



The Bird Beak Game

Summer Camp Activity



INTRODUCTION

Much can be learned from watching birds and studying their structure and behavior. Different birds are adapted to eat different types of food. Some birds will eat almost anything (e.g., the seagull). Other birds eat a very specialized diet, such as the pelican; it eats only fish. All birds have specially adapted beaks to eat their food. The specially adapted beaks and diets allows many different species of birds to survive in the same habitat without having to compete for the same food source.

MATERIALS

- “Stomach” cup (one for each participant)
- At least four different “bird food” options, such as paperclips, beads, beans, pasta, marbles, toothpicks, or something similar (it is best to have at least 20 of each type of food)
- At least four different “bird beak” options, such as a spoon, fork, chopsticks, tweezers, clothes pin or something similar
- Bird Beak Data Sheet or a page in your Nature Journal
- Birds of the Bay (optional, on following page)

PROCEDURE - For Single Participant

1. You are going to test each bird beak to see which beak can feed on the different prey items.
2. Spread out the first “bird food” in a small area.
3. Select your first bird beak you will test.
4. Set your timer for 30 seconds.
5. Start your timer and see how many food items you can pick up with your beak. The items must be picked up and put into your “stomach” cup.
6. After time is up, record how many items you picked up with your beak.
7. Repeat the activity using the other food items.
8. Once you have used all the food items, try a the next “beak.”

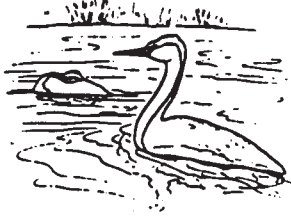
PROCEDURE - For Multiple Participants

1. Each participant will have a different bird beak to see which beak can feed on the different prey items.
2. Spread out the first “bird food” in a small area.
3. Set your timer for 30 seconds.
4. Start your timer and see how many food items you can pick up with your beak. The items must be picked up and put into your “stomach” cup.
5. Which “bird” ate the most food? Which one at the least amount of food?
6. After time is up, record how many items you picked up with your beak.
7. Repeat the activity using the other food items.

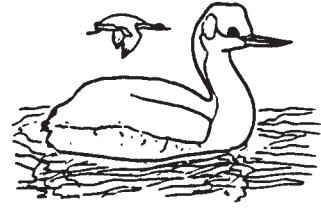
QUESTIONS

- Why were some birds were able to obtain certain types of food easily and others were not?
- Did any particular type of bird had difficulty obtaining food? Describe what would happen to a bird unable to get enough food.
- Are any birds adapted to eat a particular kind of food? Have them describe the bird(s) and their adaptation(s).
- If a bird moved to a different “habitat”, how well would it survive?

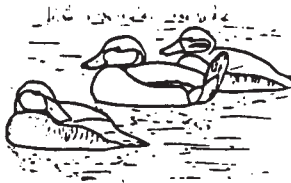
Birds of the Open Water



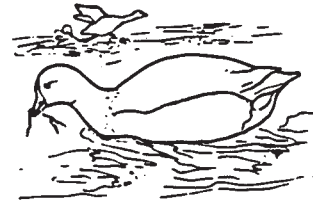
Western grebe



Eared grebe

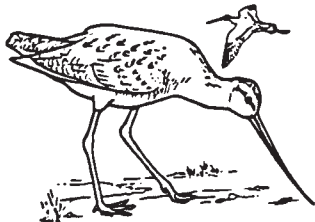


Ruddy duck

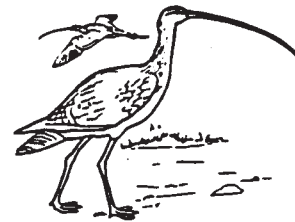


American coot

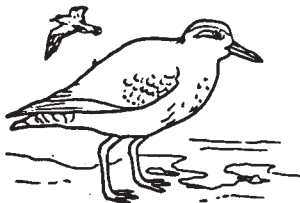
Birds of the Mudflats



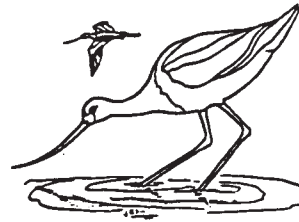
Marbled godwit



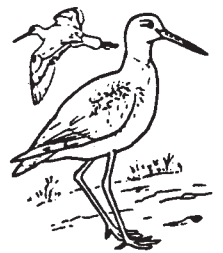
Long-billed curlew



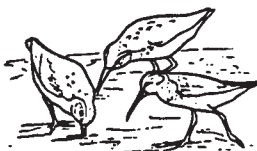
Black-bellied plover



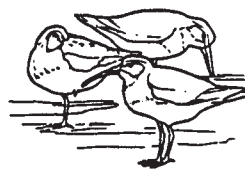
American avocet



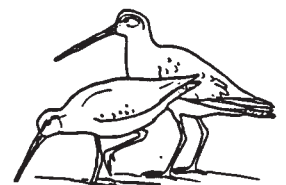
Willet



Least sandpiper

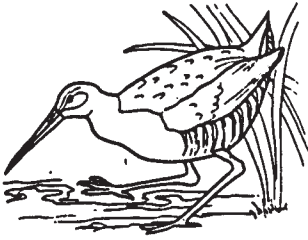


Dunlin

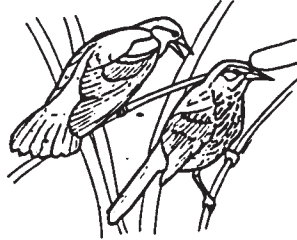


Dowitcher

Birds of the Marshes



Light-footed clapper rail



Red-winged blackbird



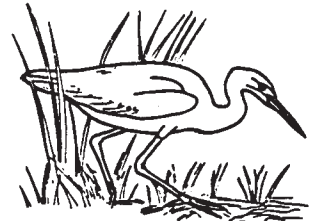
Savannah sparrow



Great blue heron

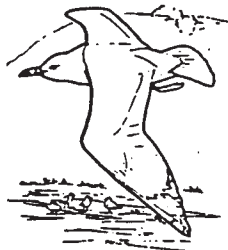


Common egret

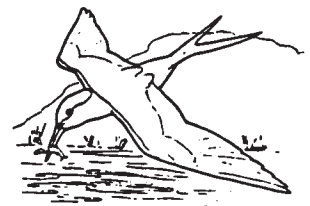


Snowy egret

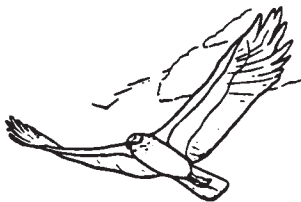
Birds of the Air



Ring-billed gull



Forster's tern



Turkey vulture



Red-tailed hawk