**The Bird Project**

**7th Grade Science**

 Strong observational skills are one of the most important tools a student of science can develop. In order to develop and challenge our observational skills, students in 7th grade will complete The Bird Project.

**Project Overview:**

 Students will have until Friday, May 20, 2011 to correctly identify as many bird species as they can. Birds may be observed and identified only in the wild, but do not need to be observed only in the BVI. On May 20, students will turn in their completed Bird Project. It will be bound in a large, three-ringed binder and contain their collection of identified birds and other project materials.

**Project Guidelines:**

 For every individual bird that you wish to include in your final list, a numbered ID Sheet must be completed. The ID Sheet will assist you in recording relevant information about your bird sighting, such as location, weather conditions, number of individuals, etc. There is also room on each ID sheet to affix a picture of the actual bird you have sighted. Identification will not be confirmed without an actual picture that you have taken. Unconfirmed (not photographed) birds may be included in your final count. These numbered ID Sheets will comprise the main section of your Bird Project Binder.

 Each student’s Final Count will be tallied at the conclusion of the project. A confirmed (photographed) bird is worth 2 points. A confirmed bird listed as Endangered or Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List is worth 4 points. An unconfirmed (not photographed) bird is worth 1 point. Special recognition awaits any students who confirm a bird never before seen in the BVI.

 Lectures and demonstrations on bird observation, photography and identification will be conducted during class time. Recommendations of field guides to aid in identification will be discussed. Students will be allowed to purchase the recommended field guide(s) through Cedar School. Once per month a Bird Project Check-In Day will be held in place of a normal science class. This is to check on the progress of each student’s project and discuss any new developments.

**Assessment:**

 This project will be assessed using all six MYP Science Criteria. Detailed information about the construction of the final binder will be forthcoming, but it is important to know that this binder will include all of this project’s tasks. Grades will be given on a variety of these tasks including, but not limited to the following examples:

-The collection, organization and representation of field observations and data using Google Doc Spreadsheets.

 -One World Essay writing assignments.

 -The use of a field notebook to record observations.

 - Reflections on the skills developed during this project.

 -Bird Feeder construction.

 Detailed rubrics for every assessed task will be given to the students at an appropriate time. These individual tasks will have varied due dates, but will be returned to the students for inclusion in the final binder. All project documents will be available on the course website.

**Getting Started:**

 The main part of this project is the observation and identification of birds in the wild. To begin, familiarize yourself with your field guide and remember the observational skills taught to you in class. Then, notebook and binoculars in hand, step outside and begin this journey of discovery!