

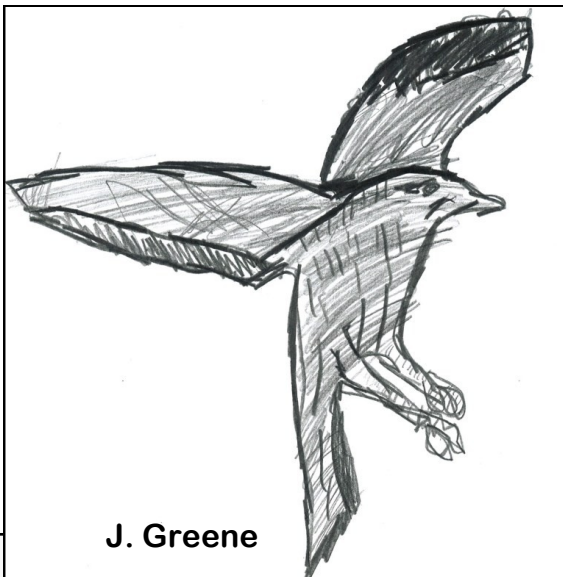
# WHAT BIRD AM I?

*A clue book on the birds of  
Rock Creek Park*

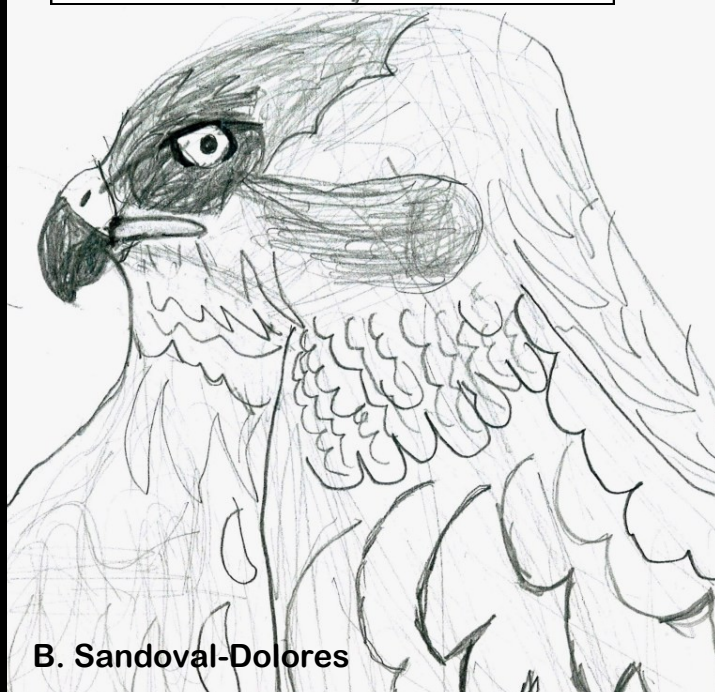
Written and Illustrated by  
Grade Three Students at  
Capital City Public Charter School,  
Washington D.C.



In Capital City's Lower School, we embrace the core values of creativity, kindness, perseverance, responsibility, and courage. The students who created this book possess these qualities and more! We would like to acknowledge the following for their hard work and dedication to this project:



J. Greene



B. Sandoval-Dolores

- Jariel
- Anya
- Annaya
- Tobias (Toby)
- Jalin
- Isaiah
- Julian
- Assata
- Evangeline
- Henry
- Jasmine
- Jamal
- William (Liam)
- Jake
- Gabriel
- Elsie
- Jailin
- 
- Nia
- Brandon
- Carlos
- Bryan
- Edwin
- Nafiad
- Henry

Cover art by J. Anderson

# ABOUT THIS PROJECT

*This volume was created as a final project for an expedition on Rock Creek Park. Capital City Public Charter school is an Expeditionary Learning school.*

*Through learning expeditions, students engage in fieldwork, community service and work with experts, to complete in-depth studies in one or more subject areas. Expeditions culminate with projects and exhibitions that demonstrate mastery of standards.*

## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

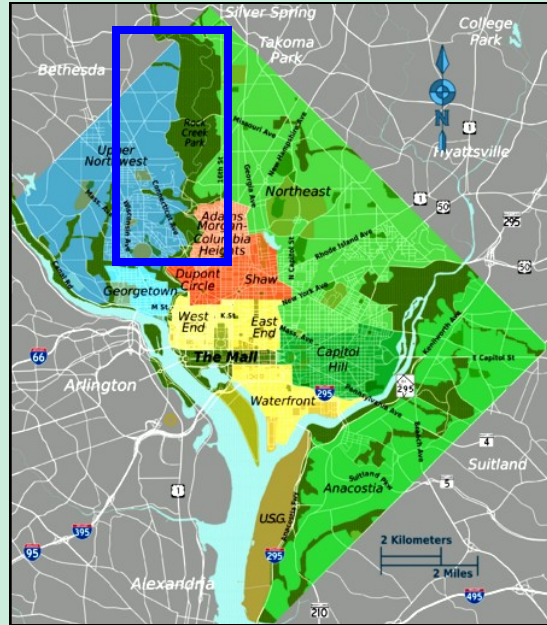
*One part field guide, one part narrative, this book invites exploration by providing clues about the bird being identified, then revealing the identity of the species.*

*Contributors have done extensive research on the bird of their choice and transformed their research into a narrative written from the perspective of the bird. Using clues about physical features, nesting, diet, and habitat, readers are encouraged to use their tools of deduction to guess the identity of a given bird.*

*If readers get “stuck”, the same contributors have created scientific illustrations that reveal the bird’s identity on the page following the description.*

# ABOUT ROCK CREEK PARK

Rock Creek Park is one of the nation's oldest national parks. It is over 1700 acres in size, and cuts through the NW section of DC, connecting to other parks in Maryland. Rock Creek Park is a unique oasis amid the chaos of the city, and provides habitat for many species, including coyotes and deer.



# BIRDS OF ROCK CREEK PARK



As of this publication, there are over 130 species of birds that can be seen at various times of the year in Rock Creek Park. Birds that were selected for this book are present in the park for most of the year, and are readily identified by beginning birders. Students were able to choose a bird from this set, and worked in teams to create compelling writing and illustrations to best portray their chosen bird.

# Who am I?

Authors: Jailin [redacted] and Jalin [redacted]

I am puffy and cute and have a white stomach and a black head and back. I have a round head and tiny body. I also have a black head and white cheeks. I have gray-black wings. I am five inches long and have excellent balance.

I am not easy to catch because I am small. Staying quiet helps me hide and hunt. I am really fat because I eat lots and lots of food. I think that is how the babies are going to be born. Do you think so? People can catch them fast because they are really small and slow. I have really skinny wings. I think that is what makes me fly slowly.

I like to live in open woodlands to get fresh air. You can see me in forest fields and backyards. You can see me in Rock Creek Park. I like to travel in the wintertime. I like to stay in the cold. We like to live in open woodlands because that is where we see more friends. I look in people's backyards to go and find a home. Have you seen one there? We like to visit gardens.

We like to eat juicy caterpillars. I am very silent so I can catch my food. I like to eat grasshoppers that are hard to catch but easy to eat. I hide to eat my food so other birds cannot take my diet. I like to eat really really yummy carpenter ants that are hard to find.

I sit on my eggs for two weeks. I keep my eggs safe in already dug out holes and I lay down in woodpecker nests. I plant down feathers and fur and moss in cupgrass cocoons.

Can you guess who I am?



J. Fuentes-Argueta

I am the  
black-capped  
chickadee!  
(*Poecile atricapillus*)



J. Quinteros-Gomez

# Who am I?

Author: Anya [REDACTED]

I'm black and covered in feathers. My body is large. I'm also two times larger than a blue jay, but I am not as big as a raven.



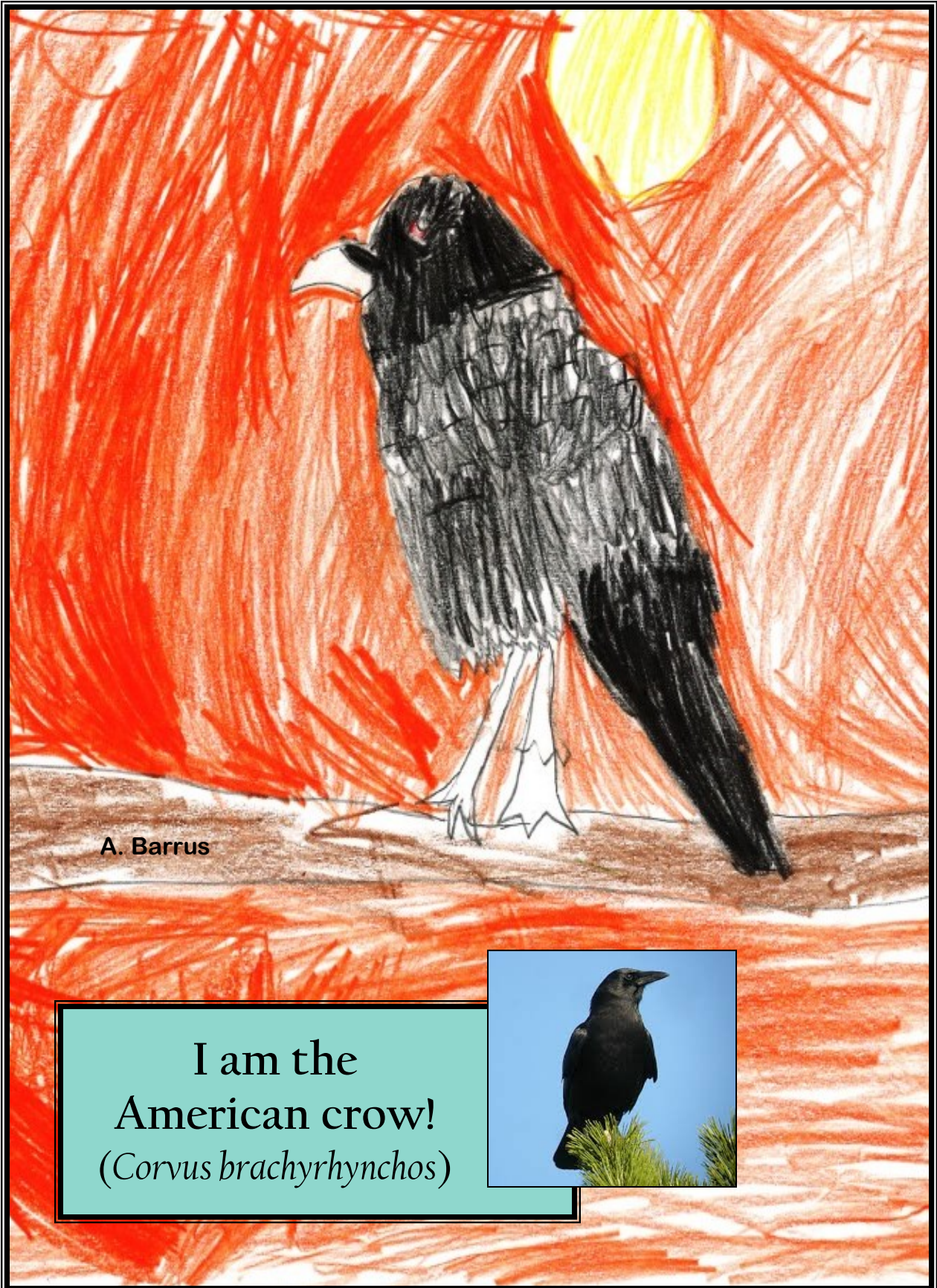
I live in the United States. In treetops, fields, and roadsides. I also live in forests, town centers and beaches. I only live in temperate areas. Temperate means not too hot or too cold. I sometimes live in city parks, towns, gardens, rivers and perch in trees.

Yum! Grains and seeds are some of my favorite foods. Fruits and nuts are also good. I love earthworms, insects, young turtles, crayfish, clams, and eggs. I eat some stuff that would make you puke! Some gross stuff I eat is garbage and carrion. You think that's gross? Well, I love it. Some other stuff I eat are mice and berries. Do you know who I am? If you still don't, keep reading!

Female ones of me can have chicks! I can lay five to seven eggs. When my kids are five weeks old they leave my nest. Sad right? I will breed once a year. Now do you know? You'll find out soon!

I am very intelligent. I'm so smart I can recognize faces. I'm able to because some people feed me but some people may hurt me so I must know who is a friend and who is a foe. I am one of the smartest animals alive. I make caw sounds. I love stealing corn from farms. I'm not afraid of scarecrows. I'm so smart that I can also respond to animals calls so I can save my family.

If you still don't know, turn the page!



A. Barrus

I am the  
American crow!  
(*Corvus brachyrhynchos*)

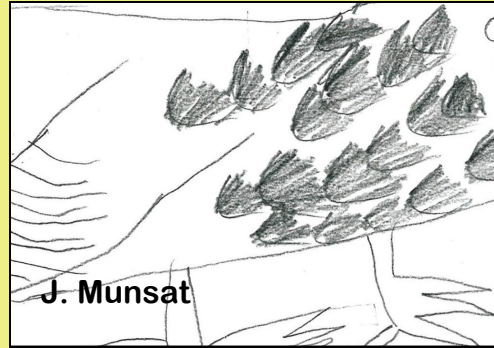




# Who am I?

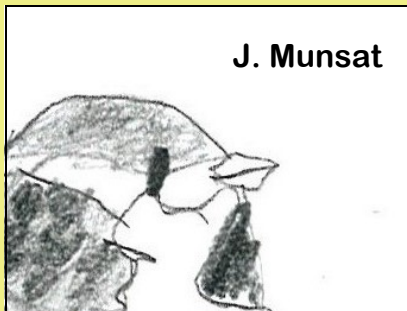
Authors: Toby [redacted] and Jake [redacted]

I have a white underbelly and a big gray upper body. I also have pink feet. If you see a pink bill it's probably mine. My eyes are very dark. Guess what? I have white outer tail feathers.



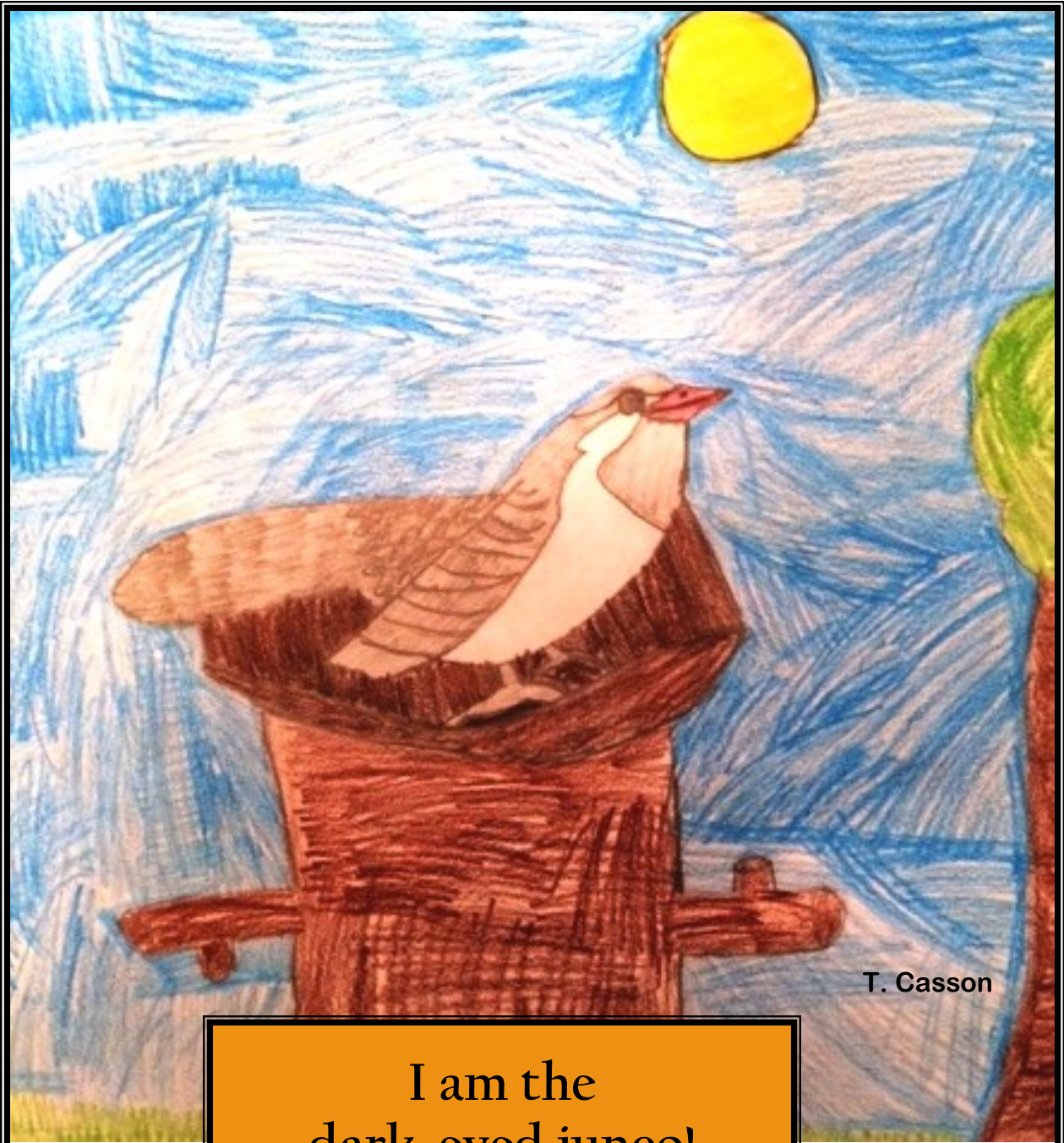
I live in fields, roadside, parks, and suburban gardens. I live in clearings next to wooded areas. But I avoid very deep forests. I eat seeds, small fruit, insects, and spiders.

I live between three and eleven years. I make a lot of different kinds of nests. I dig deep nests out of roots, moss, grass, and hair. And I use different kinds of materials. I make it out of shiny grass. I even make it out of hair.



I lay three to five and rarely six slightly glossy eggs. Incubation is apparently by the females of my kind alone and usually lasts 12 to 13 days. The male of my kind often helps by bringing materials for my nest.

Can you guess who I am? Turn the page to find out!



T. Casson

I am the  
dark-eyed junco!  
(*Junco hyemalis*)



J. Munsat



# Who am I?

Authors: Isaiah [redacted] and Elsie [redacted]

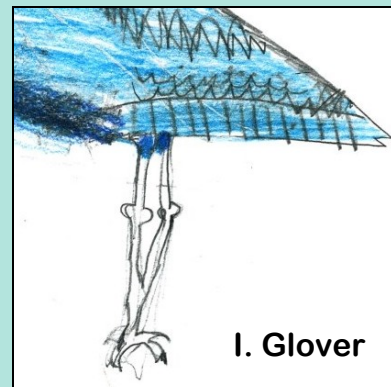
I live in the United States. I can live in freshwater or saltwater. You can also see me in swamps and ponds, island, lakes, and in high trees.

I can eat yellow perch, bullfrogs, lizards, insects, and small mammals. I snatch small prey with my bill and spear big fish with my dagger bill. I also hunt rodents in grasslands and farm fields.

I collect sticks for my nest. My wife weaves the nest with pine needles moss, reeds, dry grass, and twigs. It takes 3-12 days to build the nest. I also fly with a colony (group) of birds.

My wingspan is six feet wide. I have good eyes for hunting in the day and night. I have long legs so I can wade into the muddy water. My neck is long and lanky. I have a long bill that helps me forage in the water for fish. Yummy yum! I have a wingspan up to six feet- that's so large! I have beautiful light blue feathers. Can you guess who I am? Let me tell you more...

I have powder down feathers. I scrape the powder off my feathers and onto the fish! The oil on the fish clamps so that I can just scrape it off. Yum yum! I hunt all day and night. I am able to see in the dark. I grab the fish with my bill and chomp chomp!

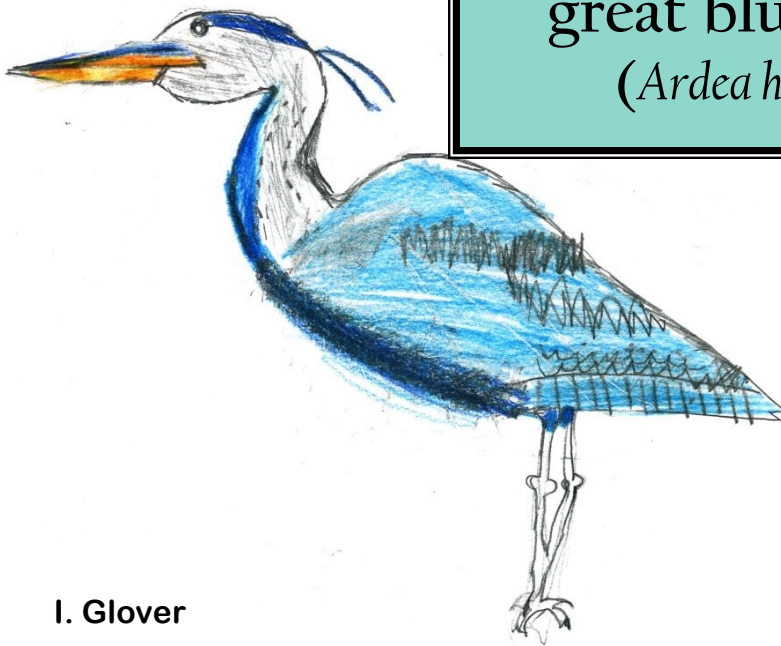


If you still don't know, turn the page!



E. Paxton

I am the  
great blue heron!  
(*Ardea herodias*)



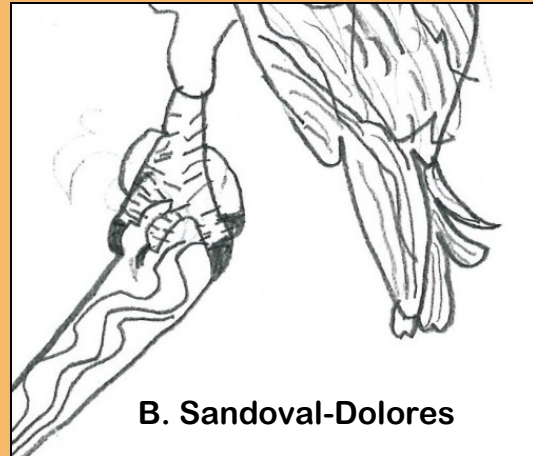
I. Glover

# Who am I?

Authors: Jamal [redacted], Bryan [redacted],  
and Edwin [redacted]

I am red, light brown, and orange. I look like an eagle. I am big.

I enjoy soaring over fields. We swoop down in the fields. We live on telephone poles and fence posts and standing trees. We like the edges of fields and open spaces. We hang out on telephone poles and fence posts and trees. We like the edges of fields and open spaces.



**B. Sandoval-Dolores**

I love to eat voles. Mice are a tasty snack. Wood rats are my favorite food and rabbits are a good snack. I also like to eat snowshoe hares, jack rabbits, ground squirrels, birds, and snakes. Some animals that like to eat me are raccoons and great horned owls. Red foxes are also dangerous because they think that I am delicious for them.

I put my nest in the crowns of trees. I also nest on cliff ledges, windows, billboards, and platforms. Both males and females build the nest. The nests are piles of dry sticks up to 6.5 feet wide and 3 feet wide. We also use bark and fresh foliage in our nests.

I can live up to 15 years in the wild. I can spot a mouse from a height of 100 feet. Turn the page to see who I am!

E. I. Santos- Ledesma



E. I. Santos- Ledesma



I am the  
red-tailed hawk!  
(*Buteo jamaicensis*)



J. Mohamedu



B. Sandoval-Dolores



# Who am I?

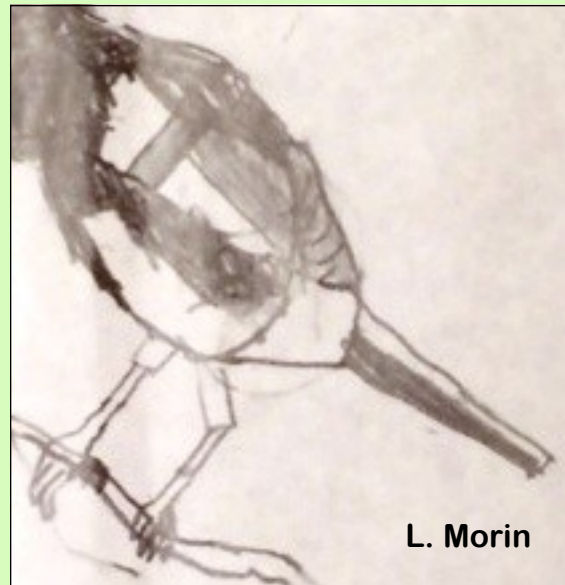
Authors: Liam [redacted] and Gabriel [redacted]

I weigh as much as 85 grams. I'm approximately 24 centimeters long! I can also have a wingspan of 37 centimeters! but females are much different. I am black with red shoulders but females are brown.

I construct nests in salt marshes with nests made of cattails and sedges. Now do you know who I am? Probably not so here's more information. I live in some other run-down places like shrubby fields, old fields, and even hay fields too! Urban parks and croplands are my favorite.

Since you know a lot about me I will tell you what I eat! I devour crawly insects not to mention spiders (they taste good). Here's some normal food (for a bird): crop grains are delicious. Here's where I find the food: in rice fields. I also eat worms. Who am I? I even eat snails, carrion, fledgling birds and I am very aggressive so I even eat eggs and frogs.

Did you figure out  
who I am?



G. Ocampo



I am the  
red-winged blackbird!  
(*Agelaius phoeniceus*)



# Who am I?

Authors: Henry [redacted] and Nia [redacted]

The male of my kind has bright red feathers, the female has tan feathers. In my species, the brighter the red, the more females are attracted. Also in my species we both have a strong pointed crest. I am very short only nine inches long so I am hard to see. I also have a hard beak to crack hard seeds.

I live in open woodlands and forests. Fields and backyards are also some of my homes. Also I like to build nests in thick trees so I won't be seen. The country I live in is the USA and in Rock Creek Park. Now do you know who I am? Let me tell you more.

I love to snack on sunflower seeds. I am a forager. Do you know who I am now? I will tell you some more. I like wild grapes, yes boy oh boy are they good! Blackberries, corn, beetles, crickets, plants and insects provide yummy treats for me. This also makes me an omnivore.



In my species the female creates a suitable nest. The female also bends the twigs to fit into the spaces. Do you know who I am? Let me tell you when I mate. I start to mate in March and go until September.

**If you still don't know, turn the page!**



N. Reese



I am the  
Northern cardinal!  
(*Cardinalis cardinalis*)



H. Hess



H. Hess

# Who am I?

Authors: Jariel [redacted] and Julian [redacted]

I am yellowish-orange, black and white. I have a blue and white head with large, dark black eyes. I have a golden-orange chest and am very small. One of my favorite things to do is move down a tall tree head first. This makes me very unusual compared to most birds. When I am a baby I don't have all my feathers on. Can you guess who I am ?

I live all over the United States. I like to live in pine trees and in trees that lose their leaves. The reason I like pine trees is because bugs live in the bark of the tree and they taste good. I do not usually migrate south in the winter. I live in temperate forests. Temperate means not too hot and not too cold.

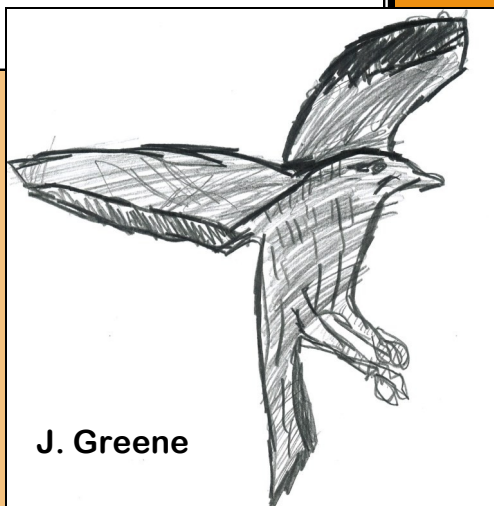
When it comes to building a nest, I do less work than my female mate! It can take up to 18 days building it with my wife. She likes to make a nest with feathers, fur and bark to keep our eggs safe and warm. We place our nest in the hole of a dead tree where it's warm and cozy. The female of my species lays 5 - 6 eggs, each one with reddish-brown specks. We sit on our eggs for 12 - 14 days until they hatch. After a couple days our young are ready to fly! Now do you know who we are? Read more to find out!

One of my predators is sharp-shinned hawks. I can climb up and down tree trunks head first. If food is scarce in the north I may move south, but not much, for a season. I break seeds and nuts with my beak and claws.

Can you guess who I am? Turn the page to find out!

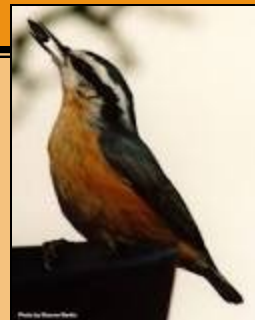


J. Anderson



J. Greene

I am the  
red-breasted  
nuthatch!  
(*Sitta canadensis*)

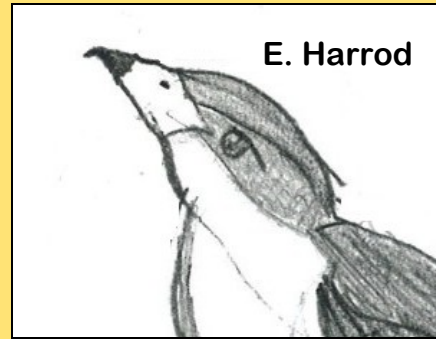


# Who am I?

Authors: Assata [redacted], Evangeline [redacted], and Jasmine [redacted]

I am a medium-sized bird. I have a long tail and short round wings. Males are larger than females. Males are 22 to 25 centimeters long. Females are 20 to 23 centimeters long.

I live in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. I mostly live in the United States, especially Texas and Florida. I breed from northern California, eastern Nebrasks, southern Ontario, and Atlanta. I love open habitats and deciduous forest edges. I live in woodlands.

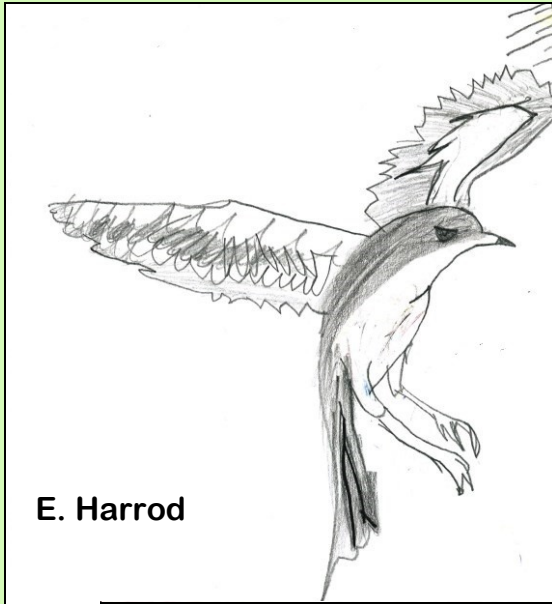


I am an omnivore. I eat insects, berries, and seeds. I also eat earthworms, and sometimes small lizards. I love to eat holly berries and mulberries. I usually search for food on the ground, or while perched in a tree or shrub.

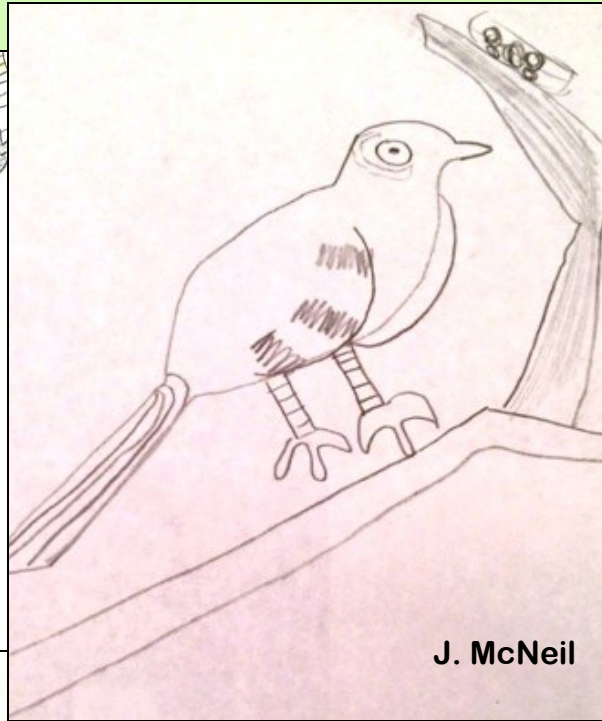
We females lay two to six eggs. Our eggs are about 24 millimeters long and 18 millimeters wide. My eggs are blue or greenish with brown or reddish spots. I make my nest cup-shaped. We make our nests out of twigs, stems, paper, grass, and other useable things! We make nests high up in a tree that is 50 feet off the ground. That is a lot! What bird am I?

Adults are gobbled up by sharp-shinned hawks, hungry screech owls, the scary scrub jays, and great horned owls. Females that are incubating eggs are sometimes killed by snakes. Blue jays, fish crows, American crows, snakes, and squirrels eat my eggs and chicks. When predators come near a nest, adults make alarm calls. Several adults may also mob predators that enter their territory.

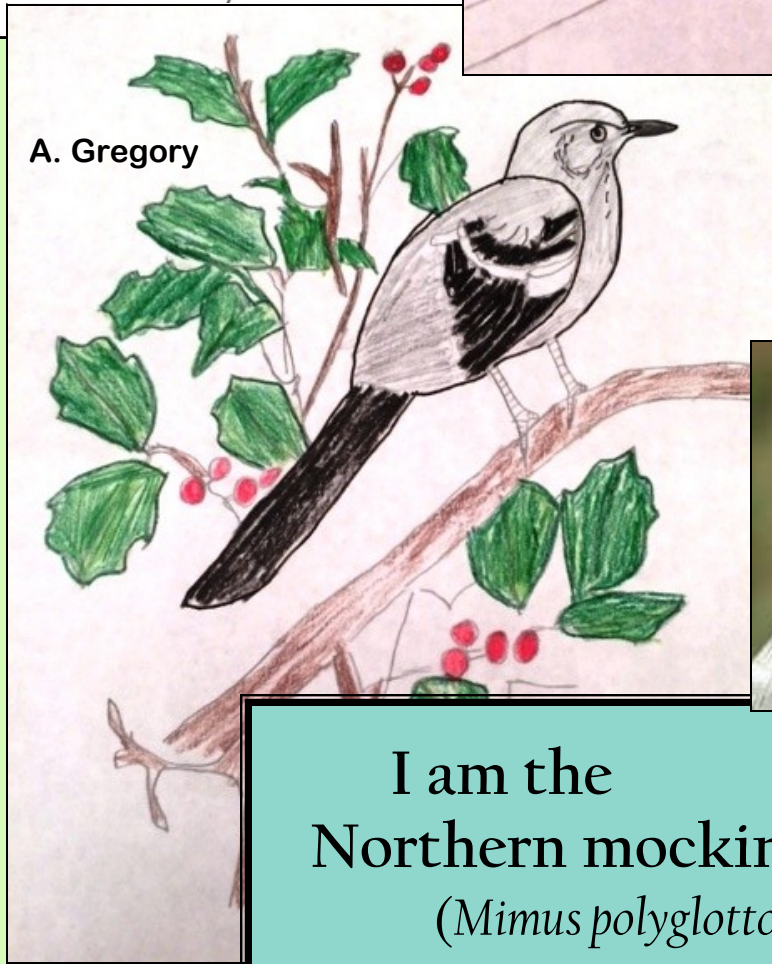
Did you know that we communicate mostly by songs? Wow! We can at least sing 39 songs and 50 other call notes. And also we are solitary and territorial! During nesting season we are very aggressive! We also ATTACK animals that attack our TERRITORY!



E. Harrod



J. McNeil



A. Gregory



I am the  
Northern mockingbird!  
(*Mimus polyglottos*)

# Who am I?

Authors: Carlos [redacted], Nafiad [redacted], and Henry [redacted]



I am black and red, but females do not have red feathers. There are parts of white on my black wings. I, as a male, have a red patch on the back of my head. Females have white patches instead of red. I have black and white on the bottom of my wings.

My bird likes to make its home in the woods. I think my bird makes their nests out of bark, weeds, and dirt. Some birds make their homes in holes. My bird likes to make his nest high in the tree-tops. I like all this because my bird is me!

I eat insects, beetle larvae, ants, and caterpillars. I also eat corn earworms, bark beetles, and apple borers. Also I eat berries, acorns, and grains. I eat suet and black oil sunflower seeds. I drink from hummingbird feeders.

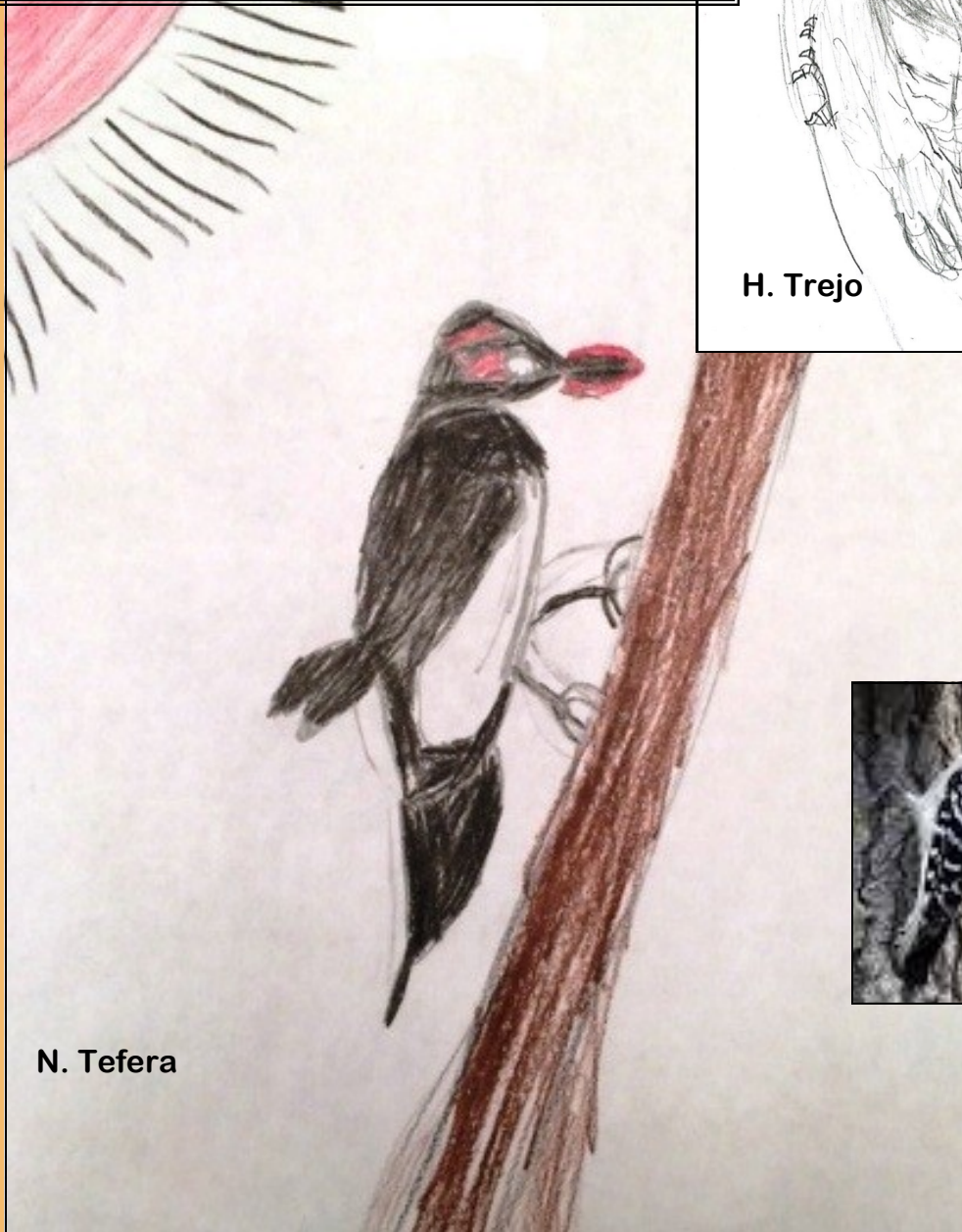
I have chicks by laying eggs. When they hatch, chicks don't have feathers. Without feathers, chicks cannot fly. Nests are made of wood and hay. I have been discovered nesting in the walls of buildings.

The oldest known of my species lived to be 11 years and 11 months old. They have been discovered nesting in the walls of buildings. They live on dead trees. We don't sing songs, but do make a "strumming" sound. Now do you know who I am?

I am the  
downy woodpecker!  
(*Picoides pubescens*)



H. Trejo



N. Tefera





# Who am I?

Authors: Annaya [redacted] and Brandon [redacted]

I am red and black, also soft and feathery. My wings are also feathery. I live in woodlands and I love to smell the flowers in the gardens! I like to live in gardens, it's cool. I live in orchards and I love the smell of the breeze. When I move to different places I make a nest to have baby chicks and find lots of food for me and my baby chicks. I like to soar through the fields and also walk on the grass. I live in woodlands, gardens, orchards, dense shrubs, and small trees. You can also find me in fields. I am also found in Mexico and Canada.



I like fruit. Lots and lots of fruit. I like to chomp up my fruits and berries. I am an omnivore and I like to eat caterpillars and earthworms. I love to eat snails every day and every afternoon. Sometimes my diet can include other insects and I love, love, love grasshoppers!

The nest is usually placed in the crotch of a tree or shrub 5-20 feet above the ground. My nest is made with grasses, mud, and fine grasses. The female lays 3-7 light blue eggs that are incubated for 12-14 days.

Did you figure out who I am?

I am the  
American robin!  
(*Turdus migratorius*)



A. Bundu



B. Romero

*We hope you enjoyed the journey of reading this book as much as we enjoyed the journey of creating it.*

*We see many of these birds each day, and it can be easy to forget that they are truly remarkable creatures— just like the extraordinary group of young people who came together to make this book.*

“The robin flew from his swinging spray of ivy on to the top of the wall and he opened his beak and sang a loud, lovely trill, merely to show off. Nothing in the world is quite as adorably lovely as a robin when he shows off - and they are nearly always doing it.”  
—Frances Hodgson Burnett, The Secret Garden

*Never forget to show off, third grade friends.  
Love, Ms. Murphy and Ms. McNamee*