My Bird Log - a kid's journal to record their birding experiences
Getting started

A field notebook is just for you, by you. These are your observations. Make drawings and sketches if you can’t find the words!

Wherever you go, take notes on these pages just as you would in class.

Always start by writing down:
1. where you are (name a major landmark or street intersection, then city or county and state)
2. the date
3. your notes

Fernbank Science Center
Atlanta, Ga
June 23, 2006

Forest walk
Plants I saw:
American Beech Tree
Dogwood
Tulip Tree
Wild Ginger
Redbud
Ferns & moss

animals I saw:
Squirrel
Chipmunks
Millipedes
Slugs
Spider
Woodpecker
Earthworms
ants

What is the bird doing? ____________________________

What does it sound like? __________________________

Is there a nest? Eggs? If so, describe:

Other interesting things I noticed:

It looks like this:
LOG

Date/Time: ________________________________

Season: _________________________________

Weather Conditions: ______________________

Bird Location: □ ground □ tree □ air

□ phone wire □ other ____________________

How many are there? ____________________

How big is the bird? _____________________

Any distinctive markings? ________________

______________________________________

What colors are on it? _________________

______________________________________

What shape are the wings? □ long □ short □ pointy □ round

□ straight □ other ____________________

What does the beak look like??

□ thick □ pointy □ short □ long □ hooked

Color _________________________________

Is there a band on it’s leg?

Bird Topography

If you know the different parts of a bird, it’s easier to identify them. This is a combination of many birds, not a real one.

[Diagram of bird topography]
COMMON WORDS

Bird of Prey: A hunting bird. Usually means the day-flying raptors, but sometimes refers to all birds that hunt prey generally larger than insects. This phrase is not usually used to describe insect-eating and fish-eating birds.

Call: A short sound or even a few notes usually used by a bird to tell other birds he/she is there, or that there’s danger.

Carrion: Dead and decaying animals or their parts, eaten by birds, (or other carrion eaters) that usually have not killed them.

Clutch: The set of eggs laid and taken care of by one parent or pair of birds at a time.

Color Phase: Different feather colors that distinguish some birds from others of the same species.

Display: The way a bird moves or presents itself to tell other birds when it wants to mate or when it wants to fight.

Down: A loose-textured, soft, fluffy feather or part of a feather, that helps insulate the body and retain heat.

Eye Ring: A narrow and differently colored ring of feathers or skin around the eye.

Eye Stripe: A differently colored stripe that goes across the side of the head including the area around the eye.

Forage: To look for any kind of food by hunting in an area.

Habitat: The type of natural place where a bird typically lives for example: forest, swamp, shoreline, desert, etc.

Immature: A fully grown bird not old enough to breed, often with different feather colors than the adult. Another word for “Juvenile”.

What is the bird doing? __________________________________

____________________________________________________

____________________________________________________

What does it sound like? _________________________________

____________________________________________________

____________________________________________________

Is there a nest? Eggs? If so, describe:

____________________________________________________

____________________________________________________

Other interesting things I noticed:

____________________________________________________

____________________________________________________

It looks like this:
Incubation: To keep an egg warm, usually by the mother bird sitting on it, letting the chick inside grow.

Iridescent: The sparkling appearance of a feather. The feather structure makes it reflect light in such a way that it appears to be different colors.

Migratory: A type of bird that leaves an area and typically returns, either when the seasons change or to find food.

Mimicry: The ability of a bird to imitate sounds it hears, such as the songs and calls of other bird species, or occasionally other sounds, including the human voice.

Mobbing: Noisy calls and pretend attacks by a group of birds against another bird.

Molt: The process of shedding feathers. The feathers are usually replaced by new ones which may be of a different color or shape. This can happen before breeding, migration or when a change of season occurs.

Nestling: A very young bird that needs to remain in a nest and be tended by adults.

Preening: The action of a bird using its bill and/or claws to clean and groom its feathers.

Range: The area where a species of bird is typically found.

Roost: 1) To rest or sleep 2) A place where birds rest/sleep 3) A site where many birds roost.

Song: A series of sounds or recognizable melody that a bird makes usually to declare its territory or to attract a mate.

Territory: An area defended by one or several birds, usually used for feeding and often for nesting. The area may be small, only surrounding one bird, or as much as several square miles.
LOG

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Season: ________________________________

Weather Conditions: ____________________

Bird Location:  □ ground  □ tree  □ air
□ phone wire  □ other __________________

How many are there? ____________________

How big is the bird? ____________________

Any distinctive markings? ________________

What colors are on it? __________________

What shape are the wings?
□ long  □ short  □ pointy  □ round
□ straight  □ other ___________________

What does the beak look like??
□ thick  □ pointy  □ short  □ long  □ hooked
Color ________________________________

Is there a band on its leg?

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Name of bird I saw (enter this on your life list)

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Season: ________________________________

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