

Environmental Education: Harbours and Watersheds

Backyard Birds Scavenger Hunt

Background Information

A watershed is an area of land that drains rain, snow and ground water to a common point, such as a creek, wetland, lake or ocean. Watersheds can be different sizes and scales. Small watersheds can be part of larger watersheds.

For thousands of years, watersheds on Southern Vancouver Island have supported people and a huge diversity of wildlife that live on the land and in and around our creeks, wetlands and lakes.

A healthy watershed includes ample trees throughout to absorb and slow the rain, as well as vegetated areas around the banks of a lake or creek which acts as a filter for incoming water. This keeps it clean for the animals, insects, birds and fish that live in these habitats and ecosystems.

We all live in a watershed, whether natural, urban or rural. We are all affected by the rain that falls, the soil, the plants, trees, wildlife and the flow of water through out watersheds. What we do on land directly impacts the health of our local water bodies. When we protect our watersheds, we keep our creeks, wetlands, lakes and harbours clean and healthy. Watersheds provide good homes for many different plants and animals, especially birds. Birds live in many different types of habitats and can therefore be found throughout watersheds. Whether you are in your backyard, strolling through a forest, near a wetland or on the water you can find birds! Explore your watershed to see what kinds of birds live nearby.

Instructions

1. Find a spot to watch for birds. Look out the window, watch a bird feeder, tree or bush or go for a walk.
2. Identify as many different types of birds as you can.
3. Use the attached scavenger hunt sheet, a bird identification book or look birds up online to identify the types of birds you see.

Quick Tips:

When learning to identifying birds there are a few simple things to look for:

Size — Is the bird large like an eagle, the size of a crow or small like a hummingbird?

Shape — Does the bird have long legs like a heron, a round head like an owl or a long tail like a robin?

Colour — What colours did you notice? Bird feathers come in many colours and patterns, which are unique to different species. Even the colour of a bird's beak and feet could give you clues!

Behaviour — What was the bird doing when you saw it? At a feeder, on the ground looking for worms, soaring in the sky or diving underwater? Different bird species exhibit different behaviours.

Helpful Resources

For information about common birds found in our harbours and local marine bird sanctuaries visit the CRD [harbours webpage](#).

[All About Birds](#) — The Cornell Lab of Ornithology's bird identification guides and resources.

[Merlin Bird ID App](#) — Free app for iPhone and Android.

[eBrid Canada](#) — Recent bird sightings, bird hotspots, species maps, photos and sounds.

Backyard Birds Scavenger Hunt



Chestnut-backed Chickadee



American Robin



Northwestern Crow



Red-breasted Nuthatch



Anna's Hummingbird



Northern Flicker



House Finch



Dark-eyed Junco



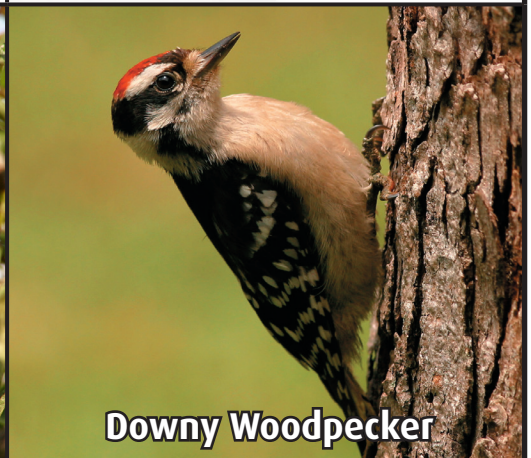
Spotted Towhee



Song Sparrow



Steller's Jay



Downy Woodpecker