

Activities- invasive species

1. Know your Birds!

The children have to recognise the parrot's silhouette among different bird silhouettes. Therefore, they have to know the native birds in their region and the characteristics of a parrot.

- **Material:** different bird silhouettes
 - In order to protect them from the weather and to be able to use them several times, it is advisable to laminate them.
 - The silhouettes should be marked with numbers on the back.

→ Now hang the bird silhouettes in a certain area in trees and bushes

1. The children have to find all silhouettes.
2. The children have to recognise which one is the invasive parrot species.
(Note the silhouette number)
 - a. You can ask which characteristics they recognised him.
(Ara: beak, long tail feathers)
3. The children also have to recognise the native bird species.
(Pigeon, Black bird, Stork, Raven, Hawk, Swallow)

→ Of course, you can use more native and invasive birds.



Hawk





Raven



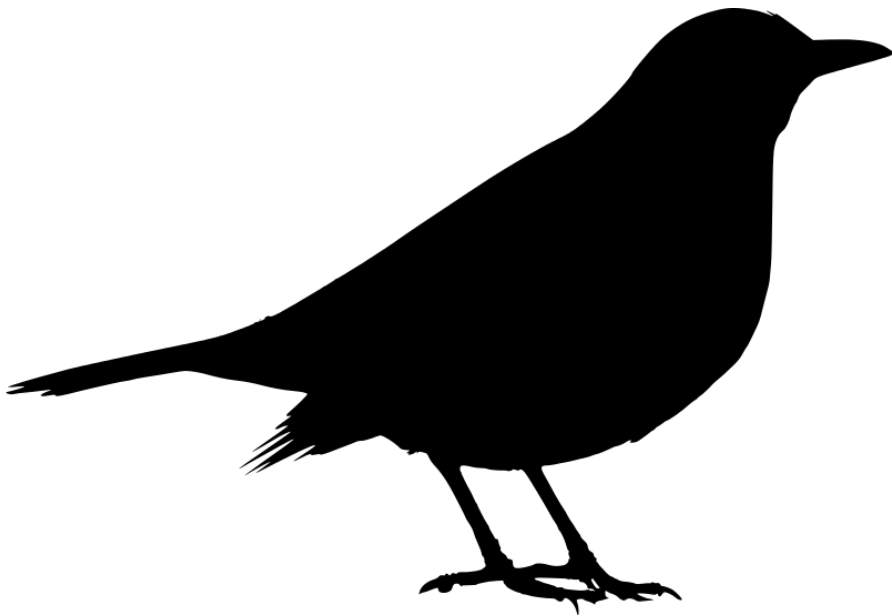
Stork



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Macaw



Black Bird



Swallow

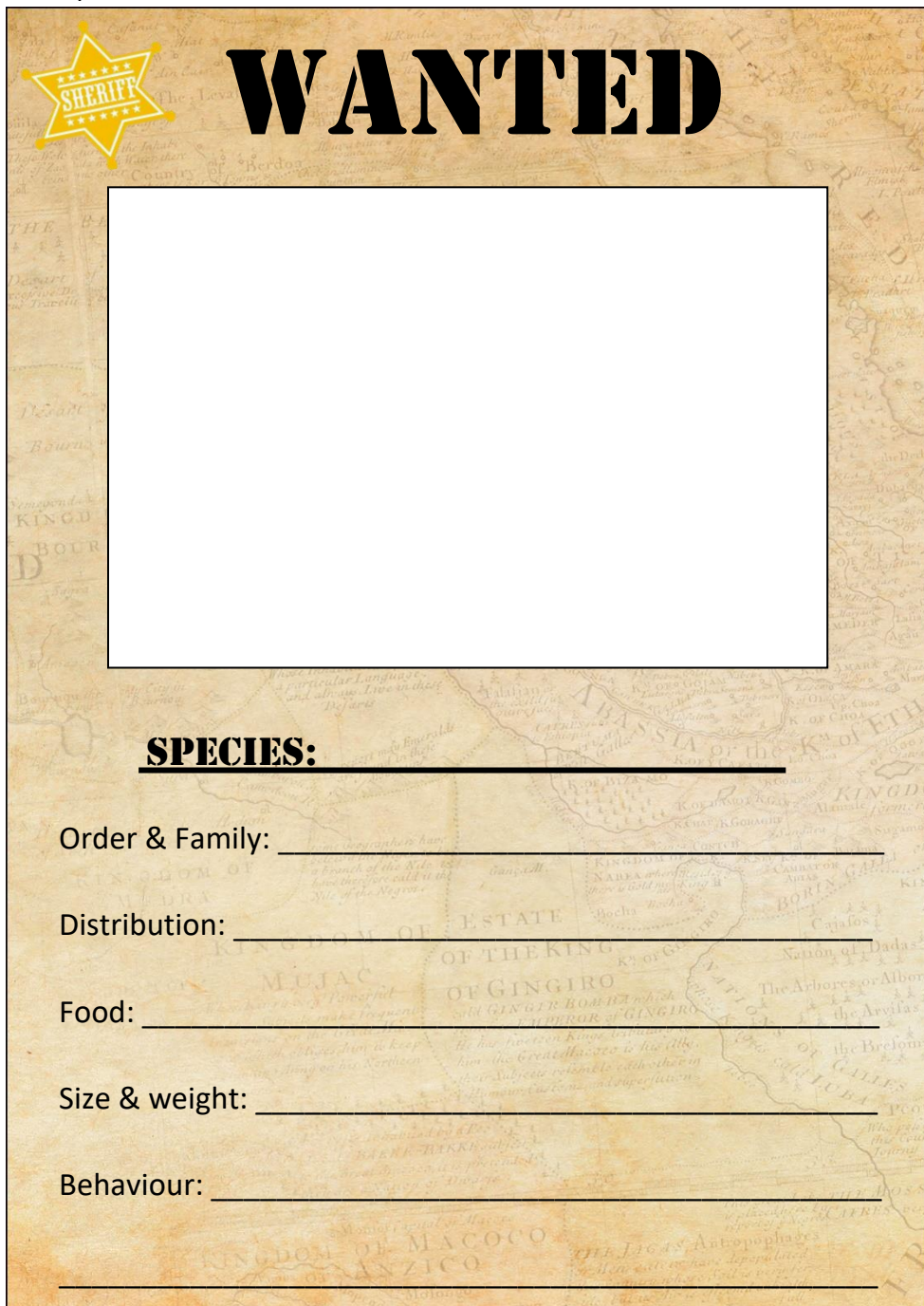


2. Wanted!

If your zoo keeps one or maybe more of the invasive parrots, you can see the parrots as criminals illegally residing in a wrong country. And these criminals are searched by the nature conservation authorities to bring them back in their native habitat. Therefore, the authorities need WANTED posters to find the birds.

1. Kids have to find the enclosure of the right species on their own.
2. Kids have to read the signs to complete the profile.
3. Kids have to observe the birds, to draw the parrot and to know their behaviour.

Example:



SHERIFF

WANTED

SPECIES: _____

Order & Family: _____

Distribution: _____

Food: _____

Size & weight: _____

Behaviour: _____



3. Adaptation wins

Invasive species are on the rise worldwide. The reason for this is their good adaptability, their competitive strength and the possibility to exploit free ecological niches. This game can be used to show their strong beak as an advantage over native bird species.

- **Material:** almond with shell, small pliers and nutcrackers

→ Divide the classes into two groups.

1. One group must try to open the almond shell with the small pliers. They symbolize the native birds. The other group can use the nutcrackers. They are the invasive parrots.
- 2.
3. The two groups must try to remove as many almonds as possible from their shells within a set period of time.

- The group of parrots will manage to open more almonds. Due to their stronger beak, they have a competitive advantage and can conquer a new ecological niche.

→ Have also a look to information material about invasive species. Monk parakeets cause damage to the cultivation of almonds in South Italy.

- Based of the game, the effects on agriculture can be discussed and what solutions can be found.



→ If you only want to explain the facts, it becomes more clearer if you show different tools and species that have such beaks, just like woodpeckers, waders and ducks.

It is then easy to imagine that birds with a beak like tweezers, a landing net or a chisel cannot open the shell.



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