



Kid Stuff

Nurturing Nature

Kid Stuff philosophy: The screen is the launch pad. The real activity happens outside - where kids can observe, wonder, create, solve problems, and become helpers for nature.

The Night Shift

When night things take over!

Owls hunt. Bats search for insects. Tiny mammals leave their burrows. Moths visit flowers. Coyotes and other night animals move through the darkness. On some nights, birds from far away fly overhead on a long migration journey!



Night Explorer Challenge

Choose a safe place - your yard, porch, balcony, or a window with a view outdoors. Spend 5-10 quiet minutes after dark. You do not need to find an animal. Your job is to find proof that the night is alive.

- What is the brightest thing you can see? What is the darkest place you can see?
- What is the farthest sound you can hear? What is the closest sound?
- Do you notice movement you did not see at first?

The 5-Sense Night Challenge

SEE	Find one thing you could not see well during daylight.
HEAR	Find the quietest sound and the loudest sound.
SMELL	Notice one natural smell. Can you guess its source?
FEEL	Stand still. Is there a breeze or is it still outside?
IMAGINE	Think of one night animal. What might it be doing right now?

CREATE YOUR OWN NIGHT CREATURE

Invent an animal that lives at night. Give it **one special sense, one food, one way to hide, and one problem caused by humans**. Draw it and label its adaptations. Then write one thing people could do to make its night safer. Yay! Good job!

When Lights Change the Night

Artificial light can make our streets and homes safer - but extra light can also change nighttime conditions for wildlife. Migrating birds can be attracted to bright lights and become disoriented around lighted buildings that can pull birds into places where windows and other structures can create harm.

10-MINUTE MISSION: LIGHT DETECTIVE

Your job: Find **3 different kinds of artificial lights** around your home or neighborhood that can be turned off and still be safe.

Examples: landscape lights, an unneeded porch light, a bright sign, a light left on in an empty room, or a light shining upward into the sky.

Safety: Stay with an adult, stay on your own property or another safe observation spot, never step into a street to inspect a light, and never touch electrical fixtures. You are observing, not switching things off yourself unless an adult says it is safe and OK to do.

The night sky can be very busy! Many migratory birds travel at night. Billions of birds migrate in the spring and fall. Do you want to know whether birds may be migrating over your area tonight? Check out <https://birdcast.info/migration-tools/migration-dashboard/>

Be a Night Helper

Decide what you can do!

■ TURN OFF one unnecessary light	■ BLOCK light with a blind or curtain	■ SHIELD a light so it points down
■ OBSERVE migration with BirdCast	■ EXPLAIN the problem to someone else	■ INVESTIGATE a wildlife-safe change

Puzzles!

<https://www.jigsawplanet.com/?rc=play&pid=160237e10f8b> On the move!

<https://www.jigsawplanet.com/?rc=play&pid=1d42520161cb> Yum!

<https://www.jigsawplanet.com/?rc=play&pid=262827381d2d> Whooo?

FOR ADULTS

The activities in this article are designed for observation from a safe location. For a window-collision victim, contact a qualified wildlife rehabilitator for instructions.

SOURCES & FURTHER EXPLORATION

Cornell Lab of Ornithology / All About Birds: “The Basics of Bird Migration: How, Why, When, and Where” (updated April 2026). Most birds migrate at night; discusses nighttime travel and migration threats.

• **Cornell Lab of Ornithology / All About Birds:** “Why Birds Hit Windows - and How You Can Help Prevent It” (current page). Explains the role of artificial light at night and why many collisions occur at dawn/day because of reflections.

• **BirdCast:** <https://birdcast.info/migration/> - migration forecasts, live maps, dashboards, and local migration information.