

Memoirs of a Bird

True Life Accounts by Pee Wee of Western Woods

By: Christine Leipheimer and Kimberly Tozzi

Grade Level: 3-6

Time Period: about 7 days (depends on grade level and computer skill ability)

Objective: Students will write a tale from a “bird’s eye view” of the times and life of Pee Wee of Western Woods and how his neighborhood is becoming more populated. Students will investigate and learn the characteristics, habitat, migration, and food source of two birds found at the Grant-Kohrs Ranch and why they think there is an increase in their chosen species’ population.

Standards: MT Standards for Science

Content Standard 1: Students design, conduct, evaluate and communicate scientific investigations.

Content Standard 3: Students demonstrate knowledge of characteristics; structures and functions of living things, the process and diversity of life, and how living organisms interact with each other and their environment.

Content Standard 6: Students understand historical developments in science and technology.

MT Standards for Social Studies

Content Standard 4: Students demonstrate an understanding of the effects of time, continuity, and change on historical and future perspectives and relationships.

Content Standard 6: Students demonstrate an understanding of the impact of human interaction and cultural diversity on societies.

MT Standard on Technology

Content Standard 1: Students demonstrate an understanding of the basic operations of technologies.

Content Standard 6: Students apply technological abilities and knowledge to construct new personal understanding.

Mt Standards for Writing

Content Standard 1: Students write clearly and effectively.

Content Standard 2: Students apply a range of skills and strategies in the writing process.

Content Standard 4: Students write for a variety of purposes and audiences.

Materials: paper, pencil, computer with internet access, Microsoft Paint and Word computer programs, list of birds increasing in population at Grant-Kohrs Ranch: American White Pelican, Eurasian Collared Dove, Bobolink, Bullock’s Orioles, and the Common Grackle.

Websites: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MOB-Montana/> (image of Pee Wee membership is free, just register)

http://www.birds.cornell.edu/AllAboutBirds/BirdGuide/Western_Wood-Pewee.html
(Western Woods Pee Wee description)

<http://www.birds.cornell.edu/AllAboutBirds/BirdGuide/> (Bird guide)

Activity:

Day One: Teacher will introduce to the students the Western Wood -Pewee Bird, which is commonly found at the Grant Kohrs Ranch and will show the class a picture of the bird.

Characteristics of Pee Wee

Habitat

What he eats

Where he goes for vacation (migration)

The teacher will then introduce the character, Pee Wee of Western Woods (see story starter below).

Days 2 & 3: Students will be put into groups and then they will select one of the 5 birds that have increased in population at the Grant-Kohrs Ranch from 1999 to Present Day. Their task is to investigate their chosen bird and research the characteristics, habitat, migration, and food source. They also will need to hypothesize why there is an increase in that species' population.

Day 4: Students will write a story tying in the information about their chosen bird and its effect on the character Pee Wee of Western Woods using the story starter below.

Day 5 & 6: Students will use Microsoft Word to type their story. They will also use Microsoft Paint to draw the birds' habitat. First they must insert a picture of the chosen bird and Pee Wee from the Internet.

Day 7: Students will turn in their finished product. It will be published in a classroom book and displayed in the school library for all to enjoy.

Pee Wee of Western Woods

One early morning, while Pee Wee was perched on a lower branch of the Bebb Willow looking for insects to eat, he spotted an odd-looking bird. He knew this bird was from out-of-town, because he would have known if it was from around this neck of the woods. Pee Wee remembered hearing about reported sightings lately among his flock of friends. This started to worry him. With a puzzled look of concern, he started asking himself, why are they here? Where did they come from? What do they want? What do they eat? Are they dangerous?