



Lesson Plan: **Practicing Bird Identification with Live Feed Videos**

How do I notice the characteristics of birds for identification?

Alignment with STEM Framework

Designer  Tinkerer  Investigator 

Overview

In this lesson, the facilitator shares the following link with youth: <https://birdwatchinghq.com/live-cameras/>. Everyone watches the live stream of a bird feeding station in Ohio for 3 minutes. Youth answer the following questions as they watch the live stream: 1. What types of bird food can you see? 2. How many birds visit? 3. What types of birds visit, if any? and 4) Do shapes of the feeders make a difference of what visits? Facilitators continue to ask questions that probe students to make more and more sophisticated observations. Facilitator encourages students to share their observations and characteristics of specific birds and to discuss with each other where their observations are similar and dissimilar.

Practice Goals

- Asking questions and defining problems
- Developing and using models
- Engaging in argument from evidence
- Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating evidence

Content Goals

- What characteristics of birds do I notice in order to identify the birds correctly?
- What kinds of food are specific kinds of birds eating at the feeders?

Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to explore backyard birds with youth. This lesson is intended to provide opportunities to practice questioning, observing, predicting, and generalizing. This lesson encourages noticing the shape of feeders, the seed in the feeders and what kind of birds are attracted to that feeder.

Teacher Background Information

The facilitator should practice identifying common backyard birds with both field guides and the Merlin app so that they are prepared to help students use these identification tools.



Affinity Goals



I can act like a **Designer** by designing a bird feeder that keeps the squirrels out.



I can act like a **Tinkerer** by building my design.



I can act like an **Investigator** by looking for birds in a live feed online and noticing their colors, size, beak size and shape, flight patterns, and calls. I can use my observations paired with a field guide or the Merlin app to identify the birds I see or hear.



Materials

- Computer & internet access
- Paper and pen to record observations of live stream video
- Nature journal
- Materials you anticipate students may need for building bird feeders: screen, mesh, duct tape, milk cartons, cardboard tubes, boxes, hot glue gun (supervised by adult)

Time Needed

45 Minutes

Instructional Sequence

Facilitator will:

- Direct youth to carefully watch feeder in live feed looking for answers to the following questions:
 - 1) What types of bird food can you see?
 - 2) How many birds visit?
 - 3) What types of birds visit, if any?
 - 4) Do the shapes of the feeders make a difference in what visits?
- Set up a table of materials for youth to “shop” at.

Youth will:

- Observe material choices.
- Design a bird feeder in their nature journal.
- Build their feeder.

Facilitator will:

- Aid youth in locating a place to hang their feeder for observation week #6, selecting seed and hanging their feeder. Observation will be done the following week to give birds time to find the feeders.