

Looking for a way to engage with your learner more deeply through our videos? Use these guiding questions to dig a little deeper as you explore Field Museum collections and research at home!

# THE BIRDS AND THE TREES



**Run time:** 2:17

**Suggested age level:** elementary grades, tweens and teens

**Essential question:** How is animal classification a work in progress?

**Key vocabulary:**

**Systematics** – A branch of biology dealing with classification

**Ornithology** – The study of birds

**Molecular Analysis** – Studying genes and DNA

**Guiding questions:**

1. What factors do scientists consider when deciding how to categorize birds on display in exhibits?
2. If you were a Field Museum scientist, how would you organize the bird hall?
3. How has molecular analysis changed the way animals are classified?
4. What other unexpected animal relatives can you think of?

**Take action:**

1. Find a spot outdoors to observe the birds around you.
2. Observe the features of the birds such as size, color, wing shape, and beak shape.
3. What birds do you think are related to each other? Why do you think that?