

Bird Beak Buffet

Directions for Set Up: Select two or more birds, represented by Bird Beak Tools from the chart below. Set up a different station for each type of Bird Beak Tool, with several of that tool so more than one child can participate at the same time. Each station should also include a sampling of ALL the different Model Foods for the birds you chose. This will allow children to try each tool with multiple foods to see which “beaks” are “adapted” for each “food.”

Exploring Stations:

1. As children explore stations, encourage them to make their arms into pretend birds as you did in your demonstration. You may wish to help children make their own Bird Arm Puppets (see Centers and Extensions) to help solidify the connection between the tools they are using and bird beaks they represent. Encourage children to have their “birds” try “eating” the various “foods” at each station.
2. After children have time at each station, pick up one of the bird “beaks” and ask children which “food” they found was easiest to eat with that beak. Which was the hardest? Tell children a little about a real bird with this kind of beak, using the information from the chart below. Repeat this discussion for each of the “beaks.”

Common Birds, Beak Type and Foods, and Demonstration/Station Materials

* Please note the tools listed are intended to represent the shape or general function of the beak. A real beak may not function in the same way.

Bird	Adaptation and Food Advantage	Bird Beak Tools	Model Food
Pelicans	Use pouch-like beaks to scoop fish from the water	Cup or other scoop	Small plastic fish or craft foam fish in a pan of water
Hummingbirds	Use long, slender beaks to probe flowers for the nectar they eat	Turkey baster or eye dropper	Tall vase or cylinder with colored water
Snipe and Shorebirds	Use long, thin beaks to probe shallow water, mud and sand for small invertebrates	Tongs	Plastic or rubber worms buried in soil or sand
Woodpeckers	Use strong, pointed beaks to drill or chisel into wood and probe for insects	Tweezers	Long narrow beads or rice tucked into the bark of a log
Owls, Hawks and Eagles	Use sharp, curved beaks for tearing meat from the mice and other animals they eat	Scissors	Play dough wrapped around a stick
Hérons and Egrets	Use long, sharp beaks for catching or spearing fish and amphibians	Chopsticks	Styrofoam pieces (fish) floating in water
Sparrows and Finches	Use short, stout beaks to crack open and eat seeds and nuts	Nutcracker	Pecans, peanuts, almonds, or other nuts * If children have allergies, provide gloves, or omit station.
Ducks (some) and Swans	Use blunt, spoon-like bills that have fine combs along upper and lower edges to strain aquatic plants and algae from water	Strainer	Tea leaves in water

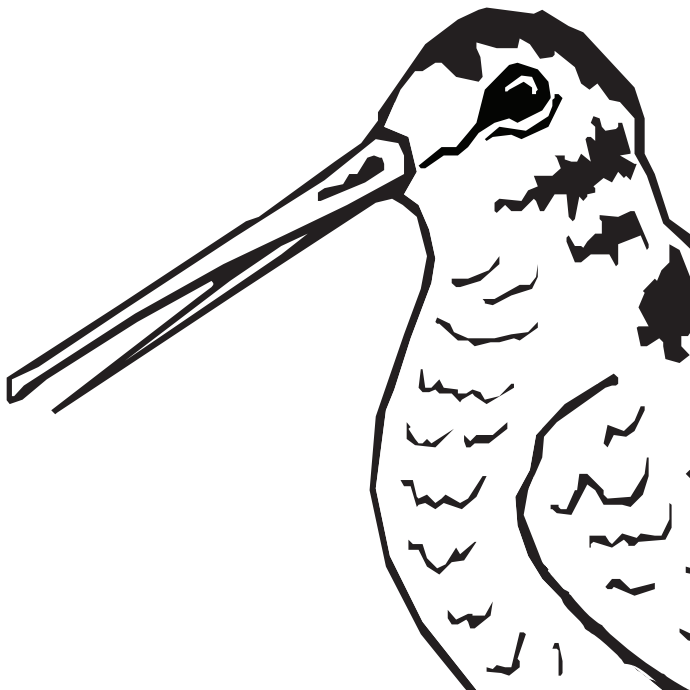
Bird Cards



Pelican



Hummingbird

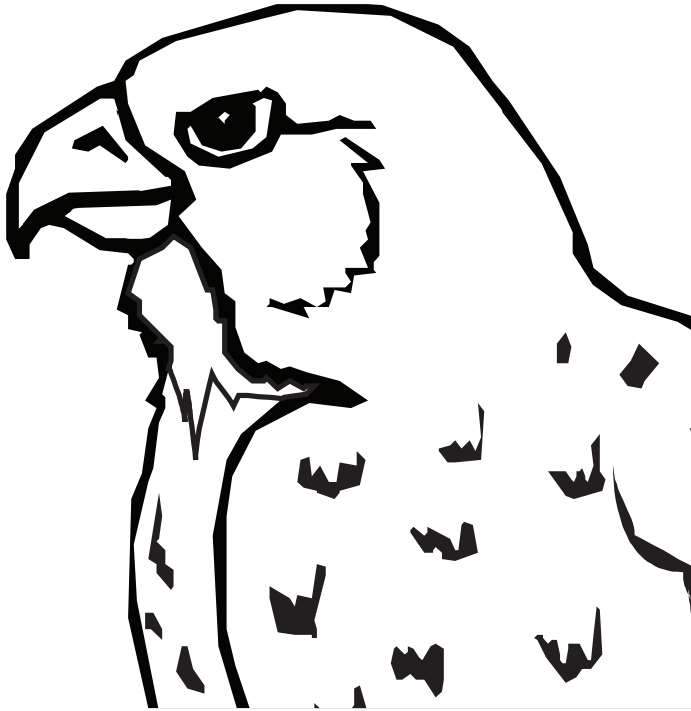


Shorebird

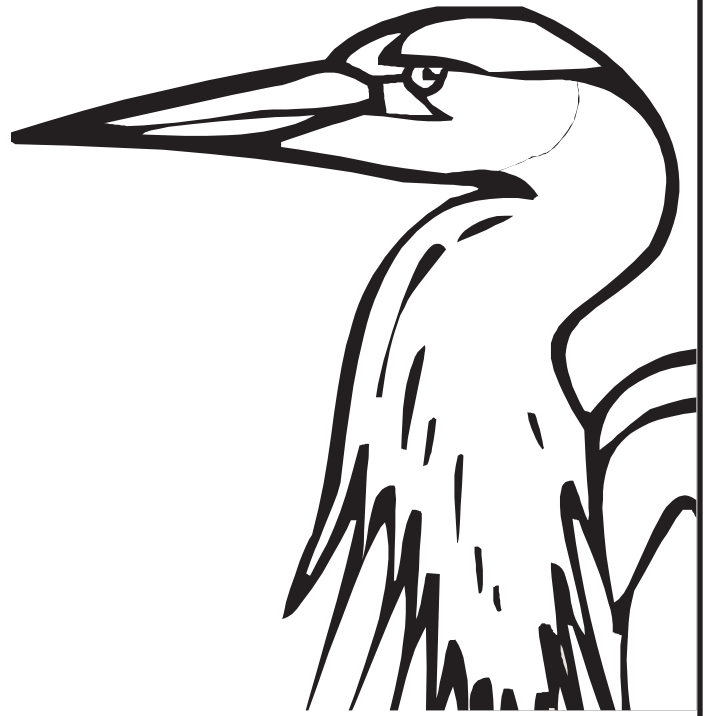


Woodpecker

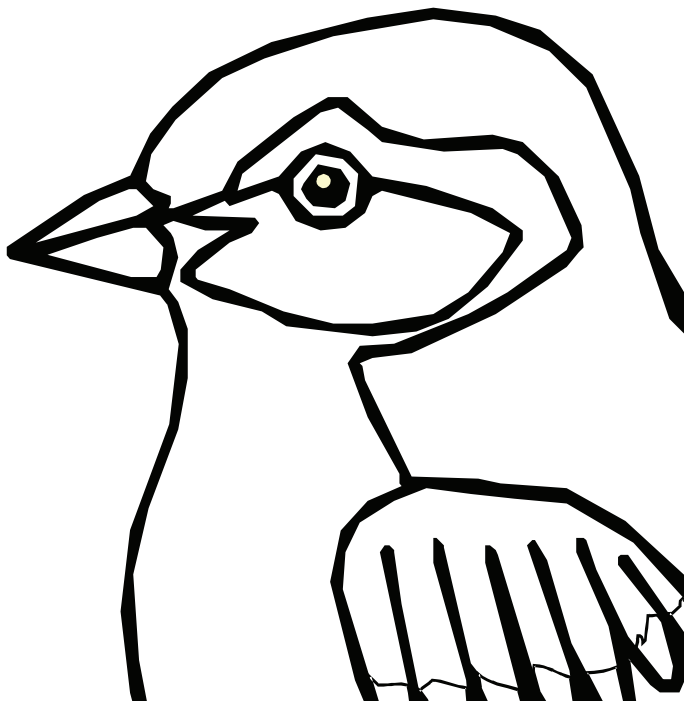
Bird Cards



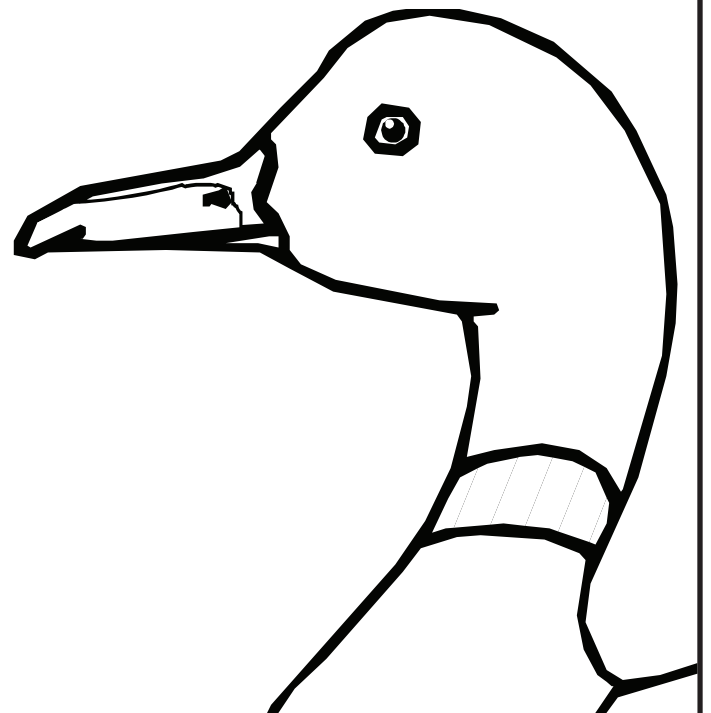
Hawk



Heron



Sparrow



Duck