

Birds

*They search for food and things to eat,
And return to their nest at night.*

Linda Ford, Sacramento, CA

Helping Birds Build Their Homes

3+

Science skills

Children use numbers, observation and fine motor skills.

Materials

Scraps of yarn about 2" to 4" (5 cm to 10 cm) long
Lint from clothes dryer

What to do

1. In early spring, read about birds building nests, then plan this activity to assist them.
2. Let the children count ten pieces of yarn, then tie a longer piece of yarn around the bundle in the middle.
3. Tie a piece of yarn around a ball of lint.
4. Tie all these materials to bushes on the playground and watch them disappear as birds look for materials to build nests.

More to do

More science: Examine the yarn and the lint with a magnifying glass. Introduce the term "fiber." Discuss how washing and drying clothes removes some of the fibers from the material. Relate this to clothing wearing out. What else removes fibers? (friction) Which parts of clothing wear out first? (knees, elbows) Why?

Mary Jo Shannon, Roanoke, VA

Weaving a Nesting Branch for the Birds

3+

Science skills

*Children are fascinated to see that their creations
are helping the birds to build homes.*

Materials

Forked branches
String or twine
Odds and ends such as cotton, sheep's wool, yarn scraps, animal fur, string, thread, ribbon

Birds

What to do

1. Collect forked branches, one per child, of a size easily handled by the children. Show the children how to wrap string or twine around and around the fork of their branch, fairly tightly.
2. Then the children weave the odds and ends in and out loosely.
3. Hang the branch outside where birds can safely find the bits to use in building their nests and where children can watch the birds.

More to do

Games: Play the circle game "Bluebird."

More science: Children make individual nesting balls to take home by stuffing old onion bags. ■ Look at a collection of nests to see how differently they are made and to see bits of litter that the birds have used in addition to natural materials. ■ Take a walk during the winter to see abandoned nests in the trees. ■ Feed the birds year round. Make bird feeders from milk cartons or by covering white pine cones with peanut butter and rolling in seeds.



Related books and songs

Have You Seen Birds? by Joanne Oppenheim

Mr. and Mrs. Bird and Their Family by Daniel Boillat

Mr. and Mrs. Bird Build a Nest by Daniel Boillat Downloaded by test@gryphonhouse.com from ProFilePlanner.com

A Year of Birds by Ashley Wolff

"All the Birds Sing" from *Sing Through the Seasons*

"Spring Is Coming" from *Pentatonic Songs* by Elizabeth Lebet

■ Linda Atamian, Charlestown, RI

3+

Bird Nests

Science skills

The children use fine motor activity to build a real bird's nest, and they are encouraged to wonder about nature.

Materials

Cup (250 ml) of soil, or more

Spoon

Assortment of grasses

Water

Straw

Paper