



# Backyard Bird Survey



## Northern Cardinal

Cardinals are an easy songbird to spot with their bright red feathers and roughly 8 inches from beak to tail. Even the females can be seen although their feathers are not nearly as bright as a male. Cardinals are commonly found in backyards and at bird feeders. Look for the red feathers and crested heads.



## House Sparrow

Medium sized brown sparrow measuring 4 to 5 inches from beak to tail. Males are brown with black coloration that resembles a 'goatee' around the beak and females lack this marking. Commonly found in hedges and around birdfeeders.



## American Robin

Commonly found hunting worms, Robins are a backyard staple with a slate gray back and bright rusty orange bellies. Robins are larger than many backyard birds, reaching around 10 inches from bill to tail, but are not attracted to birdfeeders. Find them in the early morning and late evening roaming woodlands and open spaces for food.





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## American Crow

Large black bird that you will likely hear its' nasally deep call before you see the bird itself. Nearly 20 inches from bill to tail with a three-foot wing span, crows can be seen perched in the tops of large trees and flying overhead.



## Blue Jay

Blue Jays are the bullies of the backyard. Related to crows, blue jays are not actually blue, but white. The blue jays' feathers are designed to shine a reflective pigment that in light makes the bird's feathers blue. Commonly found around birdfeeders with whole peanuts being the birds' preferred snack.



## Downy Woodpecker

Downy Woodpeckers are small black and white checkered birds that can be seen drilling away on trunks of trees and occasionally on houses. The downy is the smallest woodpecker in North America at 5 inches in length. Males are only distinguished from females by a small bright red patch directly on the back of the bird's head.





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## Carolina Chickadee

The most commonly found backyard chickadee is the Carolina Chickadee although they are nearly identical to Black-capped Chickadees. This very small seed-eating songbird may only be 3 inches in length, but is the security force of both the woodland and backyard often sounding an alarm for not just fellow chickadees but other bird species as well.



## Canada Goose

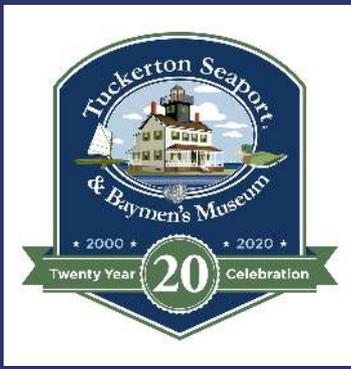
With over 5 million in North America and counting, the Canada Goose is easy to spot in large fields, backyards or flying overhead in large groups in check mark or v-shaped patterns. These geese are large with long necks and an average 5-foot wingspan.



## Mallards

Commonly found by bodies of water, male mallards have a green head and neck with gray body feathers while females are colored in brown with white speckles. Can be seen flying in the morning and evening when returning to nightly roosting ground. Smaller than a Canada Goose, but still quite large with a 2-foot wingspan and shorter neck.





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## Tufted Titmouse

Titmice are small song birds that are between 4 and 5 inches long with light gray heads for male and female. Back feathers while also having a crest on the head with a black spot between the eyes. White underneath with rusty brown shading under the wings on both sides. Usually found with chickadees and at birdfeeders.



How many species out of 10 were found within the week?

Are there bird species within your house as decoration or other mediums such as decoys or in paintings?

Try Identifying any birds not on this checklist.

Want to see an even larger bird? Check out this Osprey Cam located on Long Beach Island.

<http://www.conservewildlifenj.org/education/ospreycam/>





# Parent Guide

## Becoming a Citizen Scientist

Becoming a Citizen Scientist is easy. You can do it in your very own backyard just by looking out the window and observing the animals you see, taking notes on behaviors and documenting the sightings in real life data bases. Birds, more often than not, will dominate the observations you make. People who study birds are called ornithologists. The observations YOU make in your backyard can be logged into databases in order to help ornithological scientists complete real research.

## Identifying & Mapping What Is Found

What should you do if you or your child see a species you cannot identify? First, keep your eye on the bird. If you reach for your phone or tablet to try and Google the bird you will lose time that can be used to remember what you saw. Have your child describe the bird to you. Use the size, shape and behavior to help. Is the bird flying high over your house or in a tree of the yard? You or your child write down the details of what you see and the behaviors of the bird.

There are apps that can help identify birds and are easily used through virtually any tablet or smartphone. There are many, but the best two are by developed by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Merlin, is an app that will use your physical location and also the size, shape, color and behavior of the bird you saw to give you several suggestions as to what it might be. If you are lucky enough to snap a photo of the bird you can even upload that for an even more accurate guess. The other app, eBird, is the app that helps ornithologists research the bird species around the world. It allows Citizen

Scientists across the world the ability to monitor the species they saw as well as to where the bird was located and how many birds were seen at one time.



Share your bird watching photos with us!



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