

Study of Nature – Level 4

Identifying Birds and Animals

You will have to rely to a great extent on your books to help you identify wild animals. They are usually shy, and will run or fly away if you get close enough to sketch or photograph them. To study most birds you will need a pair of binoculars.

Many animals can be identified by the tracks they make in mud, snow, or sand. Sometimes, the tracks will reveal whether the animal had been walking or running or will show that it had been injured.

Bird calls and songs, and frog calls make an interesting study. There are a number of bird and frog calls, and by learning their voices, you can identify the animals without seeing them. Listening to recordings of these calls can help you learn them.

Bird Lists and Calendars

You need to keep a list of the kinds of birds and the numbers of each kind that you see. Some birds migrate, traveling at certain seasons from one part of the world to another. In North America, migrating birds usually go north in summer, south in winter. You need to keep a calendar showing the date each kind of bird arrives in your neighborhood, and the date it disappears.

Keep a list of the birds that frequent your area. You should be able to identify 26 different types of birds that are in the environment you are studying. The male and female of each species of bird are usually different.

When did you see the bird.

Where did you see the bird.

What does the bird eat.

Where does the bird sleep

When does the bird build its nest.

Where does the bird build its nest.

How long before the eggs hatch.

When was the last day you saw the bird.

Attracting and Helping Birds

If you have a yard, there are several ways you can get birds to visit it. A birdbath is especially attractive to songbirds. Food—such as bread crumbs, nuts, grain, and suet—is welcome to birds, especially in winter when it is hard for them to find fruits and insects. Birdhouses are attractive to birds as places to build nests in. Different types of birdhouses attract different types of birds.

Animals

Some animals stay around all year and other animals hibernate. You need to keep a list of the kinds of animals and the numbers of each kind that you see. To determine if an animal hibernates you can find that out by when you see the animal last and then when it reappears.

Since many animals are shy or shy away from humans you will have to learn how to identify the tracks animals make. Squirrels, rabbits and deer all leave tracks that are different. A guide book on animals will have pictures on the tracks they leave so that you can identify the animal that made them.

Keep a list of the animals that frequent your area. You should be able to identify 15 different species of animals in the environment you are studying.

When did you see the animal.

Where did you see the animal.

What does the animal eat.

Where does the animal sleep.

Does the animal build a nest.

Where does the animal build its nest.

When was the last day you saw the animal.