

Make Painted Birds for a Garden

During a nature walk, look for smooth rocks that sit like a little bird, or a piece of drift wood that looks like an up-turned bird tail. It's fun to look at natural objects with a new eye. Even the youngest child can enjoy painting "feathers" on a nature object.



What You Need

- Art smocks or aprons
- Newspaper
- Optional - Yellow or orange felt, googly eyes, glue gun, field guides, bird books, water-based varnish
- Paint
- Paint brushes or sponges
- Small bird shaped rocks or pieces of wood

What You Do

1.

Look for a nature object shaped like a bird.

Try holding them in your hand and see if they will sit nicely.

2.

If it is cold, let the object warm up to room temperature. If it is wet, let it dry out.

This is an activity you can do year round except when things are covered with snow.

3.

Paint your nature object any color or combination of colors that you desire.

If you want a “realistic” looking bird, you might pull out a book about birds for inspiration. Are there any birds with a body shape similar to your nature object? You could start by painting your nature object all over with one or two layers of color, and then letting that dry. Then you could come back with a finer brush to add details of wings, feathers, eyes or beaks.



4.

If you want to put your bird outside in the garden, varnish it.

To keep the paint lasting longer, use a painting sponge to put a thin layer of water-based varnish. Water-based varnish makes for a much easier clean-up and works great.

