

# SCIENCE LAB

## PRE-LAB BIRD RESEARCH

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### BACKGROUND

Just as bird beaks are different from one another depending on what kind of food a bird eats, the wings and legs of different bird species can also be different from one another. The wings and legs of birds are a reflection of each bird's "feeding niche," that is, its method for searching for and catching its food. Some birds, like the nighthawk, may have long, pointed wings and short legs, because they are adapted for catching insects during flight. Other birds, like chickens, are adapted for foraging on the ground and have long legs and short wings. In this lab, you will test to see if data from bird skeletons supports this theory. But first, you must learn more about the species you are testing.

### RESEARCH

First, go to the website [www.allaboutbirds.org](http://www.allaboutbirds.org). Using the Search function, search each common species name in the table below. Next, fill in the table with the appropriate information you find on the site. After reading about the behavior of the bird, predict whether the legs will be longer or shorter than the wings for each species.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Foods	Behavioral Category	Prediction (Legs Shorter or Longer?)
Common Nighthawk				
Ruffed Grouse				
Caspian Tern				
Cooper's Hawk				
Broad-winged Hawk				