



## Time Needed

One class period

## Materials

(for each student or group of students)

- Bird observation tally sheet
- Pencils
- Clip boards
- Binoculars (optional)
- Field guide (optional)

The question you will answer in this FACTivity is: How many birds do I notice in my schoolyard habitat?

## Methods

First, break into small groups and brainstorm a list of reasons why you feel birds are important. Title the list "Why Are Birds Important?" After your groups brainstorm at least three reasons that birds are important, come together as a whole class and create a classroom list. Hold a brief discussion of why birds are important.

Next, have everyone in your class think about the habitat in your schoolyard. Imagine spending 10 minutes outside walking around in the schoolyard habitat. Write down an estimate for how many different individual birds you think you will see and hear.

Your teacher will collect your estimates and write them on the board. Did the groups report a wide variety of estimates? Add all the class estimates together and calculate an average for the estimate.

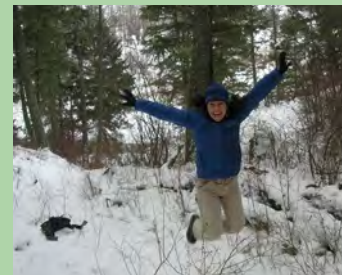
As a class, go outside and walk through the schoolyard habitat for 10 minutes. Your teacher will set a timer. Remember to be quiet and observe with your eyes and ears. Make tally marks on your bird observation sheet (page 71) when you see or hear

## A Note From the "Invasion of the Song Snatcher" Scientist

**I**n an activity like this one, birds are often more easily heard than seen. Particularly during the birds' breeding season, if you listen carefully, you are likely to notice many more birds with your ears than if you are only using your eyes.

Have Fun!

Ms. Yvette Ortega



an individual bird. Then tally only those birds that you see and hear. Everyone in the class may see or hear different birds. Count each individual bird only once.

After your observation time outside, add the tally marks in each column. Create a class total for the first two columns and find the average for these columns.

- How does the class average from your time outside compare to your class's individual and average estimates about the number of birds that were in the schoolyard habitat?
- What do you notice about the number of birds you heard versus the number of birds you saw?
- How are you surprised by your results?

Have a class discussion about the number of birds you observed. What are some reasons why there may be so few or so many birds? Name three ways your class can help create a better schoolyard habitat for birds.

# ***Invasion of the Song Snatcher Bird Observation Tally Sheet***

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

See a Bird	Hear a Bird	Notes About What You Hear or See