



Suggested for Pre-K and up, or the entire family!

## **Art and Nature:** ***Become a Birdwatcher!***

Birdwatching is a popular outdoor activity. Birdwatchers carefully observe and listen for birds in their natural habitats. They often draw (or photograph) the birds to record their features. Every once in a while, lucky people spot a bird that is very rarely seen!

### **Did you know you can go birdwatching at the MAG?**

Artists often include birds in their artworks, along with details about their habitats. And the birds in artworks are easy to study—they don't fly away!



### **Hummingbird in Brazil**

American artist Martin Johnson Heade saw this hummingbird in Brazil. Similar birds visit our area in summertime.

- What does the artist tell you about the hummingbird's habitat?
- Have you seen hummingbirds in your neighborhood? Were their feathers the same colors as this one?
- What do you know about hummingbirds? What do they eat? How fast can they flutter their wings?

Martin Johnson Heade,  
*Hummingbird with Cattleya and Dendrobium Orchids*, ca.1890.  
Oil on canvas. Harris K. Prior Memorial Fund, 1976.3

*More birds on the following page . . .*





Unknown Iranian (Persian), *Kubachi Ware Tiles*, 1500s.  
Ceramic. Gift of Mrs. Cady Hews Allen. 1921.2

## Birds in Iran . . . from over 500 years ago!

These birds are on a tile that was once part of a set that created a scene on a wall.

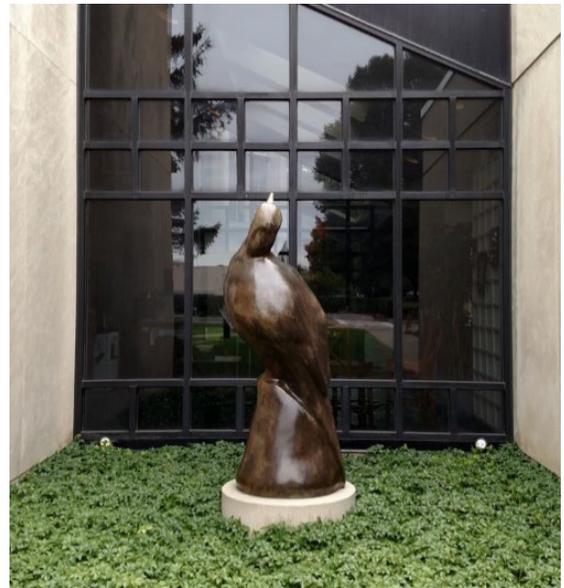
- What kind of birds are these?
- How would you describe their features?
- What are they doing? What clues does the artist give you about the birds' habitat?
- Have you seen birds like these in real life? Where did you see them?

## Lost Birds

Millions of passenger pigeons lived all across the US. Sadly, they became extinct when their habitat was destroyed and too many were hunted for their meat.

This sculpture is part of artist Todd McGrain's *Lost Bird* series, created to remind us of what we have lost.

- Can you find this sculpture hiding outside the MAG building?
- What other birds have become extinct in the US? Draw or paint them to memorialize them.



Todd McGrain, *Passenger Pigeon*, 2007.  
Bronze. Clara and Edwin Strassenburgh Fund, 2007.26  
© Todd McGrain

**What's in the name?** Passenger pigeons were wild birds and got their name because they were always "passing by." Carrier pigeons are domesticated birds that were trained to carry messages during WWII.

**Do you know about the I Bird NY Challenges? Continue to the next page to find out!**

## Become a Birdwatcher!

Go outdoors, and watch for the different birds living in your backyard, neighborhood trees, or nearby park.

- Describe the bird's size and shape.
- How many colors do you see? The feather markings around the bill and eye are often very distinctive.
- Look closely at the bill (beak). Its shape and size give a clue to what they eat.
- Listen. Birds communicate by sound and sight. You probably already know some bird sounds like the chirping of sparrows, or cooing of pigeons.
- Watch how the bird-moves.
- What is the bird doing? You may see a bird carry food in its beak to feed its young, or fibers to build a nest.
- Watch for patterns. Birds are creatures of habit and you may see them make multiple trips back and forth to their nest.



### Are you 16 years old or younger and live in New York State? Join the I Bird NY Challenges this summer!

Use your observation skills and find the birds on the list. Successfully complete your challenge and you will be entered into a drawing for fun birding accessories. Challenges are open through September 30.

Click the ***I Bird NY*** icon above to begin!

