

Challenge # 3 - Tuning in while tuning out

Color in nature is made up of interactions of light – either playing upon surfaces and reflecting out (structural) or absorbing wavelengths (pigment). Our lives are colored landscapes. The colors we are surrounded by, assemble and adorn ourselves with, help paint the portrait we live in. We interact with color every moment – whether we see it or not. Color is a constant companion in nature, and for birds changing color is often necessary for survival.

Exploring Ornithery

Find a space outdoors, or view from a window.

Look for living things that match every color of the rainbow: Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Indigo, and Violet.

Seek out colors in the birds around you.

- How many colors can you see in the birds you observe?
- Can you match the colors of the rainbow with birds in your area?
- Challenge yourself and see if you can pick out multiple colors on a single bird.
- Are there patterns? Do you think the patterns are adaptive? In what ways do they enhance the likelihood of survival of the bird?

Colors and patterns are abundant in nature.

When we take a closer look, we might see things we've never noticed before.

Think about today: are you reflecting or absorbing the color around you?



During difficult times, looking to nature can provide us comfort, distractions, and bring perspective amidst changes to the color of our landscape of life.

What is Ornithery?

Ornithery is the mindful observation of birds benefiting our minds, bodies, and souls. Surrounding us all the time, birds offer a gateway into deeper experiences with nature.

Research shows that exposure to nature actively reduces:

- Stress
- Depression
- Anxiety



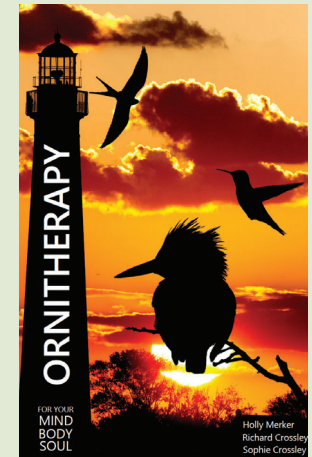
While helping to promote:

- A stronger immune system
- Creativity
- Focus Productivity



Coming Soon! ORNITHERY - For Your Mind, Body, Soul

A new book by Holly Merker, Richard Crossley, Sophie Crossley. Their new book will be available for purchase in Spring 2021 at www.crossleybooks.com



Excerpted from Ornithery: For Your Mind, Body, and Soul
Holly Merker, Richard Crossley, Sophie Crossley

Challenge # 1 - Tuning in while tuning out

We are all pressured by the stimulus of the world around us, whether we are animals, plants, birds, or fish. The expectations and demands of our attention, whether real or perceived, can suck us in and we often lose focus of our goals.

By allowing ourselves to tune out of life's pressures for just a few moments, we can tune into a space that allows our minds to flourish and our bodies thrive.

Exploring Ornithery

- Go outdoors – in your yard, garden, or local park, and find a comfortable place to rest for a bit.
- Close your eyes.
- Shut all other noises out and just listen. Fine tune your ears and mind to hear only birds.
- Listen and focus for two minutes, taking mental notes of what you hear.
- Start a journal and write down what you hear.

You do not need to ID birds to make this effective.

Ask yourself these questions:

- Did I hear more than one bird?
- Did I hear more than one type of bird?
- What other sounds did I hear?
- Try to describe one of these sounds in words.

Repeat this again... later today, or tomorrow. Gradually increase time spent listening. See what changes. Do you hear more?

Are you more able to focus once you've practiced?

In time, this will come easier. You will hear more. Your mind will find a new peace, and you will long for more connections to the world around you.

This is mindfulness through birds and nature.



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Challenge # 2 - Finding Diversity

The world spins and relies on biodiversity. Each system, every community, thrives through diversity in nature. Within biodiversity, each link is an important connector to productivity and success. In the avian world, diversity abounds.

When we open our eyes, we can see the niche filled by birds in their required habitats, and our shared world.

Exploring Ornithery

In a single day, challenge yourself to find as many different types of birds as possible. This can be from right outside your door, during a walk, or wherever your day takes you.

Keep a running tally, and see if you can find birds on that list that do the following:

- Hop
- Continuously flap during flight
- Flap then glide
- Appear never to flap while aloft
- Have an undulating flight pattern
- Soar in circles
- Climb up a tree
- Climb down a tree
- Bathe in dust
- Drum on wood
- Float on water
- Dive underwater



What was your “best” observation of the day? Was it a behavior you noticed? An individual bird? By looking for diversity in birds, we can learn a lot about them and how they are adapted to their habitats. Can we also learn something about ourselves and how we adapt to our environments?