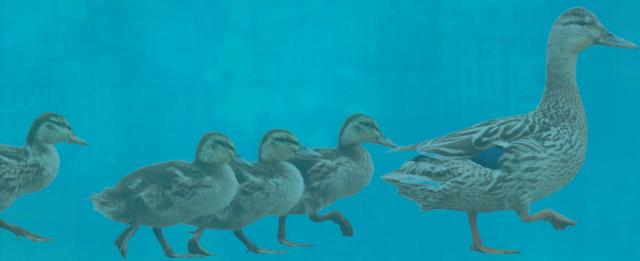




How to

BIRD

RASHA HAMID



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A young girl with dark hair, wearing a white hoodie and a green backpack, is looking up with an open mouth, appearing excited. In the background, there is a multi-story brick building with fire escapes and a clear blue sky with several birds flying. A single black and white chickadee is perched on a thin branch in the foreground on the right.

Are you a **birder**?

People who bird are called birders. Birders notice and observe wild birds in their habitats.

Anyone can bird.

Some birders use tools to see or hear better.

binoculars

glasses

hearing aid





A Note from Rasha

Dear Readers,

Birding is one of my special interests. It makes me feel peaceful and joyful. Every time I go birding in the park near my home in New York City, I see something amazing—a great blue heron fishing, a barred owl taking flight, or red-tailed hawks soaring and diving! The more I practice, the better I get at spotting birds.

Seeing and hearing many species of birds has been proven to make people happier. And spending time in nature can make people healthier. Unfortunately, in some neighborhoods there aren't enough green spaces. Areas that don't have enough parks are sometimes called *park deserts*. In places with few green spaces, there are also fewer birds.

Birders are every age, color, gender, ability, and size. Birders live in every part of the world and speak thousands of languages. Public green spaces are not always welcoming and accessible to everyone, but many individuals and groups are working to make birding more inclusive. Birding is for absolutely everyone. So get out there and bird!

Love,
Rasha



Questions to Think About

Whether you're a brand-new birder or you've been doing it a while, it's fun to talk about birding with other people! Here are some questions to get you started.

- What do you think your birding superpower could be?
- Who would you like to go birding with?
- What is your favorite birding outfit?
- What do you enjoy most about birding?
- How do you feel when you bird?
- How could you teach someone else how to bird?
- What is your favorite bird you've ever seen?
- Are there park deserts in your area? If so, how can you advocate for more public green spaces in your community?
- How can you help other birders feel welcome?
- How can other birders help you feel welcome?



Birding Words

advocate—to speak up or write to support a cause

bird—as a verb, this means to go looking for birds in cities, parks, forests, and other outdoor spaces

birders—people who bird

birding—the activity of looking for birds in outdoor spaces

field guide—an illustrated book for recognizing birds in nature

extraordinary—special, unusual, or amazing

habitats—the places where plants, animals, or other organisms normally and naturally live

observe—to carefully watch or notice

park deserts—urban areas without nearby green spaces

record—to write, draw, or make note of something

silhouettes—the dark shapes and outlines of bodies or other shapes

Birding and Nature Organizations to Check Out

Birdability (birdability.org) focuses on increasing the number of accessible birding spaces available to disabled birders.

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology (birds.cornell.edu/home) learns about, teaches about, and conserves biological diversity through research, education, and bird-focused community science.

The Feminist Bird Club (feministbirdclub.org) works to promote inclusivity in birding and helps diverse communities connect with the natural world.

New York City's Urban Park Rangers (nycgovparks.org/programs/rangers) help community members and visitors explore NYC parks through programming including environmental education, wildlife management, and conservation.

Outdoor Afro (outdoorafro.org) celebrates and inspires Black connections and leadership in nature.



Do you think you can spot all the birds in this book?
Visit go.frespirit.com/bird to download a list of the birds that appear.