

Houston Zoo at Home

MIGRATORY BIRDS

Birds follow migratory routes, called flyways, between their northern breeding grounds and southern wintering areas. There are four major flyways in North America: the Pacific, Central, Mississippi and Atlantic Flyway. Houston is a wonderful place for birding because we are on the migratory bird route, perfectly positioned near the line between the Central Flyway and Mississippi Flyway. Of Texas' 639 species of birds, more than two-thirds are migrants. We can all do our part to help our feathered friends on their journey!

Pitstop Partners!

Ages: 4 and up

Materials: Various items from around your house

Work with your family to do one of the activities below to become a Pitstop Partner! You can help provide migratory birds with a place to rest and recharge on their journey.

1. Food – make a bird feeder

You can use pinecones, toilet paper roll tubes, or an old dish

Place some bird seed, sunflower seeds, or berries onto the dish. If you are using a pinecone or toilet paper tube, get some peanut butter or Crisco (for an allergy safe method), coat the pinecone or toilet paper tube, and press the seeds into it.

Hang it on string or yarn.

Put your new bird feeder outside for the birds to snack on!

2. Water – provide a drink

Find a small dish, bowl or bucket around your house

Fill it with fresh clean water for the bird to stop at for a quick drink and bath. Make sure to place it off the ground.

Change out the water every 3 to 4 days to keep it clean and to prevent mosquitos

Remember, it does not have to be fancy to be useful to our feathered friends!

1. Shelter - a place to rest

Look around your house for an old shoebox, a coffee can, or another container

Make a hole in one end of the container roughly the size of a ping pong ball

Place your container outside for our small migratory birds to rest in

If you have some old wood around the house, you can get a grown-up to help you make a bird house by nailing them together. Outdoor department stores like Home Depot and Lowes have bird house you can put together as a family.

Remember, it does not have to be fancy to be useful to our feathered friends!

Share your project with us!

Tag your photo using #HoustonZoo or email us your story at communications@houstonzoo.org.

An Incredible Journey

Ages: 4 and up

Materials Needed: Sidewalk chalk and a Quarter

Steps:

1. In a safe place outside, use the chalk to make 10 boxes in a straight line
It should look like a hopscotch in a single line
Make the boxes big enough for a person to stand in them
Number them 1 – 10
2. The first player steps into Box 1. This is “Bird 1”
3. The Game Controller flips a coin
If it lands on heads, “Bird 1” is having a great migration and can step 1 more box forward
If it lands on tails, “Bird 1” has had a hard time and CAN NOT step forward. The Game Controller should say one of the following:
You encountered a house cat! You need to rest.
You ran into a building! You need to rest.
You could not find enough food. You need to rest.
City lights made you confused during the night and you got lost. You need to rest and wait for daylight.
4. It is now the next player’s turn. This is Bird 2.
5. The game ends when someone reaches Box 10 and that bird wins the game since they finished their migration!
6. Play as many rounds as you like. There is no limit to the number of players per round. Players can be on the same square.



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