



Birds Brownie Patch

To complete this patch at least four requirements including the starred requirement must be finished. However if your girls are enjoying the subject, keep going!

- *1. Learn to identify at least 15 different kinds of birds that live or visit your area feeders. The American Goldfinch pictured on this patch is the New Jersey state bird. To learn about other birds common in your immediate area, learn to use a field guide or use an Internet site such as www.birdsandblooms.com and key in your zip code for a list with pictures. Use the Bird Notebook page in the Program Box to keep track of your observations. Bird watching is the most popular hobby in the United States.
2. Learn the parts of a bird in order to more easily identify a new bird in a field guide. Diagrams are provided in the program box for standard parts of every bird. Notice that different types of birds have different beaks and feet to adapt to the kinds of food they eat and the type of area where they live. Some birds have developed special vision to help them survive. Some birds have adapted their wings to suit their environment and needs.
3. Learn how to make a bird feeder. Different birds prefer different types of seeds. Goldfinches like thistle seeds and wildflower seeds. Cardinals like sunflower seeds and woodpeckers like peanuts and suet. There are many types of feeders to choose from and instructions can be found in the field guides and in the program box.
4. Learn about the different types of nests and nesting boxes that the birds in your area use. Every bird prefers his or her own special type. There are instructions to make birdhouses in the program box, perhaps you would like to make one and keep track of its inhabitants.
5. Birds need food, shelter and water all year round. Make a birdbath for your backyard birds. It can be a large standing birdbath or a small plant saucer. Make sure to keep it clean and supplied with water even in the winter.
6. Participate in the [Great Backyard Bird Count](http://www.audubon.org) run every February over President's weekend by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. You and your troop can observe which birds come to your backyard over a period of a few hours and use the internet website to report your numbers. You could also choose to participate in the Audubon December Christmas Bird Count, which has been held every year since 1900. You can report your numbers to their website at www.audubon.org and also view past years' counts.
7. Make an craft connected with birds such as an origami duck or swan, an Indian Peacock, a Hand & Foot Turkey, construct a nest-like a bird would do, make a summer birdhouse out of pony beads or find another one of your choice. Instructions for those above are in the program box manual.
8. Learn what to do if you find a baby bird out of its nest or if a bird accidentally hits your window. Read the articles on these subjects in the program manual.
9. Some birds fly to different areas of the world during the summer and winter months. This is called migration. What birds in your area migrate to a warmer climate for the winter months and return in the summer and which birds in your local area stay all year round and adapt to the change of season? How does their diet change during these months?
10. Birds communicate with each other through their chirps and songs. Go outside and be very still and quiet and learn to identify several birds from their sounds. Scientists have actually studied the songs of the same species of birds in different areas and discovered they can have different accents!
11. Visit a bird sanctuary, a veterinarian who specializes in bird care, a Raptor Trust or the bird section of a zoo and observe birds in these environments.

12. Read at least two folklore stories about birds from different cultures. What are the birds like in the stories? How do these stories compare to our bird folklore, such as owls being wise and Blue Jays being mischievous?
13. Learn how to use one of a birdwatcher's most important tools, binoculars. Learn how to focus, look through, clean and store for binoculars.
14. Learn how free ranging cats affect bird populations and what can be done to minimize cat related problems. Information can be found at www.abcbirds.org/cats/.
15. Who are bird's closest relatives? Learn about what animals are related to birds and how scientists believe birds have evolved.
16. One thing that makes birds unique is that they lay eggs. Learn about the parts of an egg and how bird's eggs are similar and different from reptile and amphibian eggs. Investigate why birds that nest in different places have different colored eggs. How large is a hummingbird egg? How large is an ostrich egg?
17. Many birds are camouflaged as a way to protect themselves. Learn how birds use camouflage in the different places they live like the forest, shore and wetlands. Why are many male songbirds brightly colored when the females have duller colors? Look in a field guide to compare male and female birds and birds of different habitats.
18. Many birds have adapted to living in urban and suburban areas. For some species, this has helped increase their populations, like the threatened Peregrine Falcon. Learn about how birds have adapted their lifestyles to live with people. More information about Peregrine Falcons can be found at www.njfishandwildlife.com/peregrinecam/.