

World Migratory Bird Day: Backyard Bird Buffet

Discover the beauty of native species. Match the native Georgia bird to a preferred plant or tree. Use provided poems to help find the best match.

Age: Recommended for participants 7 years old or older

Gather your Gear

- Optional: Print out the matching activity sheet
- Optional: Pencil, marker, or crayon

Get Ready *You can help your child make connections by thinking about concepts before the activity.*

- In what ways do birds rely on plants and trees?
 - Possible answers include: food; shelter; nest building material
- How do plants and trees rely on birds?
 - Possible answers include: birds are seed dispersers
- Do you think every bird prefers the same type of plants?

Match the Native Species

Print out the provided Backyard Bird Buffet Matching Sheet. If you can't print, just download the file to your screen.

Use the following poems as clues to match the Georgia native bird to its preferred plant (answers below):

- I'm a _____, I chirp and I screech. For nesting and gathering nuts, I love to visit yards that have the **American beech**.
- I'm a _____ and I like this trumpet-shaped flower that is red. The nectar from the **wild columbine** keeps me well-fed!
- It's the _____, who mimics new sounds. They love the seeds from this fruit, the **wild cherry** that falls to the ground.
- Female _____ are brown, while males are red as can be. A snack they enjoy is sap from the **silver maple**, a syrup-producing tree.
- _____ love many fine treats, and the **winterberry**, named after the coldest season, is one thing they like to eat!
- I'm a _____ with spots of brown. I like the **spicebush**, the shrub with the spiciest scented leaves and my favorite berries in town.
- Haven't you heard that the _____ is Georgia's state bird? The **flowering dogwood** tree that attracts them seems like it would bark out loud, and its pretty white flowers stand out in a crowd. It serves as an important food source, with its red berries bringing these birds to your yard, of course.
- I'm the _____, a black and orange fellow, but the **black-eyed Susan** flowers I eat the seeds from have petals of yellow. With a quick flutter and flitter, looking for insects, I like to rummage and scratch through leaf litter.
- This is the _____, don't you think they are swell? The delicious **blackberries** they like are put into pies as well.

- The _____ is the only warbler that regularly eats seeds. They stay near the **Loblolly pine** because it meets all of their needs! In addition to eating seeds, they'll also use the needles to line their nest. For them, any kind of pine is the home that's the best.
- The _____ stays here year-round, even when it's cold. One of the trees it likes, the **sweetgum**, has a "chewy"-sounding name, or so I'm told.
- This plant's name, **the eastern red cedar**, is deceiving since it's a juniper and not a cedar. _____ prefer to eat the berries from this plant rather than seeds at the bird feeder.

Recap *Have a conversation about what you saw/did and questions your child may have.*

- What Georgia native plant species did you recognize the name or picture of? Do you have any of these plants in your yard or neighborhood?
- What Georgia native bird species did you recognize the name or picture of?
- Do you think birds only eat from or live in one type of tree?

Relate *Create connections to the idea through activities.*

- Go birding! Look for the birds that were part of the matching game. Use the [eBird website or app](#) to help identify and share the birds you observe.
- Help native birds by growing native plant species. You can plant a whole garden, or put a few pots outside your window.

It takes a team.... join ours

Help us save species by joining the "Zoo Conservation Corps" and raise awareness about wild animals, their habitats and why conserving both is so important. If your family members are on social media, post to show what you have learned, and use the hashtag #OnlyZooATL so that we can see all your great work!

Want to know more....

- Want to plant some native species in your yard? Visit native plant source sites:
 - <http://www.kinseyfamilyfarms.com/>
 - <http://www.nearlynativenursery.com/>
 - <http://botgarden.uga.edu>
 - <http://www.southernnativeplantings.com>
- To learn more about Migratory Bird Day, visit: <https://www.birdday.org/> or <https://migratorybirdday.org>
- For more information about Atlanta native birds and how to help protect them, visit: <https://www.atlantaaudubon.org/>

Answer Key:

- American robin → eastern red cedar
- Brown thrasher → flowering dogwood
- Brown-headed nuthatch → sweetgum
- Chatty gray catbird → wild cherry

- Cedar waxwing → winterberry
- Eastern towhee → black-eyed Susan
- Northern cardinal → silver maple
- Pine warbler → loblolly pine
- Ruby-throated hummingbird → wild columbine
- Tufted titmouse → American beech
- White-throated sparrow → blackberries
- Wood thrush → spicebush