

Activity 2

Explore the Bird-Plant Connection: My State Bird

Audubon

adventures



Teacher-led Classroom Activity
Research, Writing, Life Science

How does your state bird fit into the food web?

Objective:

Students conduct research to learn about the life history of their state bird and create food webs to show how it fits into the ecosystem.

Students will need:

- Access to reliable information (online or print) about the state bird for their state: its characteristics, life cycle, habitat, and food needs
- Drawing materials (to create food webs)

Suggested time:

- One class period to discuss the project and begin research; homework or additional class time to conduct research and create food webs

What to do:

1. Review with students the role of plants as a source of food for birds, either directly or indirectly, as presented on this website and in the *Audubon Adventures* student magazine “Plants Are for the Birds.”
2. Identify the bird that has been chosen as the “state bird” for your state. You can find the list here or on your state’s official website. (Note: If you are in Delaware or Rhode Island, your state bird is a chicken rather than a wild bird. Therefore, your class should choose a bird that is common in your area to use for this activity.)
3. Have students work individually or in small groups to conduct research about this bird using books or online resources, such as Audubon’s online bird guide. Ask them to find answers to these research questions:
 - What kind of habitat does this bird need?
 - What is this bird’s range? (Where can it be found, in North America and other places in the world?)
 - What does this bird eat? Does it depend on plants directly (eating fruit, seeds, nut, nectar, parts of the plant) or indirectly (eating animals that eat plants), or both?
 - Does this bird migrate? If so, where does it go?
 - Are there predators that prey on this bird?
4. Once students have answered the research questions, ask them to create a food web or food chain, including images of the state bird and the plants and animals with which it is associated.
5. Create a classroom or hallway display of students’ creations.

