

## **Session Plan – Brilliant Birds (KS1 & KS2)**

**This session lasts one hour and is suitable for a maximum of fifteen children.**



### **Learning Objectives**

- Children understand that the natural world around them holds a diversity of fascinating organisms
- Children understand that organisms' bodies are adapted to their lifestyles
- Children understand that each organism needs an appropriate habitat in which to live
- Children understand that our actions affect other organisms and their habitats

### **Personal Development Objectives**

- Children learn about our responsibility towards other organisms

### **Curriculum Links**

KS1 – Life processes and living things

Pupils should be taught:

- 1b. that animals move, feed, grow, use their senses and reproduce
- 1c. to relate life processes to animals and plants found in the local environment
- 4b. to group living things according to observable similarities and differences
- 5a. to find out about the different kinds of plants and animals in the local environment

KS2 – Life processes and living things

Pupils should be taught:

- 1c. to make links between life processes in familiar animals and plants and the environments in which they are found
- 4c. that the variety of plants and animals makes it important to identify them and assign them to groups
- 5. all points covering adaptation, feeding relationships and micro-organisms

## **Safety Considerations**

Refer to relevant risk assessments for the site and session. At Cley, special care must be taken to ensure children cross the main road in a safe and supervised manner. Children using binoculars must always be warned never to look towards the sun with them.

## **Introduction**

Explain the session to the group, covering safety considerations and guidelines for proper behaviour, especially those mentioned above. Explain to the children that they will be visiting an important nature reserve and that to avoid disturbance to both wildlife and other visitors they should be quiet and respectful. Explain that they will be visiting bird hides which will allow them a close view of birds. Distribute binoculars and explain how to use them carefully.

Take the children into the hides quietly, making sure not to disturb other visitors. Explain to them how to behave in hides, keeping voices down and arms inside. Seat them quietly before opening the slats in order to surprise them with the view from the hide when they open them.

## **Walk to Bird Hides**

Introduce the main habitats on the nature reserve and their importance for birds.

### **NWT Cley Marshes**

- freshwater grazing marshes
- reedbed
- open water scrapes

### **NWT Holme Dunes**

- freshwater grazing marshes
- open water
- reedbed
- saltmarsh
- sand dunes

The following are important themes to raise when watching birds from the boardwalk and from the hides:

## **Bird communication**

Birds communicate information about themselves visually and vocally. Many species, such as ducks, use plumage colour and movement to communicate information such as breeding condition, identity, sex. Male songbirds in dense habitats, such as woodland and reedbed, use their voices to establish territory. Calls are made by both sexes and can communicate a range of information such as warning, feeding and contact with young.

## **Migration**

Ask whether anyone knows what migration is. Explain that many of the birds you are seeing are migratory and introduce some of their migratory routes. Explain the advantages and disadvantages of migration. Encourage children to imagine what it would be like to migrate, how they would find their way, how they would know when they reached their destination, and what dangers would be involved.

## **Reproduction**

In spring and summer, talk about when, how and where birds breed. Contrast species whose young stay in the nest and are fed by the parents and the many young birds you will see on the scrapes which left the nest when they hatched and can feed themselves. Talk about how feathers grow and how long it takes birds to acquire the power of flight. Talk about the dangers to parents and young involved in the raising of a bird family.

## **Adaptation**

Once in the hides, allow children to spend some time just watching birds. Gradually start pointing out readily observable species to them. Ask them to think about two noticeable characteristics of the birds they can see: their bills and their legs. Ask them to list the different shapes and sizes of bills and legs they can see and discuss why they might have these different adaptations. Compare bill shapes to tools humans use for different purposes.

## **Conservation**

As you walk back to the visitor centre, talk to the children about the rare species which inhabit the reserve and what their habitat requirements are. Talk about how they became rare and about the efforts NWT and other conservation organisations are making to conserve them. Encourage them to think about what life would be like if there were no birds.

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