Bird Feeder Observations

General Objective: Students will construct a bird feeder of their own design and observe what birds use their feeder.

Specific Objectives: Discover:

- Constructing a bird feeder,
- Observing,
- Recording data, and
- Animal classification.

Time: Two hours spread over several days.

Resources needed: 4-H 903, pp 18-19. Copies of the different bird feeder designs, bird watcher’s guide, Observation Table, and Bird Feeder Observation Worksheet. Collect supplies for the birdfeeder construction based upon the attached designs.

Activity: Learn about bird feeders and observe what birds come to the feeder.

Discussion – 5 minutes:
- Ask students who has a bird feeder at home.
- After their response ask who has family members who watch birds.
- Explain that they are going to build a bird feeder or bird feeders if you have a large class.
- Break into groups if needed and pass out the bird feeder design sheet.

Construction – 15-20 minutes:
- It is best to design one hanging feeder and a tray feeder if you are making more than one feeder. Students will then be able to make observations about the different birds that go to each feeder.
- Construct the feeders based upon the attached construction design.
- You may need extra milk cartons or 2-liter bottles if the students have a hard time cutting the holes
- Walk around the room assisting the students as needed.
- Place feeders outside where they can be observed.

Observation – 15 minutes a day for a week:
- Have the students replenish their feeders daily.
- Wait to start observations until birds are using your feeder(s).
- Tips
  - Keep the feeders clean.
  - Change out the seed more often if there is a lot of rain or snow.
  - Use a mixture of seed and peanut butter on the tray feeder if seed blows away.

More? Click on Lesson Plans at: http://www.four-h.purdue.edu/natural_resources/resources.html
• When birds are frequenting your feeders have each student record what birds are visiting in their Observation Table.
• You may need a few copies of a bird watcher’s guide to identify the birds.
• Observe for 15 minutes. Be sure to do your observations at the same time of the day each day.
• Help the students complete their table and identify behaviors the birds might be displaying.
• After observing for a week complete the attached worksheet.
• Discuss with students their observations and worksheet responses.


Academic Standards:

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<th>Activity</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<th>Science</th>
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<td>1.2, 1.4, 6.3, 6.6, 6.7</td>
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Bird Feeder Designs

Design #1 – Milk Carton Feeder
Materials: Milk carton, 12 inch long dowel rod, wire, knife
• Cut two holes one inch above the bottom of the milk carton on opposite sides.
• Be sure your holes are large enough for a bird to access the food.
• Below the holes make two small holes.
• Slide the dowel rod through the small holes to make a perch.
• Make two small holes at the top of the carton.
• Insert wire through holes to make a hanger.
• Place bird feed inside.
• Hang outside in a tree.

Design #2 – 2-Liter Feeder
Materials: 2-liter bottle, 12 inch long dowel rod, wire, knife
• Cut two holes one inch above the bottom of the 2-liter bottle on opposite sides.
• Be sure your holes are large enough for a bird to access the food.
• Below the holes make two small holes.
• Slide the dowel rod through the small holes to make a perch.
• Make two small holes at the top of the bottle.
• Insert wire through holes to make a hanger.
• Place bird feed inside and hang outside in a tree.

Design #3 – Tray Feeder
Materials: Plywood 12”X12” (approximate), trim wood, hammer, nails, drill, and drill bit
• Use the plywood as your tray.
• Drill three small holes for draining water.
• Attach to the sides the trim wood for an edge.
• Place feed inside the tray.
• Find a location up off the ground to place your feeder
## Observation Table

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**Bird Feeder Observation Worksheet**

Instructions: Write your responses in complete sentences.

1. What was the most common bird at your feeder?

2. Did the birds prefer the aerial or ground feeder? Why?

3. What types of behavior did you observe at your feeders?

4. What bird feeder would recommend some one place in their yard? Why?