

Beyond Bird Feeders: A Complete Guide to Bird Watching

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Bird watching, also known as birding, is considered a hobby by some and a sport by others. It is one of the most popular hobbies in that it embraces a large group of people. About one-fifth of the United States population is thought to be involved in bird watching, according to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. One of the reasons for the popularity of bird watching is that there are no special requirements in order to participate. Ideally, a person would want to invest in a durable pair of binoculars in order to see the wild birds clearly from a distance. Another reason for the popularity of bird watching is that a person can participate regardless of economic status, age, physical fitness, handicaps, or experience. In addition, a variety of companies even sell guided bird watching tours to foreign countries around the world. Bird watching is also a popular gateway hobby to other interests, such as the awareness and study of environmental issues.

While bird watching involves the study of birds for recreational purposes, it should not be confused with ornithology. Like bird watching, ornithology also involves the observation of birds. However, as opposed to being a hobby for recreational or leisure purposes, ornithology is a form of zoology in that it studies birds in a formal context. Birding enthusiasts can contribute to the scientific study of birds by monitoring migratory behavior and taking notices of adverse changes. A person may bird watch for a number of reasons. Because North America is the home of over 900 bird species, many people find pleasure in viewing as many as possible. Others may want to document details about them, or simply watch their favorite type of birds in their natural environment. People who take part in bird watching may do so independently or with their families in their own backyards, or they may travel to parks or habitats as a part of a local group. In some cases, serious bird watchers may even travel abroad. When traveling outside of the local area, the opportunity to discover more wildlife is appealing for many bird watchers, who may even turn their vacations into an opportunity to observe different bird species.

Bird ID

- [What Bird.com: Bird Identification 101](#)
- [National Geographic: Backyard Bird Identifier](#)
- [Visual Key for Bird Identification](#)
- [All About Birds: Bird ID Skills by Songs and Calls](#)
- [USGS: Patuxent Bird Identification Info Center](#)
- [Interactive Bird Identifier](#)
- [Audubon Society of Central Arkansas: Sparrow Identification](#)
- [Wildlife Hotline Online - Baby Bird ID](#)

Species of Birds

- [Birding.com: Introduction to Bird Species and Ornithology](#)
- [Bird Channel.com: Bird Species](#)
- [Center for Earth and Environmental Science - Scott Sterling Nature Sanctuary Bird Species List: Common Species](#)
- [Fish and Wildlife Service: Bird Species List](#)
- [Everglades National Park - Bird Species List](#)
- [ACE Characterization Species Gallery - Birds](#)

Bird Research

- [Wildlife Research Birds](#)
- [Bird Research Northwest](#)
- [The Cornell Lab of Ornithology - Mission Research](#)
- [Starr Ranch Bird Observatory \(SRBO\) - Research](#)
- [Idaho Bird Observatory: Programs - Research](#)
- [Indiana University Animal Behavior Farm: Bird Research](#)

Bird Watching Guides, Tips and Tricks

- [The Porter County Birding Guide](#)
- [Lake County, Florida - Bird Watching Tips](#)
- [Pocket Field Guide - Landscaping for Wildlife: Common Birds of Kentucky](#)
- [Natural History Museum: Top Tips for Birdwatching](#)
- [Outdoor Alabama: Wildlife Watching Tips - American Birding Association's Code of Birding Ethics](#)
- [Southeast Idaho Bird Watching Guide](#)
- [Columbia County Tourism - Bird Guide](#)
- [KNOP 2 News: Winter Bird Watching Tips](#)

Basics, Equipment, and Beginning Bird Watchers

- [Bird Watching for Beginners](#)

- [Bedford Audubon Society: Birding 101 Tips for Beginning Birders](#)
- [Bird Watching for Beginners](#)
- [Bird Watching Basics - An Introduction for Beginning Bird Watchers](#)
- [The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission: An Introduction for Beginning Birders](#)
- [Get Started Bird Watching](#)

Bird Watching Equipment

- [Birds in Backyards: Watching Equipment](#)
- [Iowa Nature Mapping: Bird Watching Basics - Equipment](#)
- [Tripods for Birdwatching](#)
- [Bird Watching Nebraska: What You Need, Where to Go, and Other Useful Information - Binoculars and Field Guides](#)
- [Essential Equipment](#)
- [Birdwatching in North Dakota – Focusing on Binoculars](#)

Organizations and Associations

- [American Bird Conservancy](#)
- [American Birding Association](#)
- [The National Audubon Society](#)
- [Bird Life International](#)
- [Western Atlantic Shorebird Association](#)
- [The Peregrine Fund](#)
- [Carolina Bird Club](#)

Bird Publications and E-Zines

- [Bird Watching Magazine](#)
- [Audubon Magazine](#)
- [Birds and Blooms](#)
- [Bird Watcher's Digest](#)

- [Wild Bird Magazine](#)
- [The LBJ, Avian Life Literary Arts](#)
- [Birdwatch Magazine](#)

Bird Watching Pages and Activities for Kids

- [Nick Jr. Printable Bird Watching Activity Book](#)
- [The Great Backyard Bird Count is for Kids](#)
- [National Avery - Birdwatching for Kids](#)
- [Scholastic Parents: Bird Watching](#)
- [Parent Map: Watch Birds with Kids for Fun and Learning](#)
- [PBS Parents: Drawing Birds](#)
- [Thinkquest – Bird Watching](#)