

Age range:



Time needed:



Resources:



Head to your local park, nature reserve, or even just a tree-lined street to discover the behaviour of different bird species in your neighbourhood.

You will need:

- Binoculars
- Bird ID guides
- Notebooks & pens
- Copies of the 'bird behaviours' from step 2
- Bird feeders (optional)

You could do this activity at different times of the year and see how birds' behaviour is different. See the 'Citizen Science' activity for ways that your observations can help scientists learn more about bird life.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Head to an outdoor space where different bird species can be observed. You could hang bird feeders in trees/bushes to attract more birds.

2. Divide the group into pairs or threes, and ask them to try and identify the different species they spot, and sketch or describe the behaviour that they see.

These are some of the things that you might see birds doing:

Hiding: using camouflage or cover to protect themselves from predators.

Flocking: creating large groups to fly or feed, creating safety in numbers.

Bathing: washing in water, or sometimes, giving themselves a dirt bath.

Flying: using their wings or air currents to travel through the air.

Preening: cleaning their feathers using their beak or feet.

Singing: communicating using calls and songs.

Giving an alarm call: hard to distinguish from a song, but usually shorter and simpler than songs.

Foraging: searching for food on the ground, in bark, in water, etc. Food could include seeds, fruits, fish, even small mammals and reptiles.

Feeding: actually eating the food they find



REFLECT AND DISCUSS

Come back together and discuss what birds and behaviours you saw:

- What behaviour was most common?
- Was there any behaviour that surprised you?
- Did you observe any behavior that didn't fit into one of the categories on the sheet?
- Are there differences in how different species do the same behaviour (e.g. blue tits take seeds from feeders, dunnocks pick up food that has fallen to the ground)?