

Help the birds with their nests!



As you know, spring is the breeding season for a lot of species! Did you know that there are many species of birds that nest in urban areas? They use our hedges, trees and even man-made structures!

Unfortunately, they sometimes use artificial material to construct their nests that can be harmful to the nestlings and even the adults. Bits of string, wool and even human hair can wrap around their legs, wings or necks and cause harm.

The Ecomuseum Zoo is issuing you a challenge! With your family, collect nesting material from the list provided to offer to the birds. Place this material in a spot in your garden or on your balcony where it is possible to observe the birds from inside your home. What next? Watch! How many birds came to take advantage of the material collected? Are you able to recognize a few species?

Why is it important to encourage birds to nest? Many songbird populations are decreasing at an alarming rate due to habitat loss and pesticide use. Many feed on insects that can be problematic for humans. By helping protect songbird species we can help maintain a natural balance between all of the species that make up Quebec's biodiversity!

Share your bird photos with us! We can even help you to identify the species that have chosen to nest in your area.

To collect :

- Dead leaves
- Pine needles
- Tree bark no longer attached to a tree
- Small branches and sticks
- Dead outdoor plants
- Dried grass
- Spider webs
- Mud
- Natural cotton balls (can be pulled apart into pieces)
- Cat or dog fur (UNLESS the animal has recently received a topical treatment against parasites and fleas)



Do NOT offer :

- Human hair
- Artificial material (nylon, plastic, wrappers, ribbons, tape)
- Dryer lint (contains residues of detergent and artificial fibres)
- Dental floss
- Food (bread, rice, crackers...human food can make birds very sick!)

What purpose does all of this nesting material serve?

- Provides a cushion to protect the eggs from the ground and from being crushed by the weight of the parents;
- Insulates the eggs from changes in temperatures;
- Protects the eggs from wind and rain;
- Camouflages the nest to hide it from predators;
- Keeps the eggs together to make incubation easier.

