



Time Needed

60 minutes

Materials You Need

Journal

Pencil

Phone, tablet, or Chromebook

Audubon Bird Guide app

Binoculars

Something to sit on

Things to remember:

Wear sunscreen

You might want insect repellent

Check yourself for ticks when you finish

Elon Explorers: Bird Flirting

Overview. Campers will explore the relationship between characteristic behaviors and increasing the odds of reproduction using bird communication as a model

Today’s asynchronous science activity: Before we start our outside activity today, please watch the “How to observe birds” video on the Elon Explorers website. There is also PowerPoint that we would like you to look through, so that you will have a better chance at correctly identifying the birds (and a better chance at winning a prize!). The “Identifying birds” PowerPoint can be found on the Elon Explorers website under Day 8.

When you have finished those two things, go outside to a safe place away, from any busy streets or construction areas, or any other types of human noise. Listen and look, and try to locate any birds around you. If you need help figuring out what bird you are seeing, the Audubon Bird Guide app has photos, calls, and songs of all the birds you might see in North Carolina.

Common birds in the Burlington area include: Northern Cardinals, American Robins, Carolina Chickadees, Carolina Wrens, Tufted Titmice, Northern Mockingbirds, Blue Jays, American Crows, American Goldfinch, House Sparrows, European Starlings, Rock Pigeons, and House Finches

Using your binoculars and the camera on your phone, tablet, or laptop, capture videos and photos of as many birds as you can. Observe a total of 5 instances of bird vocalizations, and fill in a table (which we will talk about shortly).

Make sure to record the following in your journal:

- Vocalization observation number
- Behavioral response of any neighboring bird (if there isn't one, note that too!)
- Environment: time, temperature, weather, noise level

Here’s an example for how you can arrange the information in a table:

Vocalization Observation	Behavioral response	Possible ID of vocalizing bird	Possible ID of responding bird
1	flying away	northern cardinal	same species
2	none	carolina wren	none observed
3	another call	carolina wren	i cant tell
4	flying towards	northern cardinal	same species
5	none	american crow	none observed

And here an example to record what your environment is like:

Time: afternoon	Temperature: 90	Weather: sunny	Noise level: quiet
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Examples of bird responses could include: answering a call with another call, flying towards or away from the vocalizing bird. The responses should happen moments after the vocalization.

Be sure to note what sort of environment you were in during your recording. Important things to note (like in the example above) may be time of day, temperature, weather, how noisy the outside already is, etc.

After you have collected your videos, use The Audubon Bird Guide app to identify the birds. After you identify the birds, upload your images to the Elon Explorers website under “Day 8: Bird Communication”, and input which bird you think your images are. In the afternoon we will have a contest! Anyone who can correctly ID two birds wins a prize!