

## Birding and Beyond Syllabus

Birding and Beyond is a great introduction to the world of nature, as students will learn to be particularly aware of the birds around them. Students will learn to recognize birds in the wild using their common names, and develop a familiarity with habitats and bird families. They will practice tuning in to bird sounds, similar to how trackers and Native Americans have learned to understand their surroundings.

Studying one facet of nature will open doors for other areas. In the fall, one class will be devoted to learning about frogs and amphibians, and listening for them in the wild.

Birds are more active in the mornings and evenings. Therefore, we will meet from 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. on eight Thursdays during the Fall semester. The amphibians class may be shifted to an evening as frogs call most often at dawn or dusk. Love Creek will be home base, and the site of our first class, but we will also go birding at different spots around the county.

This class is a beginning birding class, and open to any age. Bring your own binoculars (8x42 or 10x42 are most common), and dress for the outdoors. Parents are requested to accompany pre-teen children. A field guide is handy, but not required. A \$5 materials fee is requested at the first class.

### Class Plan

1. Finding Birds (Class at Love Creek)
  - a. Learning how to use the binoculars
  - b. Learning how to tell different birds apart
  - c. Finding birds on the trails at Love Creek
2. Meet the Shorebirds, Gulls, and Terns (Meet at Silver Beach)
  - a. Learning about Shorebirds, Gulls, Terns

- b. Walk the beach, watching for Shorebirds, Gulls, and Terns
- 3. Birds Have Favorite Places -- Habitats (Place TBA)
  - a. Learning where to look for various birds
  - b. Migration -- any bird can be anywhere!
  - c. Bird walk
- 4. The Voices of Birds (meet at Floral Lane, north part of Warren Dunes)
  - a. Learning bird sounds
  - b. Walk through the woods, listening for birds
- 5. The Big Birds -- Hawks & Owls (Place TBA)
  - a. Learning about Hawks and Owls
  - b. Bird walk
- 6. Ducks -- Dabblers & Divers (Place TBA)
  - a. Learning about ducks
  - b. View any visible ducks; also bird walk
- 7. Winter Birds (Love Creek)
  - a. Learning which birds stay in our area for the winter
  - b. Bird walk
- 8. Frog & Amphibian class (Love Creek)
  - a. instructor Derek Pelc, naturalist at Love Creek

## Assignments

1. Attendance is expected for each of the 8 classes
2. Observation assignment:

Each child will choose a "sit spot" where they can stay for 10-30 minutes at a time, at least three times each week. During this time they are asked to observe what is happening in the bird world around them. They will notice such things as birds feeding, sitting and singing, giving alarm calls when danger approaches, etc. They are encouraged to identify the birds, but the goal is to learn baseline, and then be aware of, and try to understand what's happening, when baseline is broken.

Observations will be made in a journal (younger ones will need the help of parents). A short time will be allotted during each class period to share observations.

Note: Classes may be in a different order, depending on migration and weather.