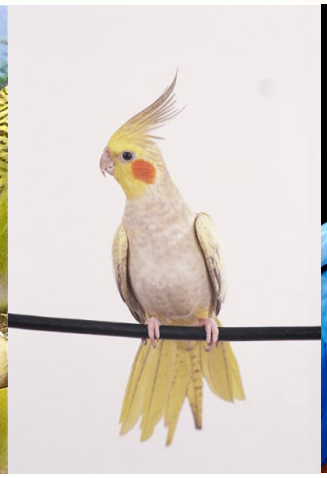
University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources

CALIFORNIA 4-H PROJECT SHEET SERIES
Publication 8601 | April 2018

UC PEER REVIEWED

4-H Bird Project



The 4-H bird project helps youth explore different types of birds from across the globe. This project may also help youth learn about the types of birds that fit into their family's lifestyle and how to be an excellent caretaker of their pet. 4-H bird projects may include topics such as:

- Identify different bird species and their characteristics.
- Learn about the selection, care, needs of birds, and basic principles of bird behavior.
- Demonstrate care and management in feeding, handling, grooming, and fitting/showing.
- Explore health regulations, first aid, and simple treatments for ailments.
- Learn and practice animal ownership responsibilities.

Starting Out *Beginner*	Learning More *Intermediate*	Exploring Depth *Advanced*
• Gather information and determine the best bird for a family. • Learn about proper care, grooming, and feeding. • Create a plan to prevent birds from getting lost and/or finding them. • Purchase and use appropriate grooming equipment and techniques. • Practice appropriate training for a bird. • Compare prices to shop for setting up an aviary.	• Plan a training and exercise program for a bird. • Prepare for participation in a bird show. • Make a decision about breeding or not breeding. • Compare labels on bird food to make an informed decision on content and price. • Keep a diary of a bird's health and eating habits. • Learn to identify parts of a bird for conversations with your veterinarian.	• Develop a business plan for a bird care or sitting business. • Assess careers related to birds and bird business. • Help a friend make a decision about bird ownership. • Research diseases in birds. • Identify symptoms and a course of action for a disease in a bird. • Do a presentation on how birds affect the environment and humans.

The activities above are ideas to inspire further project development. This is not a complete list.

4-H THRIVE

Help Youth:

Light Their Spark

A spark is something youth are passionate about; it really fires them up and gives them joy and energy. Help youth find how this project excites them.

Flex Their Brain

The brain grows stronger when we try new things and master new skills. Encourage youth effort and persistence to help them reach higher levels of success.

Reach Their Goals

Help youth use the GPS system to achieve their goals.

Goal Selection: Choose one meaningful, realistic and demanding goal.

Pursue Strategies: Create a step-by-step plan to make daily choices that support your goal.

Shift Gears: Change strategies if you're having difficulties reaching your goal. Seek help from others. What are youth going to do when things get in their way?

Reflect

Ask project members how they can use their passion for this project to be more confident, competent and caring. Discuss ways they can use their skills to make a contribution in the community, improve their character or establish connections.

Expand Your Experiences!

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

- Research the nutritional needs of your bird(s) and compare to nutritional needs of humans and other animals.
- Teach the basics of wildlife photography.
- Discuss migration paths and trail marking using GPS/GIS technology.

Healthy Living

- Discuss the necessity and practice of washing your hands before and after handling your bird.
- Discuss your bird's life expectancy, what to look for when it gets older, and how you might feel when it dies.
- Go hiking to watch birds in the wild.

Citizenship

- Vlog, blog, or chat with someone who raises cavies in another part of the country.
- Volunteer with an animal rehabilitation program that also accepts birds.
- Work with an environmental refuge to help build animal preserves.

Leadership

- Present to community groups about the information learned though the project.
- Become a role model for others by taking the position of Junior or Teen Leader in your project.
- Create a Teens as Teachers program to integrate wildlife projects in afterschool programs.

Resources

- Healthy pets www.cdc.gov/healthypets
- University of Illinois Pet Columns //vetmed.illinois.edu/pet columns
- American Vet Med Association www.avma.org/firstaid/ procedures.asp
- American Red Cross: Pet First Aid/ CPR www.redcross.org/pets
- California State Fair www.castatefair.org
- Birds as Pets handout www.extension.iastate.edu/4h/files/page/files/4H560Bbirdsaspets.pdf

Connections & Events

Presentation Days – Share what you've learned with others through a presentation.

Field Days – At these events, 4-H members may participate in a variety of contests related to their project area.

County & State Fair - Enter your animal(s) and show the judge what you have learned!

Contact your UC Cooperative Extension Office to determine opportunities available.

Curriculum

- Pet Curriculum
  -Pet Pals Level 1
  -Scurrying Ahead Level 2
  -Scaling the Heights Level 3
  -Helpers Guide
  http://shop4-h.org
- Youth Development through Veterinary Science- Is Your Bird Feeling Blue? http://4h.ucanr.edu/Resources/Curriculum/FREE/

4-H Record Book

4-H Record Books give members an opportunity to record events and reflect on their experiences. For each project, members document their experiences, learning and development.

4-H Record Books also teach members record management skills and encourage them to set goals and develop a plan to meet those goals.

To access the 4-H Record Book online, visit http://ucanr.edu/orb/

The UC 4-H Youth Development Program does not endorse, warrant, or otherwise take responsibility for the contents of unofficial sites.

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Publication 8601
ISBN-13: 978-1-62711-031-0

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An electronic copy of this publication can be found at the ANR Communication Services catalog website, http://anrcatalog.ucanr.edu/. This publication has been anonymously peer reviewed for technical accuracy by University of California scientists and other qualified professionals. This review process was managed by ANR Associate Editor for Human and Community–Youth Development Lynn Schmitt-McQuitty.

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