



The Bird Observatory

Equipment required (per group)

- Outdoor space for observation
- Natural materials for the observatory/bird hides
- 'Role Cards – Bird Observatory Team' worksheet (2 pages), one per group
- Internet enabled devices and internet access for research

To complete the activity

1. Begin by asking learners "What do you think a bird observatory does?" to gauge their understanding.
2. Explain that there is a bird observatory on Bardsey Island. You may wish to use the 'Bardsey Bird Observatory Education Pack' - www.tiramor.cymru/wildliferecording (Resource 8) to find out more.
3. Divide learners into groups of 4-6 and share the 'Role Cards – Bird Observatory Team' worksheet. Explain that learners are now wildlife conservationists working for a nature organisation tasked with building a bird observatory.

"Your conservation team has been hired to set up a bird observatory. Your task is to correctly identify and record different bird species. Scientists depend on your accuracy to track bird populations – mistakes could mean the wrong data being used to protect species!"

4. Ask learners to take on a different role within their Conservation Team. Encourage them to act as experts in their field and communicate their findings effectively. Encourage learners to describe bird features rather than guess if unsure. Remind them that correct recording helps scientists protect birds and their habitats! Learners may wish to use field guides (e.g. Collins Bird Guide), or online Merlin Bird Guide to identify species.

5. Support learners to build the bird observatory/hide, observe and collect data as required.

6. Ask learners to reflect on their mission and discuss findings.
 - What challenges did they face?
 - How could they improve the accuracy of their data?
 - Invite each group to share one key challenge and one proposed improvement with the class.

Encourage learners to think about their role as conservationists and the importance of their contributions.

Additional
TASK
Optional

Encourage learners to take part in the 'Big Garden Birwatch' citizen science initiative or input their findings onto the BTO's bird track recording system.

www.tiramor.cymru/wildliferecording (Resource 9).
www.tiramor.cymru/wildliferecording (Resource 10).

Role Cards

Bird Observatory Team



What you will need

- Natural materials for the observatory/bird hides
- Copies of 'Role Cards – Bird Observatory Team' worksheet, one per group
- Internet enabled devices and internet access for research

Welcome to the Bird Observatory Team!

Your conservation team has been chosen for an important mission – setting up a bird observatory to study and protect birds!

Your task is to identify and record different bird species and their behaviours. Scientists depend on your accurate observations to track bird populations. Mistakes could lead to the wrong data being used, putting some birds at risk.

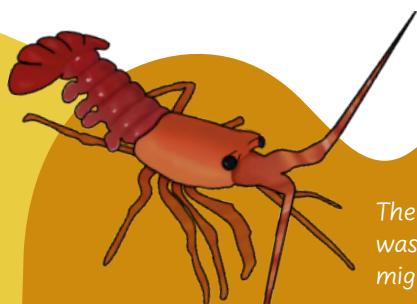
Each of you will take on a special role in your team, based on your skills and interests. Would you enjoy observing birds, designing hides, or tracking data?

Choose a role that suits you!

Every role plays a vital part in making your observatory a success.

Work together, share your findings clearly, and if you're unsure about a bird, describe its features instead of guessing—good records help protect birds and their habitats!

Stay curious, work as a team, and enjoy discovering the amazing world of birds.



The Bardsey Bird Observatory was founded in 1953 to record bird migration.

Role Cards Bird Observatory Team



Ornithologist

Your role

Study birds, observe size, flight, food and behaviour.

Help identify species.

Create a bird ID sheet to log bird species seen/heard, e.g.

Time	Bird Seen	Amount?	Behaviour	Location	Habitat Notes
10:15am	Robin	2	Pecking ground for worms	Near a tree	Lots of bushes nearby



Habitat Engineer

Your role

Design & build the observatory using natural materials.

Choose the best location for bird hides to observe discreetly.

Record features that might attract birds to the area.



Wildlife Tracker

Your role

Record all bird sightings. This may include bird species, behaviour, habitat, and time of sighting.

Keep a record of when and where you see each bird using tally charts for numbers.

Work with the Ornithologist.



Conservation Officer

Your role

Explain why birds need protection and suggest improvements to the birdwatching area.

Consider population trend data for birds sighted. www.tiramor.cymru/wildliferecording (Resource 11).



Media Specialist

Your role

Sketch or take notes on birds and their surroundings.

Help present findings using drawings, reports or videos.



Ecologist

Your role

Investigate the habitat - record nearby food sources (e.g. insects, berries, water, etc).

Log any environmental factors that might affect bird presence (e.g. weather, trees or other animals).

Suggest ways to improve the birdwatching hide.



Bardsey was once home to a 55-year-old Manx shearwater.