

## **Resources for Grandparents and Parents: How to introduce Toddlers and Young Children to Nature:**

Hopefully this list of resources is a starting point for you to introduce your toddlers to nature. There are so many resources and books available that it would be impossible to include them all. I recommend that you explore your local library or nature center for more ideas and programs to participate in. It is hoped that by introducing young children to nature they will develop a growing appreciation of the world around them and a desire to preserve our environment.

Check out local programs offered by Massachusetts Audubon or Trustees of Reservations. Or visit the Franklin Park Zoo or the New England Aquarium. Museum passes are available at your public library.

<https://www.massaudubon.org/>

<https://thetrustees.org/>

### **APPS:**

1. Merlin Bird ID: Merlin Bird ID is a free app from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology that helps you identify birds by sight or sound. It contains photographs and information about birds found in your location. This app can be used all over the world.
2. Seek by I Naturalist: Free app from I Naturalist that can be used to identify plants, animals, birds, and fungi. Just take a picture and this app will help identify what you are looking at in nature.
3. All Trails: Information about trails in all 50 states. Great for planning hikes, downloading maps to your phone, and exploring nature. Provides information about difficulty, length, handicap accessibility, dog-friendly, kid-friendly, parking, with reviews from other hikers/walkers. Small monthly cost of \$2.99/month or \$36 per year. <https://www.alltrails.com/>

### **Helpful Tools:**

1. Magnifying glasses: Crocodile Creek Magnifying Glass/Backyard: Easy to use.
2. Bugcatcher with 5X Magnifier: BugView by Carson Kids: Bug catching tool designed to catch and release insects. Easy to use with built-in magnifier. Assist children when using.
3. Life Cycle Animal Kit - Science Toy by Glinglong with 24-Piece Matching Game, Butterfly, Frog, Chicken, Bee, Ladybug and Turtle: Age 3+. Sorting cards with plastic

figures of various lifecycles- eggs, hatchings, young animals/insects, and adult animals/insects.

4. Hingham Public Library: Bird Watching Kit which includes 2 pairs of binoculars, one for adults and one for children, and Sibley's East Bird Guide are available for checkout.

### **Board Books for Infants–3-year-olds:**

1. "I am a Bunny" by Richard Scarry: Nicholas the bunny explores the seasons. Golden Sturdy Book, 1963.
2. "Little Green Frog" by Ginger Swift: Lift-a-flap book about a frog exploring the pond. Cottage Door Press, 2016.
3. "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" by Eric Carle: Board book about the life of a caterpillar. Penguin Random House, 1969.
4. "Birding for Babies: A Colors Book: Migrating Birds" by Chloe Goodhart. Learn colors while learning about birds that migrate. Penguin Workshop, 2022.
5. "Birding for Babies: A Numbers Book: Backyard Birds" by Chloe Goodhart. Learn to count while learning about common birds found in your backyard. Penguin Workshop, 2022.
6. "Mrs. Peanuckle's Bird Alphabet" by Jessie Ford. Learn about birds from around the world while learning the alphabet. Rodale Kids, 2018.
7. "Nerdy Babies- Ocean" by Emmy Kastner. Learn about the ocean with colorful pictures. Roaring Brook Press, 2019.
8. "Nerdy Babies- Insects" by Emmy Kastner. Learn about bugs with colorful pictures. Roaring Brook Press, 2019.
9. "Bee"- A peek-through board book by Britta Teekentrup. Learn how bees pollinate our world. Doubleday Books, 2017.
10. "Tree"- A peek-through board book by Britta Teekentrup. Learn about the seasons from an owl living in a tree. Doubleday Books, 2017.
11. "Moon"- A peek-through board book by Britta Teekentrup. Learn about the different phases of the moon, a perfect bedtime book. Doubleday Books, 2017.
12. "My First Book of Growing Food" by Asa Gillard. Learn how to grow vegetables and herbs at home with your toddler. Duopress, 2021. Terra Babies series.
13. "Tad and Dad" by David Ezra Stein. Board book about the loving relationship between a tadpole and his dad. Penguin Random House, 2015.
14. "Forest Tracks- What animal am I?" by Hannah Alice. Footprints and animals. Mudpuppy, 2024.
15. "The Very Hungry Caterpillar's Forest Hide and Seek" by Eric Carle. A finger trail lift-the-flap book through the forest. Penguin Random House, 2020.

16. "Songs of the Birds- A Guide to North American Bird Calls and Songs" by Isabel Otter. Press the sound buttons to listen to the songs of birds that live in different habitats. For ages 1-4. Tiger Tales (Penguin Random House), 2023.
17. "Swim, Splash, in the Sea! Let's Listen in the Ocean!" 10 Animal Sounds. Parragon Books. Push the buttons to listen to animals of the sea. Cottage Door Press, 2021.
18. "Owl Babies" by Martin Waddell. Wonderful story about three baby owls that wake up at night and discover that their mother is gone. Of course she returns, and says "What's all the fuss? You knew I'd come back". Candlewick Press, 2002.
19. "Little Wonders BUGS" by Rose Nestling. Interactive board book with tabs, flaps, and wheels to explore the world of bugs. Cottage Door Press, 2023.

### **Books For Ages 3-8**

1. "My Very First Outdoor Book" by Minna Lacey and Abigail Wheatley. Lots of ideas for things to do outdoors. Topics include bugs and slugs, pond life, beachcombing, jumping in puddles, trees and leaves, stargazing, birdwatching, clouds, and the night sky. Usborne Publishing Ltd., 2019.
2. "BIRD BLOCK" by Christopher Franceschelli. Lift-the-flap board book designed for ages 3+ but would be appropriate for a 2-year-old. Learn interesting facts about different kinds of birds. Abrams Block Book, 2025.
3. "Ducklings-A First Look" by Anna Anderhagen. Learn about baby ducklings in this book with real photographs. An early reading book for ages 5-8 but toddlers will enjoy looking at the photos and learning about baby ducks. Lerner Publishing Company, 2025.
4. "Birdhouse- a lift-the-flap book of discovery" by Libby Walden. Learn about the different types of birdhouses/nests that doves, ducks, woodpeckers, swallows, sparrows, and owls prefer to raise their young. Ages 5-9 but younger children will enjoy lifting the flaps to look inside. Kane Miller EDC Publishing, 2018.
5. "Nobody likes Frogs- A book of Toadally fun facts" by Barbara Davis-Pyles. Ages 4-8 but toddlers will enjoy the humorous way that true facts about frogs is told. Sasquatch Books, 2023.
6. "All the Birds in the World" by David Opie. Beautiful, colorful picture book exploring the diversity of birds around the world- their colors, sizes, nests, diets, beaks, claws, and where they live. Narrated by a flightless kiwi bird. Ages 3-8. Peter Pauper Press, 2020.
7. "Song of the Wild- A First Book of Animals" by Nicola Davies. Beautiful picture book of animals from around the world with interesting facts about insects, mammals, birds, reptiles, birds, and fish. Ages 3-8 but toddlers will enjoy looking at the pictures and learning about the animals. Candlewick Press, 2016.

8. "Counting is for the Birds" by Frank Mazzola, Jr. A counting book of common backyard birds visiting bird feeders. Charlesbridge Publishing Company, 1997.
9. "What's inside a Bird's Nest? and other questions about nature and life cycles" by Rachel Ignotofsky. Lots of information about the life cycle of birds: behavior, migration, nests, baby birds, and ecology. Crown Books for Young Readers, 2024.
10. "A Nest is Noisy" by Dianna Hutts Aston and Sylvia Long. Beautifully illustrated book about the many different types of wildlife that create nests including birds, reptiles, amphibians, mammals, insects, and fish. Chronicle Books, 2015. Other books by these authors include "A Seed is Sleepy", "An Egg is Quiet", "A Butterfly is Patient", "A Rock is Lively", and "A Beetle is Shy".
11. "Birds Make Nests" by Michael Garland. Explore the different types of nests made by birds around the world. Holiday House Books, 2017.
12. "Frogs, Toads, and Turtles- A Take-Along Guide" by Diane L. Burns. Commonly found frogs, toads, and turtles found in the United States. Information about what they look like, where to find them, and what they eat. Includes some easy-to-do activities. North Word Books for Young Readers, 1997. Other books in the series include "Rabbits, Squirrels, and Chipmunks"; "Birds, Nests, and Eggs"; Berries, Nuts, and Seeds"; Caterpillars, Bugs, and Butterflies"; and "Snakes, Salamanders, and Lizards".
13. "Robins" (In My Backyard) by Kate Riggs. Facts about the life cycle of robins with lovely photos of these birds we commonly see. Creative Education and Creative Paperbacks, 2017. Other books in the series include "Chipmunks", "Frogs", "Mice", "Moles", and "Squirrels".
14. "Does a Mouse Have a Mommy" an Early Experiences book by Fred Ehrlich. From spiders to turtles to humans-why some animals do not stay with their mothers after birth, while others (such as humans) need to be cared for. Blue Apple Books, 2004. Many other Early Experience books in this series.
15. "The Secret of the Egg" by Nicola Davies. Rhyming book about different types of eggs including those from fish, reptiles, birds, amphibians, and even the platypus. Beautifully illustrated by Abbie Cameron. Graffeg, 2018. Other rhyming books in the series include "Animal Surprises", "The Word Bird", and "Into the Blue". There is a companion series of "how to draw" books for children.
16. "How do birds sing a duet? A Book about Bird Behavior" by Clayton Tobias Grider. Fun facts about birds of the world include information about migration, flight, vocalization, diets, and nests. How do birds know where to fly when they migrate? How do woodpeckers know where to find bugs? How can a pelican fly without flapping its wings? Flowerpot Press, 2023.

17. "About Mammals" A Guide for Children by Cathryn Sill. Beautifully illustrated book about mammals- what they look like, where they live, what they eat. Peachtree Publishers, 2014.

### **Field Guides and Reference Materials**

1. "A Kid's Guide to Backyard Birds" by Eliza Berkowitz. Bird watching guide to common birds for children aged 6-8. Includes pictures, habitat, food, nests, and fun facts. A Bird Log in the book helps track birds observed. Gibbs Smith Books, 2023.
2. "Critters of Massachusetts- A Pocket Guide to Animals in Your State" by Alex Troutman. This pocket guide designed for use by children includes photos and information about commonly observed birds, amphibians, reptiles, and mammals found in Massachusetts. Information about habitat, diet, predators, migration is presented concisely with interesting facts. Adventure Publications, 2024.
3. "What it's Like to Be a Bird: From Flying to Nesting, Eating, to Singing What Birds are Doing, and Why" by David Allen Sibley. Vast amount of information about birds with answers to many questions about bird behavior, with focus on common birds found in the US. Beautiful illustrations by a world-renowned bird expert. Alfred A. Knopf, 2020.
4. "Sibley's Birding Basics- How to identify birds, using the clues in feathers, habitats, behaviors, and sounds" by David Allen Sibley. Using many illustrations, Sibley explains the basic concepts of bird identification. Alfred A. Knopf, 2002.
5. "The Backyard Bird Chronicles" written and illustrated by Amy Tam. Bird journal kept by the author as she observed birds coming to her backyard. Witty with beautiful illustrations of her bird visitors. Great night table book for bedtime reading. Alfred A. Knopf, 2024.
6. "Why Don't Woodpeckers get Headaches? And Other Bird Questions You Know You Want to Ask" by Mike O'Connor. Humorous book written by the very knowledgeable bird expert and owner of the Bird Watcher's General Store in Orleans, MA. Beacon Press, Boston, 2007.
7. "Naturally Curious- A Photographic Field Guide and Month-by-Month Journey through the Fields, Woods, and Marshes of New England" by Mary Holland. A monthly guide to what is happening in nature in New England. This book includes beautiful photographs taken by the author. Trafalgar Square Books, 2019.
8. "The Sibley Field Guide to Birds of Eastern North America: Second Edition (Sibley Guides)" by David Allen Sibley. A comprehensive field guide with illustrations by the author to identify birds found in the Northeast. Alfred A. Knopf, 2016.
9. "Peterson First Guides" by various authors and print dates. Concise field guides for beginning naturalists. These field guides focus on the mammals, insects, plants,

reptiles and amphibians, trees, and birds that you are most likely to see. Houghton Mifflin Company.

10. "Wildflowers of the Northeast" by George Miller. An Adventure Quick Guide with easy-to-use format. Adventure Publications, 2020. Other quick guides include birds, insects and bugs, rocks and minerals, butterflies, and stargazing.
11. "Sibley's Backyard Birds of the Northeast" by David Allen Sibley. Waterproof, foldable pocket guide to common birds of the Northeast. Earth Sky + Water, 2016. [www.earthskywater.net](http://www.earthskywater.net).
12. "Birds of the New England Coast" by Mark Garland. Waterproof, foldable pocket guide to shorebirds. Earth Sky + Water. [www.earthskywater.net](http://www.earthskywater.net).
13. "Sibley's Common Trees in the Cities and Towns of the Northeast and Upper Midwest" by David Allen Sibley. Earth Sky + Water, 2017. [www.earthskywater.net](http://www.earthskywater.net).
14. "Common Wildflowers of the Northeast" by Ulrich Lorimer. Earth Sky + Water, 2021. [www.earthskywater.net](http://www.earthskywater.net).
15. Folding Guides- Field Guides for All Regions and Wildlife. Over 170 titles cover different regions in the US. Great waterproof, foldable, pocket guides. Easy to use with detailed pictures. [www.earthskywater.net](http://www.earthskywater.net).

Diana Clarke

Hingham Land Conservation Board Member

Field Naturalist Certificate Program Student/Bird's Certificate Program Student-  
Massachusetts Audubon Society

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