

Bird Activity

1

Paint Eggs

1. Choose reference photo of a backyard bird egg to paint. This will determine what color paint(s) you will need.

2. Get eggs, reference photos, paint, a small brush, and tooth brush ready. I would recommend buying small wood eggs like these from a craft store since if you see below the actual backyard bird eggs are quite small but if you'd rather you could always boil a chicken egg and paint it too.



3. Paint base layer and let it dry.

4. Put the tooth brush into the accent color and flick of excess paint on to spare paper by pulling your finger gently but quickly across the face of the paint dabbed toothbrush.

5. Using that same motion at speckles to your egg and let it dry.

Bird Activity

2

Make a nest

1. I looked at several tutorials on how to build a nest and this one was my favorite. I found it at HGTV and it does use hot glue. So if your kids are too young for that I would try one of the other two nest activities.



2.



This one is definitely more kid friendly and traditionally crafty if you don't want to have to make a trip to the craft store. I found it at busybeekidscrafts.com

3.

I saved my favorite for last. Ask them what they think would make a good nest, find the materials, and try to make it themselves. (I would put it in a shoe box or something to give it support though) The Many Little Joys has other good suggestions on this blog post for bird activities as well.



Bird Activity

3

Bird Nest Snack



Ingredients:

1 TBS of unsalted butter,
for greasing the muffin pan

6 oz (1/2 bag) of semi-sweet
chocolate chips

6 oz (1/2 bag) of
butterscotch chips

1 cup creamy peanut butter

6 oz (1/2 of a large bag)
of chow mein noodles

36 mini Cadbury eggs

This recipe makes 12 servings. For
Instructions head over to The
Curvy Carrot!



Bird Activity

4

Feed the Birds

If you want to attract birds to your back yard you can make a simple bird feeder out of a plate and some string. Just punch 3 holes evenly spaced around the edge of the dish, knot the string through the holes, and tie together with a loop at the top.

Then hang it from a tree with some bird seed picked up from a local garden center. For more details on the one pictured check out "paper plate bird feeder" at Happy Hooligans blog.



If you'd like to feed ducks you can find them near lakes and ponds. Remember NOT to feed them bread, it can make them sick. Instead try oats, peas, or corn. When feeding them show them kindness by respecting their space and not chasing them or being too loud.

Bird Activity

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Bird Watch

1. Go prepared for a hike with all necessary snacks and gear, content kids pay attention better!
2. Bring Nature journal, colored pencils, binoculars, and bird ID cards.
3. Use your senses. Do you hear them calling, do you see the branches move? Can you see a nest or something they might eat? Ask thinking questions to spark curiosity and imagination. "What do you think they are talking about?" or "Where might they be hiding?" encourage them to notice details, ask questions, and really look at what they are seeing.
4. Still and quiet are not the natural state of kids but when you spot a bird, encourage them to be still and ask them to quietly observe, even for just a moment. Can they identify the bird?
5. Write down observations. When they go to write/draw, help them remember what they had noticed and record their own thoughts/questions they came up with. Encourage them to make sketches with the specific details they noticed or are curious about.

Bird Watch



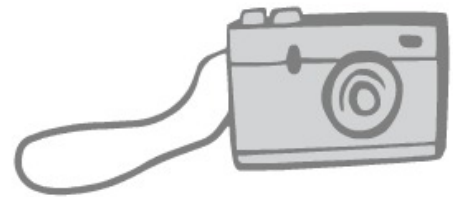
The best time to go is in the morning when the birds are looking for food.

The best time of year is in the Spring or Fall when they are migrating.



The best time to see them from a backyard feeder is in the winter, when food is more scarce.

Write down the different types of birds you've seen and draw a picture in your nature journal or take a photograph to refer back to later.



Bird Activity

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Disect an Owl Pellet













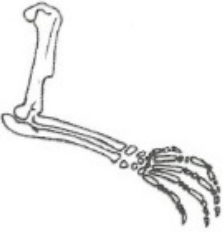
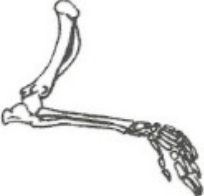



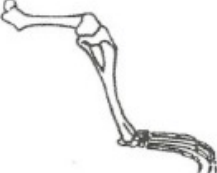

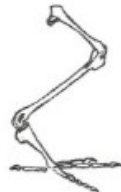












The BIG Question: What do owls eat?

1. A great place to start is guessing an answer to the BIG question then watching this kid friendly video titled "What are Owl Pellets?"
2. Gather materials, you will need:

Required:	Optional:
- Owl Pellet	- Gloves
- Tweezers	- Magnifying glass
- Observation sheet	- Small paint brush
3. Gently pull pellet apart with fingers, carefully being aware of any skulls you may find. Once broken into smaller peices you can begin to pull out different bones with your fingers or tweezers and clear them of fur and debri. Carefully go through each peice as you gather your bones for further investigation.
4. Once you get the bones separated and cleaned match them to your bone identification chart to discover what type of animal your owl ate. Then dig deeper into trail guides and books to learn more about how owls catch their prey or what the prey's defenses are.



Dissect an Owl Pellet

Owl Pellet Bone Chart				
	Rodent	Shrew	Mole	Bird
Skull				
Jaw				
Scapula				
Forelimb				
Hindlimb				
Pelvic Bone				
Rib				
Vertebrae				

Bird Activity

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Measure Wingspans

Have your kids measure out the length of a bird's wingspan on the sidewalk with a



measuring tape, marking the distance with a line drawn in chalk. Repeat for several birds then compare their armspan length. For a challenge have them add wing details to the line drawings, calculate the average length from the range, or predict which wingspans will be larger/ smaller than their armspans.

Bird

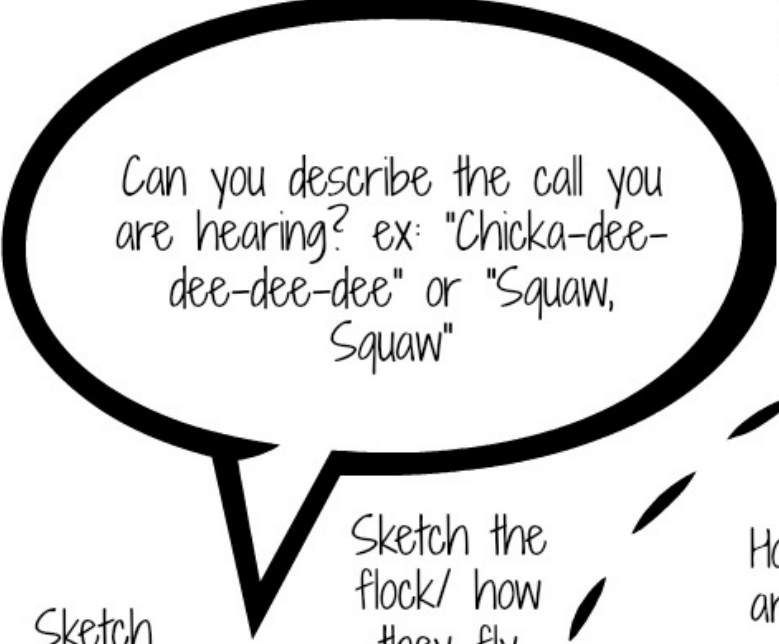
Wingspan

Average

Bald Eagle	5.9-7.5 feet	6.7 Feet
Canadian Goose	4.2-6.1 feet	5.15 Feet
Common Raven	3.3-4.9 feet	4.1 Feet
Mallard Duck	2.7-3.2 feet	2.95 Feet
Boreal Owl	21.7-24.4 inches	23.05 Inches
American Robin	12-16 inches	14 Inches
B. C. Chickadee	6.3-8.3 inches	7.3 Inches
Rufous Hummingbird	4 inches	4 Inches

Nature Journaling Birds

Watch what their wings/ feet look like in flight. Try to sketch it.



Can you describe the call you are hearing? ex: "Chicka-dee-dee-dee-dee" or "Squaw, Squaw"

Sketch the nest.

Sketch the flock/ how they fly together.

Sketch a feather, beak, or some other specific part of a bird with as much detail as you can.

How are their bodies designed for flying/ perching/ obtaining food? What can we guess about their diet/ behavior from their body?



How do they know where they are going when they migrate?



How do you feel when you hear them sing? What might they be saying?

How do they eat seeds without teeth?

Do you think they feel love/ sadness? How do you think they feel today?

What would you do if you were a bird?


What kind of bird does the feather/ nest/ etc belong to?

Why are they in a hurry?



What makes that a good home/ nest material?

Do they prefer certain types of trees/ food over others?



Where do they go/ what do they do in bad weather?

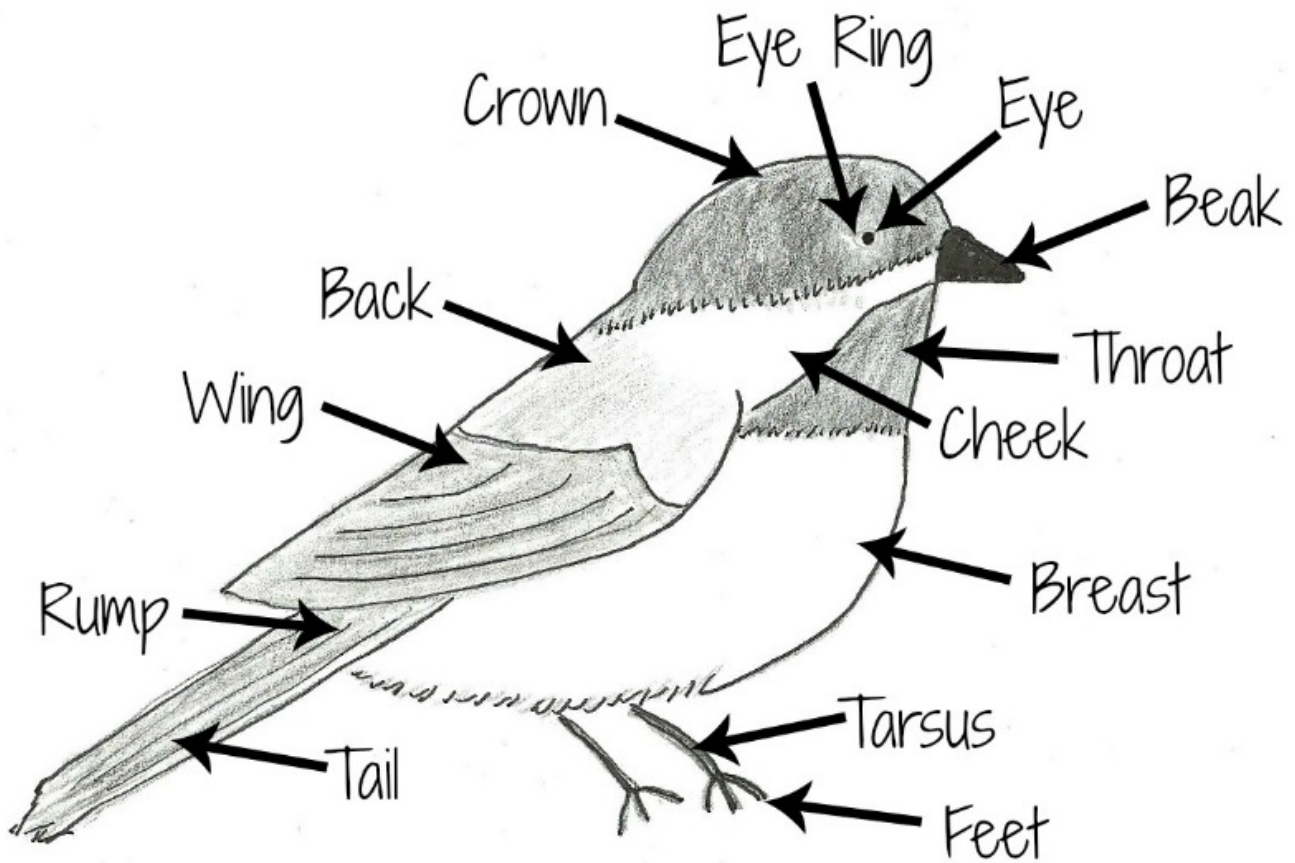
An Alaskan Native Raven Tale

In the beginning there was no light, but Raven heard of a chief who kept the sun, moon, and stars in cedar boxes at his home.

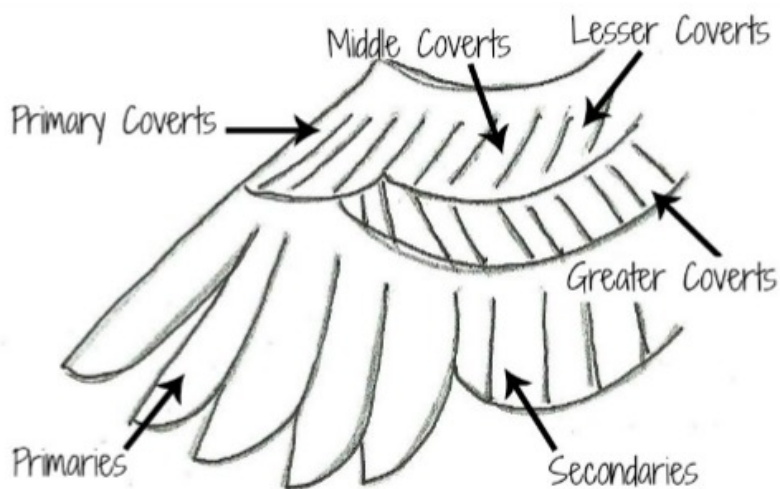
One day he devised a way to steal the light. He found the chief's daughter drinking from a stream and turned himself into a hemlock needle then floated right into her drinking basket. When she swallowed him he turned himself into a baby so that when he was born he would be the chief's grandson.

The chief loved his grandson and wanted to make him happy. One day when Raven was playing, he pretended to get upset and demand a cedar box. Trying to keep him happy the chief agreed to open it. When he lifted the lid stars came out and raven immediately threw them through the smoke hole and they scattered all over the sky. The chief was not happy, but when Raven cried again, he opened the next box and handed Raven the moon. Raven played with it awhile but still not satisfied, threw it up through the smoke hole in the roof as well! Then wailed and wailed until the chief finally opened the box containing the sun. As he went to hand it to Raven, Raven took his true form, grabbed the sun and flew through the smoke hole taking it to the sky to light the world.

Bird Anatomy



Parts of a Wing



Bird Beaks and Feet



Tubular

Used for probing, usually nectar



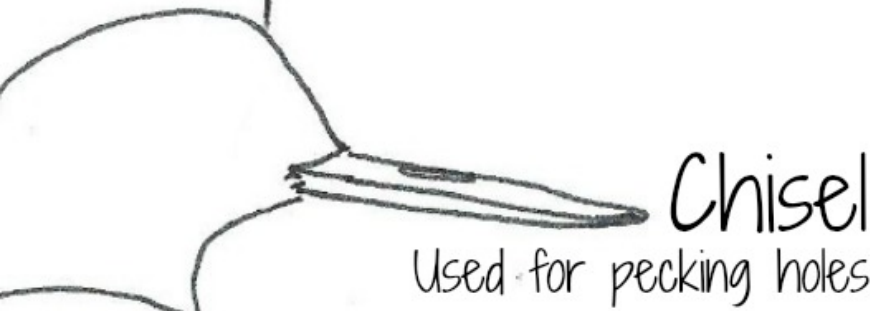
Tweezer

Used for catching insects



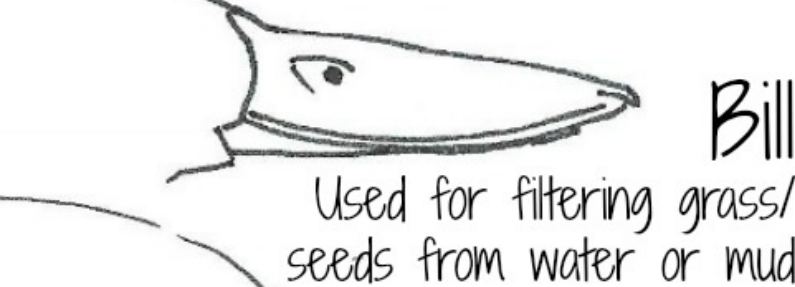
Cone Shaped

Used for pecking seeds and cracking nuts



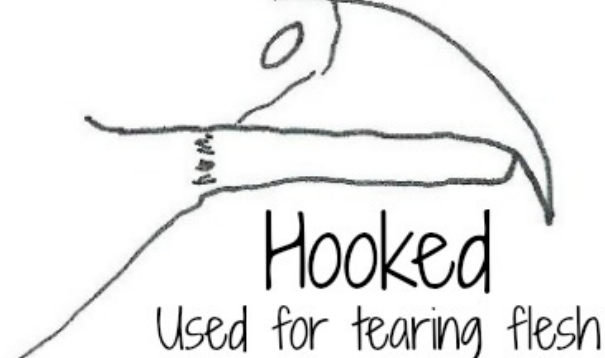
Chisel

Used for pecking holes



Bill

Used for filtering grass/ seeds from water or mud



Hooked

Used for tearing flesh

You can tell a lot about what a bird eats and where they live by their beaks and their feet...

Anisodactyl

The most common.
3 in front,
1 and back for perching



Raptorial

with talons
for catching prey



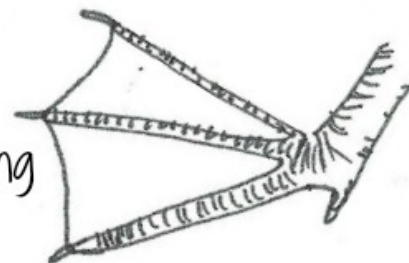
Zygodactyl

2 front, 2 back
for climbing

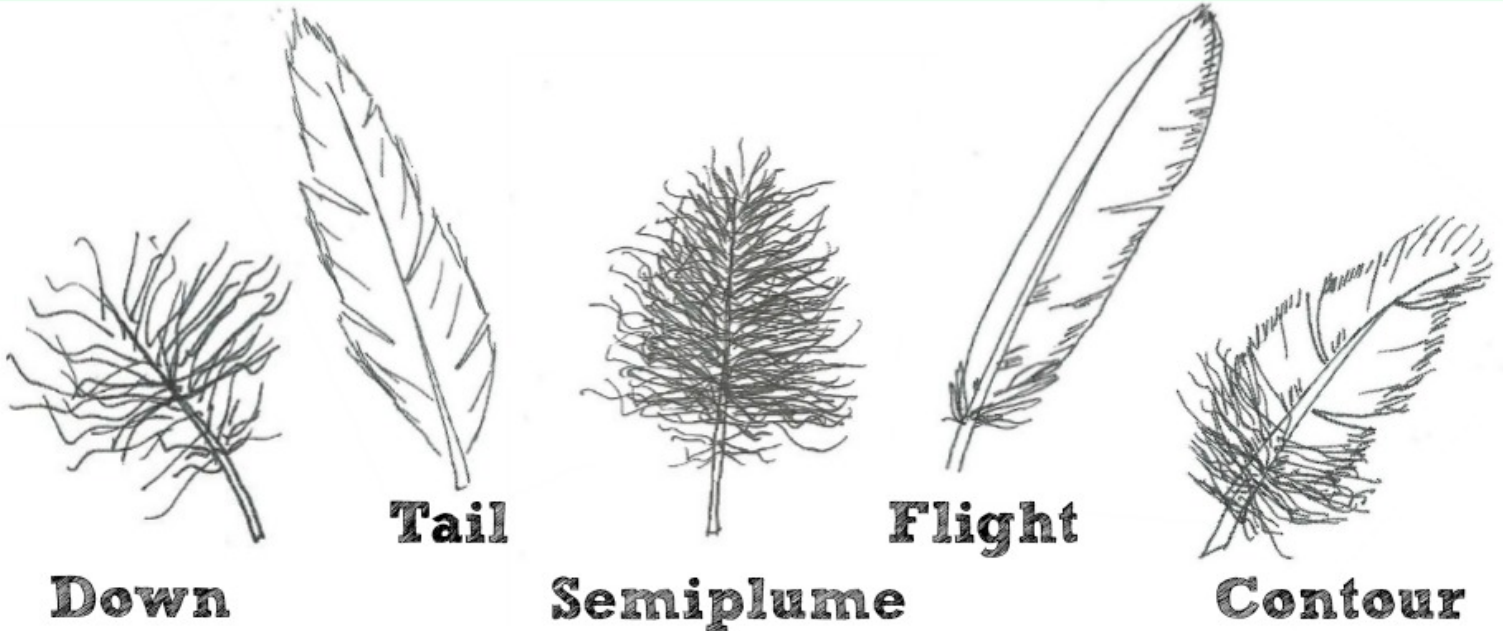


Totipalmate

Webbed for swimming



Bird Feathers



Down

Tail

Semiplume

Flight

Contour

Down feathers are soft and fluffy. They are close the skin with loose barbs that trap air for insulation.

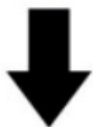
Semiplumes are similar to downy feathers but have slightly more structure and provide form that helps with aerodynamics; they can be as large as a contour feathers but only have downy barbs.

Contour feathers cover most of the bird. The Contour feathers have different colors and patterns for display. They have a downy section and a smooth section.

There are typically 12 **Tail** feathers, with even barbs that interlock with each other making the feather smooth, water resistant, and stiff on each side of the shaft. These feathers serve the purpose of steering and breaking while the bird flies.

There are usually 10 primary **Flight** feathers used for forward thrust and 10-14 secondary flight feathers used for lift and display. The flight feathers have a smaller vane on the forward side and a larger vane on the backside of the shaft.

Bird Food Chain



Food chains show the transfer of energy from one living thing to another. Here is a basic food chain in the bird class:

Plants grow through a process called photosynthesis that turns sunlight into food for themselves. Plants are called "Producers" in food chains because they can produce for themselves and become food for everything further up the chain.

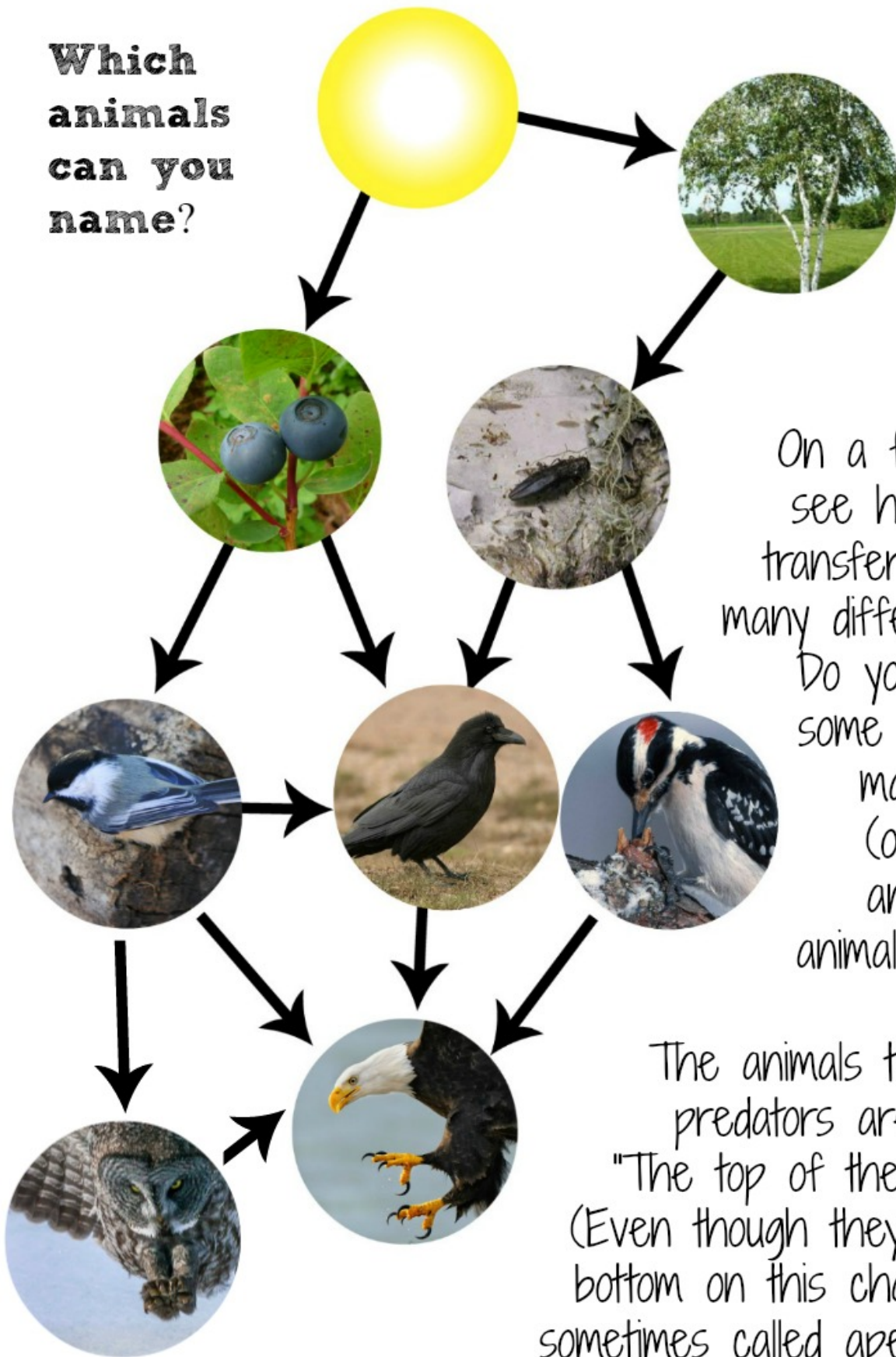
1 Beetles are considered primary (Or first) consumers because they consume or "eat" the plants.

2 Chickadees are called secondary consumers because the energy transferred first from the plant to the beetle and second from the beetle to the chickadee.

3 Owls are tertiary consumers because this is the third transfer of energy in the food chain.

Bird Food Web

Which animals can you name?

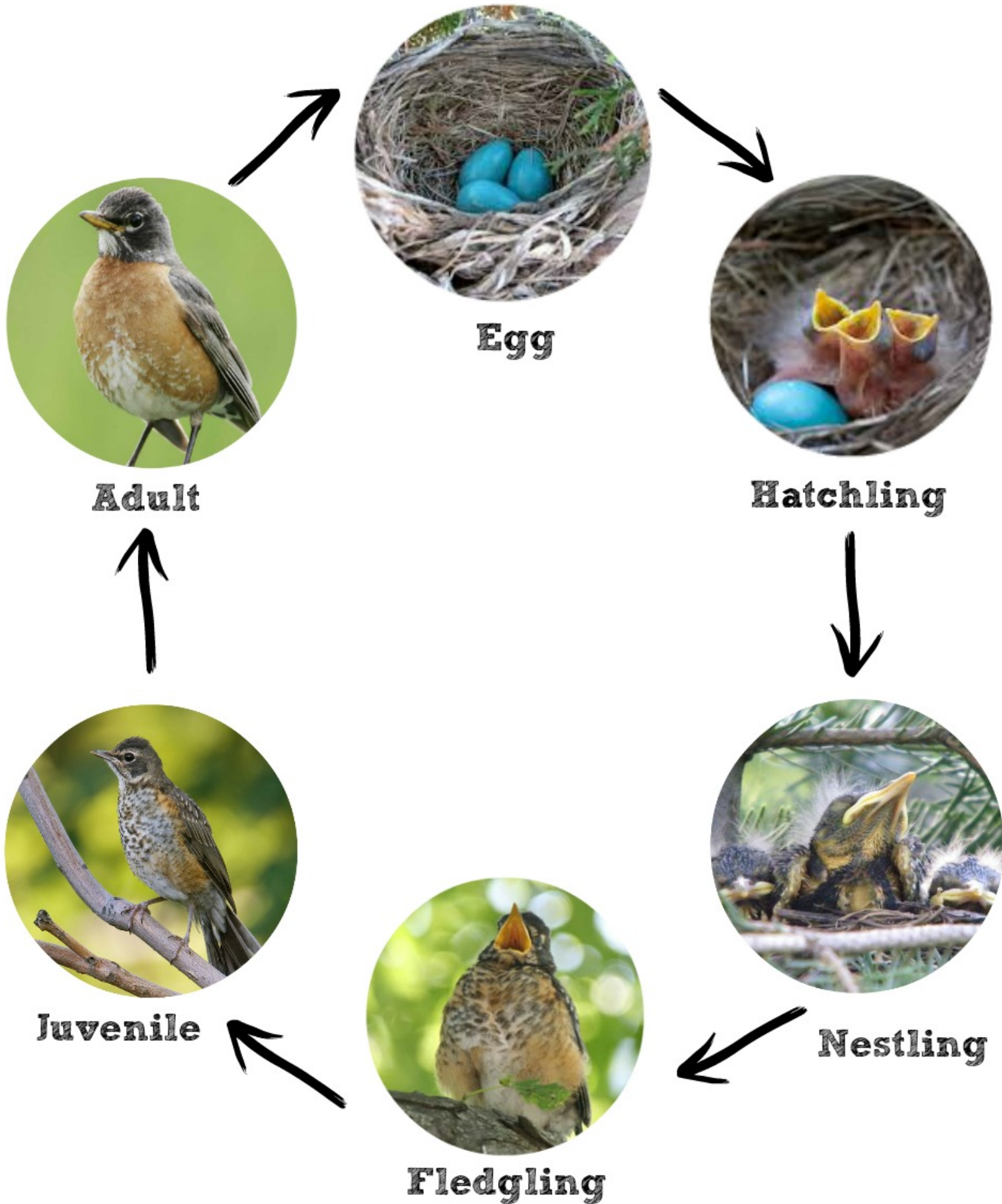


Similar to a food chain,

On a food web you see how energy is transferred between many different animals. Do you notice how some animals have many predators (or consumers) and how other animals have few?

The animals that have no predators are considered "The top of the food chain" (Even though they are at the bottom on this chart) and are sometimes called apex predators.

Bird Life Cycle



Bird Migration

Pacific Flyway



This is a major North/South route for migratory birds in North America. The Birds that migrate to Alaska usually fly all or part of its distance.