



BIRDWATCHING

NOTEBOOK

LEVELS

3-8



The Good AND THE Beautiful



Instructions:


The main purpose of this Birdwatching Notebook is to record the birds you observe. The most-referenced pages will be the Birdlife List on pages 1–2 and the notebook pages beginning on page 21.

Place your Birdwatching Notebook in a binder or on a clipboard to keep the pages contained and to provide a solid surface for writing. Pages do not need to be completed in order, but we recommend you look through the entire notebook before you start using it to get an idea of things to look for.

It will be helpful to have a bird guidebook or app for your location to help identify the birds you observe. Binoculars can help you get a closer look at the birds you find.

Enjoy your time in nature as you get to know more about birds and perhaps develop a lifelong interest in these fascinating animals!

Materials Needed:

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- writing utensils
 - colored pencils
 - binder or clipboard for stability
 - bird guidebook or app for your area
 - binoculars (optional)

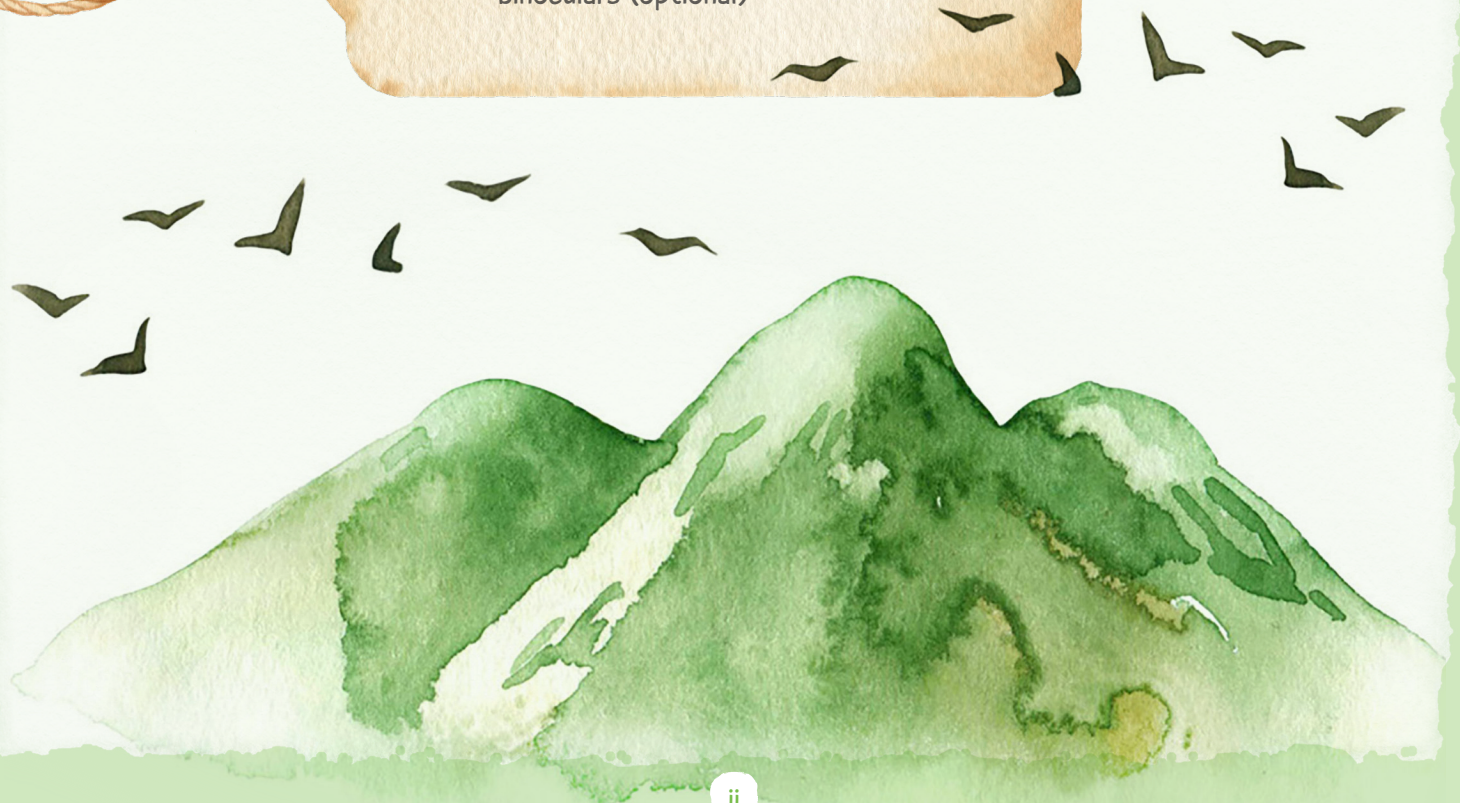
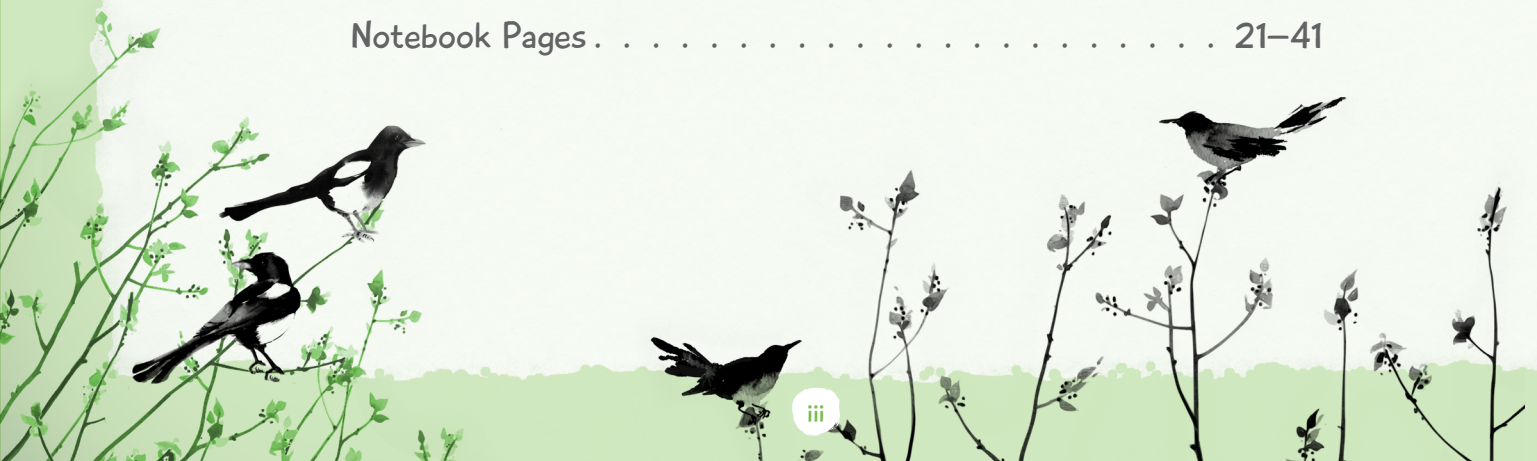




Table of Contents

Birdlife List	1–2
Birdwatching Bingo Cards	3–4
Ethical Birdwatching	5
Signs of a Bird.	6
Feather Identification	7
Bird Tracks	8
How to Make Your Home Bird Friendly	9
How to Use Binoculars.	10
Beak Talk	11
Peek at a Beak	12
Feet Beat	13
Peek at the Feet.	14
State Bird Study.	15
National Bird Study	16
Bird of Prey Study	17
Bird of Interest Study	18
Bird Identification	19–20
Notebook Pages	21–41



BIRDWATCHING BINGO!

APPEARANCE

Look for the features in each square during your birdwatching expeditions. See how long it takes you to complete all the squares, or challenge someone to a friendly competition to see who can check off a line of squares first.

a bird that is one solid color



a bird with a long neck



a bird I've never noticed before



a bird with green anywhere
on its body



a bird that has more than
two colors



a bird that is camouflaged



a bird of prey



a bird with babies



a bird with striped or
spotted coloring





FEATHER IDENTIFICATION

On this page tape photos or draw pictures of feathers you find so you can look them up in a bird app or field guide. Be sure to always wash your hands after touching feathers—they can carry germs. It is illegal to have some types of feathers in your possession, so it is best to leave feathers where you find them.

A large, empty rectangular area with a dashed border, intended for users to tape photos or draw pictures of feathers.



How to Make Your Home Bird-Friendly

Would you like to attract more birds to your home so you can see them more closely? There are things you can do to make your area, no matter the size or location, appealing and safe for birds so you can enjoy them at your leisure.

1. Food

Birds spend much of their time looking for a bite to eat. They will stay close by if they find ready food sources in the area. Research what the birds in your area like to eat so you can prepare the right foods that will keep them near.

You can place birdseed in feeders on your property. There are all sorts of feeders you can make at home and place anywhere, whether you have a yard or not. Be sure to put your feeders in places that will protect the birds from predators, such as cats. Try to put the feeders in places where squirrels cannot get to them because they will quickly eat all of your birdseed!

In your yard or field, you can leave brush piles, leaves, or fallen trees, where insects like to build their homes and birds like to hunt for those insects.

Plant trees, bushes, flowers, or other plants that produce fruit, nuts, seeds, nectar, and berries that birds like to eat.

2. Water

Birds need water to survive, and they love the sound of splashing water! Birdbaths provide water sources, but stagnant water can easily get dirty and be filled with germs, unappealing algae, and insects. Bird fountains with circulating water pumps, drippers, or misters are great ways to attract birds to your property and provide healthy sources of water.

3. Shelter

Birds need areas that will keep them safe from harsh weather and predators as well as provide protection for their nests. Large trees, shrubs, nesting boxes, and nesting materials can help birds create safe homes for themselves and their hatchlings.

4. Habitat

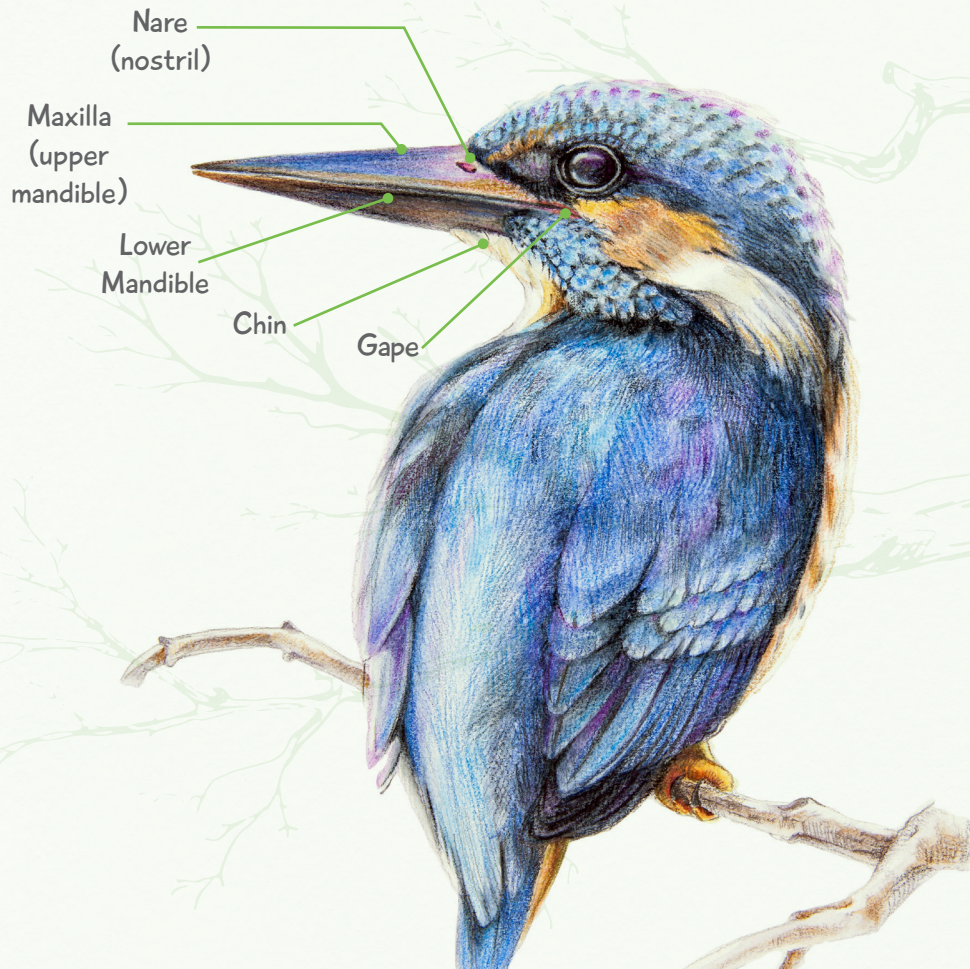
Think of your outdoor space as a habitat where birds live. Include plants native to your area that birds love, and provide a variety of plants and plant levels—grasses, bushes, and all sizes of trees. Keep in mind things such as shade, water sources, food sources, shelter, predators, and human activity. Consider increasing your garden space instead of keeping large lawn areas. Birds are very sensitive to chemicals, so avoid spraying herbicides and pesticides in areas where birds may visit.

Do you want to attract a certain species?

Find out what that bird prefers in all the areas above and set up your property to meet those needs. You may be able to closely observe your favorite local bird if you do!



PEEK AT A BEAK



Observe and Draw!

Observe a bird and take a close look at its beak. What do you notice? Is it pointy? Is it curved? What does the shape of the beak tell you about this bird? Draw the beak you see.



What are some unique features of this bird?

Why did your state choose this bird?

What does this bird eat?

Where can you find this bird?

Sketch or place a picture of the bird you just studied here.

BIRD IDENTIFICATION

Field Marks

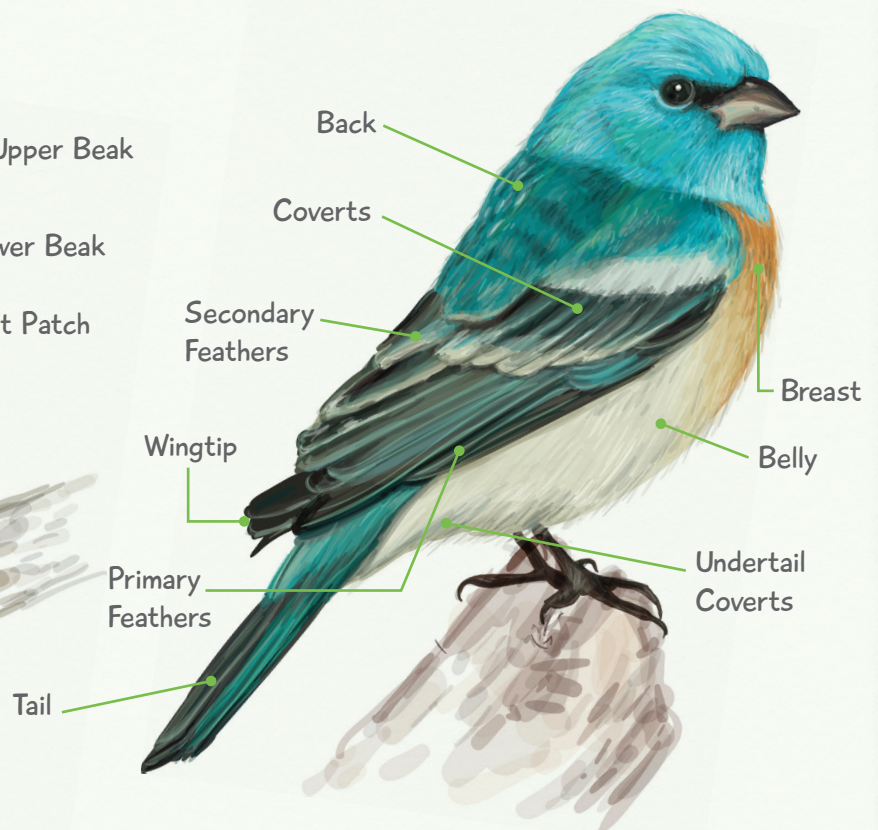
Field marks are the unique markings of color, pattern, and other feather features on a particular bird. Knowing some bird anatomy is helpful when you start to identify birds by their field marks; you can be more specific with your descriptions.

Ornithologists divide up a bird's body into parts, specifically the beak or bill, head, throat and neck, back, breast, wings, tail, legs, and feet. They may further divide these areas. Sometimes you can identify one or two key field marks and know which species you saw, but sometimes different species have nearly identical field marks that require some close observation to notice the difference!

Field Marks on the Head



Field Marks on the Body



Note: Some species look nearly identical, so you need other clues to identify them, such as their size, where in nature they are found, or if they travel in large groups. The field marks of a particular bird can also change with age, molting, and season, making identification even more challenging!



NOTEBOOK

Date _____

Name of Bird (common and scientific, if possible) _____

Location _____

Appearance

Find a picture of your bird (printed from the internet or copied from a book) and paste it below, or draw a picture of your bird. You may wish to label key features, use color, or draw the bird in different positions or angles.

Behavior

Notes

Size _____

Feather Color _____

Bill Color _____

Foot Color _____

Distinctive Features _____

