Monthly 4-H Club Activity
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Recycled Bird Bungalow

Objective: To construct a bird house using recycled materials from home. This activity promotes Reduce, Recycle and Reuse concepts, environmental impact and natural resources education.

Age Range: All ages

Hands-on Activity: Design, construct, and build a bird house from repurposed materials

Life Skills: HEAD = wise use of resources, critical thinking; HEART = concern for others; HANDS = responsible citizenship.

Introduction

Bird houses are a useful addition to every backyard. Bird houses provide shelter and protection for nesting birds, as well as young hatchlings once they emerge from the egg. Early spring is an ideal time to provide structures where birds can build their nests. Express your creative side using the suggested materials and construct your own upcycled bird bungalow!

Activity Materials

- Empty 2-liter bottle (or similar)
- Non-toxic glue (hot glue or silicone-based works well)
- Scissors or craft knife*
- Yarn or twine
- Permanent marker
- Decorations (acrylic paint, non-toxic markers, decorative tape, etc.; Avoid beads or jewels that could be ingested)

*Adult supervision or use is strongly recommended when cutting plastic.

Activity Instructions

Planning is the most important step of any project!

1.) Start by asking, "What types of birds have you seen in your backyard?" "Have these birds nested in any of the trees or bushes?"

Figure 1. Example birdhouse made from a decorated 2-liter plastic bottle.

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2.) Begin brainstorming; think of creative ways to construct a bird house using the materials list. Look around your home and see if these materials are available for you to use. The challenge is to reuse and repurpose what you already have.

3.) Use a marker draw a line around your bottle about 6 inches from the top. This is where you will cut the bottle in half using your sharp pointed scissors or craft knife. Have an adult assist or, at a minimum, supervise all the cutting steps.

4.) Draw a circle (2-3 inches in diameter) on the bottom half of your bottle. The circle should be 2 inches from the base of the bottle, which will be the entrance to the bird bungalow. Cut out the hole and avoid leaving any sharp edges that could injure birds.

5.) Cut scalloped edges around the bottom edge of the top half of the bottle to create the roof of the bungalow.

6.) Attach the top of your bottle to the bottom of the bottle by running a line of glue along the cut rim of the base (bottom) and placing the roof (top of the bottle) on top of the glue. The glue will adhere and fuse the two bottles together. Let it sit for a few minutes to set.

7.) Poke a small hole in the bottle cap and run one end of the yarn or twine through the hole. Create a loop around your hand and run the other end of the line or string back through the hole. Secure the loop by tying a knot or two at the base of the cap. Screw the cap back onto your bungalow bottle top to hang up your bungalow.

8.) Construction is complete. Using acrylic paint, decorate your new bird house! Coat the outside of the bungalow completely.

**Reflection**

What would you change if you did this activity again? What environmental impact do you think your work will have? What else could you do?

**Conclusion**

Repurposing plastic water bottles is an inexpensive way to support local wildlife. Continue to activity by monitoring the use of the nesting structure you have created throughout the year. What type(s) of birds use it?!

**Resources:**


Dóbiász, A. 2015. How to make a Bird Feeder. [https://youtu.be/zHj8CEn2i2M](https://youtu.be/zHj8CEn2i2M)