

# PLUGGED IN

FUN FOR KIDS

A COOPERATIVE PROJECT OF THE SANTA BARBARA NEWS-PRESS AND THE EDUCATORS' ROUNDTABLE, PUBLISHED MONTHLY TO PROMOTE LEARNING AMONG YOUNG READERS IN NATURAL SCIENCE, HISTORY, TECHNOLOGY, AND ART

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## This Month's Theme: Be A Birder

Our mild climate and location by the ocean mean that Santa Barbara County is rich with a great variety of habitats. Our county is therefore also rich with bird life. Santa Barbara has more species of birds than most places in the United States. Spring is a great time of year to watch birds. They are busy finding mates, building nests, and raising young.

Here's the challenge: Can you learn to identify some of the birds around you—in your neighborhood, at the beach, in a park, or at your school? You might ask, "How do I begin?"

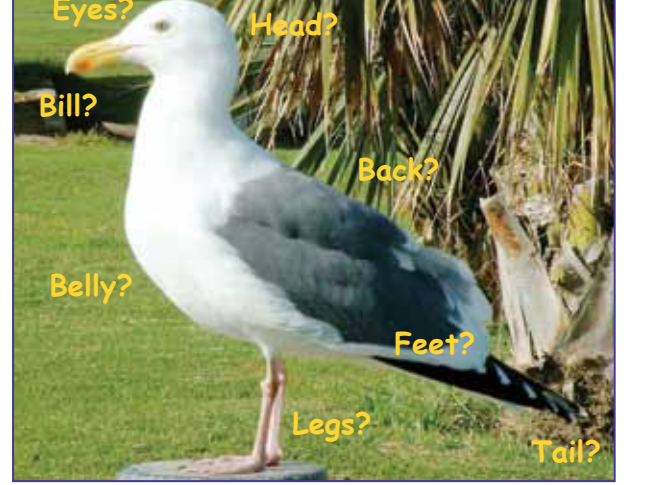
You will need a bird field guide. A field guide is a book or brochure that shows photos or pictures of birds that live in certain geographic areas, such as North America. If you don't have one, you can borrow a guide from a library. After you have seen a bird, you can identify it using the field guide. First, you will need to learn how to really look at a bird so you can find it more easily in the guide.

There is a way to look at a bird, and the more you do it, the better you will get. Begin by looking carefully at certain parts of the bird. (Yes, they fly away, so be quick!) Here are a few basic questions to ask when you look.

### WHAT TO ASK WHEN IDENTIFYING A BIRD:

- **How big is it?**  
Hummingbird size Sparrow size  
Crow size Hawk size  
Eagle or Heron size

- **What colors are its ...**



- **Where is it?**  
On a branch In a hole On a tree trunk  
Under a bush In a bush In the grass  
In the water Near water

- **What is it doing?**  
Perching Singing Eating Preening  
Swimming Soaring Walking

- **Is it alone or in a flock?**

- **Does it make any sounds?**  
hoot whistle warble quack  
coo pip chig squawk

### Common Birds of Santa Barbara County

Acorn Woodpecker	American Crow	Anna's Hummingbird
Brown Pelican	Great Blue Heron	Hooded Oriole
House Finch	House Sparrow	Mallard
Oak Titmouse	Red-tailed Hawk	Scrub Jay Western Gull

## A Bird's Beak Talks

The shape of a bird's bill (or beak) can tell you about its eating habits.



Acorn Woodpecker: drilling



House finch: cracking seeds



Anna's Hummingbird: sipping nectar



Red-tailed Hawk: tearing flesh



Great Blue Heron: spearing fish



Scrub Jay: multi-purpose



Hooded Oriole: catching insects and sipping nectar

### Match the Tool to the Job: Which Bill Does What?



Answers: 1. crack seeds; 2. multi-purpose; 3. catch insects; 4. tear flesh

## Bird Word-Search Scramble

Unscramble the bird names below. Next, find the names in the word search. The names may be forward, backward, or diagonal. Find the answers to the far right.

- OWCR
- UINCOHEHSF
- MIBRMHDNUGI
- DRLLAAM
- ELOORI
- EAIEDKRDHALTW
- RJBYACUS
- SEWTLREUNGL
- DWEOKECORP

O	E	F	B	Y	H	F	C	T	D	Z	M	D	M	S	K	D
Q	H	E	B	Z	Q	C	F	V	X	H	L	R	V	K	I	P
R	H	K	W	B	R	J	N	R	Y	X	Z	G	K	L	G	R
T	W	E	Y	T	E	L	O	I	R	O	W	C	J	C	S	T
I	C	M	S	A	S	H	J	X	F	C	R	O	W	Y	F	X
V	U	A	R	E	D	T	A	I	L	E	D	H	A	W	K	N
H	A	L	Q	N	W	S	W	P	C	X	S	D	Z	H	P	T
H	Z	L	A	M	E	Q	D	O	S	J	J	U	U	T	N	E
J	V	A	X	R	S	J	W	E	O	C	M	B	O	F	C	Z
P	Z	R	X	A	T	F	E	L	E	D	R	A	U	H	C	V
P	M	D	J	M	E	P	O	H	M	M	P	U	C	X	X	Z
L	R	S	J	A	R	Q	A	I	T	F	L	E	B	M	T	O
H	U	M	M	I	N	G	B	I	R	D	J	S	C	J	J	P
H	M	Q	N	Z	G	J	D	B	N	N	G	C	U	K	A	E
K	A	U	X	E	U	O	F	H	G	P	H	O	S	H	A	Y
A	N	M	Y	L	L	D	J	G	N	B	M	X	O	E	V	R
W	P	D	F	X	L	R	C	E	U	F	G	T	I	S	B	K

Check out the website, [www.cachuma.com](http://www.cachuma.com), click on "Calendar of Events," for information on the upcoming birdwatching class, "Kids Learn Birds," in late June for kids 8-15.

### Answers To The Bird Word-Search Scramble

- CROW
- HOUSE FINCH
- ACORN WOODPECKER
- MALLARD
- ORIOLE
- RED-TAILED HAWK
- SCRUB JAY
- WESTERN GULL
- WOODPECKER

Page by Liz Gaspar, Santa Barbara County Parks Dept. All photos by Roger Millikan

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