

Birds & Flight



"Birds make any place a chance for discovery! They make a garden seem wild, they are a little bit of wilderness in a city park, and, for a bird watcher, every walk is filled with anticipation. What feathered jewel might drop out of the sky next?" - David Sibley (American ornithologist, author and illustrator of The Sibley Guide to Birds)

Birds and Flight is the topic of our Whole School Unit scheduled for February 2014, so we are weaving the topic as a thread through the year. You can support your children's exploration by observing birds near your home or in your neighborhood. To help you get started, we've enclosed an Audubon Society birding guide for families with this newsletter.

During our unit, we will be observing birds to discover their characteristic properties, compare and contrast the features of diverse species, make hypotheses about their adaptations to the environment, and learn about ways that birds and humans are part of a broader system of interdependent relationships. With the help of colleagues at Pittsburgh's National Aviary, we will introduce environmental issues of pollution, habitat loss, pesticide use, climate change, etc. We will also investigate physical science features of eggs, nests, beaks, feathers and flight, together with representations of birds in literature and the arts, cultural beliefs and emblems related to birds, etc.

Perhaps you wondered ...

why we organize our curriculum into thematic units.

Studying topics in depth builds children's knowledge base, starting with what they already know and creating a network of concepts that are richly connected in ways that help children apply their knowledge to new contexts. We combine verbal and visual representations and provide a variety of activities to help them acquire, strengthen, and refine concepts via experimentation, stories, dramatic play, art, games, technology activities, etc. Children converse and reason in more sophisticated ways about content they understand, so themes provide a foundation for other cognitive challenges.

Do you have more Questions for Educators?

On Thursday, October 10th, Dr. Carver will host open question & answer sessions for parents from 8:30-9:30am and from 12:30-1:30pm. Perhaps you have questions about handling children's behavior, building character, choosing media, teaching reading, responding to children's questions about sensitive topics, etc. Anything is fair game! Remember that you can also send questions to Dr. Carver any time via email at sc0e@andrew.cmu.edu or request a personal appointment.

Using GoodSearch / GoodShop



GoodSearch donates money to Carnegie Mellon Children's School when you search the Internet, shop online, or dine out at local restaurants! Use Goodsearch.com to search the Internet, and they donate a penny per search to us. Use Goodshop.com when you shop online and they donate a percentage of every purchase and offer over 100,000 coupons to help you save money too! Sign up for their GoodDining program and they'll donate a percentage of your restaurant bill when you eat at any one of thousands of participating restaurants. Please sign up today to help support Carnegie Mellon Children's School. Go to <http://www.goodsearch.com> to get started.



Carnegie Mellon University Children's School November 2013 Family Newsletter



Families Enjoy Florentijn Hofman's Duck

Almost as enjoyable as visiting the 40-foot art installation at Point State Park is watching the children explore all the photos of themselves and their teachers with the enormous duck. There's still time to share your favorite photo by sending it to Miss Hancock at lh37@andrew.cmu.edu.



As we prepare for our unit on Birds & Flight, we encourage you to share family photos from your experiences with real birds or other aspects of flight. Be creative!

November / December Dates (Remember to Check the Interactive Web Calendar TOO)

Sunday, November 3rd – Daylight Savings Time Ends – Turn Clocks **BACK** One Hour

Thursday, November 14th from 6-8pm - Shopping Night at Ten Thousand Villages
Raising 10% of Sales for Enhancing our Library

Tuesday, November 12th – Run for the Hungry (See Article for Details) – Rain Date 11/14

Friday Afternoon, November 15th - Parent Teacher Conferences for 4's and K
Regular School Schedule in the Morning

NO SCHOOL – Friday, November 22nd – Parent Teacher Conferences for All Ages

No School for Children – November 27th through December 1st – **Happy Thanksgiving!!**

Tuesday, December 3rd – Extended Morning 4's Open House 12-1pm

Thursday, December 5th – Extended Morning 3's Open House 12-1pm

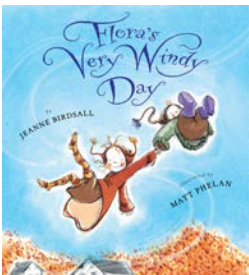
Friday Afternoon, December 6th - Parent Teacher Conferences for 3's

School Choices Discussion

If you missed the October 18th **Staff / Parent Discussion on Making School Choices**, you can find the handouts on the Children's School web site in the "For Parents" section. Remember to **Focus on the MATCH** between your child, your family, and the school rather than seeking an absolute best choice (i.e., one school that's best for all children in all families). **Take a BROAD, LONG-TERM VIEW** including your priorities for future years' programs as well as other children in the family so that you can avoid multiple school changes and placements of siblings in too many different schools.

Early Literacy Conference

On Friday, October 11th, Mrs. Blizman and Miss Hancock attended the Friedberg-Segel Early Literacy Conference at the Fred Rogers Center at St. Vincent College. Nancy Tarshis, Supervisor of Speech and Language Services at the Children's Evaluation and Rehabilitation Center at Einstein College of Medicine, presented the keynote address entitled, "Language, Social Cognition, and Play: Teaching Early Learners to Read the Room". She discussed "the many important facets of development that underlie play and language in preschool and early elementary children." Ms. Tarshis cited research on the importance of pretend play for developing executive function, self-regulation, and literacy skills as building blocks for success in school and life. Following the keynote, Ms. Tarshis continued discussing the value of promoting play in the classroom and discussed ways to include and support dramatic play as an alternative to screen time and paper & pencil based tasks. She stressed the importance of educating families and schools to make time for play every day. Her message affirmed our Children's School philosophy.



Matt Phelan, children's author and illustrator, also provided a session on his experience working with author Jeanne Birdsall to illustrate the book, "Flora's Very Windy Day". He provided insight into the process of creating the visual appearance of the characters and a world that existed only in the author's mind and manuscript. His humorous presentation, coupled with the delightful drawings from the book, rounded out a very informative day of learning and networking with other early childhood professionals from the region.

Birds & Flight

Exploring Birds & Flight affords many opportunities for children to practice the executive function, self-regulation, and literacy skills mentioned above as central foundations for children's learning. The essence of bird-watching is observation, noticing the small details that distinguish between birds and paying attention to the birds' calls, location, behavior, nests, etc. so that you can begin to understand why you see certain ones in certain places at certain times, but not others. Bird-watching also requires patience, stillness, and quiet, all qualities that are challenging for young children to acquire but rewarding in terms of bird sightings and useful for calming and collecting oneself in many other situations. To add literacy elements to the experience, encourage children to use field guides to help identify birds, as well as to keep a journal of their observations or start a "life list" of birds.



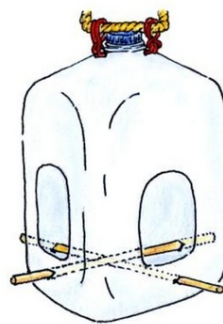
Winter Bird Feeding

As winter approaches and you have extra time for family activities, consider attracting wild birds to your best windows for observation by hanging bird feeders outside them. The food you provide helps birds that do not migrate south in the winter because their traditional sources of food may be less available (e.g., insects) or buried in frozen soil or under snow.



Wisconsin's *Environmental Education for Kids* site has wonderful resources to help families get started with both making bird feeders and observing birds, as well as caring for bird feeders and discouraging squirrels and raccoons from stealing the food you intend for the birds (<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/caer/ce/ee/nature/winterbird.htm>). They also provide directions for making bird feeders from recycled materials and for choosing different types of food based on the species of birds you hope to attract. According to the site, "Grains are very popular with many bird species. Sunflower seeds, corn, milo, and millet are common birdfeed grains. Black, oil-type sunflower seeds and white proso millet are probably the best and most popular seeds to attract goldfinches, blue jays, cardinals, black-capped chickadees, evening grosbeaks, pine siskins, purple finches, pine grosbeaks, and white-breasted nuthatches. Corn is also a very popular grain food on the ear, shelled, or cracked. Blue jays, house sparrows, starlings, and pheasants all prefer corn. Milo, another grain, is preferred by dark-eyed juncos, American goldfinches, pine siskins and tree sparrows. Cardinals like squash seeds if you've got any extras from your fall harvest." The site's authors do caution that it sometimes takes time for the wild birds to "discover" your feeder, so you might want to start on this project before the weather gets too cold and try a few different types of feeders and locations around your home to have the best chance of success!

Here are a few sample feeders to inspire your creativity in the coming weeks. Be sure to invite your children's ideas as well!



One last tip:

The Cornell Lab's Project FeederWatch web site offers lots of tips for observing the detail of backyard birds. With this newsletter, we've included their free field guide for backyard birds in the eastern United States, but you might want to check their web site for more information (<http://feederwatch.org/learn/identifying-birds/>).

Enjoy!

Birds are Amazing Builders

Birds need nests to protect their eggs and their young birds from predators, as well as from harmful temperatures and weather conditions. In many cases, birds try to make their nests difficult for predators to see or to reach. "Bird nests range from non-existent to extensive, multi-chambered apartments which can be fully weatherproof and may last for years or even decades"

(<http://www.earthlife.net/birds/nests.html>). Bird nests may be shaped like a cup, a platform, a hanging elongated sac, or a suspended sphere. Other birds scrape natural materials together into a ground nest, bury eggs in mounds, build nests by burrowing into the ground, or utilize an existing cavity in a tree. "The smallest bird nests are those of some hummingbirds, tiny cups which can be a mere 2 cm (0.79 in) across and 2–3 cm (0.79–1.2 in) high. At the other extreme, some nest mounds built by the Dusky Scrubfowl measure more than 11 m (36 ft) in diameter and stand nearly 5 m (16 ft) tall" (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bird_nest).



Like human builders, birds must choose their construction materials from readily available resources and then combine them with attention to both functionality and stability. Their sense of aesthetics is amazing, and the nests are often well camouflaged. During the January units on Building, when children are thinking about strategies for building stable structures with varied materials, help them consider the challenges birds face when making the nests that you see in your neighborhoods. When we study Birds & Flight in February, we've scheduled several Family Social Organization outings to the Pittsburgh Aviary, so you can continue the discussion of nest building together at that time.



See "15 incredible photographs of birds' nests" at <http://www.environmentalgraffiti.com/news-15-incredible-photographs-birds-nests>.

The Beauty of Birds for Families

CMU Children's School

Staff / Parent Discussion 1/31/14

Why Birds?

- Birds are easily accessible animals to study directly.
- Birds are found most everywhere in the world and migration crosses boundaries.
- Birds offer clear examples of key concepts, like adaptation, interdependence, etc.
- Birds are used as emblems for countries, states, sports teams, etc.
- Birds are affected by important environmental issues, like habitat loss, pollution, climate change, etc.
- Birding can become a lifetime hobby and personal passion.

Key Concepts Related to Birds & Flight

- **Life science** – common features of birds, life cycle, diversity of size, shape, color, and behavior adaptations to habitats, interdependence within the food chain ...
- **Physical science** – beaks as tools for feeding, wings for flying, nests as homes ...
- **Earth science** – land features, climate, weather, and seasons impacting birds
- **Technologies** for observing and documenting birds, invention of flying machines
- **Math** for measuring, comparing, contrasting, and graphing bird features, populations ...
- **The Arts & Literature** - ways to represent bird songs as music, behavior as drama, movements as dance, images in art, stories in literature ...
- **Geography** – distribution of birds in the world, migration
- **Social Studies, Culture & History** of humans impacting and being impacted by birds, with particular emphasis on environmental responsibility, conservation ...

Developmental Benefits of Exploring Birds & Flight

- **Self-Esteem & Independence** – building self-regulation skills and patience necessary for bird-watching, pride and confidence in sharing bird experiences, etc.
- **Interaction & Cooperation** – taking responsibility for caring for birds as pets or in the wild, cooperating during explorations and activities related to birds, etc.
- **Communication** – learning new vocabulary related to birds & flight, describing bird properties and experiences, writing labels, drawing illustrations, and writing stories about birds, comparing and contrasting bird vs. human communication, etc.
- **Discovery & Exploration** – strengthening skills in observation, comparing & contrasting, explanation of causal relationships between bird features and habitat, using numbers, shapes, and measurements to describe and document birds, etc.
- **Physical Capabilities / Health & Safety** – strengthening eye-hand coordination and body movements when imitating bird movements, etc.
- **Artistic Expression & Appreciation** – using birds and their behavior as inspiration for music, drama, dance, art, literature, etc.

Additional Resources

National Audubon Society

- Birds, Conservation, etc.
<http://www.audubon.org>

Cornell Ornithology Lab

- All About Birds / Birding Basics, etc.
<http://www.allaboutbirds.org/page.aspx?pid=1189>
- Feeder Watch
http://cams.allaboutbirds.org/channel/40/Cornell_Lab_FeederWatch_Cam/
- Birds of Paradise Project
<http://birdsofparadiseproject.org/index.php>

Explanation & Video of How Birds Fly

- http://nature.ca/discover/exb/hwdbrdsfly/index_e.cfm
- <http://askabiologist.asu.edu/explore/feather-biology>
- <http://askabiologist.asu.edu/how-do-birds-fly>

Have you ever wondered **how birds fly?**

What is it that lifts them off the ground and lets them fly and glide through air?

Try this activity and you might just get a clue.

1) Take a piece of paper.

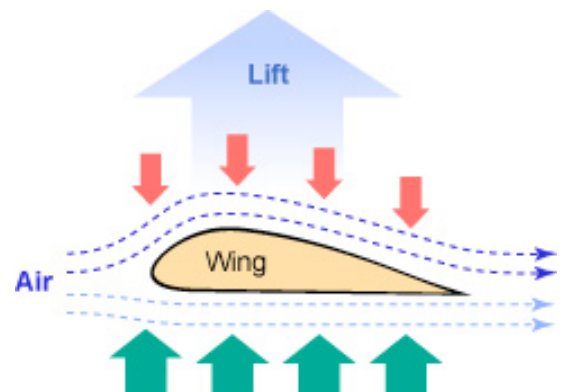
The best type of papers to use are the thin sheets used in magazines.

2) Hold the short edge of the paper up to your mouth using both hands.

What do you think will happen if you blow hard across the top of the paper? Will it go down or up? Now try it.



In most cases a person would think the paper would go down and not lift up when blowing across the top. It may not be what you would expect, but it is what birds and planes do to lift off the ground and fly. Blowing faster moving air above the sheet paper lowered the air pressure above the paper. Now the air pressure below the paper is higher and creates lift. Lift does exactly what it sounds like, it lifts objects off the ground when everything is just right.



The pressure exerted down by fast moving air (red arrows) is less than the pressure exerted up by slow moving air (green arrows).



Carnegie Mellon University Children's School February 2014 Family Newsletter



Whole School Birds & Flight Unit

Birds are the always-present possibility of an awakening to the natural world that too many people have not yet experienced. Birds are important because they keep systems in balance: they pollinate plants, disperse seeds, scavenge carcasses, check populations of other species (insects, rodents, etc.) and recycle nutrients back into the earth. They are wonderful indicators for the health of a habitat. For example, the fact that there are three active Bald Eagle nests in and around Pittsburgh's city limits is a testament to the water and fish quality of the rivers and the rebound they have made in the past 30-40 years! But they also feed our spirits, marking the passage of the seasons, moving us to create art, stories and poetry, inspiring us to flight and reminding us that we are not only on, but of, this earth. - adapted from a quote by Melanie Driscoll



During the month of February, our whole school community will explore the amazingly diverse world of birds whose unique adaptations to their habitats enable them to both survive and thrive. We will explore the ways our earth's topography, weather, and seasons impact the birds' life cycles and behavior, as well as the physical science of their unique features, such as beaks and wings. We will also consider the ways that humans impact birds and are inspired by them to invent ways to fly. We invite you to engage with us in the exploration as we all anxiously await the early signs of spring. Please join us to celebrate our learning at our Family Bird Bonanza on Thursday, March 6th from 4:30 to 6:30 pm.

February & Early March Dates

- Friday, January 31st - Staff / Parent Disc re: BIRDS & FLIGHT 9:30-11:00 (child care provided)
Re-enrollment Packets Sent Home in Backpacks to Current 4's Families
 - Monday, February 3rd - Deposits Accepted for 2014-15 Kindergarten
3's & 4's Enrollment / Re-enrollment Forms DUE for 2014-15
 - Tuesday & Wednesday, February 4th & 5th - Vision Screening
 - Thursday, February 6th - 8:30 am and 12:30 pm, Q&A with Educators
 - Tuesday & Wednesday, February 10th & 11th - School Photos
 - Friday, February 14th Deposits DUE for 2014-2015 Kindergarten
 - Monday, February 17th Presidents' Day Holiday (NO SCHOOL)
FSO Aviary Event at 10:00 am (Mother Nature's Diner & Talons Show)
 - Wednesday, February 19th - Box Tops for Education DUE
 - Friday, February 28th - FSO Aviary Event at 1:30 pm (Talons Show & To Be a Penguin)
 - Thursday, March 6th, 4:30-6:30 pm, FAMILY BIRD BONANZA
- NOTE: There will be no Extended Afternoon Program on that day!

The Great Backyard Bird Count



The Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) is an annual four-day event that encourages bird watchers of all ages to count birds. The 2014 Great Backyard Bird Count will be happening Friday, February 14th through Monday, February 17th. Participants can choose to count birds for as little as 15 minutes a day, or can count all day every day of the four-day event. Most importantly, it's free, fun, easy, and it actually helps the birds. Since there are so many different species of birds, one scientist or a team of scientists cannot watch all of the birds. Therefore, they need our help. Scientists need to learn about the distribution and movements of so many birds in a short time, to get the "big picture" about what is happening to bird populations. Everyone is welcome - from beginning birders to experts. To become a new participant, establish an account on the web site <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/>, and on February 14th start counting. In 2013, participants in Allegheny County submitted counts for 86 species of birds!

Pittsburgh Gives!

Support the Children's School on May 6 via Pittsburgh Gives!

We have been notified that the Day of Giving 2014 will be on Tuesday, May 6, 2014. This event will take the place of the day traditionally held in October. The Day of Giving 2014 will be a 18-hour event, running from 6:00 a.m. until 12:00 a.m. (Midnight.) This event is part of Give Local America, the national day for community foundations across the country.

To ensure that your donation reaches the Children's School, log on to PittsburghGives.org. Select Carnegie Mellon University from the List of Eligible Organizations and make your donation. Please notify Miss Hancock at lh37@andrew.cmu.edu that you have made a contribution via the Day of Giving and that you want it to be designated to The Children's School. She will send a list of the Children's School donors to the University Development Office who will allocate the donation and matching funds to The Children's School.

Organizations will receive a pro-rated portion of the match pool. The match will be capped at \$1,000 per donor transaction per organization. For example, if an individual donor makes a gift of \$5,000 to one organization, only \$1,000 of that gift will count towards the match calculation. Amounts sent to the individual nonprofits are for operating support only. Donations may not be used to fulfill dues, pledges, or for named or capital projects. Donations will not be accepted by third parties. The donor must make the online contribution and he/she will be receipted directly for that donation by the Pittsburgh Foundation. Donations are MasterCard/Visa credit card gifts only on May 6, 2014 in the given time period at www.pittsburghgives.org - checks, stocks, or cash will not be accepted.

PITTSBURGH GIVES.ORG

A Resource of The Pittsburgh Foundation



Carnegie Mellon University Children's School March 2014 Family Newsletter



Invitation to the Family Bird Bonanza!

We hope to see all of our Children's School families on Thursday, March 6th from 4:30 – 6:30 pm for our **Family Bird Bonanza**. You'll be able to play a variety of bird-related games, visit the bird gallery, meet a live bird from the Pittsburgh Aviary, explore owl pellets and worms, decoupage a bird necklace, sample snacks that birds and people eat, tour the kindergarten bird-seum, and relax with bird books and puzzles in the "peaceful room". Consider bringing a camera to take snapshots of your family's bird adventures!

NOTE: There will be NO Extended Afternoon Program on the Bird Bonanza day so that the staff can prepare the school for the event. If your child is enrolled in the Extended Afternoon Program, we will dismiss your child at the end of the regular school day. Thank you!

Summer Camp Enrollment

Enclosed with this newsletter is a brochure about the Children's School Summer Camp, which is a mixed-age, four-week program that runs weekdays in June from 9 am to 1 pm with as much outdoor time as weather permits. This year, Mrs. Armbruster, Mrs. Bird, Mrs. Blizman, Miss Mangan, Miss McMichael, Mrs. Solomon, Ms. Stevens, and CMU graduate Miss McGregor will engage the children in a study of "**Senses**". We anticipate investigating the many ways we can use our senses to explore nature. We will read fiction and non-fiction books to enhance the thematic study, as well as offer related art, cooking, sensory, and manipulative activities. In addition, children attending camp enjoy water time with access to wading pools, sprinklers, etc. We provide a daily snack, and children bring their own healthy lunch.



March Dates

Thursday, March 6th, 4:30-6:30 pm, FAMILY BIRD BONANZA

NOTE: There will be no Extended Afternoon Program on that day!

Friday, March 7th Professional Development Day for Staff (NO SCHOOL)

Sunday, March 9th Daylight Savings Time Begins so SPRING FORWARD 1 Hour

SPRING BREAK Monday, March 10th through Friday, March 14th (NO SCHOOL)

Thursday, March 20th, 8:30 am and 12:30 pm, Parent Q&A with Educators

Friday, March 28th, 9:30-11:00 am, Staff / Parent Discussion re: Too Much Too Soon?
Too Little Too Late? (child care provided for children not in school)

Staff / Parent Discussion re: Birds & Flight

Thanks to Mr. Salinetto for sharing his love of birds and birding with parents and our Duksung Women's University practicum students on Friday, January 28th. In preparation for our whole school unit, we learned about diverse features of birds and ways to help children observe them.



Staff / Parent Discussion re: Too Much Too Soon? / Too Little Too Late?

Please join us for a discussion of how adults can make decisions about what is "Developmentally Appropriate" for their children at school, at home, and in the community. We will consider multiple perspectives on what we may be introducing to our young children too early or perhaps too late. This Staff / Parent Discussion will be held on Friday, March 28th from 9:30 to 11:00am. Preschool 4's and Kindergarten children will be in school, and child care will be provided in the Red Room for 3's and younger siblings. School will be in session; please park in the East Campus garage or at one of the metered spots near the school.

Family Social Organization



The FSO had a great Aviary Event in February in which Children's School families enjoyed two very special shows. We started the morning at Mother Nature's Diner, where Mother Nature herself introduced us to different birds and how they eat. In our second show, we got up close with some birds of prey and witnessed the birds' incredible skills while learning about the threats they face and the ways they adapt. We hope everyone enjoyed themselves!

We have some great events coming up in March, including:

- "Aladdin" at the Gemini Theatre on March 1st.
- Field trip to Phipps Conservatory on March 7th. Come join Children's School families for a fun field trip where the children will meet worms and discover how they live, eat, and move. Using a worm-composting unit, the class will explore the ingredients of a worm's home and the healthy soil they create! After class, parents and children will do a 1-hour self-guided tour around Phipps and then meet in the tropical forest for lunch! *Please pack your own lunch.* The cost of the class for children is \$7.50. Adults who are members of Phipps are free. Non-member parents/guardians pay general admission (\$15). Please send an envelope with cash, your child's name, number of participants, and whether you are a member of Phipps to Miss Drash by Tuesday March 4th.
- Monthly book club meeting on March 19th. Join us at the CMU Café after morning greeting for some coffee and a lively discussion. Our March reading is a short story called, "The Caretaker," which can be found in the book "The Shell Collector: Stories by Anthony Doerr." As always, reading of the book is not required to join the fun!
- Golf lesson at First Tee of Pittsburgh on March 21st. Watch for an email with details!

We hope to see you at the next FSO outing! Amee Chaudry and Julie Paris

THE 3'S BIRDS NEWSLETTER



- BRYLIE TAKING A CLOSER LOOK AT TWO NORTHERN FLICKERS FROM THE MUSEUM.
- MATIAS WATCHING A WEBCAM OF THE PITTSBURGH BALD EAGLE ON HER NEST.

February was a month full of freezing temperatures and more importantly, FEATHERS! The friends in the Red and Blue Rooms spread their wings and took a look at the world of birds.

We began our investigation by saturating the classroom centers with bird related material for the children to play with, observe, question. The teachers supplemented the independent play by adding information, answering questions and extending learning opportunities with songs, video clips and books. Transitioning from our building theme, we read "Birds Build Nests" by Yvonne Winer and "Owls Live in Trees" by

Melvin and Gilda Berger. Other books included "Hank Finds an Egg" by Rebecca Dudley, "The Emperor Lays An Egg" by Brenda Guiberson, "There's A Bird On Your Head" by Mo Willems, and "Grumpy Bird" and "Boo Hoo Bird" by Jeremy Tankard.

We utilized many real life examples of birds, nests and eggs. We received and observed specimens like Northern Flickers, American Robins, Ruffed Grouse (PA's state bird) and a Great Horned Owl from the Natural History Museum, and Mr. Salinetto brought nests and eggs from a House Wren and a European Starling. The teachers stressed taking the

time to look at the different colors, sizes and shapes of birds, nests and eggs in an effort to develop the children's observation skills.

A great deal of our learning is accomplished through play, so we capitalized on this fact by turning the dramatic play center into a Bird Clinic where the children could care for sick and injured birds. The teachers engaged the children as they developed their sense of empathy, played cooperatively with other friends, shared stethoscopes and thermometers, practiced writing and pre-writing skills, and used books and magazines to find information.



SAATWIK CREATING A BIRD.



PHOEBE STRINGING CHEERIOS FOR A VALENTINE'S DAY BIRD FEEDER.



FRIENDS SPLATTER PAINTING EGG SHAPES.

OUR IDEAS AND INTERESTS TAKING FLIGHT!



(STARTING WITH TOP-LEFT AND MOVING CLOCKWISE...)

* SAATWIK WORKING ON A DUCK FLOOR PUZZLE.

* PHOEBE AND FRIENDS INVESTIGATING BIRDS.

* BRYLIE USING A FEATHER TO CREATE A COLORFUL PICTURE.

* MATIAS PLAYING A COOPERATIVE GAME, "ORCHARD".

CREATING KNOWLEDGE THROUGH ART AND PLAY



Brylie and the Blue Room friends pretending to be Emperor Penguins.



Phoebe hatching macaws and parrots



Matias enjoying a Snowy Owl.



Saatwik drawing a bird while looking at a model.



Mrs. Tomer and some young veterinarians caring for injured loons and blue jays.

I'M YOUTH, I'M JOY, I'M A LITTLE BIRD THAT HAS
BROKEN OUT OF THE EGG. ~JAMES M. BARRIE



I see you! Marley using the binoculars she decorated.



Roxie, Max and Cherry mending broken wings.



The doctors are in!



Owl investigations!! Miss Stevens reading a book about owls and showing the Great Horned Owl specimen (bottom right). Santiago dissecting and finding bones in an owl pellet (bottom left).

IF THEY PLAY, THEY WILL LEARN!



David carefully weaving string and yarn like a weaver bird.



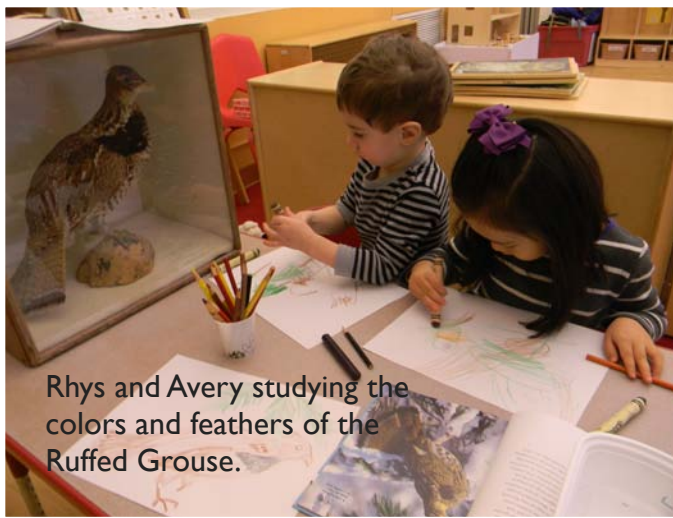
Friends learning from the masters! A video clip of weaver birds in action.



Brylie with her bird creation!



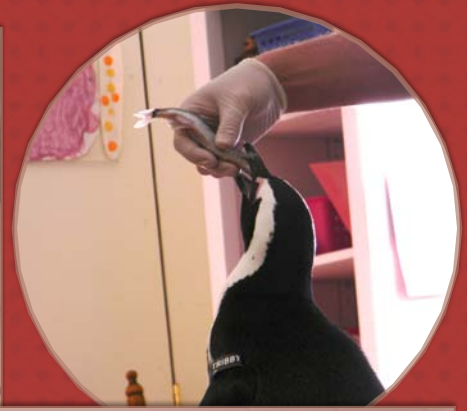
Camryn gluing feathers on the Bald Eagle's wing.



Rhys and Avery studying the colors and feathers of the Ruffed Grouse.



Jacob drawing an American Robin while looking at pictures and a real model of the birds.



(PICTURES FROM TOP LEFT AND MOVING CLOCKWISE) THE CHILDREN LISTEN AS JAMIE TALKS ABOUT ANIMALS THAT LAY EGGS... TRIBBY THE AFRICAN PENGUIN EATING A FISH FOR LUNCH... BARKLEY THE ONE-EYED SCREECH OWL WAS A CROWD FAVORITE... MIRA IDENTIFIES A BIRD IN JAMIE'S BOOK... SCOOTER THE AMERICAN KESTREL SHOWS OFF ITS FEATHERS.

On two separate occasions, we had the privilege of welcoming friends from the National Aviary to our school. Jamie, an amazing educator, talked to us about eggs and feathers and about everything that makes a bird a bird. We also enjoyed seeing a few live birds in the Red Room and watching them flap, eat, squawk and even poop!

Thank you to Owen's father who visited and baked bread with the morning Red and Blue Room friends.

The three-year olds have had such a good time exploring and learning about birds this month. Look for ways that you can extend the experiences by feeding birds around your house, going on a bird walk in your neighborhood or park, or visiting the Natural History Museum, the National Aviary or the Pittsburgh Zoo. You can also visit www.aviary.org/NestCams to watch our Bald Eagles and Peregrine Falcons as they lay eggs and raise their young. Happy birding!!



Sonny the Sun Conure brightening our day!

Mrs. Tomer Ms. Stevens Mr. Salinetro

Green Room News



Carnegie Mellon University Children's School

February 2014

Birds and Flight

All about Birds

We began our bird unit by discussing the parts of a bird, what birds eat, where they live and that they hatch from eggs. We read "Life Cycle of a Bird" by Bobbie Kalman, "Bird Eggs" by Helen Frost, and "Beaks" by Sneed B. Collard III. The dramatic play center was turned into the Green Room Aviary, where



children could take turns visiting birds, sketch birds and listen to a variety of bird songs by using the book "Bird Songs From Around the World" by Les Beletsky.

Owls

During the second week of our theme, we took a closer look at the owl. We compared and contrasted the different kinds of owls that exist. We learned that an owl's egg is round and white like a golf ball. We also discussed where owls live and what they eat. We talked about how they are birds of prey and that they prefer to hunt at night. We read "The Littlest Owl" by Caroline Pitcher, "Owl's First Flight" by Mitra Modaresi and "Owls" by Gail Gibbons during circle time. The dramatic play center was transformed into a bird sanctuary where owls and other birds live. The friends worked together cutting leaves for trees and adding flowers and wild life by drawing on the brown paper that covered the walls of the dramatic play center.



Penguins

During week three, we switched our focus to penguins. We learned that these flightless birds can live in cold weather like the penguins in Antarctica or in warmer places like the penguins who call Australia or South Africa their home. "The Little Penguin" by A.J Wood and "If You Were a Penguin" by Wendell and Florence Minor were some of our favorite books to read during circle time. The dramatic play center became Antarctica. We covered the floors and dramatic play center walls with white "snow." We colored penguins and used them to play in the scene.

Backyard Birds

Pittsburgh is home to a variety of birds. In our fourth week of our bird emphasis, we explored the birds that we might see in our own backyards. We also focused on our state bird the ruffed grouse. The friends had the opportunity to sketch the state bird and add it to our ruffed grouse booklet. We enjoyed "Have you Seen Birds?" by Joanne Oppenheim and Barbara Reid and "About Birds" by Cathryn Sill to lead our circle time discussions. The dramatic play center was transformed into a bird's nest. The nest is a great place for the friends to sit together and play bird board games.



Flight

During our final week of the theme, we focused on flight and things that fly. We read "How Bird's Fly" by Bobbie Kalman and "In the Air" by Samantha Berger. We used this week to make the connection between birds' flight and how it has inspired air transportation for humans.

Birds and Flight Activities

Here is a closer look at some of our favorite activities and games that we have enjoyed during this theme.

Caring for birds



Throughout the bird theme, the friends have made it a priority to care for our feathered friends. We made bird feeders for our playground. We mixed Crisco, sunflower seeds, cornmeal, oatmeal and coconut. Then we placed the mixture in a container and in the freezer. Once frozen, we placed the mixture in a suet basket and hung it on the playground for the birds to enjoy! We also made individual bird feeders for the friends to take to their own backyards. We recycled small milk cartons by turning them into bird feeders. The friends decorated the bird feeders with buttons, foam pieces and wooden shape pieces. We also made a nest starter kit for birds. The friends worked together to compile yarn, fabric pieces, ribbon and strips of newspaper. We put

them inside of a net material and hung it from a string on a tree so that the birds can fly by and take what they need to complete their nest.

Bird Beak Buffet



In this activity, the friends experimented with various utensils (spoons, toothpicks, tweezers, tongs) and pretended that the utensil was a beak. The children experimented with picking up various seeds and cooked pasta with the "beaks." They compared and discussed how each utensil was different in picking up the materials.

Owl Pellets



The friends were surprised to learn that owls swallow mice, rats, birds and other small creatures whole. Because owls cannot digest the bones and hair of these creatures, they regurgitate them in the form of an owl pellet. The friends had an opportunity to dissect owl pellets. We used tweezers and wooden picks to sort through the hair to find bones. We used diagrams of mice, rats, birds and shrews to see if we could recognize what the owl had eaten.

Bird Art



We enjoyed a variety of bird and flight related art activities during the last few weeks. Our favorites included: making collage birds with a variety of different colored and shaped paper, sketching birds with colored pencils, designing black and white pattern bead jewelry, ice cube painting and working together to paper mache and then paint an airplane.

Creative Writing: Bird Stories



After hearing stories, listening to songs and participating in bird themed activities, the friends were asked to tell the story about a bird. They dictated their stories as the teachers wrote their words. Then the friends illustrated their stories. It was wonderful to see that the children were using information that they have learned about birds and also being creative in their storytelling.

Bird Games



Count your Chickens, Hoot Owl Hoot, Seeds for Birds, and Orchard are the terrific cooperative bird games that we've been enjoying during the month of February. Count your Chickens is a game in which the friends try to get the chicks back to the hen house before the hen returns. Hoot Owl Hoot is a game where the friends try to get four owls back home before the sun rises. Seeds for Birds is a game where the friends try to collect as many seeds for the baby birds before the squirrel collects them. In Orchard, the friends are trying to collect all of the fruit from the trees before the crow puzzle is completed to signify that the crow has won.



The friends have also been enjoying math games like Tip Top Tally, a game in which friends are adding to get to the end of the game, and Owls in a Tree, a game where children take owls from a tree and count how many are left.



Birds and Flight!



Ruby, Jane, Adeline, Simone and Lorelei are painting with ice cubes.



Sally and Joya are making penguin pattern bracelets.



Ruby, Jane and Emma are painting peacock feathers.



Sasha is exploring the owl pellet.



Elena is proud of her creative writing story about birds.



Broden is sketching the ruffed grouse.



Julia M. is enjoying the visit from the kindergarten parakeets.



Lola, Lynn and Sasha playing the flight memory tray game.



Vivian, Lola, Carlos, Julia and Lena are showing the birds that are in the aviary.

Special Guests and Birthdays



Ms. Debbie shared some bird stories with the friends during her visit.



Sally's Mom and her sister shared a story on Sally's birthday.



Julia G's Mom and grandmother shared a story for her birthday.



Milo's Dad visited the Green Room to celebrate Milo's half birthday.



Charlie A. was joined by his family to celebrate his half birthday.



Sam's family came to celebrate Sam's birthday.



Ben's Mom visited for Ben's Birthday.



Adeline's grandmother joined Mrs. Opferman's circle and shared a story.



Muriel's Mom shared a book about Chinese New Year and did a folding envelope activity.



The Aviary educators visited the friends twice during our Birds and Flight theme. In the photo above, Jamie is showing the friends Barkley, a screech owl.

100th Day of School Celebration!



The friends are happy with their 100th day crowns!



Basil's Mom helped the friends make a chain with 100 links in it.

Can You Believe We've Been In School 100 Days?

To celebrate the 100th day of school, the friends enjoyed a variety of special activities. Special 100th day of school crowns were made and worn throughout the day. Friends helped make a chain consisting of one hundred links and added one hundred items to a three dimensional banner. For a special snack, children enjoyed counting ten cheerios, ten teddy grahams, ten goldfish and other treats until they had one hundred pieces of snack.



Lola and Tayshawn are adding items to our 100th day of school banner!



FOCUS BOOKS FOR BIRDS

The story *Life In The Air* by Maria Rius and J.M. Parramon follows a baby bird from hatching out of its egg, to learning how to fly, to discovering the world from up in the air. The children learned games such as Orchard, Early Birds and the Feed the Birds game. In Feed The Birds, each child rolls a die and uses a clothespin "bird" to pick up that many worms (pipe cleaner pieces) to take to their nest for the baby birds. They discovered how a paper shredder works, and then used the shredded paper to make bird nests. We also experimented with dropping different items from high up to see how they fell to the ground. The children learned that gravity causes things to fall down and that lighter things, like feathers, sometimes get caught in the air and float down slower than heavy, solid things, such as coins.

The cooks made homemade suet to freeze and then put into suet baskets to hang on our playground and outside the windows to feed the birds.



Emma plays The Orchard Game.



Nola, Roxy, Tyler and Ben play the Early Birds game.

Jackson and Ilan get the ingredients ready to make Suet Cakes for the birds.



Without You by Sarah Weeks is a heartfelt story-song about the relationships in an Emperor Penguin family. The father penguin carefully balances the egg on his feet and cares for it during the long, dark two months of Antarctic winter, while the mother goes out to sea to feed. After the egg hatches, the mother returns and uses her voice to find her family. She cares for the chick while the father goes to feed.

The animals of the Arctic and Antarctic circles spend their lives surviving subfreezing air temperatures and frigid water. Their secret is blubber, a thick layer of body fat that comprises up to 50% of some marine mammals. To demonstrate this fact, the children did the blubber glove experiment by testing the feel of freezing cold water directly on their hands, and then again with their hand in a plastic bag surrounded by Crisco. The friends got to see on a small scale what it's like to take a dip in cold water without turning into a popsicle. Another experiment showed how the oil on bird feathers causes water to slide right off of them.

We played with small penguin figures on blocks of ice, used the scooters to practice “belly sliding” as penguins do when they get too tired to walk any more, and pretended to be penguins fishing in the ocean. The friends also played a letter recognition and writing skill game called “Feed the Penguin”.



Daniel creates custom birds.

Charlie A., Eric and Julia try the Blubber Glove Experiment.



Ruby practices “belly-sliding” like a penguin, on the scooters in the hallway.

Gwynnie drips water on an oiled feather to see what happens.



Eric displays his Penguin Pattern Bracelet.



Stellaluna by Janell Cannon, is about a baby bat and her mother who get separated during an owl attack. The baby bat lands in a bird's nest and is taken in by the mother bird, but only if she changes her bat ways. She finds her bat mother later in the story and is reunited with her bat family, but she remains in contact with her bird family. "Stellaluna" activities included the following: making bat wings to wear; playing a sorting and comparing bird wings and bat wings game; making paper mache nests; building birds out of folded and stuffed coffee filters and feathers; counting bats; and making fruit kabobs in the kitchen. The children enjoyed learning the dance to the Birdie Tweet Tweet song by Laurie Berkner.



Ben makes a Bird Nest out of shredded paper, string, ribbon and glue.



Milo and Ilan examine the different kinds of fruit that bats and birds might eat. The fruit was made into Fruit Kabobs for everyone to taste.



Sahil plays the Bird-Bat Comparison Game.

The story *Chickens Aren't The Only Ones* by Ruth Heller, begins with wonderful illustrations and descriptions of the different kinds of eggs that birds lay. It then outlines the other types of animals that lay eggs: reptiles, amphibians, fish, spiders, snails and insects. There are only two exceptions of mammals that lay eggs - the Spiny Anteater and the Duckbill Platypus, whom both live in Australia! Everyone who lays an egg is OVIPAROUS. The week's activities included: racing with an egg on a spoon; practicing cutting egg shapes; forming clay eggs; decorating bird houses; and water color painting on huge dinosaur eggs.

Several activities focused on math skills. While playing the Yarn Measuring Game, each child chose a plastic egg, opened it, and laid the piece of yarn out straight on the table. Then they lined up small unit blocks next to the yarn and counted how many blocks long the string was. The children practiced counting, sequencing and number identification in the Small to Big Egg game, the Name That Number game, and the Shaky Egg Hide and Seek game.

All of the kitchen cooks colored hard-boiled eggs this week.



Jacobo, Roxy and Tyler color hard-boiled eggs.



Arnav and Joya decorate model magic eggs to put in their nests.



Lorelei dries her colored eggs on a paper towel, and then discovers that it has made a cool pattern!

Sam and Broden count the eggs they collected and figure out how many are still hidden.



Gwendolyn cuts out a medium-sized egg.

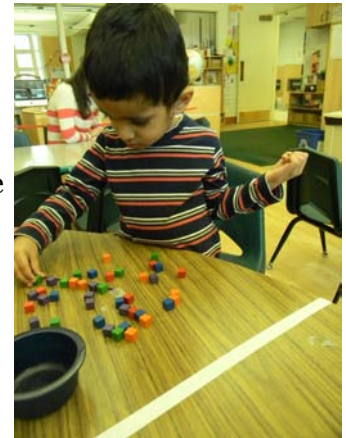


Natalie and Eric identify and name numbers inside the eggs.





Sam and Jane color hard-boiled eggs.



Saatwick lines up blocks against a string to see how many blocks long it is.



Nola uses water color paints to decorate a huge dinosaur egg.



Maeve carefully balances an egg on a spoon as she walks.

Daniel, Phoebe, Ruby and Roxy paint dinosaur eggs.



Jacobo plays with penguins on ice.



BIRDSONG is written by Audrey Wood, and illustrated by Robert Florczak. Each page of this dawn to dusk story details a different environment and a different bird with a distinct call or song.

The activities that supported the book included: playing the Bird Match Game and Bird Sound Bingo; using our whole bodies to play Crows and Cranes and Bird Catcher; folding paper into airplanes; using wood shims, c-clamps, drills, screwdrivers, nuts and bolts to build airplanes or birds; and rolling, cutting and baking bird shaped biscuits.



Ilan opens the salt so he can measure it for the Bird Biscuit recipe.



Natalie and Lorelei listen to the bird sounds to make a match in Bird Sound Bingo.

Julia folds paper to make a paper airplane.



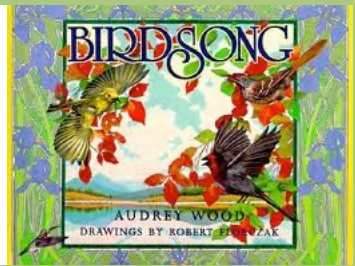
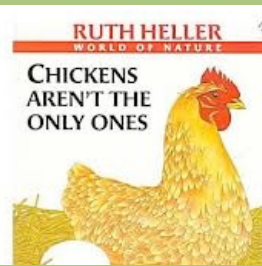
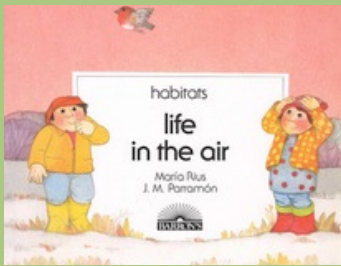
Sahil takes his turn in the Bird Match Game.



We learned so much about Birds in Extended Morning this Month! We will continue to feed and observe the birds around the school throughout the spring.

The Extended Morning Team: Mrs. Tomer, Mrs. Opferman, Ms. McMichael, Mrs. Loomis, Mrs. Bird

Extended P.M. Newsletter

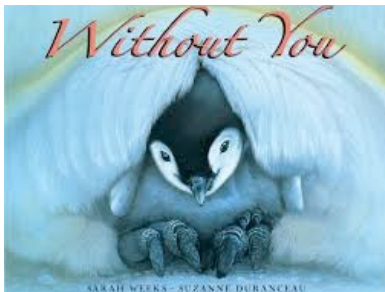


Carnegie Mellon University Children's School

March 2014

Birds and Flight

Five focus books were selected for the Extended Afternoon's study of Birds and Flight. The first book in the Birds Unit was the story of *Life In The Air* by Maria Rius and J.M. Parramon. It tells the tale of a baby bird from hatching out of its egg, to learning how to fly, to discovering the world from up in the air. We made homemade suet to freeze and then hang on our playground. It was also placed outside the windows to feed the birds. We made butterflies out of clothespins, construction paper bird nests, and multi colored eggs.



Without You by Sarah Weeks is a heartfelt story-song about the relationships in an Emperor Penguin family. The father penguin carefully

balances the egg on his feet and cares for it during the long, dark two months of Antarctic winter, while the mother goes out to sea to feed. After the egg hatches, the mother returns, and using her voice, finds her family. She cares for the chick while the father goes off to feed.

The animals of the Arctic and Antarctic circles spend their lives surviving subfreezing air temperatures and frigid water. Their secret is blubber, a thick layer of body fat that comprises up to 50% of some marine mammals. We experimented with the blubber glove experiment. The friends got to see, on a small scale, what it's like to take a dip in cold water without

turning into a popsicle. Mrs. Loomis had the friends practice laying on their bellies using scooters. This is called belly sliding done by Penguins when they get too tired to walk any more.

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ways. She finds her bat mother later in the story and is reunited with her bat family, but remains in contact with her bird family.



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decorating bird houses. In the kitchen, the cooks sampled egg salad, made eggs in a nest, and dyed hard boiled eggs.

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One square pan plus one round pan equals one beautiful "HEART."

Cereal balls formed into egg shapes bring smiles to all.



Bat wings in the making!



Learning to tumble...

KINDERNEWS

Bird Bonanza

Reminders

- March/Early April Theme: Greece
- No School: April 4th (Conference Prep)
- Parent Teacher Conferences:
April 11th and 25th

Alexander, Caleb, Pryn, Benjamin and Ari use binoculars for bird watching.



Our kindergarten tropical rain forest full of birds-of-paradise.



What makes a bird unique? As we began our bird unit we challenged the students to answer this question. As a whole group, the friends brainstormed a detailed list with great examples, but they kept finding exceptions. A bird has pretty colors, but so does a fish or insect. A bird has a beak/bill, but so does a duck billed platypus. A bird lays eggs, but so do fish, amphibians and reptiles. A bird has wings, but insects and some mammals do too. Finally, we decided that birds are the only animal to have feathers, and that all birds have them! A bird's

feathers protect its skin from injury and weather. They provided a light, broad, lifting surface that enables them to fly, steer and brake. They add support, warmth and comfort in a nest and are used for display in attracting mates. As we delved into the world of birds, the students were amazed at the many different, exotic and interesting facts. They learned the anatomy of a bird's body and the important role each part plays, the influence of habitat, the nesting practices and necessity of migration. We were also lucky to enjoy two visits for the National Aviary and observe two nests of Peregrine Falcons and Eagles located in Pittsburgh on a daily basis thanks to web-cameras.



Friends watch a Ruffed Grouse on the smartboard.



Lexi shares her bird journal from home.



Emmet, Dany, Mae, Mela and Alice enjoy being baby birds in the forest.

BIRD WATCHING

The students' interest began to pique with the addition of binoculars in the hallway and the installation of bird feeders near the playground, so they couldn't wait to become true bird watchers themselves. To introduce our new unit, friends shared their own bird watching journals, drawings and bird sightings with classmates. We then began our study of backyard birds native to Pittsburgh, focusing first on the state bird, the Ruffed Grouse. Using the works of John James Audubon (a French American ornithologist, naturalist and painter) as

inspiration, students chose a bird to research and illustrate in their natural habitat.



Benjamin, Lexi and Emmet look for birds outside the window.



Shaylee draws a Ruffed Grouse.



Pryns, Rohan and Mae draw and write facts about birds.

BIRDS, BIRDS, BIRDS

With the inclement weather upon us during this winter season, friends in the kindergarten classroom came up with the best way to learn about birds you may only find outside of Pittsburgh—creating our very own bird aviary and habitats. To warm things up, we started with the birds-of-paradise, believed to be among the most beautiful creatures on earth. With the help of The Cornell Lab of Ornithology, scientists have succeeded in capturing images of all 39 species of these rare and magnificent birds. Known best for their colorful plumage (feathers) and unique courtship displays, birds-of-paradise are native to the New Guinea and satellite islands. As we learned about each bird, the friends selected their favorite to draw and paint, eventually adding to our kindergarten rain forest. A favorite amongst the class was the male Superb bird-of-paradise, known to have one of the most bizarre and elaborate mating displays in the avian world. After preparing his “dance floor” (scrubbing away dirt and branches), he attracts females with a loud call, folds his feathers in an upward shape creating an ellipse-shaped feature and begins his rhythmic dancing. We then transformed the classroom into our very own aviary using exotic and interesting birds. After several weeks of meticulous paper mache building, painting and decorating, friends proudly shared their birds and facts with classmates.



Mela paints her bird-of-paradise.



David using paper mache.



Alexander

Great Horned Owl



Shaylee and Mela sculpting their paper mache birds.



Hugo

Wilson's Bird-of-Paradise



Blue Bird-of-Paradise

Lexi

ABC CHALLENGES CONTINUED

The kindergartners have eagerly continued with their classroom challenges, often asking for “more of a challenge!” This month we focused primarily on letter recognition. During the first challenge, students were asked to place ABC containers in alphabetical order, then match tennis balls (with the lower case letter written on it) to the initial uppercase letter. For example, they matched the d tennis ball with the letter D container. This activity was an independent task that each child had the opportunity to complete. During the



Dany, Savanna and Clark add letters from magazines to the ABC challenge.

second challenge, students worked as a group, searching through magazines, finding photographs and print, matching the letter to the challenge alphabet board. Each day, students had to find matches for five new letters of the alphabet. Students are eagerly awaiting our upcoming challenges after spring break, focusing on beginning letter sounds and rhyming words.



Benjamin matches letters on the challenge board.



Emma places letters in alphabetical order.

WORD FAMILIES RHYMING

This month we introduced the children to two new families: the AT family and the EN family as we continued our development, becoming emerging readers and writers. We used a variety of ways to practice these families with the children. We began with the Smartboard to introduce the family to the children. Once the children understood the pattern, we practiced the families in lots of hands on ways. The children played games like Roll the Word or Word Family Bingo to reinforce their learning. Using word related searches, building, sorting, and graphing as daily activities, we were able to scaffold the students’ learning in a familiar and



Ari sorts and writes AT and EN words.

comfortable manner. Well-timed instruction with word families can help children solidify understandings, eliminate confusions, and move to new understandings in the most efficient



Alexander, Dany and Mae explore word families.



Lexi and Boden sort word family words.

KINDERGARTEN DISCOVERY AND EXPLORATION

The Science/Discovery Area has continued to be a busy place in the kindergarten classroom! We have explored several experiments involving bird adaptations including habitats, nest building, and the function and importance of different feathers and beaks.

Feathers



Shaylee predicts the feather will keep her hand warm.

I wonder...how does a feather help protect a bird from the elements of nature?

I think...the children worked with Mrs. Armbruster to make some predictions about what will happen to a feather when it gets wet. Some friends predicted: "The water will fall off the

feather, keeping it dry." "The feather will absorb the water when it rains." As a whole group, students also explored how feathers help a bird stay warm by placing ice cubes on top of a single feather. Most friends predicted that feathers must act like a blanket for birds. One friend suggested, "Feathers must keep birds warm because a penguin is a bird and he stays warm in the snow."

I learned... feathers help protect birds from getting drenched in the rain. Instead of soaking through them, water slides right off. Birds are able to keep their feathers waterproof by putting a layer of oil on them. They get the oil from a place near their tail called the preen gland. Feathers also insulate a bird using various layers of feathers, including soft, fluffy feathers called down.



Hugo conducts an experiment using water and feathers.



Mae drinks like a Hummingbird.

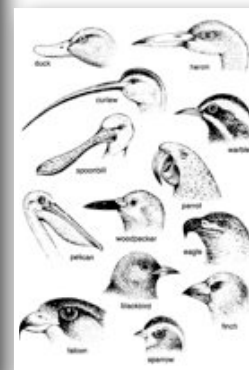
Beaks

I wonder...why birds have different shaped and sized beaks?

I think...the children made predictions about why a bird's beak looks the way it does. The children began by looking at various photographs of beaks and predicting what type of food each bird ate and their process of obtaining and eating food. They predicted if the bird was a meat eater (birds of prey, also known as raptors, that hunt and feed on other animals) or a seed/insect eater.

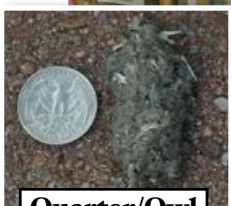
I learned...birds eat many different types of food. It may depend upon their environment and what's available for them to eat, along with their body/beak structure. Scientists rely on a bird's beak (or bill) to help identify and categorize them. Beak types range from those that crack, shred, chisel, probe, strain, spear and several other unique designs. Here are some common bill shapes and the food that they are especially adapted to eat. Seed eaters like cardinals have short, thick conical bills for cracking seeds. Birds of prey like hawks and owl have sharp, curved bills for tearing meat. Woodpeckers have bills that are long and chisel-like for boring into wood to eat insects. Hummingbird bills are

long and slender for probing flowers for nectar.

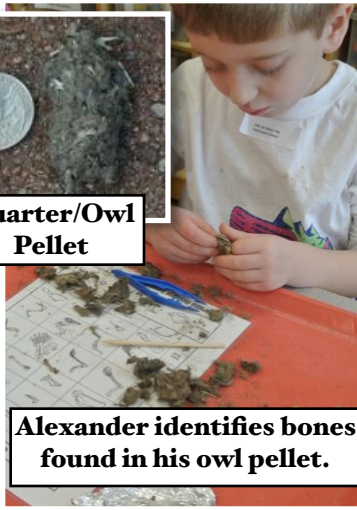


Bird Beaks

WHAT'S AN OWL PELLET??



Quarter/Owl Pellet



Alexander identifies bones found in his owl pellet.

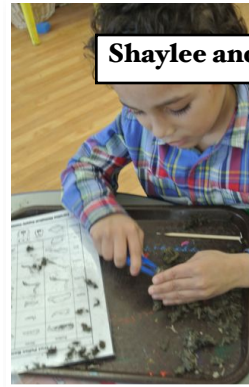
When learning about any subject, one of the best ways to build understanding is through hands-on exploration. The kindergarten friends were very eager to explore what they called "One of our best science experiments this year"-dissecting owl pellets.

Owls, like many other birds, eat their food whole. Since birds do not have teeth, they can't chew their food. Therefore, they use their strong and

sharp beaks to rip their prey apart and then swallow large chunks whole. The owl slowly digests its meal by separating the softer materials (meat) from the harder materials (bones). It then regurgitates the harder materials along with indigestible items such as feathers and fur in the form of a pellet. The children enjoyed the process of dissecting the pellets, using a chart to sort and identify their findings.



Shaylee and Henry examine a bone.



Pryns, Emma and Savanna explore owl pellets.

SUBTRACTION

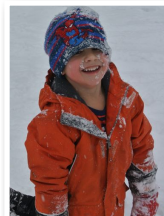
As students mastered the basic concept of addition, we began to gradually introduce subtraction. We learned the process of finding the difference between two numbers, inspired by our current unit. Students began by using plastic frogs and a log to create a number story. "One day, there were 10 frogs sitting on a log. A bird swooped in and ate 5 frogs. How many frogs were left on the log?" Students practiced subtraction with the help of a teacher, then worked with a partner, with one student creating the story problem, while the other solved. As students gained a better understanding of the meaning of subtraction ("to take away"), off the log. As we move on to our next unit, we will continue exploring all that subtraction has to offer and begin to explore both addition and subtraction using larger numbers.

Collin explores subtraction with frogs on a log.



SNOWY WINTER FUN

David, Lexi, Alice, Emmet, Dany, Clark, Henry, Ari, Hugo and John have fun sledding.



BIRD BONANZA FAMILY FESTIVAL

Thank you to all the families who came to our Bird Bonanza Family Festival on Thursday, March 6th! We really enjoy seeing all our friends and families again. We hope everyone had a great time exploring our paper mache kindergarten aviary, dissecting owl pellets, learning about a Macaw, making necklaces and more. We could tell all the children couldn't wait to share what they have been learning about birds, including all about their habitats, adaptations and interesting facts.



Boden proudly shares his Emperor Penguin with his mom and sister.



Clark and his family read facts about his bird, the Treecreeper.



Kindergarten families enjoy watching the bird facts video.



Lexi, her mother and Alice look at the Baltimore Oriole.



Emma, her mother and Benjamin look at the tropical birds.



Rohan and her mother explore the water birds at the Kindergarten Aviary.



David, Dany and their mom watch the kindergarten bird movie on the smartboard.

Family Bird Bonanza

On Thursday, March 6th, almost 350 Children's School family members and friends participated in our **Family Bird Bonanza**. Together, we played a variety of bird-related games, visited the Blue Room bird gallery, met a live macaw from the Pittsburgh Aviary, explored owl pellets and worms, decoupage a bird necklace, sampled fruit snacks that birds and people eat, toured the kindergarten bird-seum, and relaxed with bird books and puzzles in the "peaceful room".



More Bird Bonanza Explorations

During our Birds & Flight unit, we discovered how amazingly diverse birds adapt to their habitats so they can both survive and thrive. We learned about birds' life cycles, behavior, diets, camouflage, etc., as well as the physical science of their unique features, such as beaks and wings. We also considered the ways that we can help birds by protecting the environments in which they live.



Birds & Flight

Though our Whole School Birds Unit is technically finished, our children's interests have taken flight. Families have shared their children's exclamations when they can identify the birds they see in their yards and in the sky (e.g., "Look, a red-tailed hawk!"). We encourage you to support these emerging hobbies by engaging in bird-watching as a family, helping the children record their observations, and even attracting birds to your own yard by providing food, nesting materials, etc. for the birds.



In school, the kindergarten friends are expanding their study of birds by doing an in-depth study of eggs and chicks, as well as exploring other OVIPAROUS (egg-laying) animals. They have been caring for fertilized chicken eggs for 14 days and expect the hatching to begin on May 5th. All of the children will have opportunities to observe the hatching process and the development of the chicks. Feel free to visit the kindergarten next week to see for yourself!

PittsburghGives.org Day of Giving

PittsburghGives Day of Giving provides an opportunity for you to maximize your charitable contribution to the CMU Children's School! The donated funds will be used to support our Library Enhancement Project, which involves having custom-made library cabinets built for us. The Day of Giving for 2014 will run from 6:00 AM until 12:00 Midnight on Tuesday, May 6, 2014. This 13-hour event is part of Give Local America, the national day for community foundations across the country. This event will replace the day traditionally held in October.

To ensure that your donation reaches the Children's School, log on to PittsburghGives.org. Select Carnegie Mellon University from the List of Eligible Organizations and make your donation. Please notify Miss Hancock at lh37@andrew.cmu.edu that you have made a contribution via the Day of Giving and that you want it to be designated to The Children's School. She will send a list of the Children's School donors to the University Advancement Office who will then allocate the donation and matching funds to The Children's School.

Organizations will receive a pro-rated portrait of the match pool. The match will be capped at \$1,000 per donor transaction per organization. For example, if an individual donor makes a gift of \$5,000 to one organization, only \$1,000 of that gift will count towards the match calculation.

Donations will not be accepted by third parties. The donor must make the online contribution and he/she will be receipted directly for that donation by the Pittsburgh Foundation. Donations are MasterCard/Visa credit card gifts only on May 6, 2014 in the given time period at www.pittsburghgives.org - checks, stocks, or cash will not be accepted.