



Bird Conservation

"It was a spring without voices. On the mornings that had once throbbed with the dawn chorus of robins, catbirds, doves, jays, wrens, and scores of other bird voices, there was now no sound; only silence lay over the fields and woods and marsh... Even the streams were now lifeless... No witchcraft, no enemy action had silenced the rebirth of new life in this stricken world. The people had done it themselves."

~Rachel Carson

Bird watching is a great way to connect with nature, enjoy the outdoors, and introduce yourself to birds and how you can help them. Western Pennsylvania provides wonderful opportunities to see a variety of species, but natural habitats and open spaces are disappearing at an alarming rate. Learn how people can play a critical role in foresting healthy wildlife populations and communities.

How to earn the *Bird Conservation* patch the Girl Scout way:

Steps:

1. **Discover**—Learn how to help birds in your community.
2. **Connect**—Watch and observe birds from your backyard, state park, or nature reserve.
3. **Take Action**—Make a difference for a bird in your neighborhood and inspire others.

Materials Needed:

In order to complete this patch, you'll need a few things:

- resources (You can either go online with an adult, ask a professional, or visit your public library.)
- binocular device of any kind
- camera
- field guide
- patience

STEP

1 Discover the world of birds.

Go online with an adult, ask a professional, or visit your public library to learn more about one of the following:

1. How to identify birds common in western Pennsylvania by using S.C.O.P.E. (size, color, outline, patterns and, extras, like location, season, habitat, or sound)
2. What you can do to protect birds from the dangers in their world, including:
 - a. Outdoor cats
 - b. Climate change and local impacts like developments
 - c. Window collisions
3. Famous women in the bird conservation movement.

STEP 2

Be a bird detective.

Use your new bird knowledge to connect with birds, from finding them to helping to save them! Choose one of the following activities:

1. Visit one of Pennsylvania's birding hotspots for a walk, workshop, or program and talk to an expert. **Here are a few regional birding hotspots to get you started:**
 - Presque Isle State Park
 - Erie National Wildlife Refuge
 - Powdermill Nature Reserve
 - Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania – Nature Reserves
 - Fern Hollow Nature Reserve
2. Assist scientists in gathering baseline data of our region's birds to help them understand larger global trends. Now, more than ever, it is important for all of us to assist scientists in gathering baseline data that can be analyzed in real time. **Here are a few apps for data input to get you started:**
 - eBird
 - iNaturalist
 - bird banding

STEP 3

Take action to help birds thrive in your community.

Complete a service project for birds in your community and inspire others to make daily lifestyle choices that impact conservation. Choose one of the following or come up with your own idea:

1. With the decline in their habitat and tree canopy, it is critical to help birds with nesting habits. Make and place a bluebird box, owl box, or if you have the resources, make a chimney swift habitat tower or an Audubon Society-certified backyard bird habitat.
2. Reach out to and get involved with one of the many citizen monitoring programs that depend on scientist like you. **Here are some examples:**
 - Audubon Society
 - Project FeederWatch
 - Hummingbird Helper
 - Pittsburgh Project OwlNet
3. Join the movement to help birds, pollinators, and wildlife by creating a bird feeder in your neighborhood or using window products, like iridescent bird tape, UV paint pens, or ultraviolet decals to reduce window collisions.

All done? CONGRATULATIONS! You've completed all the necessary steps to earn the *Bird Conservation* fun patch.

After completing the activities from each step, visit or call a Girl Scouts Western Pennsylvania retail shop at **800-248-3355** to purchase your patch.* A patch may be worn on the back of a vest, sash, or tunic.

**Patch shown may be substituted with similar patch, based on availability.*