

Activity 2

A Year in the Life...

Teacher-led Classroom Activity
Life Science, Research, Reading, Writing

How does a wading bird's life change through the seasons?

Objective:

Students conduct research to create a report or presentation on the life of a particular wading bird species through a year.



Students will need:

- Classroom, media center, and/or online resources for research
- Writing and drawing materials

Suggested time:

Class and/or homework time for research; two to three class periods for creating reports/presentations; two class periods for presentations

What to do:

1. Have students, working individually or in pairs, select a wading bird for in-depth research. Give students some guidelines for the kind of information their reports should include:

- A description of the bird's appearance, with special attention to adaptations that help it survive in a particular environment.
- The bird's range—where it lives at different times of year.
- What the bird eats and how it gets its food.
- Breeding and nesting behavior.

Encourage students to pose and answer their own questions about the bird's life. They can illustrate their reports and include a map showing the bird's range. (Audubon's online [Guide to North American Birds](#) is a good resource.) Students can choose the format for their presentations—print, digital, or a combination.

2. Set aside class time for presentations and questions from fellow students.
3. Create a classroom or hallway display using students presentations, or combine them into a book on wading birds for the class library.

Extensions

- Imagine you are a wading bird that lives in a neighborhood park. What kind of wading bird are you? What is the name of the park where you live? What season is it? What do you see and hear? Think about what you need to survive here—what you eat, where you nest and raise young, and so on. Then write a letter to the local park ranger thanking him/her for working to protect you and keep your habitat clean and healthy.
- Suggest that students to use the information they've gathered to make a game based on wading birds specifically or animal adaptations in general.