

Birds in the Bible

The Bible has over 300 references to birds



Creation:

Birds were created on the 5th day:

Genesis 1:20-23 And God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky." So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. 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." And there was evening, and there was morning – the fifth day.



The Flood:

Birds were brought on the ark, not 2 of each kind, but 7. There are differing opinions regarding whether this means seven of each kind, or seven pairs. Also, was it just clean birds or all birds? The point is, at least some of the kinds of birds were represented in greater amounts than other animals.

Genesis 7:3 and also seven of every kind of bird, male and female, to keep their various kinds alive throughout the earth.

After the flood, for the first time, birds were given to man as food to eat from God.

Genesis 9:3 Everything that lives and moves will be food for you. Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything.

After the flood, birds and animals feared man for the first time.

Genesis 9:2 The fear and dread of you will fall upon all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air, upon every creature that moves along the ground, and upon all the fish of the sea; they are given into your hands.



Stewardship:

We are supposed to be good stewards of the earth and the inhabitants of the earth, including the animals and birds.

Genesis 1:28 God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number, fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

Treatment of nesting birds (stewardship):

Deuteronomy 22:6-7 If you come across a bird's nest beside the road, either in a tree or on the ground, and the mother is sitting on the young or the eggs, do not take the mother with the young. You may take the young, but be sure to let the mother go, so that it may go well with you and you may have a long life.



Birds in the Bible, continued

Clean vs. unclean:

Birds are divided into clean and unclean

Leviticus 11:13-19 *These are the birds you are to detest and not eat because they are detestable; the eagle, the vulture, the black vulture, the red kite, any kind of black kite, and kind of raven, the horned owl, the screech owl, the gull, any kind of hawk, the little owl, the cormorant, the great owl, the white owl, the desert owl, the osprey, the stork, any kind of heron, the hoopoe and the bat.*

Types of birds:

Dove – offered as sacrifice Genesis 15:9, Leviticus 5:7

Peace Genesis 8:8

Purity Psalm 68:13

Holy Spirit Genesis 1:2, Matthew 3:16, Mark 1:10, Luke 3:22, John 1:32

Power of flight Psalm 55:6

Nesting habits Jeremiah 48:28

Metaphor for loved one Song 2:14

Innocence Matthew 10:16

Eagle – swiftness of flight Deuteronomy 28:49

Mounting high in the air Job 29:27

Strength Psalm 103:5

Nest in high places Jeremiah 49:16

Power of vision Job 39:27

Symbolizes nations God uses to do work of destruction Matthew 24:28

God's care is like an eagle teaching its young to fly Exodus 19:4

Unclean Leviticus 11:13

Sometimes translated as vulture

Symbolic Ezekiel 1:10, 10:14, Daniel 7:4, Revelation 4:7, 8:13

Sparrow – used for offering Matthew 10:29

Psalm 84:3

Psalm 102:7

Matthew 10:29-31, Luke 12:6-7

Swallow – Psalm 84:3, Proverbs 26:2, Isaiah 38:14, Jeremiah 8:7

Cock – Matthew 26:34 and others but all regarding Peter's denial (NT), Proverbs 30:31

Hen – Matthew 23:37

Crane – Isaiah 38:14, Jeremiah 8:7

Stork – Leviticus 11:19, Psalm 104:17, Jeremiah 8:7, Zechariah 5:9

Heron – Leviticus 11:19, Deuteronomy 14:18

Lapwing - Leviticus 11:19, Deuteronomy 14:18

Bat - Leviticus 11:19, Deuteronomy 14:18

Ravens – Genesis 8:6,7

Hawk – Job 39:26

Owl – Psalm 102:6-7

Quail – Numbers 11:31-32

Bittern – Isaiah 14:23, Isaiah 34:11, Zephaniah 2:14

Cormorant – Leviticus 11:17, Deuteronomy 14:17, Isaiah 34:11, Zephaniah 2:14

Kite – Leviticus 11:14, Deuteronomy 14:13

Birds in the Bible, continued

Ossifrage - Leviticus 11:14, Deuteronomy 14:12

Osprey - Leviticus 11:14, Deuteronomy 14:12

Peacocks – Job 39:13

Ostrich – Job 39:13

Partridge – 2 Samuel 26:20, Jeremiah 17:11

Pelican – Leviticus 11:18, Deuteronomy 14:17, Psalm 102:6

Pigeon – Genesis 15:9, Leviticus 12:6

Swan – Leviticus 11:18, Deuteronomy 14:16

Vulture - Leviticus 11:14, Deuteronomy 14:13, Job 28:7

Raven – Genesis 8:7, Leviticus 11:15, Deuteronomy 14:14, Job 38:41, Psalm 147:9,
Proverbs 30:17, I Kings 17:3

Fowl – Matthew 6:25-26, Genesis 1:20

There are also many general passages about birds, winged creatures etc.

Ideas for further study of birds

Learn bird calls. This is easiest done by listening for bird calls and then seeing which bird made the call. If you do this repeatedly, you will become proficient in identifying birds by their call alone, without having to see them.

Journaling – many naturalists and bird enthusiasts journal their discoveries and experiences. You can journal in any format you wish. The library has some great books. One of the best authors of this type of book is Clare Walker Leslie.

Bird count/survey - If you can identify birds fairly reliably, you can participate in a bird count or bird survey. These can be done online and there is information in the packet you received this month about this activity.

www.eBird.org provides another opportunity to submit data collected about birds. It has a lot of information about how to collect data in a scientific manner (but easy enough for a beginner) and how the data is used by scientists. You can view data submitted by others for each state. There is a vast amount of data that can be reviewed a number of different ways, which is an excellent resource for practicing viewing and reading scientific data.

Migration - The Journey North website is filled with information and projects to complete. This website tracks migrations of various species and allows users to input data for their area. It is specifically for students to study wildlife migration and seasonal changes. Watch *Fly Away Home*.

Informational websites - Cornell University has the best website about birds (www.birds.cornell.edu/AllAboutBirds). The printed information you received was from their website. They also offer a home study course on birds, bird songs and sound, conducting your own research, projects (including online participation of larger projects), attracting birds, conservation and much more. There is also an extensive area for educators. In this area, there is information about the scientific method and science fair projects.

www.eNature.com is a great site for kids. It provides online field guides for your specific part of the country. You can keep a list of birds and animals that you have seen online, and you can print your list. There is also a lot of information about each species, and birds and animals in general. There are also park guides, gardening information, screen savers, nature cards and more.

Ideas for further study of birds, continued

Habitat - Set up a feeder and a bird bath. You would be surprised at the visitors you receive. Be careful which bird seed you use – a lot of the cheaper seed mixes contain seeds that most birds won't eat. For an inexpensive feeder, use a milk jug.

Put up nesting boxes. Again, you may be surprised at who uses the box. We created bird feeders from milk jugs and the birds actually used them for nest boxes. You don't have to buy fancy boxes, just do a bit of research about the nesting requirements of birds in your area and get creative.

Plant for wildlife. There is information about this on some of the websites listed above. Also, check out the Florida Native Plant Society website (www.fnps.org).

Reference - The best bird ID book I have found for our area is *Birds of Florida* by Fred J. Alsop III. It is a Smithsonian book.