BIRDS OF NORTH AMERICA

Collect pictures of wild birds of North America.

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Scientists have learned that the number of birds in the United States and Canada has declined by 3 billion, or 29 percent, over the past half-century. Agriculture and habitat loss are thought to be primary drivers. However, light pollution is also thought to be a contributor to the decline because the artificial light can disorient birds, especially during spring and fall migration.

To participate in this project, you will go outside and take photos of wild birds. You can start in your backyard or where you live. But consider taking photos of wild birds in your community or places where you visit. Take note of the date, time and location of your photo. Do your best to identify the wild bird and determining whether or not the bird migrates.

The photos that you submit will help scientist understand the diversity of wild birds during the different seasons of the year.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Camera or smartphone with camera, Computer or smartphone with internet access, iNaturalist app

STEP 1

Go to scistarter.org/darksky and sign up for an account, or log in to your existing account. A SciStarter account helps you track your contributions and find relevant projects to participate in.

STEP 2

Click the "Birds of North America" icon at scistarter.org/darksky and follow the instructions to download the iNaturalist app and watch a brief video about the project.

STEP 3

After you sign up on iNaturalist, return to your SciStarter Dashboard to add your iNaturalist user name to your SciStarter account profile. It's easier than it sounds. In your SciStarter account settings, you'll see an option to integrate with iNaturalist. That's where you'll add your iNaturalist user name. This will sync your project contributions from iNaturalist to SciStarter for years to come! Sometimes, it may take up to 24 hours for an observation to be credited in your SciStarter dashboard.

(Continued on reverse)

STEP 4

Capture photos of wild birds around you. Rather than a focusing on a wild bird in your backyard, try to photograph a wild bird in your community or places where you visit. Take note of the different types of wild birds that you see during the spring, summer, winter and fall seasons.

STEP 6

After selecting your best photos, open the iNaturalist app or website and follow instructions to share your nature photos. Make sure you indicate the location of where you took the observation. Do your best to identify your observation including whether or not the bird migrates. If all you know is that it's is a wild bird, just say that. That's great, too!

STEP 7

The iNaturalist community of citizen scientists and experts will help identify your observation, and after enough people have verified it, it becomes "research grade" – meaning that it's shared with scientists around the world.

STEP 8

You can make as many observations as you would like!

QUESTIONS?

Please visit **scistarter.org/darksky-faq.**

LOOKING FOR MORE?

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PROJECT MATERIALS: CAMERA OR SMARTPHONE WITH CAMERA, COMPUTER OR SMARTPHONE WITH INTERNET ACCESS, INATURALIST APP