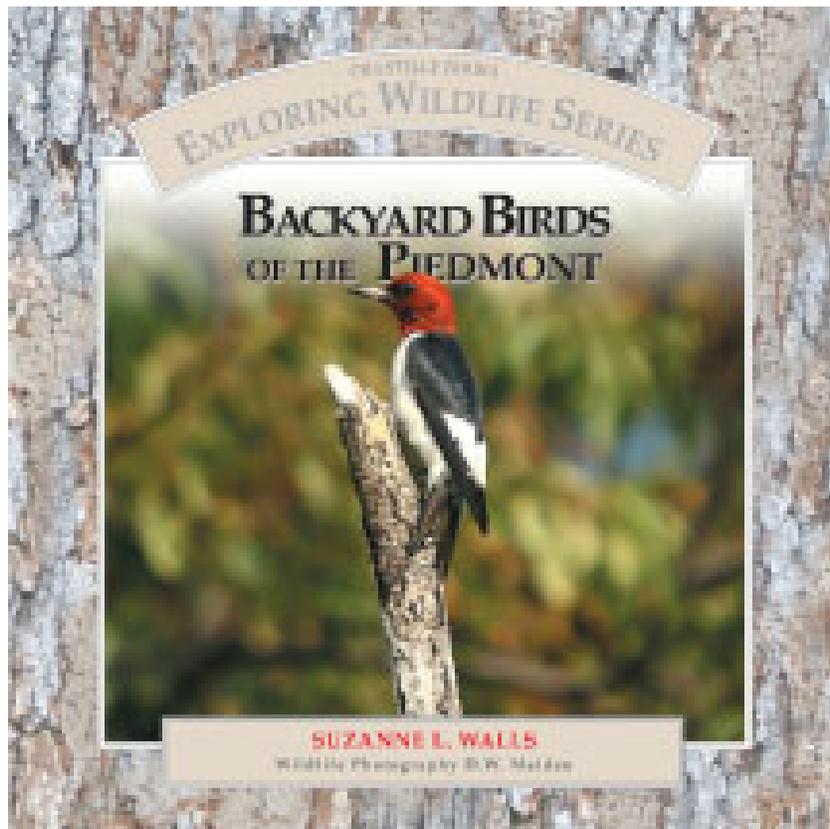


Teachers' Guide

Backyard Birds of the Piedmont

Written by Suzanne L. Walls
Photography by D. W. Maiden



Summary and Publication Information

- Publisher: Chantilly Books, A Division of Bonne Amie Publishing, Chantilly, VA
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 - US – Chantilly Books, 14240-A Sullyfield Circle, Chantilly, VA 20151
 - Europe – Mariposa Press, 109, rue d'Entraigues, 37000 Tours, France
www.mariposapress.com

Levels and Standards (Reading Levels, themes and connections to national standards)

All books in the A Child's Book series are written at the beginning-reader level. Vocabulary and discussion points in the books provide new readers with the ability to research common birds that can be seen in most localities, using words and phrases selected for their ease in reading and comprehension. Some more advanced words have been used sparsely to describe a unique characteristic or behavior of a bird in somewhat scientific terms. However, it is hoped that these "stretch" words will be explained by more advanced readers and encourage vocabulary expansion. (See Vocabulary, below.)

Summary and Background Information

Backyard Birds of the Piedmont is not a storybook but a wildlife reference book offering beginning readers basic facts about birds in their natural habitat. Two pictures of each bird are provided for identification purposes. The information describing each bird is written as though the birds are engaging the reader in factual and sometimes humorous discussions about themselves, including where they live, how they build nests, where they get their food and other unique characteristics.

Our intent in *Backyard Birds of the Piedmont* is to heighten a child's awareness of the world around them and the many creatures that live in our own neighborhoods. As each bird discusses its life, issues about how we impact their lives, where birds find the food they need to live and how they make their homes. Other aspects of life such as relationships with other birds are also introduced, strengthening a child's understanding of how similar birds are to us.

Author and Photographer Bios



About the Author

Suzanne L. Walls spent the majority of her adult career in senior management at several IT companies. Her organizations were primarily focused on helping people understand and effectively use computer technology to make their jobs and lives easier. In that capacity, her writing consisted of marketing literature, training manuals, business plans and proposal development. In 2008, Suzanne published her first independent technology-related book, *Managing Photographs in the Digital Age*.

After going into semi-retirement, Suzanne was encouraged by her grandchildren to write stories for them. Blessed with a highly talented wildlife photographer and brother, she joined with D. W. Maiden, to produce the **A Child's Book** series of 6 wildlife books incorporating high-

quality photographs of animals, insects, birds and reptiles in their natural environments. The children's version of ***Backyard Birds of the Piedmont*** was first published in 2008 in 2 small volumes. In 2011 she combined the original two volumes, and published an updated ***Backyard Birds of the Piedmont***, which contains information about 32 different bird species along with corresponding photographs.

Today, Suzanne continues her writing and works alongside her sons and brother at Walls Lithographics, a true *family-owned* printing company. In her spare time, she focuses on writing and pursuing her passion ... genealogy.

About the Photographer



D. W. Maiden is a freelance wildlife photographer who makes his home in Warrenton, Virginia, in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains and Skyline Drive. He specializes in photographing wildlife in and around Northern Virginia and the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia. His emphasis is on catching the unique qualities of wildlife that often pass too quickly for the human eye to process and comprehend.

In 2007, D. W. produced his first book, ***Coffee Table Bird Book***, followed by ***Backyard Birds of the Piedmont*** (adult/novice birder version). In 2009, D. W. collaborated with his sister, Suzanne Walls, to produce the ***Exploring Wildlife series***, combining high-quality photography and beginning-reader language to help children better understand and appreciate wildlife. In 2009, the series was recognized by the Young Voices Foundation with their Gold Seal of Approval. In 2011, an updated and expanded version of ***Backyard Birds of the Piedmont*** was produced. He also collaborated with master carver Jim Calder and writer Jen Coate to produce ***So You Thought You Couldn't Cut It, A Beginner's Guide to Woodcarving***.

More wildlife photography by D. W. Maiden can be found at www.virginiabird.com.

Before Reading

As a group, ask the children to list what kinds of wildlife live in their backyard or in the area around their home. Write their answers on sentence strips, white boards, or interactive white boards. Under each creature's name, have them list where the animals, insects, or birds live, what their homes are like and what each one eats. Discuss items on the lists again, asking the children to describe what their own homes are like and how they get their food. Ask the children to compare the answers they gave. How do the two lists compare?

After Reading

Download the Bird Watcher's Log from our website and make one copy for each child. Take a walk outside and start watching for birds. Ask the children to put a check by each bird they see.

Encourage the children to listen for bird songs. Can the birds be identified by their song?

If your school is bordered by trees and bushes, ask the children if they see any bird nests. Are they high in the tree, in a bush? Point out how the vegetation helps the birds pick where they want to live. Do they see any berries, seeds or other food sources for birds?

Vocabulary

Several of the terms in this book will be new to the children. Here are a few that are defined as they relate to birds but will probably require some explanation:

- Beak or Bill – A ^{bird's} mouth.
- Brood – A family of young birds, produced at one hatching or birth
- Call or Calling – The unique sound a bird makes to communicate to other creatures.
- Endangered Species – A variety of birds or animals whose numbers are so small that they are at risk of extinction.
- Flock – A number of birds who are feeding, resting or flying together.
- Ground Feeders – Birds who find their food laying on the ground, often under bird feeders or bushes where other types of birds have been.
- Hatch – When a baby bird breaks out of its egg shell and is born.
- Larvae – The infant stage some insects go through before they are born.
- Migration – A seasonal journey that birds take beyond their normal habitat
- Piedmont – A hilly region of the United States, situated between the Appalachians and the coastal plains.
- Survive – To overcome difficulties or threats to life such as hunger, climate and lack of a place to build a home.

Fun Worksheets and Writing Activities (Check our website to download a free worksheet. NOTE: Under Construction)

- [Bird-Fact Match](#) (match the bird with the fact)
- [Bird Sighting Log](#)
- [Word Find](#)

Cross-curriculum Activities (art, music, drama, science, math, history)

- Pine Cone Bird Feeders: Make a paste of one part shortening and one part oatmeal. Spread the mixture onto the tips of pinecones. Roll the cones in bird seed. Tie a string around the top leaving enough length to tie the cone on a tree.
- Seed pouches – Give each child a small paper bag. Have them place 2-3 tablespoons of birdseed in the bag. Take the bags outside and tell the children to dump out the seed beneath a tree or bush. At various points during the day, have the children check to see if any birds have arrived to eat. Make sure to note what kind of birds came.
- Using our senses to enjoy birds – Make a chart on your white board listing the five senses across the top. Ask the children to tell you how they use their senses to spot, identify and enjoy birds.

Web Resources (video, audio and images)

- www.a-childs-book.com
- www.virginiabird.com
- www.Animals.nationalgeographic.com/animals/birds
- www.kidwings.com
- www.Web4.audubon.org/educate/kids
- www.kidzone.ws/animals/birds1.htm
- www.biglearning.com/treasurebirds.htm