

bird

S2 W2

/bɜːd \$ bɜːrd/

noun [countable]

- 1** BIRD a creature with wings and feathers that can usually fly. Many birds sing and build nests, and female birds lay eggs:

wild birds

The dawn was filled with the sound of birds.

a flock of birds (= a group of birds flying together)

a wooden bird cage

- 2** WOMAN (BrE) (informal) a word meaning a young woman, which some people think is offensive

3 the birds and the bees

the facts about sex – used humorously or to children

- 4 a little bird told me (something)** (informal) KNOW SOMETHING

used to say that you know something, but you will not say how you found out:

A little bird told me that you've got engaged.

- 5 birds of a feather (flock together)** (informal) SAME

used to say that two or more people have similar attitudes, beliefs etc

6 give somebody the bird

- a)** (AmE) (informal)

to make a very rude sign at someone by holding your middle finger up

- b)** (BrE) RUDE/IMPOLITE

to show strong disapproval of someone who is performing or speaking in public, by shouting, making rude noises etc

- 7 a bird in the hand (is worth two in the bush)** USEFUL

used to say that it is better to keep what you have than to risk losing it by trying to get more

8 the bird has flown (informal) LEAVE A PLACE

used to say that the person you are looking for has already left or escaped

9 be (strictly) for the birds USELESS (old-fashioned) (informal)

to be silly, useless, or not practical

10 STRANGE **wise/wily/funny/weird etc old bird** (old-fashioned) (informal)

a person who seems wise, funny etc

11 do bird (BrE) (old-fashioned) (informal)

to serve a prison sentence

SYN do time

→ **early bird** AT EARLY¹ (9) ,

→ **kill two birds with one stone** AT KILL¹ (13)

COLLOCATIONSense 1

types of bird

a wild bird *Our organization aims to protect wild birds.*

a bird of prey (= that hunts and eats small animals) *A single bird of prey hovered overhead.*

a game bird (= that people shoot and eat) *They hunt game birds such as ducks and pheasants.*

a seabird/ sea bird *Sea birds are often the victims of oil spills.*

a songbird (= that makes pleasant sounds in order to attract other birds) *Hedges provide good protection for songbirds.*

a migratory bird (= that moves to different regions for the summer and winter) *This route is taken by many migratory birds going south.*

a flightless bird (= that cannot fly) *The emu is a large flightless Australian bird.*

phrases

a flock of birds (= a large number of birds together) *Suddenly a flock of birds flew up into the sky.*

bird + NOUN

bird song (= musical sounds that birds make) *The forest is full of bird song at all times of the year.*

bird watching (= the activity of watching wild birds) *One of his hobbies is bird watching.*

a bird watcher *The coast path is a paradise for bird watchers.*

verbs

a bird flies *Some birds fly incredible distances.*

a bird soars (= flies very high in the sky) *We watched birds soar in the blue sky above.*

a bird swoops down (= it suddenly flies down) *The bird swoops down on its prey.*

a bird flaps its wings (= it moves its wings up and down) *The baby birds were trying to flap their wings.*

a bird sings (= makes musical sounds) *I woke up to hear the birds singing outside.*

a bird chirps/ twitters (= makes short high sounds) *Birds chirped to one another from different branches of the tree.*

a bird squawks (= makes a loud unpleasant sound) *The bird in the cage started squawking.*

a bird builds a nest *By March many birds have already built nests.*

a bird nests *Many birds are nesting on the river banks.*

a bird lays its eggs *The bird lays a single egg on the ground.*

a bird pecks (at) something (= makes small movements with its head) *Some birds were pecking at the remains of a sandwich.*

a bird perches (= stands on something above the ground) *Beautiful white birds perched on the tree's branches.*

a bird hops (= makes small jumping movements) *A small bird*

was hopping across the grass.

a bird migrates The birds migrate from South America to North American breeding grounds.

Word origin

Language: Old English

Origin: *bridd*

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English

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