

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Families—Your child has been learning about feeding habits of wild birds. This sheet offers information and activities so the whole family can enjoy birds too.

EAT LIKE A BIRD

The Beak Game

Gather as many of the following items as you can to represent foods birds eat.



Food Resources: Macaroni (small animals), goldfish crackers (fish), gummy worms (earth worms), chocolate sprinkles (ants), peanuts, sunflower seeds, mini-marshmallows (grubs/caterpillars), dry cereals (insects), fruit juice (nectar).

Beaks (utensils): Clothespin, toothpick, straw, spoon, small plastic scoop, tweezers/small scissors.

Hold one type of “beak” in one hand and keep the other hand behind your back. With one type of food in front of you, try to gather as much food as possible in 15 seconds. Keep in mind, your survival depends on your ability to gather food! After 15 seconds, try another beak and gather food for another 15 seconds. Repeat these steps for each type of beak.

Which beak was most successful in gathering each type of food?

Bird beaks are like the tools you used in this activity. Can you match the shape/function of any of the tools with any real beaks? The shape of a bird’s beak is a critical adaptation for their survival because it helps them gather the food within their habitat. Different beaks are better suited for different foods. Next time you see a bird, take a look at its beak and see if you can tell what it eats!

COOL FACT

Woodpecker
Drumming

Woodpeckers don’t sing songs, but they do use their beaks to drum loudly against wood or metal to achieve the same effect. People sometimes think this drumming is part of the birds’ feeding habits, but it isn’t. Drumming is the woodpecker’s “song,” and is used to attract mates and defend territory. When a woodpecker is feeding, it makes surprisingly little noise, even when it’s digging vigorously into a tree.

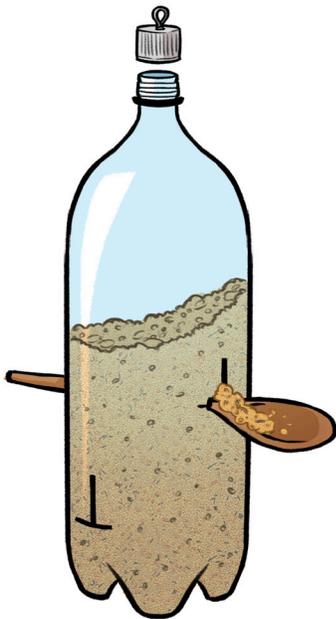
Bird of the Month

MOURNING DOVE

Mourning Doves tend to feed busily on the ground, swallowing seeds and storing them in an enlargement of the esophagus called the crop. They eat roughly 12 to 20 percent of their body weight per day, or 71 calories on average.



Hands-On Activity



MAKE A PERCH FEEDER

Your winged visitors will love being “spoon-fed” with this simple feeder.

Supplies

- 1-liter soda bottle, thoroughly cleaned
- Craft knife (adult use only)
- 2 wooden spoons
- Small eye-screw
- Twine/string for hanging

Instructions

1. Draw a 1/2-inch asterisk on the side of a clean 1-liter soda bottle (about 4 inches from the bottom).
2. Rotate the bottle 90 degrees and draw another asterisk 2 inches from the bottom.
3. Draw a 1 inch diameter circle opposite each asterisk.
4. Have an adult use a craft knife to slit the asterisk lines and cut out the circles.
5. Insert a wooden spoon, handle first, through each hole and then through the opposite asterisk.
6. Remove the bottle cap and twist a small eye screw into the top of it for hanging.
7. Fill your feeder with birdseed, recap it, and use a length of twine to hang it from a tree.

Check allaboutbirds.org under the Feeding Birds tab to find out more about what food to use and what birds you can expect to see in your region.