

## WHY DO BIRDS MAKE NESTS?

A bird's nest is a structure or a shelter that birds build to protect their eggs from bad weather, certain predators and much more. Since there are many types of birds, there are many types of nests, and they come in many different shapes and sizes. No two nests are ever exactly alike!

## HOW MANY WILD BIRDS DO WE HAVE IN PENNSYLVANIA?

Here in Pennsylvania, the [Game Commission](#) is responsible for managing 480 species of wild birds, wild mammals, and their habitats for current and future generations! We have 414 species of wild birds, including 285 that regularly occupy of the state, while 129 species are less frequent visitors. [Click here to view the whole list of wild birds that call our state home.](#)



## LISTEN TO A STORY ABOUT NESTS

[Watch the Game Commission's Story Time, "Dr. Seuss's The Best Nest," with Courtney to learn about bird's choosing the best places to build their nests.](#)



# ALL BIRDS NESTS ARE DIFFERENT

Just like all birds are different, all nests are different, too! Some birds build huge nests in trees, some build small nest in bushes. Some birds don't build nests at all.

The [bee hummingbird](#) is known for making the smallest nests in the world; their nests are only about an inch in diameter. That's the size of a quarter! Can you imagine fitting in something so small? (They don't live here in Pennsylvania, but it's still a cool fact to know.)

But the [bald eagle](#), our national bird, certainly DOES live here in Pennsylvania, and is known for having some of the largest nests in the world. They can be between 6-10 feet in diameter and 6-10 feet tall! That's taller than most Christmas Trees. Can you imagine building a nest that large? [Check out the Game Commission's livestream of a bald eagle's nest in our state to see the nest up close and personal.](#)

## LET'S MAKE OUR OWN NEST!

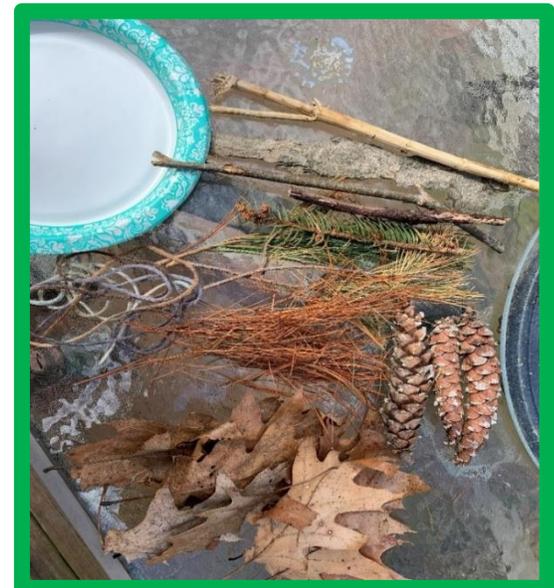
Grab a bag, basket or bucket and head outside to look for commonly used nest-making materials. Remember, no two nests will ever look the same and there are plenty of potential options for choose from.

Keep in mind that birds don't have the luxury of having hands and a basket when they're gathering their materials. They have to make many trips back and forth!

Here are some ideas for materials to collect outside:

- **Twigs**
- **Pine Needles**
- **Leaves**
- **Moss**
- **Yarn (Can be from Inside)**

Once you've collected your items, separate them so you know what you have to build with. Grab a paper plate from inside to help with the construction. (Hint, you'll need many more small twigs than are pictured to the right.)



Start by laying materials across the bottom of the nest and then build the sides up from there. Strategically place the twigs and sticks to build the walls, use yarn or pines to help weave the twigs into place.



Finish up by placing a piece of moss or some loose grass in the center.

**If you were a bird, would you like to live in the nest you created? Do you think you did a better job than a bird could do?**

**Would your nest stay together in the wind and/or rain?**

**Try blowing a hair dryer on it to test it out! If it makes it through the “wind storm,” try pouring some water over the nest to see how it would fare.**

