



Binocular Seek and Find

Observe nature in a “scavenger hunt” matching game!

Episode: “For the Birdies” (11 min.)

With winter coming, Nature Cat and the gang want to make sure their bird friends have plenty to eat. By observing the neighborhood birds, they can figure out what kind of food each bird likes and build a bird feeder.

Episode curriculum goal: Different species of birds eat different kinds of food. The shape of a bird’s beak can give you a clue about the kind of food it eats.

Goal of Activity:

Exercise observation and comparison skills by searching for distinctive features of the landscape.



The Basics:

Number of children: Any number. Younger children may need help from an adult.

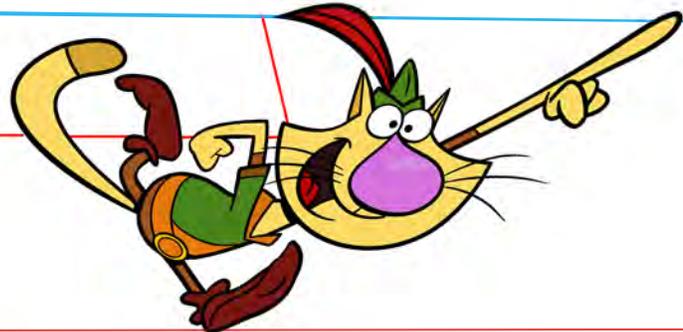
Space: Indoor or outdoor area with a view of a natural area (for example, a park, field, woods, group of trees, etc.).

Time: Approx. 10 minutes.



What You’ll Need:

- One camera
- Binoculars or telescope (one for each child, or children can share)



Preparation (before children arrive):

- Look at the landscape yourself, and choose several natural objects that look distinctive (e.g., a tree or boulder with an unusual shape, the edge of a lake).
Note: Do not choose animals or clouds that may move away before you do the activity with children.
- Take photos of the distinctive things that you chose. Be sure to take the photos from the same place where the children will stand, without zooming in, so that the photo looks similar to the real view.
- Print the photos and display them in the area where the children will stand.



Tally Ho! What to do:



- 🍂 Introduce the activity by telling children that they'll be going on a scavenger hunt...while staying in the same place the whole time!
- 🍂 Show children the photos. Explain that the goal is to use their binoculars or telescope to find the same things that are shown in each photo. How many can they find?
- 🍂 As children search, encourage them to think about the shapes and colors of the things they see and compare them to the photos. For example, which bush is the same shape as the one in the photo? Which tree has branches that stretch out in the same directions?

Onward and Yonward! Take It Further:

- 🍂 After you finish the scavenger hunt, take your binoculars or telescope on a nature walk. What plants and animals can you find? What do the binoculars or telescope help you notice that you couldn't see without them? (For example, the shape of the leaves on top of a tree or the color of a bird far away.)
- 🍂 Print and cut out a copy of the Nature Cat Wildlife Journal, and use drawings or photos to keep track of what you see.

Look in a Book:

To learn more about exploring nature, check your local library for books like these:

- 🍂 Wilsdon, Christina. **Far Out! Exploring Nature with Binoculars.** Simon & Schuster, 2000.
- 🍂 Russo, Monica and Byron, Kevin. **Watching Nature: A Beginner's Field Guide.** Sterling, 2002.

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