



BCDI
Black Child
Development Institute
ATLANTA

WINGS, WIGGLES, AND WONDERS

A MULTICULTURAL SPRING
WILDLIFE EXPLORATION

APRIL 2025

AGES 6-8



ACTIVITY GUIDE

FOR PARENTS & EARLY EDUCATORS

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March Activity Guide

Legacy of Care: Our Earth, Our Future (Ages 0-5)

Spring is a magical time when nature awakens from its winter slumber. Birds return from their migrations, insects become active, and new animal babies emerge. Across cultures and throughout human history, people have observed and celebrated these seasonal changes in wildlife. Indigenous communities have developed deep knowledge about local ecosystems and the behavior of animals during spring. In Japan, the arrival of birds coincides with the cherry blossom season; Mexico celebrates the return of monarch butterflies with festivals; and many cultures mark spring's arrival with celebrations honoring animals and new life.

This activity guide is designed to help children ages 0-5 connect with the vibrant wildlife surrounding us during this special season while honoring diverse cultural perspectives. Through age-appropriate activities, children will develop observation skills, build an appreciation for nature, and foster a sense of stewardship for our environment. Each activity supports developmental milestones while nurturing a child's natural curiosity about the world around them, incorporating stories, language, and traditions from around the world.

- 1) **Bird Activities**
- 2) **Insect Activities**
- 3) **Habitat Activities**

Bird Activities (1/2)

1 Bird Migration Mapping

- **Goal:** Understand bird migration patterns and their cultural significance worldwide
- **Materials:** World map or large paper to create one, Colored yarn or string, Reference cards of migratory birds from different continents, Sticky notes, Markers, Information on cultural festivals celebrating bird migrations
- **Instructions:**
 1. Research 5-6 migratory birds that travel through your region
 2. For each bird, identify its migration route on the map
 3. Use colored yarn to create paths from winter homes to summer homes
 4. Create information cards for each bird, including:
 - *Migration distance and timing*
 - *Cultural significance in different countries along its route*
 - *Traditional stories or celebrations related to its arrival*
 5. Discuss how different cultures mark the arrival of migratory birds (like Japan's "Bird Day" or Mexico's protection of monarch butterfly sanctuaries)
 6. Add notes about the environmental challenges these birds face
 7. Consider how climate change affects migration patterns and cultural practices associated with them
 8. Present your migration map to family members, explaining the journeys and cultural connections

2 Multicultural Bird Feeders Workshop

- **Goal:** Create [bird feeders inspired by different cultural traditions](#) while learning about bird nutrition
- **Materials:** Variety of bases: hollow gourds/coconut shells/bamboo segments/recycled materials, Bird-friendly spreads: sunflower seed butter/vegetable shortening/honey-flour mixture, Assorted bird seeds and dried fruits, Natural decorative materials: twine/raffia/dried flowers, A field guide to local birds, Information cards on bird-feeding traditions from different cultures
- **Instructions:**
 1. Research bird feeding traditions from around the world:
 - *Japanese bamboo tube feeders*
 - *Nordic winter "bird trees"*
 - *Latin American fruit offerings for tropical birds*
 - *British bird tables*
 2. Choose design elements from different cultures to incorporate
 3. Select appropriate food based on local bird species' needs
 4. Construct feeders using natural or recycled materials
 5. Set up a "bird café" with multiple feeder styles
 6. Create a field journal to record:
 - *Which birds visit which feeders*
 - *Feeding behavior observations*
 - *The time of day that different species appear*
 7. Research the cultural significance of common visitor birds
 8. Compare your observations with bird folklore from different traditions
 9. Share findings with family members or classmates

Bird Activities (2/2)

1

Avian Acoustics Laboratory

- **Goal:** Explore bird communication through sound and cultural bird music
- **Materials:** [Audio recordings of local bird songs](#), [Musical instruments from different cultures](#), Materials to make simple instruments (combs and tissue paper/seed shakers), Recording device, Notebook for documenting bird calls, Information on how different cultures have incorporated bird songs into music
- **Instructions:**
 1. Learn to identify 5-6 common bird calls in your area
 2. Create a sound map of your yard or neighborhood:
 - *Draw a simple map of the area*
 - *Mark where you hear each bird sound*
 - *Note the time of day and weather conditions*
 3. Research how different cultures have interpreted bird songs:
 - *Japanese shakuhachi flute mimics bird calls*
 - *Australian Aboriginal didgeridoo incorporates bird sounds*
 - *Western classical composers like Vivaldi used bird motifs*
 4. Create instruments that can mimic bird calls
 5. Compose a simple "bird symphony" using your instruments
 6. Record your composition and bird calls
 7. Compare how birds communicate versus how humans interpret their sounds
 8. Discuss how different cultures have assigned meaning to specific bird calls
 9. Create a presentation connecting your sound map to cultural interpretations

2

Bird Mythology Storytelling Circle

- **Goal:** Explore cultural bird stories while developing literacy and art skills
- **Materials:** [Books featuring bird myths from different cultures](#), Art supplies for illustrations, [Story mapping templates](#), Props for storytelling, Materials to create a storytelling space
- **Instructions:**
 1. Research bird feeding traditions from around the world:
 - *Raven tales from Pacific Northwest Indigenous peoples*
 - *The Phoenix in Greek and Egyptian mythology*
 - *Crane folklore from East Asia*
 - *Quetzal stories from Mayan traditions*
 2. Select one story that resonates with you
 3. Create a story map identifying:
 - *Main characters*
 - *Setting*
 - *Problem*
 - *Solution*
 - *Cultural origin and significance*
 4. Illustrate key scenes from the story
 5. Practice retelling the story in your own words
 6. Create a special storytelling space with natural elements
 7. Share your story with family members or friends
 8. Discuss what the story teaches about:
 - *The bird's characteristics*
 - *Environmental values in that culture*
 - *Human relationships with wildlife*
 9. Compare similar bird stories from different cultures

Insect Activities (1/2)

1

Pollinator Investigation Team

- **Goal:** Understand the role of pollinators and their cultural significance
- **Materials:** Magnifying glasses, Native flowering plant seeds or seedlings, Small garden space or containers, Field guides to local pollinators, Observation journals, Colored pencils, Information on cultural uses of pollinated plants
- **Instructions:**
 1. Research pollinators native to your region
 2. Learn about the relationship between specific plants and pollinators
 3. Create a small pollinator garden with native plants
 4. Set up a scientific observation station:
 - *Data collection sheets*
 - *Magnifying glasses*
 - *Timer for observation periods*
 5. Record pollinator visits:
 - *Species identification*
 - *Time spent at each flower*
 - *Behavior patterns*
 - *Weather conditions*
 6. Research how different cultures have:
 - *Celebrated pollinators (like Mexico's reverence for monarch butterflies)*
 - *Used pollinated plants in traditional medicine and food*
 - *Incorporated pollinators into art and stories*

2

Bug Olympics

- **Goal:** Compare insect capabilities to human abilities while exploring cultural perspectives on insects
- **Materials:** Stopwatch, Measuring tape, Scale, Picture cards of different insects with their abilities, Materials for obstacle courses, Information cards on how different cultures view insects
- **Instructions:**
 1. Research amazing insect abilities:
 - *Ants can lift 50 times their body weight*
 - *Fleas can jump 150 times their height*
 - *Dragonflies can fly up to 35 mp*
 2. Create comparison cards showing how these abilities would translate to humans
 3. Set up athletic events inspired by insect abilities:
 - *Long jump (inspired by grasshoppers)*
 - *Weight lifting (inspired by ants)*
 - *Sprint (inspired by cockroaches)*
 4. Calculate how far you would jump or how much you could lift if you had an insect's proportional abilities
 5. Learn how different cultures view these insects:
 - *Ants in Hopi traditions*
 - *Dragonflies in Japanese culture*
 - *Grasshoppers in Chinese folklore*
 6. Create awards that incorporate cultural symbolism
 7. Discuss how insects' extraordinary abilities have influenced:
 - *Cultural stories and folklore*
 - *Biomimicry in modern engineering*
 - *Traditional ecological knowledge*
 8. Design a superhero based on insect abilities and cultural symbolism

Insect Activities (2/2)

1

Insect Architecture Workshop

- **Goal:** Study insect homes and their influence on human architecture across cultures
- **Materials:** Clay or natural building materials, Pictures of insect structures (beehives/ ant colonies/ wasp nests), Examples of architectural designs inspired by insects, Information on biomimicry in different cultural building traditions, Magnifying glasses, Building tools (craft sticks/ carving tools)
- **Instructions:**
 1. Research different insect structures:
 - *Hexagonal honeycomb patterns*
 - *Termite mound ventilation systems*
 - *Spider web tensile strength*
 2. Explore how different cultures have:
 - *Incorporated insect designs into architecture*
 - *Used materials similar to insect builders*
 - *Learned engineering principles from observing insects*
 3. Select an insect structure to recreate:
 - *Observe images of the structure*
 - *Identify key features and adaptations*
 - *Plan your model*
 4. Build a model using natural materials
 5. Test the structural properties of your creation
 6. Compare your design to existing buildings inspired by the same insect:
 - *Zimbabwe's Eastgate Centre (inspired by termite mounds)*
 - *Honeycomb patterns in Islamic architecture*
 - *Web-like tensile structures in modern design*
 7. Present your model explaining:
 - *How the insect creates its structure*
 - *Why the design is effective*
 - *How humans have adapted these principles across cultures*

2

Metamorphosis Movie Studio

- **Goal:** Document insect life cycles while exploring cultural interpretations of transformation.
- **Materials:** Simple insect life cycle kits (butterflies/ ladybugs/ mealworms), Digital camera or smartphone with a camera, Stop-motion animation app, Art supplies for backdrop creation, Journal for observations, Information on cultural stories of transformation
- **Instructions:**
 1. Set up an observation habitat for insects
 2. Research the complete life cycle of your chosen insect
 3. Learn how different cultures view transformation and metamorphosis:
 - *Butterfly symbolism in Mexican Day of the Dead*
 - *Cicada symbolism in Chinese culture*
 - *Scarab beetle regeneration in Egyptian tradition*
 4. Document each stage of the life cycle through:
 - *Daily photographs*
 - *Detailed observations in a journal*
 - *Measurements and timing data*
 5. Create a stop-motion animation film showing:
 - *Complete life cycle*
 - *Cultural connections to transformation*
 - *Scientific explanation of metamorphosis*
 6. Develop a narration that weaves together:
 - *Scientific facts about the life cycle*
 - *Cultural stories about transformation*
 - *Personal reflections on change*
 7. Host a film screening with family or friends
 8. Discuss how metamorphosis serves as a metaphor in different cultural tradition

Habitat Activities (1/2)

1

Ecosystem Cultural Connections Map

- **Goal:** Explore how different cultures interact with local ecosystems
- **Materials:** Large paper for mapping, Field guides to local plants and animals, Research materials on local cultural practices, Art supplies for illustrations, Natural items for decoration (pressed leaves, etc.)
- **Instructions:**
 1. Choose a local ecosystem (forest, wetland, meadow)
 2. Research plants and animals native to this ecosystem
 3. Investigate how different cultural groups have:
 - *Used plants for food, medicine, or crafts*
 - *Incorporated wildlife into stories and celebrations*
 - *Developed sustainable harvesting practices*
 - *Named features of the landscape*
 4. Create a visual map showing:
 - *Key plant and animal species*
 - *Cultural connections to each species*
 - *Traditional ecological knowledge about the ecosystem*
 - *Modern conservation efforts*
 5. Include multilingual labels for key species
 6. Add quotes or stories from different cultural perspectives
 7. Visit the ecosystem if possible to make observations
 8. Present your map to family members, explaining the interconnections
 9. Discuss how different cultural approaches to the same ecosystem can enhance conservation efforts

2

Wildlife Documentary Film Festival

- **Goal:** Create short documentaries about local wildlife incorporating diverse perspectives.
- **Materials:** Camera or smartphone with video capability, Simple video editing app, Research materials on local wildlife, Information on Indigenous and multicultural perspectives on featured species, Props for narration or reenactments, Field guides
- **Instructions:**
 1. Select a local wildlife species to document
 2. Research both scientific facts and cultural perspectives:
 - *Physical characteristics and behavior*
 - *Role in the ecosystem*
 - *Cultural stories and significance*
 - *Traditional ecological knowledge*
 3. Write a script that integrates multiple perspectives
 4. Plan shots needed to tell the story
 5. Film wildlife (with adult supervision) or use ethical wildlife footage
 6. Create simple graphics to explain concepts
 7. Edit your documentary to include the following:
 - *Scientific information*
 - *Cultural importance*
 - *Conservation status*
 - *Traditional knowledge*
 8. Host a "film festival" sharing your documentary with family or friends
 9. Discuss how combining scientific and cultural perspectives enhances understanding

Habitat Activities (2/2)

1

Water Habitat Protection Project

- **Goal:** Explore water ecosystems and cultural water conservation practices
- **Materials:** Water testing kit (simple pH/clarity tests), Field guides to aquatic species, Information on cultural water protection practices, Materials for water filter experiment, Observation journals, Art supplies for presentations
- **Instructions:**
 1. Visit a local pond, stream, or wetland (with adult supervision)
 2. Conduct simple water quality tests
 3. Identify aquatic species and their ecological roles
 4. Research how different cultures:
 - *Protect and celebrate water sources*
 - *Use water in ceremonies*
 - *Connect water to spiritual beliefs*
 - *Developed sustainable water management practices*
 5. Create a water filter based on natural filtration systems
 6. Test the effectiveness of your filter
 7. Design a water protection plan incorporating the following:
 - *Scientific water conservation methods*
 - *Traditional water protection practices*
 - *Community engagement ideas*
 8. Create informational materials about
 - *Local water species*
 - *Threats to water habitats*
 - *Cultural perspectives on water conservation*
 9. Present your findings and protection plan to family members

2

Wildlife Adaptation Art Gallery

- **Goal:** Explore wildlife adaptations through scientific and cultural perspectives
- **Materials:** Research materials on animal adaptations, Information on how different cultures observe and explain adaptations, Art supplies for multiple media (clay/ paint/ collage materials), Display space for gallery, Labels and artist statements
- **Instructions:**
 1. Select 3-4 animals with interesting adaptations
 2. Research each animal's:
 - *Physical and behavioral adaptations*
 - *Habitat and environmental challenges*
 - *How different cultures explained these adaptations*
 3. Create artistic representations showing:
 - *Scientific explanation of the adaptation*
 - *Cultural interpretation of the feature*
 - *Environmental factors that shaped the adaptation*
 4. Use different artistic media for each adaptation
 5. Write an artist statement for each piece explaining:
 - *The scientific purpose of the adaptation*
 - *Cultural stories or explanations*
 - *Your artistic representation choices*
 6. Create gallery labels with information in multiple languages if possible
 7. Arrange your "adaptation gallery."
 8. Serve as a docent, guiding family members through the exhibition
 9. Discuss how science and cultural observation both contribute to understanding wildlife

Conclusion

Through these multicultural explorations of spring wildlife, children ages 6-8 have developed a richer understanding of the natural world and the diverse human perspectives that interpret it. These activities have fostered environmental awareness, cultural appreciation, and respect by weaving together scientific inquiry with cultural knowledge.

As children reach this developmental stage, they become increasingly capable of understanding multiple perspectives and appreciating nuance. By exploring how different cultural traditions observe, celebrate, and protect wildlife, they develop a more holistic view of human-nature relationships. They learn that caring for the environment is a value shared across cultures, expressed through diverse practices and traditions.

These activities have supported key educational goals, including scientific observation, research skills, artistic expression, cultural literacy, and environmental stewardship. Children develop a sense of themselves as scientists and cultural beings by connecting classroom learning with cultural knowledge and family engagement.

As we nurture the next generation of environmental stewards, embracing diverse ways of knowing enriches children's understanding and strengthens their commitment to protecting the natural world. Each spring brings new opportunities to witness nature's renewal through multiple cultural lenses, creating a rich tapestry of understanding that honors scientific knowledge and traditional wisdom.

[Click here for the survey!](#)

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