

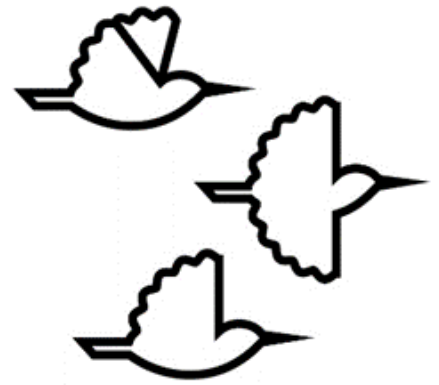
Key Concept/Message

In this instalment of Heart for the Earth, we move to the fifth day of creation described within Genesis One. Here, the narrative details God's creation of birdlife. Before reflecting on how we can show a heart for the earth through our care and championing of birds in the next collective worship plan, this plan focuses on the 'awesomeness' of birds. Exploring key facts about birds – and appreciating their beauty – provide opportunities for pupils to marvel at these wonderful creatures which are part of a rich tapestry of life on earth. It is an appreciation and value of all life on the planet which animate action for a flourishing earth.

Bible Story

Genesis 1 (particularly verses 20-23)

20 And God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of the sky." 21 So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living thing with which the water teems and that moves about in it, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. 22 God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth." 23 And there was evening, and there was morning – the fifth day. (*New International Version*)



Gather

Follow the school's normal gathering routines, using words of liturgy which are familiar to students and adults

or

Light a candle and offer the following prayer: 'The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you'. Response: and also with you. (To support pupil understanding of the Christian belief in God as Trinity here, why not light a single candle which has three wicks, lighting them in turn as each 'person' is acknowledged?)

Engage

Recap the 'community of creation' theology with the school community using the PowerPoint slides (see footnotes for an example explication in a previous plan)[1]. Remind them that we have previously used this worldview to help us think about how we can show a heart for the earth through our wise use of electricity ('Day 1') and water ('Day 2'), as well as thinking about flourishing eco-systems ('Day 3') and reducing our carbon footprint ('Day 4'). Today/this week, we will use this 'community of creation' thinking to think more deeply about birdlife.

In the creation narrative of Genesis 1[2], God follows the creation of light, water, plant-life and celestial bodies (the sun, moon and stars) to create bird and water-life on the fifth day:

[1] <http://tinyurl.com/y3wrpfxr>

[2] You may wish to reiterate that there are many views about Genesis 1 – some think it is literal truth, some think it is a symbolic poem which describes what God and creation are like, some have other views about this narrative.

20 And God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of the sky." 21 So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living thing with which the water teems and that moves about in it, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. 22 God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth." 23 And there was evening, and there was morning – the fifth day. (Genesis 1: 20-23, New International Version)

(Alternatively, you might also like to recap the Genesis 1 creation narrative with pupils using this interactive retelling:

<https://engageworship.org/ideas/genesis-rhyme-reading>. Draw attention after to creation on the fifth day)

The big story of the bible begins with God creating the earth and populating it with an extraordinary diversity of life. And God is delighted with all creatures. Nature is a rich tapestry of different species, each with their own uniqueness.

I wonder, how often do we stop and think about how amazing animals are?

Why do you think so many people love watching and supporting birds?

Let's take a moment to think about the 'awesomeness' of birds. What do you think might be the correct answers to the following questions?[3] (Feel free to make this as active as you like: what about a foot-stomping vote?). Answers are in bold, and further information can be found on the slides:



[3] Facts from: <https://www.reconnectwithnature.org/news-events/big-features/10-mind-blowing-facts-about-birds/>; <https://www.twinkl.co.uk/homework-help/science-homework-help/birds-facts-for-kids/top-20-facts-about-birds>; <https://www.lovethegarden.com/uk-en/article/17-amazing-facts-about-birds>; <https://www.wonderopolis.org/wonder/how-do-homing-pigeons-find-home>

- What is the largest bird in the world?
a) flamingo **b) ostrich** c) emperor penguin
- What is the most common bird in the world?
a) pigeon b) blackbird or **c) chicken**
- Which bird has the longest wingspan?
a) great white pelican b) kite or **c) albatross**
- Which bird is the fastest in flight?
a) peregrine falcon b) bald eagle c) Indian runner duck
- Which bird can jump the highest?
a) kiwi **b) penguin** c) stork

Other amazing bird facts are:

- There are over 10,000 different species of bird
- Some birds, like parrots, can mimic what people say
- Hummingbirds can fly backwards
- There is one poisonous bird in the world – the Hooded Pitohui of Papua New Guinea
- Some woodpeckers can peck 20 times a second (can you do something 20 times a second?!)
- Homing pigeons can find their way back to a location from over 1000 miles away. They have been used by humans as far back as the Ancient Egyptians to deliver messages.

Does anyone have any other bird facts to share?

Birds are incredible. The bible states that God delights in all creatures and it is no wonder so many people do!

Respond

As our response part of worship today, we will watch a few minutes of this video of birds around the world. I invite you to pause and think about the wonder of birdlife on the planet. If you'd like to offer a silent prayer to God for birds, feel free to do so.

<http://tinyurl.com/4nrka223>

Send

I wonder what birds you might see this week? I wonder how you might *delight* in birds?