

June 26, 2024

Birds' Nests

While the fact that birds build nests is nothing short of common knowledge for most of us, there isn't just one type of nest. Birds around the world have varying nesting habitats and there are a wide number of types of nests.



Just like us, birds need a place to call home. To do this, almost all birds need to build nests. The primary function of nests is to provide a suitable location for parents to lay their eggs and/or raise their offspring. Birds also use nests to protect nestlings from predators and adverse weather, and to keep them warm. To minimize the threat of predators, birds may use or build nests that are inaccessible, hidden, or camouflaged.

Different species of birds build different nests. Some nests are very simple constructions, while others are more complex. Some birds build their nests directly on the ground. Often these nests are very simple hollows that birds make in which to lay their eggs. Birds that nest on the ground are vulnerable to predators so these nests are well-camouflaged to blend in with their habitat. Many birds make their nests in hedges, bushes, thickets, and small trees. Larger birds, such as Crows, Magpies, and Wood Pigeons, make their nests in the tops of larger trees. The nests of these larger birds tend to be more visible, especially in late winter and early spring.

Each species of bird builds its own type of nest. Birds do not have to be taught how to build nests, it's all instinct. However, they generally build better nests with practice. Different birds build their nests in different ways. Some birds simply use their feet to make a hollow in the ground in which they lay their eggs. Other birds make more complex nests. They use their beaks or feet to carry materials to a nest-building site. They then use their beaks, claws, and bodies to build their nests. Some birds are clever weavers and are able to use their beaks to weave materials into their nests. Birds can shape their nests by turning around in them or by using their feet and beaks.

Cup nests, are cup-shaped and made from twigs and grass stems. Other materials such as mud, moss, lichen, feathers, and the hair or fur from other animals are also used. They are often seen in the fork of branches in a tree or bush. Many birds make a cup nest, including Blackbirds and Thrushes.

Nests are a crucial aspect of a bird's life (unless you're an emperor penguin), and when you find yourself in nature, they should be regarded with the utmost respect and care.

Excerpt taken from Green Bay Botanical Garden (<https://www.gbbg.org/wps-garden-of-lights-spotlight-birds-nests/>)

Let's Make Our Own Bird Nest

This project is a slightly adapted version of Barbara Rucci's DIY Bird Nests. You can find more of her amazing projects at Art Bar Blog (<https://www.artbarblog.com/>)

Materials:

- bowls
- glue
- scissors
- strips of paper
- paint brush
- Press'n Seal Wrap



Process:

1) Find a comfortable place to work and pour out all your materials.



2) Cut your paper into vertical strips (about 1/4" wide) using your scissors or a paper cutter (if you have one). The thinner the strip the more flexible and malleable it is, but you might find that younger kids work easier with slightly larger strips.

3) Unfold your Press'n Seal plastic and wrap the inside of your bowl tightly. Wrap around the top edges to keep it in place. Getting it as tight as possible will make gluing the strips down, much easier. Set aside.



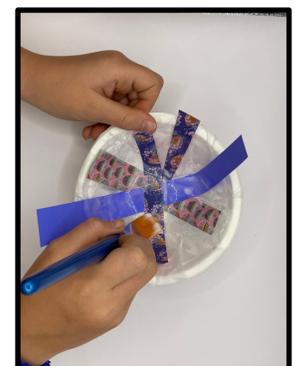
4) Use your other bowl to make a 1/2 water, 1/2 glue mixture. It doesn't have to be exact. We started with 2 TBSPs of water and 2 TBSPs of glue. Use a plastic spoon or your paint brush to mix. You can always make more if you need it.



5) Use your paint brush to coat the inside of your plastic lined bowl. Get the bottom and all the sides.

6) Place a strip of paper into the bottom of the bowl and gently push the paper up the sides of the bowl using your fingers or your paintbrush. Once you have it in place, take a little glue mixture and paint over the top of the paper. You might find that the paper wants to hold onto the paintbrush.

Over the course of the project you will learn how to use your fingers or your paintbrush to carefully push it down as you glue without tearing the paper. Go slow and gently until you find your rhythm.



- 7) Continue this process of gluing strips down over and over until your whole bowl is covered. You aren't restricted to just laying them across the middle of the bowl. Be creative and find different ways to reinforce the strength of the nest. Use your glue liberally! The more strips you use, the stronger your nest will be.
- 8) Can you add any of your own items into the nest? If you've got some ideas, do it!
- 9) After you've finished, leave your bowl to drive over night (12 hours or so).



10) Remove the nest from the bowl and very gently peel the plastic from your nest and revel in your masterpiece. Aren't they awesome! Feel free to doctor your nest any way you like. Olivia did a nice clean cut around the top. Do what you like!

11) Be proud of your creation and bring it back to Old Town Square next Wednesday so that we can hang it up for all of Fort Collins to see!



Follow us on Instagram @nola_creative_company as we will be featuring artwork from each week. We will not use full names or identify your children in any way other than using their first name in order to give credit.

About the Art for the Heart Program

Art for the Heart is a program of the Fort Collins Downtown Development Authority and NOLA Creative Company.

All returned projects will be displayed in our outdoor kiosk located in between Coopersmith's Pub and Poolside restaurants. All projects will be returned to you the following week after they have been displayed.

Each art project returned will earn you a punch on our "Frequent Artists" punch card. Artists with consistent participation will be awarded prizes at the end of the program.

You can find all of our past projects and more information about the program at <https://downtownfortcollins.org/art-for-the-heart/>

This project is brought to you by: