



Activity: Discovering Behaviors

Objective: Students will observe bird behaviors to distinguish between different bird species.

Materials: "Discovering Behaviors" and "Bird Behavior Bingo" sheets

Background: Think for a moment about your brother or sister, best friend, mother, or father. If you hear their footsteps but can't see them, can you identify them just by the sound of their footsteps? Some people walk with a sway or a swing. Others march steadily in step to a beat. Still others have a little hop in their step or are always half-running. If a group of people were standing around talking and you could see nothing but their silhouettes, could you pick out your friend just by seeing the way he or she stands? Some people stand with their hands on their hips or in their pockets. Others seem to have ants in their pants and can't stand still for even a moment! We use these actions or behaviors as clues to identify people. As you watch birds, you will begin to notice that certain species also have special behaviors that will help you recognize them.

Procedure: Observe a bird for 15 minutes, either at a feeder or in the school yard. Distinguish between the different behaviors using the "Bird Behavior Bingo" and "Discovering Behaviors" sheets. Make a list of the behaviors that were observed. Discuss these behaviors with the class. How do the behaviors aid in identification? What is the purpose of different behaviors? Why do different birds have different behaviors?

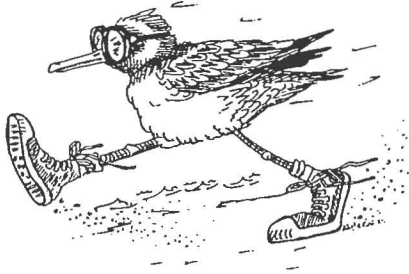




Activity: Discovering Behaviors

Watch how birds perch or stand.

Some hop.
(robins, blue jays, juncos)



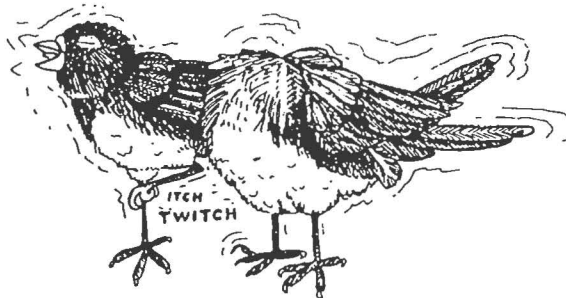
Some walk with a sway.
(crows, starlings, grackles)



Some run.
(sandpipers, killdeer)



Some stand upright at attention.
(owls, jays)



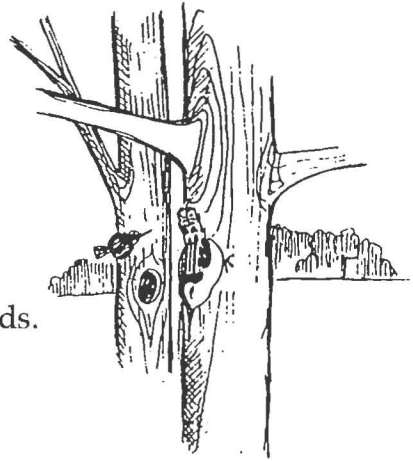
Some can't stand still or flick their tail or wings constantly.
(juncos, chickadees, cardinals, wrens, some sparrows, kinglets)



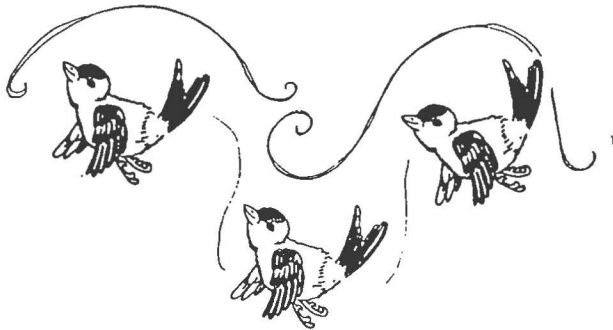
Some prefer to perch on a tree trunk rather than a branch.
(woodpeckers, nuthatches, creepers)

Some even hang upside down on tree trunks.
(nuthatches)

Some stand absolutely still, moving only their eyes or heads.
(hawks, owls, kingfishers, herons)

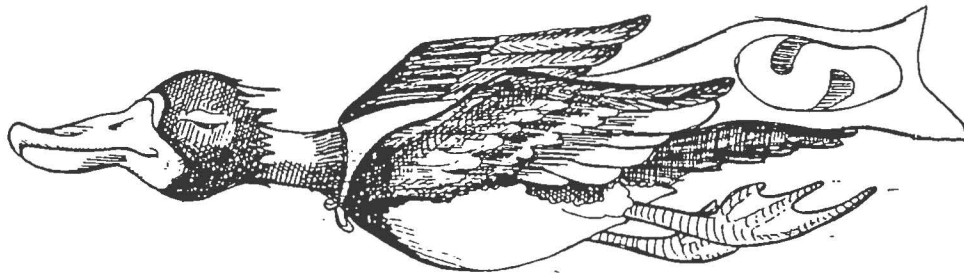


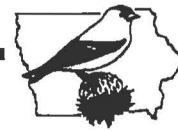
Watch how birds fly through the air.



Some dip up and down like waves.
(goldfinches, woodpeckers)

Some fly very fast in a "beeline."
(jays, ducks, mourning doves)



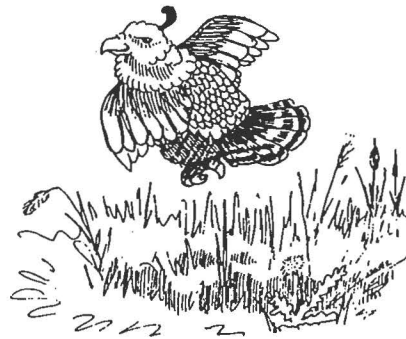


A few "stand still" or hover in mid-air like a helicopter.
(hummingbirds, some hawks, kingfishers)



Some soar and glide high above the ground and seldom flap their wings. (hawks, cranes, gulls, vultures)

Some surprise you by not flying until they are almost beneath your feet and then take off with a loud "whirr." (grouse, quail, pheasants)



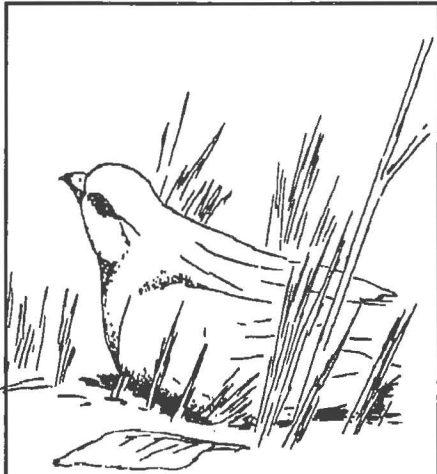
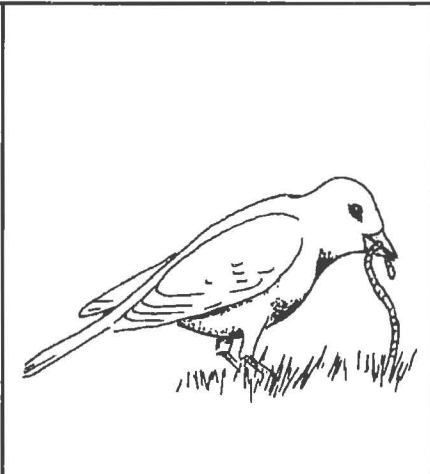
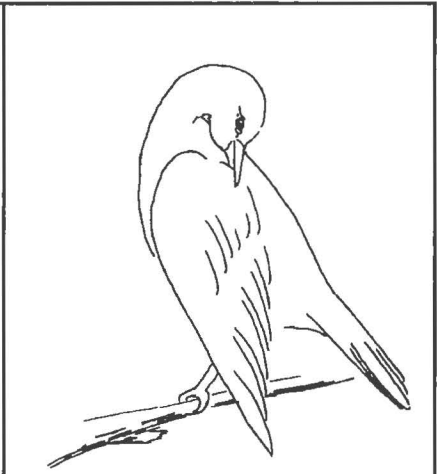

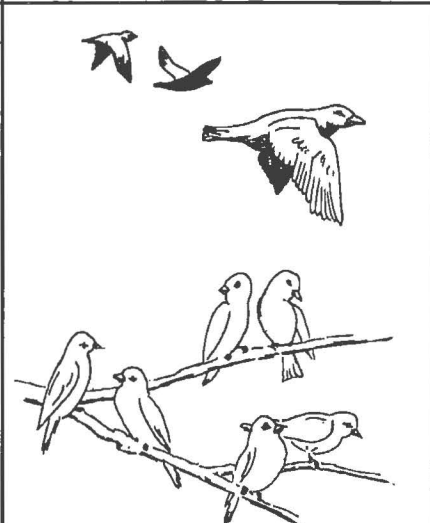
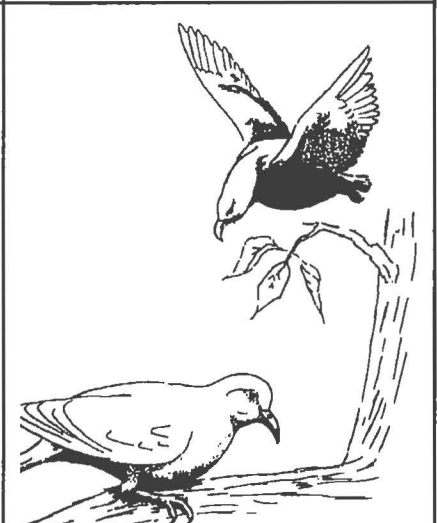



Add any other movements and pictures below to help you in your observations.

Adapted from *Getting to Know the Birds*, a Wisconsin Natural Science 4-H project by Jim Pease. Used with permission.



Activity: Bird Behavior Bingo

Watch a bird's behavior and match three across, down, or diagonally for bingo.

 <p>Hiding</p>	 <p>Feeding</p>	 <p>Preening</p>
 <p>Flying</p>	 <p>Flocking</p>	 <p>Freezing (sitting still)</p>
 <p>Singing</p>	 <p>Bathing (in water or dust)</p>	 <p>Giving an alarm call</p>