Who's Here? Investigating Birds with Observation + AI

Your Task

You will investigate which birds live around your school by:

1. Observing carefully
2. Recording data
3. Using an AI app (Merlin Bird ID, iNaturalist, Apple Photo, Google Photo App, etc)
4. Testing whether the app is correct

Important Rule

The app does NOT give answers. It gives suggestions.
Your job is to decide if those suggestions are supported by evidence.

Investigation Question

What bird species can we identify around campus, and how confident are we in those identifications?

Field Procedure

At each observation station:

Step 1: Observe (Do not use an App Yet)

Spend 2 minutes watching and listening.

Record:

- What do you hear?
- What do you see?
- Where is the bird?
- What is it doing?

Step 2: Record Raw Data

Write only observations (no guesses yet)

Examples:

“Three short chirps repeated”

“Small brown bird hopping on ground”

Step 3: Use the App

Turn on your App (Merlin Bird ID, iNaturalist, etc):

- Use Sound ID or photo/ID features
- Record ALL species it suggests

Step 4: Verify

For each suggestion, ask:

- Do I hear that sound again?
- Does the bird match the size/color?
- Does the behavior match?
- Does the sample sound match what I heard?

Step 5: Assign Confidence

For each bird:

- **Confirmed** = strong evidence (seen/heard clearly multiple times)
- **Likely** = some evidence, but not complete
- **Unconfirmed** = app suggested it, but no strong evidence

Data Table

Location	Time	Habitat	Observations	App Suggestion	Evidence	Confidence

Class Analysis Questions

After collecting data:

1. Which birds were most common?
2. Which locations had the most birds?
3. Which identifications were most reliable?
4. Did the app ever suggest something you couldn't confirm?

Reflection

Answer in complete sentences:

1. When was the app helpful?
2. When did it create confusion?
3. What made an identification trustworthy?

Big Idea

Good science is not about getting answers quickly.
It is about collecting evidence and making careful decisions.