

WETLANDS EXPLORERS CLUB



Baby Birds

All Bird Babies are not created equal.

Some birds, after they are hatched from eggs are helpless. They're almost naked, with very few feathers, their eyes are closed so they're blind and can't walk, can't swim, and certainly can't fly.

What can they do? Open their mouths and eat. That's about it.

Some birds are different. Almost right after they hatch they can walk or swim around with their families. Sometimes they're still working on their flying but they get better every day. Amazing right? Their parents are teaching them where and how to get the food they need. They are also teaching them how to avoid predators.

Okay, Kid Scientist—How can you tell the difference?

Here's the Secret



It's all about where you find the nest. Let's think about it.

Altricial Bird: The baby birds that are helpless have their **nests in trees**. Not as many predators are high up in trees so the parents can protect and feed their babies until they're strong enough to fly by themselves.

Precocial Birds: The baby birds that can move around right away have their **nests on the ground**. Those babies need to be able to escape from predators when they're right there on the ground, even if they're hidden. (Mr. Coyote says, mmmm I love eggs and baby birds)

LESSON



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A great place at Wetlands Park to do today's activity: [Cottonwood Grove](#)

ACTIVITY

Bird	Adult	Baby	Biology
Mallard			<input type="radio"/> Precocial <input type="radio"/> Altricial
Dove			<input type="radio"/> Precocial <input type="radio"/> Altricial
Owl			<input type="radio"/> Precocial <input type="radio"/> Altricial
Coot			<input type="radio"/> Precocial <input type="radio"/> Altricial
Hummingbird			<input type="radio"/> Precocial <input type="radio"/> Altricial



Takeaway... A question for today: What wild animals would eat an egg?

[Click here to answer.](#)



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Just for Fun

American Coots nest on the ground. And partly in the water.
Because their nests FLOAT!

Can you build a floating nest?

Let's see if you're as clever as a Coot in building a nest.
Use anything in nature that you think might be good to build a floating nest.

Ask yourself these questions.

1. Am I using only things I found in nature?
2. Does it stay together?
3. Does it float?
4. Can it be hidden?
5. Is it comfortable for baby birds?

After you build your nest give it a test.

Maybe you should ask someone if floating it in the kitchen sink
or your tub is a good idea before you start.

Lots of parks have water but make sure it's safe before you touch it.

At Wetlands Park, we don't come into contact with the water.



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