



## Let's Go Birdwatching!

### PROGRAM GOALS

- Learn about how Australian birds
- Discuss their traits, coloration, and other interesting observations

### GRADES

3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>

### MATERIALS

- Pencils
- Clipboards

### RECOMMENDED ASSESSMENT

- Grade worksheet based on completeness
- Assess students on appropriateness of words used to describe birds

Practice your students' observation skills as they learn about the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo marine animals and their habitat. Each bird will be doing something different in their habitat, so join us and help us identify each bird's behaviors. See below for a variety of questions to engage your student even further:

- Can you describe how they are moving?
- Are they eating, nesting, or what are they doing?
- Are they communicating? What do they sound like?
- Can you describe their colors, patterns, and more?

Have students complete the worksheet as they watch the video or observe the birds at the zoo. If at the zoo, give students five to ten minutes per animal to create observations of their chosen birds. Have students form small groups to discuss different behaviors and characteristics of their birds. Share different facts about the listed birds from the video to the discussion. Be on the lookout for other birds' behaviors at the zoo! Share your lessons with the Fort Wayne Children' Zoo. Tag #fwkidszoo or email [education@kidszoo.org](mailto:education@kidszoo.org) to express how you used these supplemental activities!

### Different Types of Birds:



**Rainbow Lorikeet:** They have a green plumage with bright red, yellow, and orange feathers on the breast, neck, and sides of the belly. Their head is often in violet blue. When born, the rainbow lorikeet has a black beak that changes to bright orange as they get older. They are constant chatterers, so they have little fear of humans. They enjoy visiting backyard picnics in Australia.

**Cattle egret:** These birds are all white with a yellow bill and legs. On their head, chest, and back, they often have golden plumes. They can be found near cattle, where they can catch and eat insects and small invertebrates that bother larger animals. This is an example of commensalism symbiotic relationship, so the egret benefit from the cattle, but the cattle do not benefit nor hurt form the interaction.



## Birdwatching in Australia



**Straw-necked Ibis:** Their name comes from the straw-like feathers that can be found on their necks. They are large waterbird with a bald black head, long down-curved black bill, and yellow throat plumes. It has a glossy blue-black, with metallic purple, green, and bronze sheen, white nape and sides of the neck and white underparts. They like to utter raucous, rolling calls when in flight. In nests, they will grunt, croak, and bark. They are known as the “farmers friend” in Australia because they help get rid of pests.

**Masked Lapwing:** Native Australians once said that masked lapwings carried a spear, and they were close to the truth! Masked lapwings, also called spur-winged plovers, have sharp yellow spurs on the “elbow” of their wings. They use these spurs to scare predators by flying directly at them, but they rarely use the spurs for anything other than looks. They spend much of their time on the ground searching for insects and worms for food. They are identifiable by its bright yellow wattle that hangs below the head and goes up behind the eye.



**Blue-faced honeyeater:** They get its name from the vibrant blue markings surrounding its eyes. Their feathers are in olive, white, and black colors. The blue part is actually the birds’ skin. They have long, quick tongues. Their tongues are bristly, like a paintbrush, and are useful for soaking up nectar from flowers. They can empty a flower in one second with ten flicks of their tongues. They are essential pollinators in Australia!

**Galah Rose Breasted Cockatoo:** These birds are one of the most common cockatoos in Australia. They have distinct grey and pink feathers. They often gather into a crowd in open fields, and the flock will walk on foot and forage on the ground for insects and invertebrates. They can emit loud, high-pitched sounds while flying in flocks. They are intelligent birds that can imitate repetitive sounds such as cell phone ringing, car horns, or whistles.



**Australian Magpie:** They are medium-sized birds with black and white feathers. Their eyes are chestnut to reddish-brown, and they have blue-grey wedge-shaped bills. They are one of the most highly regarded songbirds. They can mimic up to 25 different species of birds and can also mimic dogs and horses! Unlike most birds, they will walk on the ground rather than hop. They like to eat different types of insects, invertebrates, and even small mammals and amphibians.

**Cockatiel:** They have a grey body with a yellow head, and they are relatively easy to identify by their plumage on their head. They are super-fast flyers, perhaps the fastest in Australia. They can fly up to 43 mph! They are usually found in flocks ranging from ten to several hundreds of birds, and they can be seen flying long distances for food and water. Cockatiels can talk, where their voices sound very singsong compared to human voices.





# Birdwatching in Australia

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

I saw these birds

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_

- 4. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. \_\_\_\_\_

Australian birds often have their own unique characteristics, whether it's communication, movement, or what they look like. Choose three birds and describe what they look like and what are they doing.

1. Name of bird:

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2. Name of bird:

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3. Name of bird:

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What are some differences and similarities between the three birds you observed?

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