

"For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities-his eternal power and divine nature-have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse." Romans 1:20

Birds of a Feather gets you up close and personal with His beautiful and divinely designed creatures. And the best part? They are just outside your window!

Birds of a Feather is broken up into four weeks:

Week 1 - Bird Basics and Your Backyard Habitat

Week 2 - Bird Identification

Week 3 - Ornithology

Week 4 - Birds of Prey

The following is a sample of what you will be doing in Week 4 as you complete Birds of a Feather. Red lettering is added here for further explanation.



Week 4: Library Reading/Video Choices

Focus: Birds of Prey

J GEO Frightful's Mountain/ Jean Craighead George*

J 598.65 C Passenger Pigeon/ Graham Coleman*

J 598.65 G The Dodo/ Tamara Green*

J 598.9 B Buffy the Barn Owl/ Jean Burton

J 598.9 G About Owls/ May Garelick

J 598.9 L Baby Owl/ Aubrey Lang (Beautiful photos)

J 598.9 L Birds of Prey (Peterson Field Guide)

J 598.9 P Amazing Birds of Prey (Eyewitness Junior Book)

J 598.9 P Eagle and Birds of Prey (Eyewitness Book)

J 598.9 T Discovering Birds of Prey/ M.J. Thomas

J 598.943 M Bald Eagle/ Gordon Morrison*

J 598.943 Q The Bald Eagle/ Patricia Quiri*

J 598.97 T Animal Lives: The Barn Owl (Beautifully illustrated!)

J 743.6 A Draw 50 Endangered Animals/ Lee J. Ames

J 929.3 H Land of the Free: The Bald Eagle/ Anne Hempstead*

J DVD 791.45 S Surf's Up/ Columbia; Sony Pictures Animation*

363.7384 C Silent Spring/ Rachel Carson (high school)

598.9 M Birds of Prey/ John Mackenzie

Each Once-a-Week Unit Study provides a weekly library list that includes a variety of books for that week's focus.

As you can see, I have alphabetically and numerically arranged each call letter in order for you to quickly and easily gather your library books.

I include books of different reading levels, have chosen books of superior quality, and have carefully screened books for objectionable material.

Your children are not meant to read all of the books listed. They pick and choose books to read throughout the week which most interest them. Reading is the only activity they will continue daily throughout the week.

Only books noted with an asterisk (or an equivalent of same subject matter) are necessary in order to complete a specific assignment.

What if you cannot find the exact book? No problem. Just pick another from that same library section and focus.

In addition to books, your list will also include documentaries/movies for you to pick up at the library or get from Netflix.

Supplies:

Disposable gloves
Owl Pellets - from a local nature center or zoo
(Inexpensive owl pellets and a helpful Bone ID Chart are available at www.pellet.com.)
Glue
Magnifying glass
Sieve
Screw-top jar
Tweezers
Dishwashing liquid
Camera



Each Once-a-Week Unit Study provides you with a supply list for that week's assignments. Most will be items you already have in your home. Others will be inexpensive items you can pick up at a discount, craft, or hardware store.

This week's list, however, will require you to order owl pellets/bone chart from the web site provided. But if you have a nature center or zoo nearby, they will happily provide you with free pellets from their birds of prey.

Daily Activities



Independent Reading: Week 4 Library Choices

This week's main reading focus will be on birds of prey. There are others that will introduce your children to extinct birds as well.

Family Read-Aloud: *Frightful's Mountain*

*Each week's family read-aloud introduces your family to great literature while staying focused on that week's topic. It will most often be a classic, Caldecott/Newberry Award winner, or other noteworthy literary piece. This week's quality read-aloud is Jean Craighead George's novel, *Frightful's Mountain*.*

Once-a-Week Activities



Family Devotional:

Isaiah 40:28-31

Some devotionals are brief as with this week's final Birds of a Feather family devotional. Most go delightfully deeper, however.



Science/Research/Language:

- In 1782, our national bird was established. Benjamin Franklin was hoping the turkey would be chosen. What bird was ultimately selected as our national symbol? Which do you think was the better choice?



- Read a book about this majestic bird, and include a picture of it in your journal.

DID YOU KNOW?

The study of birds is important for many reasons, but most importantly because birds are our first indicators that something is wrong with our environment.

Silent Spring, Rachel Carson's famous 1962 best seller, drew attention to the dangerous use of pesticides and their negative effect on declining bird populations. (BSA Req.1)

- Until recently, our national symbol was on the endangered species list. How did this happen, and what was done to correct it?
- Find out the difference between "endangered," "threatened," and "extinct." Record your findings in your journal.

- Investigate a bird species that is now extinct. What was its habitat, reason for extinction, and measures that could have been taken to prevent it? Record this information in your nature journal.

You will see research assignments sprinkled throughout Once-a-Week Unit Studies. Teaching children how to learn and how to retrieve information on their own prepares them for a life of learning and better equips them for higher education and future careers.



Language:

We use many bird related expressions in the English language: “Don’t get your tail feathers ruffled, she eats like a bird, and he’s as crazy as a loon,” just to name a few.

- Make a list of all the bird sayings you can think of. Discuss how accurate you think these sayings are.



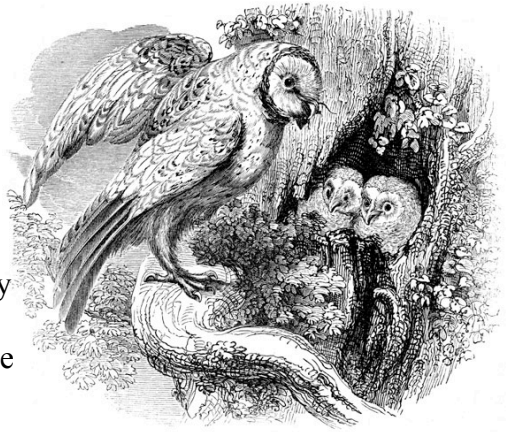
Science:



- Dissect an owl pellet.

How would you like to be an owl?

Owls and other birds of prey don’t have teeth so they swallow their food whole: fur, bones, and all! What they don’t digest, they eliminate. You can investigate what an owl ate by dissecting a pellet.



Directions:

Put on a pair of disposable gloves.

Fill a jar half-way with water and one drop of dishwashing liquid.

Drop the pellet into the jar. Tightly screw on the lid and shake vigorously for 30 seconds.

Let stand five minutes. Briefly shake again.

You should see the pellet disintegrating and the fur separating from the pellet. Strain the pellet, using a sieve.

Using tweezers begin dissecting the owl pellet.

With the aid of a magnifying glass and Bone I.D. Chart, identify the various bones: skull, jaw bones, leg bones, ribs, and teeth. Decipher what rodent the owl ate.

- Photograph or glue the bones into your nature journal. Label them. (AHG Req. 16)
Once-a-Week Unit Studies are written for ALL homeschool families to enjoy, but Boy Scouts and American Heritage Girls receive the added benefit of earning merit badge requirements while completing the same unit study assignments as the rest of their non-scout siblings.

While completing Birds of a Feather with the rest of their family, Boy Scouts will earn the majority of their Bird Study merit badge. American Heritage Girls will earn the majority of Our Feathered Friends badge.

Boys Scouts will be able to easily identify those assignments by a fleur-de-lis icon. American Heritage Girls will be able to identify assignments that fulfill their requirements with the AHG icon.



The requirements fulfilled will be noted in parentheses at the end of the assignment.



Field Trip:

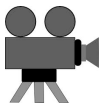
Visit a nature center, zoo, or wildlife refuge. Arrange for a guided tour and/or lecture on the birds of prey who reside there.

Identify and photograph them along with a variety of other birds.

Label and glue those photos into your nature journal.



Your children began keeping a bird journal in Week 1 of Birds of a Feather. They have continued adding to it much of what they have learned about birds over the past few weeks. By now they have compiled something to really be proud of!



Family Movie Night:

Watch *Surf's Up*.

Field trips and family nights are designed to be enjoyed on a different day of the week from your unit study day.