

Raincoast Field School @ home: “Shorebird Migration” Raincoast Challenge

This week has been all about shorebird migration!! Thousands of shorebirds stopover in Tofino in late April / early May during their northward migration to the Arctic where they will breed, fuel up, and raise their young. We are right in the middle of their Pacific Migration Flyway Route, so we are a critical stopover for globally significant numbers. These birds can be found on the Tofino Mudflats, as well as our beaches and rocky outcrops. We hope that you will use your new knowledge about birds to go check them out! But please remember, each bird is only here for 3 to 4 days and needs to feel safe so it can fuel up for the rest of its journey, so please respect their distance, keep quiet, and keep our birding areas clean!

Join us on Thursday with your Raincoast Challenge so we can hear which birds you saw, and where you saw them!

Challenge #1: Migratory Superheroes Worksheets!

Continue your learning and test your knowledge with three fun activities from the US Fish & Wildlife Service: A Word Search, Build a Shorebird, and What Can I Eat With This Bill?

Challenge #3: Go out birdwatching!

Visit the mudflats, beaches, or rocky shorelines in Tofino or Ucluelet and look for some birds! Remember to keep quiet and give them lots of space.

Challenge #3: Record your observations!

Try to identify the birds you saw by observing all their specific adaptations. Bring your favourite bird ID Book, use an app, or look at one of the many free birding websites online. Record their call and where you saw them, then draw them!

Materials List:

- Binoculars (optional)
- Bird ID book or App (optional)
- Raincoast Challenge observation recording sheet

SHOREBIRDS WORD SEARCH

Read about shorebirds and then find the hidden words in the puzzle. The words to look for are in bold letters. Search for the words across, up, and down and diagonally in all directions.

S	A	N	D	Y	B	E	A	C	H	E	S	I	P	J
E	V	P	E	T	T	M	I	D	O	X	D	J	U	P
T	O	R	G	S	A	R	M	X	L	K	R	S	G	L
A	C	E	A	A	T	E	I	Q	L	I	I	K	X	O
R	E	D	L	R	I	F	G	S	O	L	B	D	G	V
B	T	A	F	D	B	U	R	X	W	L	E	N	J	E
E	S	T	U	N	A	E	A	W	B	D	R	U	S	R
T	L	O	O	U	H	L	T	E	O	E	O	O	X	S
R	L	R	M	T	G	M	E	E	N	E	H	M	D	T
E	Y	S	A	N	D	P	I	P	E	R	S	N	U	A
V	L	E	C	S	D	N	A	L	S	S	A	R	G	L
N	F	S	T	L	I	T	S	W	E	L	R	U	C	F
I	C	H	J	L	A	D	A	P	T	E	D	R	G	D
X	K	R	O	I	V	A	H	E	B	P	Y	F	H	U
F	D	X	N	B	P	C	W	K	M	W	E	N	G	M

Shorebirds are a group of birds **adapted** to live near water. They include **plovers**, **sandpipers**, **curlews**, **avocets**, and **stilts**. **Killdeers** are a type of shorebird too. They use a variety of wetland **habitat** types including rivers and streams, **tundra**, **mudflats**, estuaries, bogs, and **sandy beaches**. Some shorebirds such as killdeers are adapted to live in **grasslands**.

Shorebirds have several adaptations to help them **fly**. They have **hollow bones** which provide a strong but lightweight framework. Their **feathers** are also light and provide them with warmth as well as coloration. Their wings

are long and pointed, perfect for long flights. Variations in the shape and size of their **bill**, the length of their legs, and their color can help you tell the different species apart. Their **behavior** also varies from species to species. They usually **nest** on the ground and their eggs are **camouflaged** to help them hide from **predators**. Most shorebirds feed on **invertebrates** found in **wetlands**.


Shorebirds may **migrate** great distances between their breeding and wintering areas. They may need to stop and **refuel** and rest along the way.

US Fish & Wildlife Service. "Shorebirds – Migratory Superheroes! A Student Activity Guide"



Build a Shorebird!

Add the correct beak, legs, feet and wings to complete the shorebird.


What *beak* would best help a shorebird probe in the mud for food?




Which *legs* would best suit a shorebird for its wetland habitat?

Which *feet* would best suit a shorebird for walking in its wetland habitat?



What type of *wings* help the shorebird fly long distance and escape quickly from predators?



US Fish & Wildlife Service. "Shorebirds – Migratory Superheroes! A Student Activity Guide"

WHAT CAN I EAT WITH THIS BEAK?

Activity Background: In a wetland or on a beach food is everywhere. Even though you cannot easily see it—shorebirds can! Each shorebird species has a uniquely adapted beak to find its food.



Whimbrel: I am a Whimbrel. I use my down-curved bill to probe **very** deeply into the mud for my food.



Western Sandpiper: Some people think my beak looks like tweezers when I eat. I probe the mud near the surface.

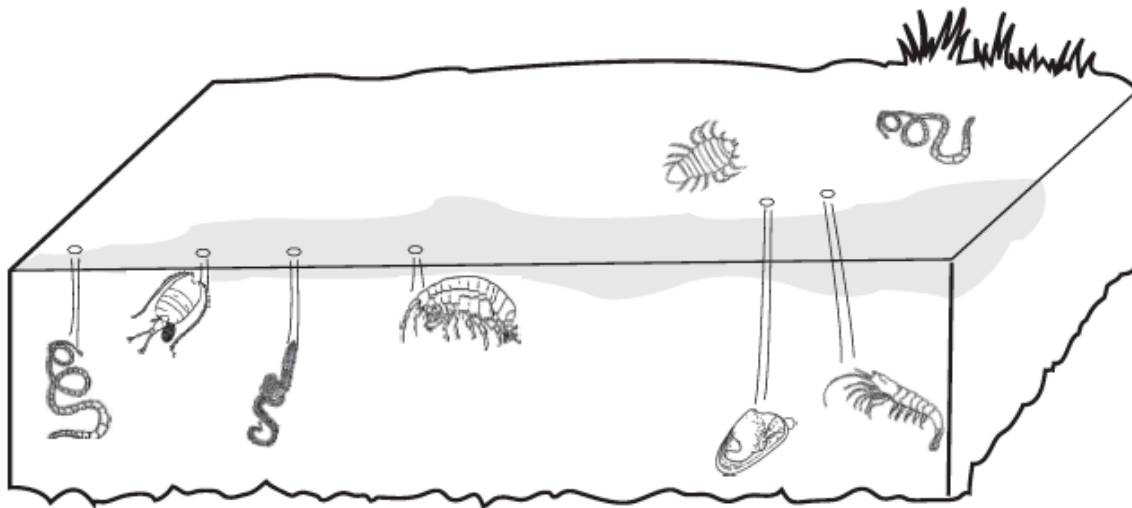
Activity Instructions: Below is a picture of a beach with food buried in the soil. Your task is to read the clues for each of the shorebird species and choose which food item in the picture you think the bird is best adapted to eat.



Sanderling: I nab insects on the surface of the sand and mud with my beak.



Long-billed Dowitcher: The clue is in my name! I probe deeply in the mud for food.



US Fish & Wildlife Service. "Shorebirds – Migratory Superheroes! A Student Activity Guide"

Shorebird Identification			
Bird Size:	Small	Medium	Large
Beak Size:	Small	Medium	Large
Beak Shape:	Downturned	Upturned	Straight
Leg Colour:	Black	Brown	Yellow
Belly Colour:	Light	Dark	Flecked
Head Colour:	_____		
Stripes on Head:	Yes	No	
Wing Colour:	_____		
Stripes on Wings:	Yes	No	
Other Features:	_____		

My bird is a :	_____		

Shorebird observations:

Bird name	Seen/Heard	#
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Notes: _____

Draw your shorebird above.