

Ames Public Library @HOME Activities for Teens

Birds!

Birds are warm-blooded vertebrates (vertebrates have backbone) and are the only animals with feathers. Modern birds descend from a group of two-legged dinosaurs known as theropods, whose members including the giant Tyrannosaurs rex and the velociraptors.

See a related video on the Library's YouTube Channel at <http://bit.ly/APLvideos>.

Books and media:

Title	Author	Call Number:
<i>Raptors of Iowa - Paintings by James Landenberger; essays by Dean Roosa, Jon Stravers, Bruce Ehresman, and Rich Patterson</i>	University of Iowa Press	598 RAP 2013
<i>The Owl Who Liked Sitting On Caesar : Living With a Tawny Owl</i>	Windrow, Martin	598.9 WIN 2014
<i>Owls</i>	Hamilton, Sue	J 598.97 HAM
<i>The Book of North American Owls</i>	Sattler, Helen Roney	J 598.97 SAT
<i>In Good Hands: Behind the Scenes at a Center for Orphaned and Injured Birds</i>	Swinburne, Stephen R	J 639.97 SWI
<i>Animal Lives – The Barn Owl</i>	Tagholm, Sally	J 598.97 KIT
<i>Bird – Eyewitness DVD</i>	(DK)	J 598 (DVD) BIR

Websites:

URL
https://www.barnowltrust.org.uk/owl-facts-for-kids/owl-pellets/
https://www.owling.com/north-american-owls/

Vocabulary

Nocturnal – Animals and birds that are nocturnal are awake during the evening and night.

Diurnal – Animals and birds that are active and awake during the day.

Flap – When a bird moves or beats its wings up and down when flying or preparing to fly. North American hummingbirds average around 53 beats per second in normal flight. The fastest recorded rate is about 80 beats per second on an Amethyst Wood-star Hummingbird (National Park Service).

Swoop – When a bird moves suddenly down through the air, especially in order to attack something. Swooping birds can be alarming.

Nest – Many birds lay and incubate their eggs in a nest. Bald Eagles build some of the largest nests among birds. An eagle's nest usually is about 3-9 feet in diameter, 3-5 feet deep, and can reach 1,000-2,000 pounds in weight (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service).

Nesting season – This is the time of the year when birds build nests, lay eggs in them and hatch their young. This season is usually in spring.

Wingspan - A bird's wingspan is the distance from one wingtip to the other wingtip. The wandering albatross has the largest known wingspan of any living bird at times reaching nearly 12 feet (Bhanoo, S., New York Times).

Ornithology – A branch of science that studies birds and all that relates to them.

Regurgitate – Bring up to the mouth food that has been swallowed.

Migration – Bird migration is the seasonal movement of birds. Birds migrate from areas of low or decreasing resources to areas of high or increasing resources.

Carnivore - Animals and birds that eat meat (and other animal tissue) to get their calories and energy to survive.

Herbivore – Animals and birds that eat plants for their energy and nutrients.

Omnivore – Animals that eat both animals and plants.



What are owl pellets?

Owls swallow every part of the animals, birds or insects they catch. Then, they bring up the bones, fur, or feathers as lumps known as pellets. If you look closely you might see parts of the things that were eaten. (Source: Owls by Bone, Emily. 2013)

Take Away Kit: Owl Pellet

Bag Contents:

- 1 Owl Pellet
- 1 toothpick

Your bag contains an owl pellet wrapped in foil. This pellet is sterilized, but always wash your hands after handling the pellet.

Carefully unwrap your owl pellet on a clean working surface.

Inspect you pellet, note the size, bones, feathers, whitewash, or any clues about where the pellet came from.

Very gently, pull apart you pellet, being very careful not to break any bones. (If you wish you can soak the pellet in water, or work with a dry pellet.)

Carefully separate the bones from the fur or feathers. Toothpicks work well. Take special care with any bones you find, this may be a way to identify the animals that the owl consumed.

You can also roll the last bits of fur between your fingers to find little bones or teeth. Try to lay out the bones to reconstruct the skeletons of the animals. Can you identify any of the animals?