
 - Make sure to color gently so as not to rip the decals. (Figure 3)
7. Once the decals are dry (and colored if needed), gently peel them off the plastic sheet. Be careful—they are fragile and can tear if the decals fold and stick to themselves.
8. Place your decals close together on the outside of your window. For puff paint: stick the flat side to the window. For homemade glue, attach the non-colored side to the window. Carefully smooth the decals on the window. (Figure 4)
 - Birds think small spaces are passages or openings, so gaps between decals should be no more than 4 inches wide and 2 inches high.
 - If you're having trouble making the decals stick, put a little bit of water on the flat/non colored side. This will help the decal stick to the window.

Let's Reflect:

Window decals are not 100% effective in stopping birds from flying into windows, but they are helpful. What other things can you do to help stop birds from seeing the reflections of the sky/trees in your windows?



Figure 1

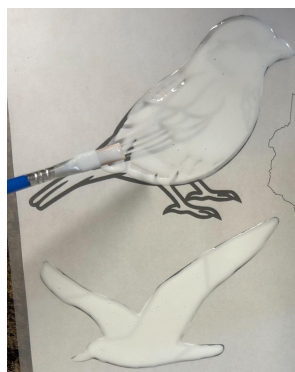


Figure 2



Figure 3

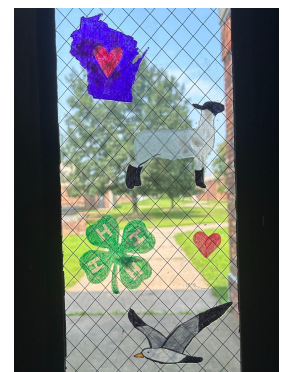


Figure 4

The Wisconsin 4-H Movement

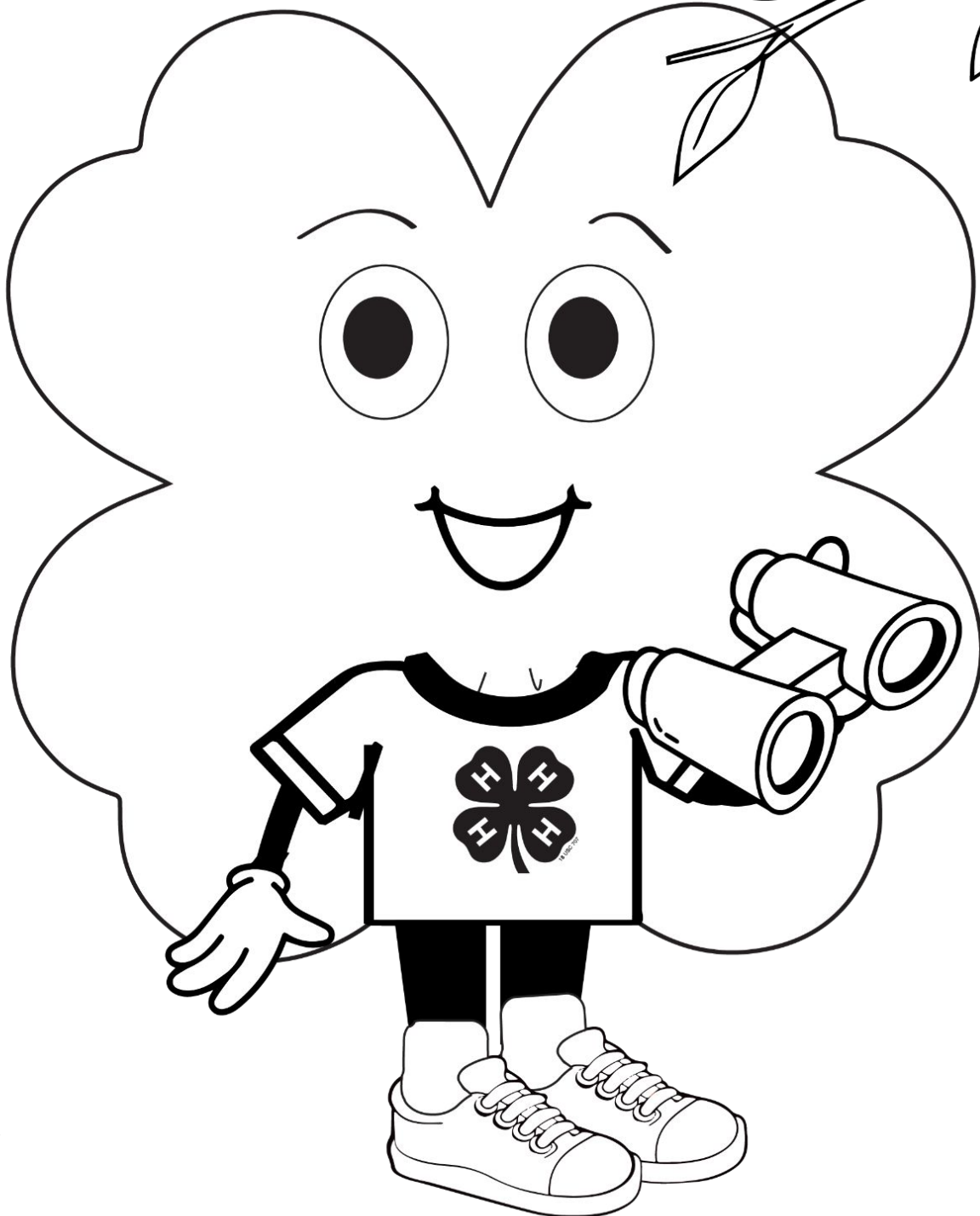
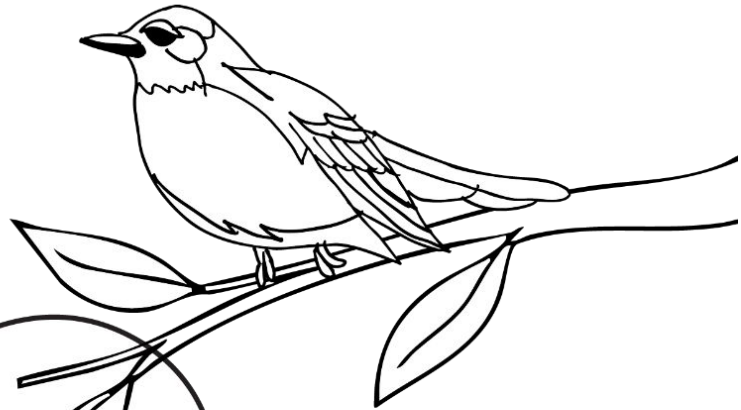


Reflection: Do | Apply | Reflect

What was your favorite activity and why?

How will you share your new knowledge about birds?

Draw a picture or write about one of the activities you did to learn more about birds.



What is the Wisconsin State Bird?

In Wisconsin 4-H we value: Being Yourself, Belonging Together, Building Connections, Discovering Skills, Exploring New Opportunities, and Giving Back to Your Community. Learn more: 4hwi.org. Created by Sara Waldron, Barron County 4-H Educator.