

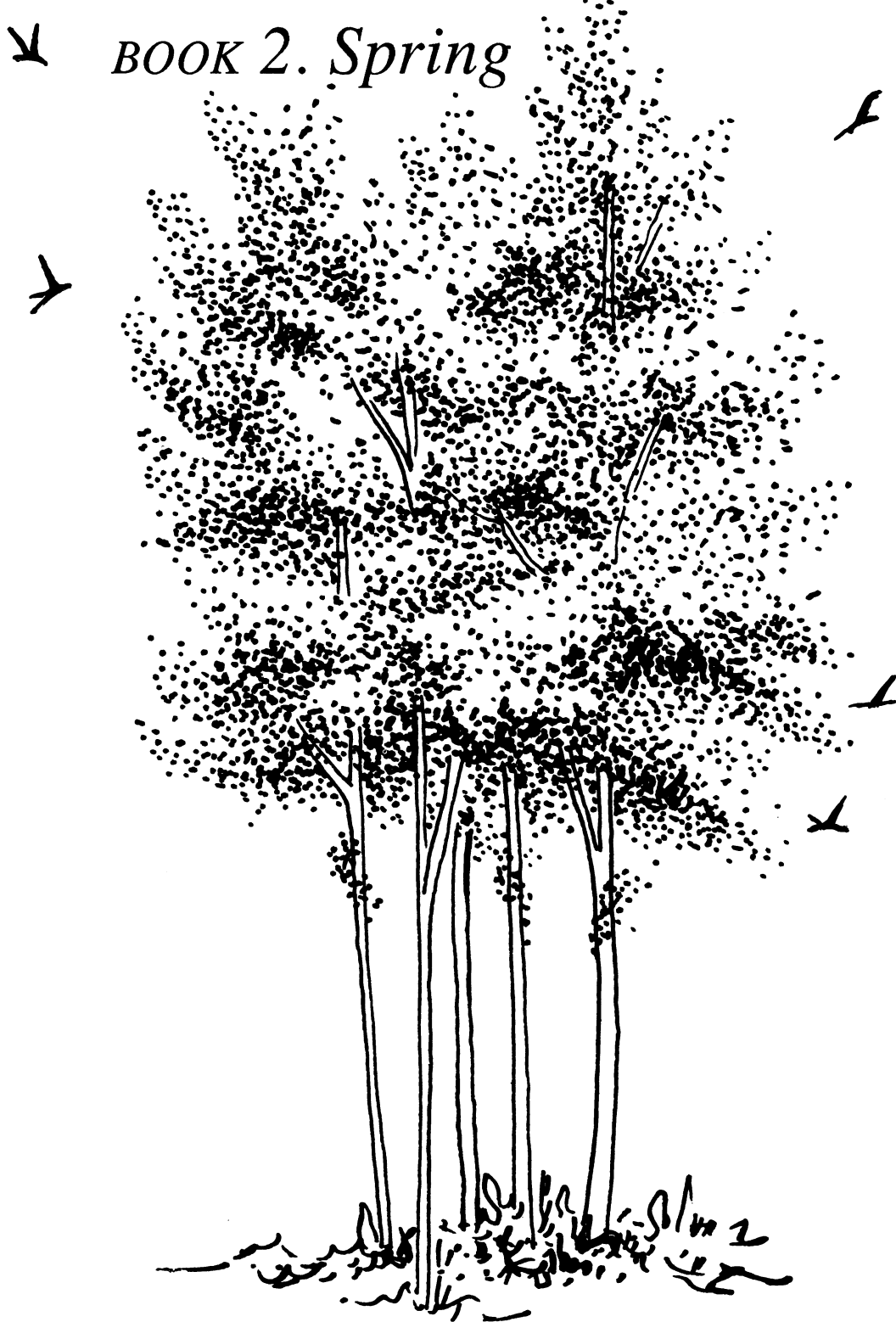


4-H Wildlife Conservation Program, Unit 1  
Member's Guide

18 U.S.C. 707

# Wildlife Is All Around Us

## *BOOK 2. Spring*



*Wildlife Is All Around Us* is Unit 1 of the Pennsylvania 4-H Wildlife Conservation Program. This unit will introduce you to the major groups of wildlife, the animals' basic needs, and where the animals can be found. By working through the projects in this unit, you will become more aware of the animals around you and the signs and clues they leave behind.

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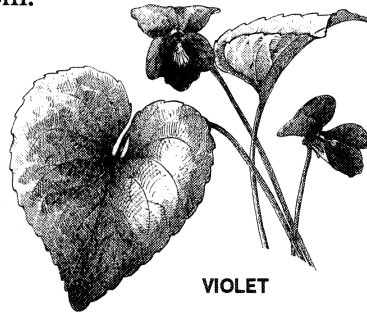
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# Spring

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Spring is a time of new life! Buds on trees open into fresh new leaves, while days become longer and warmer. Grasses grow and wildflowers, such as jack-in-the-pulpits and violets, bloom.



VIOLET



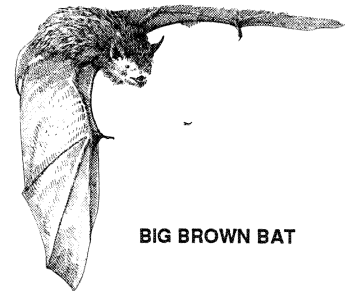
JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT

There is activity in the animal world as well. *Hibernating* animals, animals that have spent the winter sleeping, awaken from a long nap. Groundhogs or woodchucks are one of the first to come out of hibernation. They may come up from their underground burrows as early as February. Hungry black bears and their cubs become active as the weather warms. Later in the spring, bats emerge from caves in search of insects.



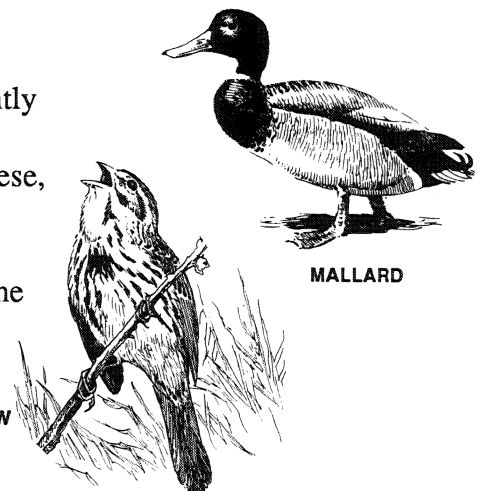
WOODCHUCK

Migration is another exciting spring activity. While some animals spend their lives in one place, others travel regularly between two homes. Animals that travel are called *migrants*, and their travels are called *migrations*. Some animals travel several hundred miles. Others travel just far enough to spend the winter in a warmer climate where they can find food.



BIG BROWN BAT

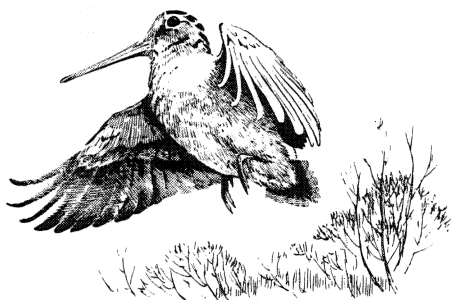
Many migrating birds return to Pennsylvania in the spring. The brightly colored wood duck and the common mallard return to our lakes and rivers. Some just pass through, while others stay to nest. Honking geese, in V-shaped flocks, pass overhead on their way north. You can see songbirds of many colors, shapes, and sizes, even in your own backyard. Wherever you go, you can hear bird songs welcoming in the spring.



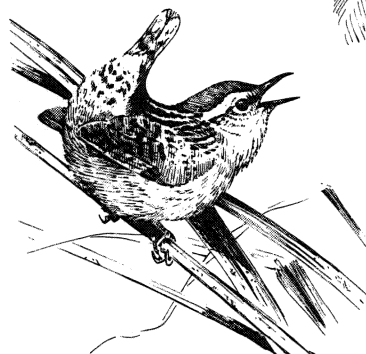
SONG SPARROW

MALLARD

For most wildlife, spring is the time for mating and having young. To attract a mate, the woodcock performs an elaborate courtship dance against the evening sky. The marsh wren, a tiny bird with an upright tail, builds a domed nest of reeds and grasses in cattail marshes. Many other birds build nests and lay eggs in the spring. Cottontail rabbits perform mating dances at the edge of farm fields. Soon after, the first rabbit litters are born. In the forest, fox kits are born, and, late in the spring, white-tailed deer fawns take their first wobbly steps.



WOODCOCK

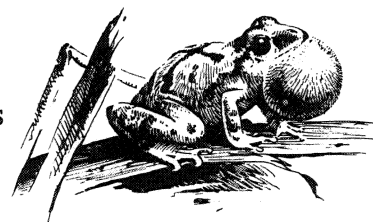


MARSH WREN

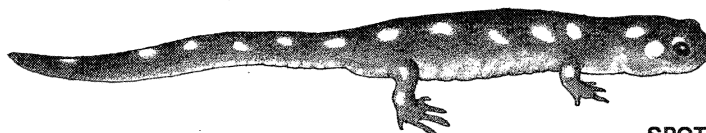


FOX

As the weather warms and spring rains begin to fall, cold-blooded amphibians become active. Salamanders come out of hibernation and migrate to wetlands where they breed and lay eggs. Frogs and toads become active too. The wood frog is the first to call in the spring. This masked bandit can be found in shallow water, such as puddles or marshes, near wooded areas. The wildlife detective can identify the wood frog by its call, a dull, ducklike “quack.” Another early caller is the spring peeper. This tiny frog sings a chorus of high-pitched “peeps” that you can hear from far away. Frogs and toads use their calls to attract mates.

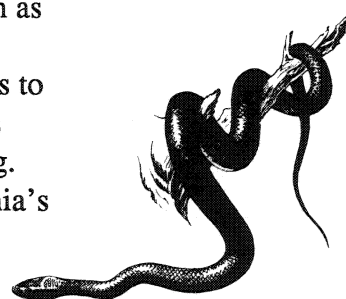


SPRING PEEPER

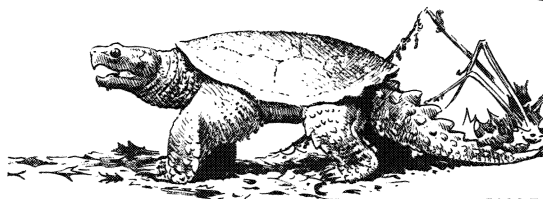


SPOTTED SALAMANDER

Cold-blooded reptiles also become active in the spring. Snakes, such as the eastern garter snake, emerge from rock piles or dens where they have been hibernating through winter. They sun themselves on rocks to raise their body temperature. Breeding takes place before the snakes leave the den area. Turtles also come out of hibernation in the spring. The snapping turtle and the eastern box turtle are two of Pennsylvania’s most common turtles. Both breed in the spring.



BLACK RAT SNAKE



SNAPPING TURTLE

## Questions About Spring

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1. Name three kinds of wildflowers you have seen in bloom.

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_

2. List several birds you have seen this spring that you cannot see during winter. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What is migration? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Why do birds and animals migrate? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Have you seen any birds nesting? ☐ yes ☐ no

6. If so, what kind of bird did you see? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. What did the nest look like? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Were there any eggs or young in the nest? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Try to visit a pond or wetland. Record what you see and hear. Did you find any frog or toad eggs? If so, describe them.

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10. Have you heard any frogs or toads calling?      ☐ yes    ☐ no

11. If so, what kind and where? \_\_\_\_\_

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12. Describe at least three signs of spring that you have seen or found (for example, bird eggs, baby animals, or songbirds singing to attract a mate)

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_

# Spring Activities and Projects

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Choose at least two of the spring projects suggested below. You may substitute a project that you design on your own as long as your leader approves it. Project 1 should be conducted as a group or with adult supervision. The other projects can be completed as a group or individually. For some projects a field guide is suggested. Peterson's Field Guides and the Golden Guide series can be found at most public and school libraries.

## PROJECT 1. Amphibians in the Night

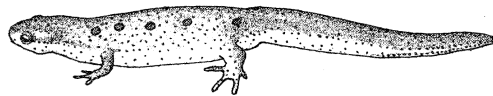
**Suggested equipment:** Boots, flashlight,  
*Peterson's Field Guide to Reptiles and Amphibians*

- ❖ Do not venture out alone after dark.  
Conduct this project with other group members or with adult assistance.

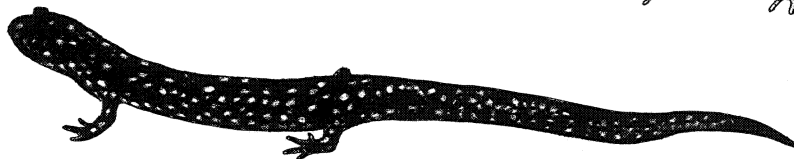
On a rainy spring night, visit a dirt road near a pond or wetland. Look for salamanders, toads, and frogs migrating across the road or resting in puddles. Amphibians prefer to migrate on rainy nights because they require moisture to keep their skin from drying out. Take along a field guide to reptiles and amphibians to help you identify what you find. Do you hear any frogs calling? Follow their voices and try to sneak up on them. What kind of frog or toad are they? If you can't sneak a peek at them, try to identify them by their calls. When you return, complete the Amphibians in the Night observation sheet.



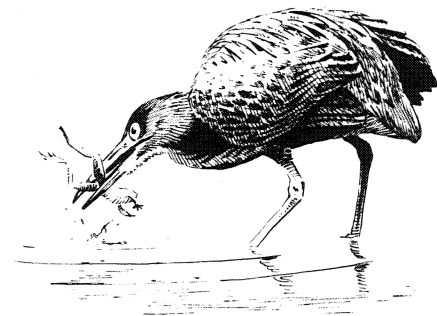
TOAD



NEWT



SLIMY SALAMANDER



LITTLE BLUE HERON

## ***Amphibians in the Night—Observation Sheet***

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*Complete a record for each kind of amphibian that you find or hear.*

1. Kind of amphibian \_\_\_\_\_

a. Where did you find it? \_\_\_\_\_

b. How many were there? \_\_\_\_\_

c. Did you see it, hear it, or both? \_\_\_\_\_

d. What was the amphibian doing? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

e. Draw a picture of the amphibian that you saw or heard:

2. Kind of amphibian \_\_\_\_\_

a. Where did you find it? \_\_\_\_\_

b. How many were there? \_\_\_\_\_

c. Did you see it, hear it, or both? \_\_\_\_\_

d. What was the amphibian doing? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

e. Draw a picture of the amphibian that you saw or heard:



## *Amphibians in the Night—Observation Sheet*

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3. Kind of amphibian \_\_\_\_\_
- a. Where did you find it? \_\_\_\_\_
- b. How many were there? \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Did you see it, hear it, or both? \_\_\_\_\_
- d. What was the amphibian doing? \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Draw a picture of the amphibian that you saw or heard:

4. Kind of amphibian \_\_\_\_\_
- a. Where did you find it? \_\_\_\_\_
- b. How many were there? \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Did you see it, hear it, or both? \_\_\_\_\_
- d. What was the amphibian doing? \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Draw a picture of the amphibian that you saw or heard:

## *Amphibians in the Night—Observation Sheet*

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5. Kind of amphibian \_\_\_\_\_

a. Where did you find it? \_\_\_\_\_

b. How many were there? \_\_\_\_\_

c. Did you see it, hear it, or both? \_\_\_\_\_

d. What was the amphibian doing? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

e. Draw a picture of the amphibian that you saw or heard:

6. Kind of amphibian \_\_\_\_\_

a. Where did you find it? \_\_\_\_\_

b. How many were there? \_\_\_\_\_

c. Did you see it, hear it, or both? \_\_\_\_\_

d. What was the amphibian doing? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

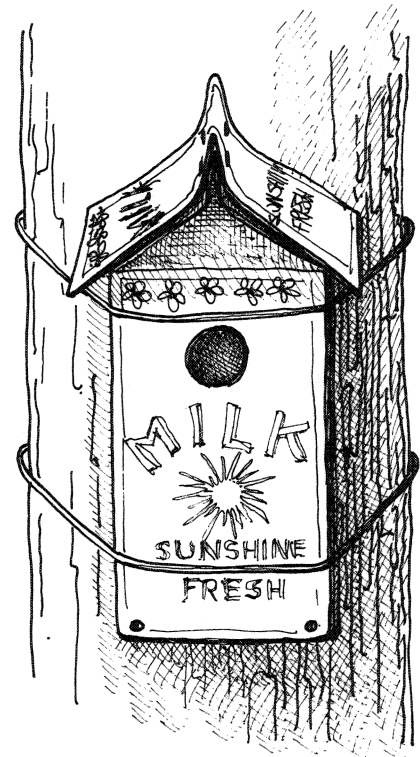
e. Draw a picture of the amphibian that you saw or heard:

## PROJECT 2. Building Your Own Birdhouse

During the spring, many birds build nests and raise young. You can help by providing this simple birdhouse made from milk cartons. If you want to build a birdhouse that will last longer and be sturdier than this model, you may choose a house from the publication entitled *Woodworking for Wildlife*, available from the Pennsylvania Game Commission.

**Materials:** Two half-gallon milk cartons, stapler, scissors, pencil, ruler

1. Rinse both milk cartons well and allow them to dry thoroughly.
2. On one side of the first carton, measure and draw a 1 1/2-inch-diameter circle approximately 6 inches up from the bottom of the carton.
3. Cut out the circle. This will be the bird's entrance hole.
4. Poke two small holes in one side at the bottom to allow moisture to drain out.
5. From the second carton, cut out a piece of cardboard large enough to overlap the top of your birdhouse. This overlapping piece will keep rain from running into the entrance hole.
6. Fold the cardboard in half and staple it to the top of the birdhouse (see diagram).
7. When your birdhouse is complete, use wire to strap it onto a tree at a height of about 6 feet.
8. Be careful not to fasten your birdhouse in a way that prevents moisture from running out the drainage holes.
9. Take your birdhouse down in the fall and replace it with a new one every spring.



RED MAPLE FLOWERS

## ***Building Your Own Birdhouse—Observation Sheet***

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*If the house was used more than once in a season, complete an observation sheet for each nest built.*

1. What date was the house put up? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Describe the general area in which the house was located. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What date was the house first used? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What kind of bird used the house? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What kinds of materials did the bird use to build its nest? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Who built the nest (male, female, or both)? \_\_\_\_\_
7. If you are able to see inside your house, how many eggs were laid? \_\_\_\_\_
8. If you are able to see inside your house, how many young hatched? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Who fed the young (male, female, or both)? \_\_\_\_\_
10. What did the parent(s) feed the young? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

My notes \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_

## ***Building Your Own Birdhouse—Observation Sheet***

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1. What date was the house put up? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Describe the general area in which the house was located. \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

My notes \_\_\_\_\_  
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## ***Building Your Own Birdhouse—Observation Sheet***

---

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\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

My notes \_\_\_\_\_

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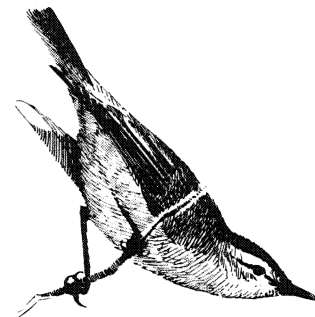
## PROJECT 3. Bird Song Field Trip

**Suggested equipment:** Binoculars, a field guide to birds, notebook, pencil

During the spring many birds return to Pennsylvania. You may be able to see some in your own backyard, but in order to see a large variety of birds, you must visit different types of habitat. Try to visit a forest, a field, and a pond or stream.

Below are listed the calls of some of the more common birds you may see. Try to identify the birds you see. Listen to the bird, then consult your list of calls and repeat the call description to yourself.

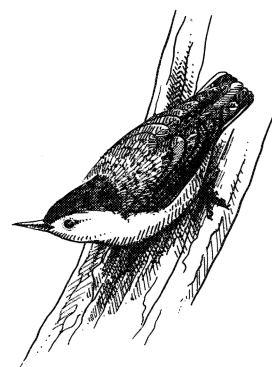
Bird	Call
American goldfinch	"Potato chip, potato chip"
American robin	"Cheerio, cheery me, cheery me"
Black-capped chickadee	"Chick-a-dee-dee-dee" or "Fee-bee"
Common yellowthroat	"Witchity-witchity-witch"
Chestnut-sided warbler	"Pleased-pleased-pleased to meetcha"
Eastern meadowlark	"Sweet spring is here"
Eastern phoebe	"Feeby-feeby"
Eastern wood pewee	"Pee-a-wee"
Northern cardinal	"Pretty-pretty-pretty"
Ovenbird	"Teacher-teacher-teacher"
Red-eyed vireo	"Going up, coming down"
Red-winged blackbird	"Konk-la-ree"
White-breasted nuthatch	"Yank-yank"
White-throated sparrow	"Poor Sam Peabody-Peabody-Peabody"



RED-EYED VIREO



RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD



WHITE-BREASTED  
NUTHATCH

You may be able to check out a copy of the album, *Peterson's Field Guide to Bird Songs*, at your local public library. Listen to the calls above to familiarize yourself with them before going out. Eventually, you may be able to identify a bird just by hearing it sing. Complete a bird song field-trip observation sheet for each habitat you visit.

\_\_\_\_\_

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[illegible]



**Date** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time of day**\_\_\_\_\_

15



## Words to Know

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**Cold-blooded**—a word used to describe an animal whose body temperature is the same as that of its surroundings

**Cover**—any material (trees, shrubs, and brush piles, for example) that provides protection to animals

**Habitat**—the physical area where an animal lives

**Hibernate**—to pass the winter in an inactive sleeping condition

**Migrant**—an animal that migrates

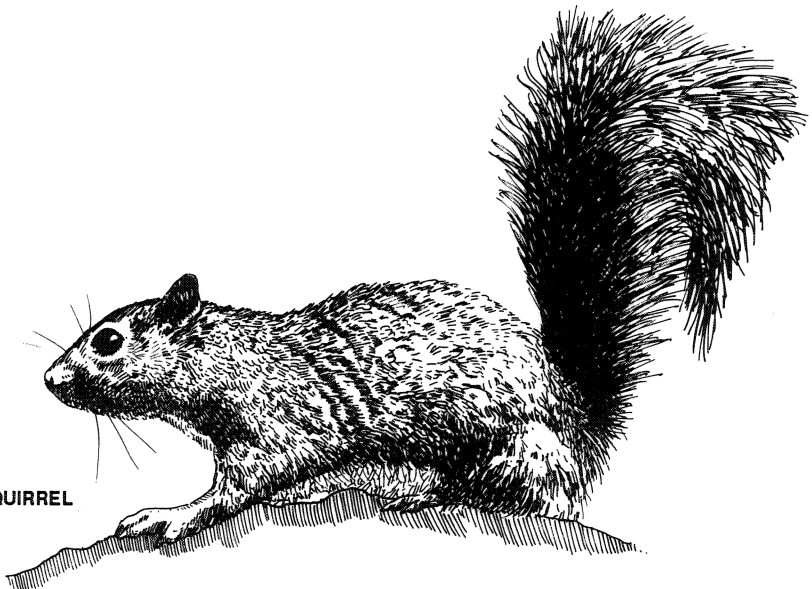
**Migrate**—to travel between a summer home where an animal breeds and a second home where it spends the winter

**Species**—a kind of plant or animal

**Vertebrate**—an animal with a backbone (for example, a fish, amphibian, reptile, bird, mammal)

**Warm-blooded**—a word used to describe an animal whose body temperature remains constant

EASTERN GRAY SQUIRREL



\_\_\_\_\_

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Did you have fun doing this project? What was the best part? What was the worst part?

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This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

## 4-H ACTIVITIES REPORT

This report will help you keep a better record of your club activities. Fill it in as you complete each assignment. Refer to this record when you are entering county, state, and national programs. Ask your local leader to explain these programs to you.

### My 4-H Activities Report for the 19   Club Year

Projects taken _____	Number of new members you encouraged to join 4-H _____
TV member <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	_____
Program title _____	Number of boys and girls you helped with projects _____
Offices held _____	In what way? _____
Club _____	Check those attended and tell how you helped
County _____	<input type="checkbox"/> 3- or 4-day camp _____
“Show-and-tell” given to:	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-day camp _____
Family _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Club or county tours _____
Friends _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Club picnic _____
Local club _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Countywide picnic _____
County _____	<input type="checkbox"/> 4-H Sunday _____
Regional _____	<input type="checkbox"/> County fair _____
State _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Achievement programs _____
News articles _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Roundup _____
Radio _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Teen Leader Retreat _____
TV _____	<input type="checkbox"/> State 4-H Capital Days _____
Things done to improve your health _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Camp Leadership Training _____
Community service or citizenship work done _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Penn State 4-H Week _____
By myself _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Pennsylvania Farm Show _____
With club _____	<input type="checkbox"/> National 4-H Week _____
Number of meetings your club(s) held this year _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Others _____
Number you attended _____	_____
	_____
	_____

PENNSTATE



College of Agricultural Sciences  
Cooperative Extension

Prepared by Kristi L. Youngfleish, former graduate research assistant, School of Forest Resources, and Margaret Brittingham, associate professor of wildlife resources.

Design and the following illustrations by Rae D. Chambers: aspens, violet, jack-in-the-pulpit, big brown bat, fox, spotted salamander, newt, slimy salamander, birdhouse, red maple flowers, red-winged blackbird, white-breasted nuthatch, eastern gray squirrel. The following illustrations by Ned Smith: woodchuck, mallard, song sparrow, woodcock, marsh wren, spring peeper, black rat snake, snapping turtle, toad, little blue heron.

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Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences research, extension, and resident education programs are funded in part by Pennsylvania counties, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension Work, Acts of Congress May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Pennsylvania Legislature. T. R. Alter, Director of Cooperative Extension, The Pennsylvania State University.

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Club \_\_\_\_\_

Leader's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Project \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### 4-H Club Motto

"To make the best better"

#### 4-H Club Pledge

I pledge  
my head to clearer thinking,  
my heart of greater loyalty,  
my hands to larger service, and  
my health to better living, for  
my club,  
my community,  
my country, and  
my world.

#### 4-H Club Colors

Green and White

\_\_\_\_\_