



The **Bird Challenge** is best done during any **48-hour period in April – June**. Many schools will select the period from 12:00 noon, Friday to 12:00 noon, Sunday.

You may want to learn to identify eight or more types of birds common to your area.

With an adult to help and verify your sightings, tally as many birds as you can within the 48 hours. Go to places where it is safe to find birds, even in your own backyard. Note names and tally total sightings like this:

1. Goose

Take this tally sheet to school the day after the count. Give it to your teacher. Maybe you can help in adding up the totals. The school will come up with a grand tally of how many students took part and how many birds were counted.

SEEDS Foundation
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www.seedsfoundation.ca

BIRD CHALLENGE

Student Pocket List & Tally



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Student Name: _____

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

11. _____

12. _____

13. _____

14. _____

15. **Unidentified** _____

Total number of birds seen (add all the tally marks). Use a second sheet for additional birds.

SEEDS Connections

Visit Us online at www.greenschools.ca for more great resources!

Migration Counts

A SEEDS Bird Challenge

This April to June, your class and/or your entire school can participate in what is truly an exciting event!

This is an opportunity to complement the outgrowth of increasing student interest in bird conservation and protection through a 48 hour bird count.

It's easy and fun!

The SEEDS Bird Challenge (Bird Identification and Data Recording) has received accolades from teachers, students and parents.

Start your challenge today!

The COPY MASTER enclosed is all you need to plan one of the best possible events of the year!

Why Participate?

This activity is easy, fun and educational. Started in 1991, this BIRD Challenge has been designed to involve teachers, students and parents in an enjoyable springtime event to better their understanding of the bird environment.

Being able to find and see birds is just as important as being able to name them. Use the category "unidentified" whenever necessary. Students can even do this activity without naming any birds... just tally the sightings if you have to!

Tally: Geese

or Unidentified



Student Participation is Simple

Students record bird sightings during a 48-hour period of time. A suggested time slot: noon on any Friday in April – June and running to noon Sunday or if done during the school week, noon on Monday to noon on Wednesday.

Students spot, identify and tally birds they may see in their backyards, schoolyards or in any locations they care to visit in the company of a parent, teacher or other responsible adult that can validate sightings. A real learning opportunity to include parents as partners!

Should five students spot the same bird, all five tally the sighting. It is the "student sightings" that we want to have happen, not simply a bird count.

Student Pocket Checklists

The "List & Tally" copy master page (on back of brochure) yields two checklists per sheet of paper if copied one-sided. Simply cut in half and fold twice to make pocket-sized. Record extra sightings on the blank back. To give focus to certain bird types, you might have students print in some of the expected sightings (such as robins, sparrows, etc. See the 10 groups shaded on the long list on next page).

What Relevance to Teachers?

Here are some of the curriculum topics that neatly fit into the BIRD Challenge and may be used in preparation for the challenge event:

- Spring Changes – the return of bird life, migrations
- Monitoring Nature – a role in environmental protection
- Habitats and Adaptations – birds have adapted through differences in beaks, feet and colour to survive in different environments
- Tallies, Totals, Averages and Graphs – various math activities can evolve from the data collected, comparisons between years possible
- Sharing Experiences – various written, spoken or artistic presentations could summarize the weekend efforts of the students participating

Suggestions

Please note that in some schools little or no preparation outside of the distribution of checklists and the tallying of results has still lead to the successful involvement of many students.

Consider:

Prepare students in 3 or 4 lessons:

- Names for 10 common local birds?
- Where can you look for different birds?
- How do you tell birds apart?

Possible activity: Have students collect (bring to class from home or from the library) a selection of 'bird identification books'. Compare, as a class, the pictures and descriptions for the most common birds: robins, sparrows, chickadees, crows, ducks. It might be useful to note that there can be differences between books and real life situations. Some birds vary more than others. Young robins are spotted and adults are not.

Students can peer teach other students:

Have groups of students learn some basic knowledge about ten common bird species and the places to look for them. Groups can prepare presentations to give to their classmates or to younger students. The intent could be to support communications skills and literacy.

Students can volunteer to help:

Run a hallway 'pre-test' by placing many pictures of birds either on a hallway bulletin board or simply scattered throughout the hallways of the school (each picture numbered) some time prior to the start day. The 'correct answers' could be shared over the public address system or circulated on paper to all classes wishing to participate to test their identification skills. This can be fun!

Tally the results of the turned-in, valid checklists, on a class by class basis to arrive at a school or class total and then fill out and fax or mail the Teacher Reporting sheet attached. (By June 17)

Teachers can initiate the BIRD Challenge on Friday on the school grounds:

If the "challenge" starts at noon on Friday, a 15-minute field trip within the schoolyard could initiate the process of recording the first birds seen. This could ensure the 100% involvement of at least your class. It would reinforce and motivate the students to take part on their own.



Canada geese are large water birds with a grayish body; long black neck and head, with white patches on their cheeks. Both males and females look the same.

They live in most areas of Canada and the northern U.S. and migrate to warmer climates in the winter.

They are often seen flying in pairs or flocks shaped like a V.

They mate for life and their average lifespan is 24 years.

Bald Eagle	
Blackbird (various)	
Bluebird (various)	
Blue Jay	
Chickadee (various)	
Coot	
Cowbird	
Crow & Raven	
Dove – Mourning	
Duck (various)	
Flicker	
Goldfinch – American	
Goose – Canada	
Grackle	
Grebe (various)	
Gull (Various)	
Hawk (various)	
Heron – Great Blue	
Hummingbird	
Kingfisher – Belted	
Loon – Common	
Magpie – Black-billed	
Nuthatch (various)	
Oriole (various)	
Owl (various)	
Pigeon – Rock Dove	
Robin	
Sparrow (various)	
Starling	
Swallow (various)	
Tern (various)	
Turkey Vulture	
Waxwing (various)	
Warbler (various)	
Woodpecker	
Wren – House	
Other – _____	
Other – _____	
Unidentified	
GRAND TOTAL	

Teacher Reporting

Submit your Bird Count information (online, email, fax or mail) before June 17 to ensure that your data is compiled with that of other participating schools across Canada. SEEDS will send you a certificate of involvement and stickers for the number of students submitting valid checklists.

A summary of participants from across Canada can be found on our website at: www.seedsfoundation.ca

**** IMPORTANT ****

Please do not send the individual "Student Pocket List & Tally" forms. **ONLY** this page needs to be submitted to receive your class rewards.

Please calculate the data for the following items:

1. Number of "Student Pocket List & Tally" forms turned in. _____
2. Total bird sightings (*sum of all student tally forms*). _____
3. Enter the totals for the bird groups in the list provided (*left side of this page*).

Teacher's Name: _____

Email Address: _____

School Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Prov: _____

Postal Code: _____ Phone Number: _____

Email and other contact information is strictly confidential. It will not be rented, sold or exchanged.

Submit entries by email or fax

Email: greenschools@seedsfoundation.org

Fax: 1-403-234-9532

For further information, contact Linda Finlay, the GREEN Schools Canada Coordinator, through the email above.

Student Pocket 'List & Tally'
Copy Master Sheet
(*other side of page*)