Birds & Bird Banding

Audubon Center of the North Woods

REVISER: ALYSON MACK, APRIL 2007

CLASS LENGTH: 3 HR

AGES: GRADES 4-8

SEASON: F, SP, S

GROUP SIZE: UP TO 20

SAFETY: Students will meet in a classroom, and then spend 1-2 hours outside walking the Audubon Center trails for approximately ½ mile. Most of the walk will be on flat to slightly sloping trails.

MATERIALS: Bird parts (feathers, wings, feet, beaks, owl skeleton), hand lenses, *Flappers Wingbeat Chart*, chicken and mammal bone, bucket of water, feather poster, laminated bird cards for ID practice, *Field Marks* poster, *Migration* poster, *Migration Headache* habitat boards, binoculars, field guides, spotting scope, *Who's Here Now* datasheets, clipboards, pencils, bird banding supplies (data books, nets, bands, tools, etc.), *Owl & Mouse* shaker, *Fill the Bill* materials, Bird songs CD, and CD player.

PRE-CLASS PREP: (20-30 MIN)
Check the bird feeders by the banding shed and by the trail to the barn to be sure the feeders are full of sunflower seeds. The seeds are in the garbage cans in the bird banding shed. Fill two beakers or clear buckets with water. Visit the bird shed before class to make sure it is neat and organized the way that you would like it for class. Communicate with Clarissa or Kate about how banding will operate.

CLASS OUTLINE:
- **I.** Introduction (15 minutes)
- **II.** What makes a bird a bird? (30 minutes)
- **III.** Bird Watching and Observation (30 minutes)
- **IV.** Field Identification Techniques (1 hour)
  - **a)** How to use binoculars and field guides
  - **b)** Observing the resident birds of prey
  - **c)** Birding Hike
- **V.** Bird Banding (30 minutes)
- **VI.** Assessment/Reflection (5-10 minutes)
- **VII.** The Sending (15 minutes)

Purpose: This class is an opportunity to share enthusiasm with young people about our feathered friends! Through activities involving basic bird characteristics, ecology, and simple field identification techniques, several common species will be identified and students will practice using these skills during a birding hike on the Center grounds. Students will also be introduced to the mysteries and miracles of bird migration and population monitoring through banding studies.

Concepts:
- The scientific study of birds is called ornithology.
- Birds set themselves apart from mammals, reptiles and amphibians by being adapted to grow feathers, stand on two legs, open two wings, lay eggs and possess hard beaks
- Bird populations are important bio-indicators of environmental health.
- Bird watchers identify birds by observing their habitats, field marks, behavior, and songs/calls.

Learning Outcomes: Students will be able to
- Compare and contrast similarities between birds and other types of animals
- Demonstrate the proper way to use binoculars.
- Practice using field guides to identify birds both in the classroom and in the field.

Minnesota Academic Standards:
Science:
- 5.4.1.1.1 Describe how plant and animal structures and their functions provide an advantage for survival in a given natural system.
- 7.4.2.1.1 Identify a variety of populations and communities in an ecosystem and describe the relationships among the populations and communities in a stable ecosystem.
- 7.4.3.1.3 Distinguish between characteristics of organisms that are inherited and those acquired through environmental influences.