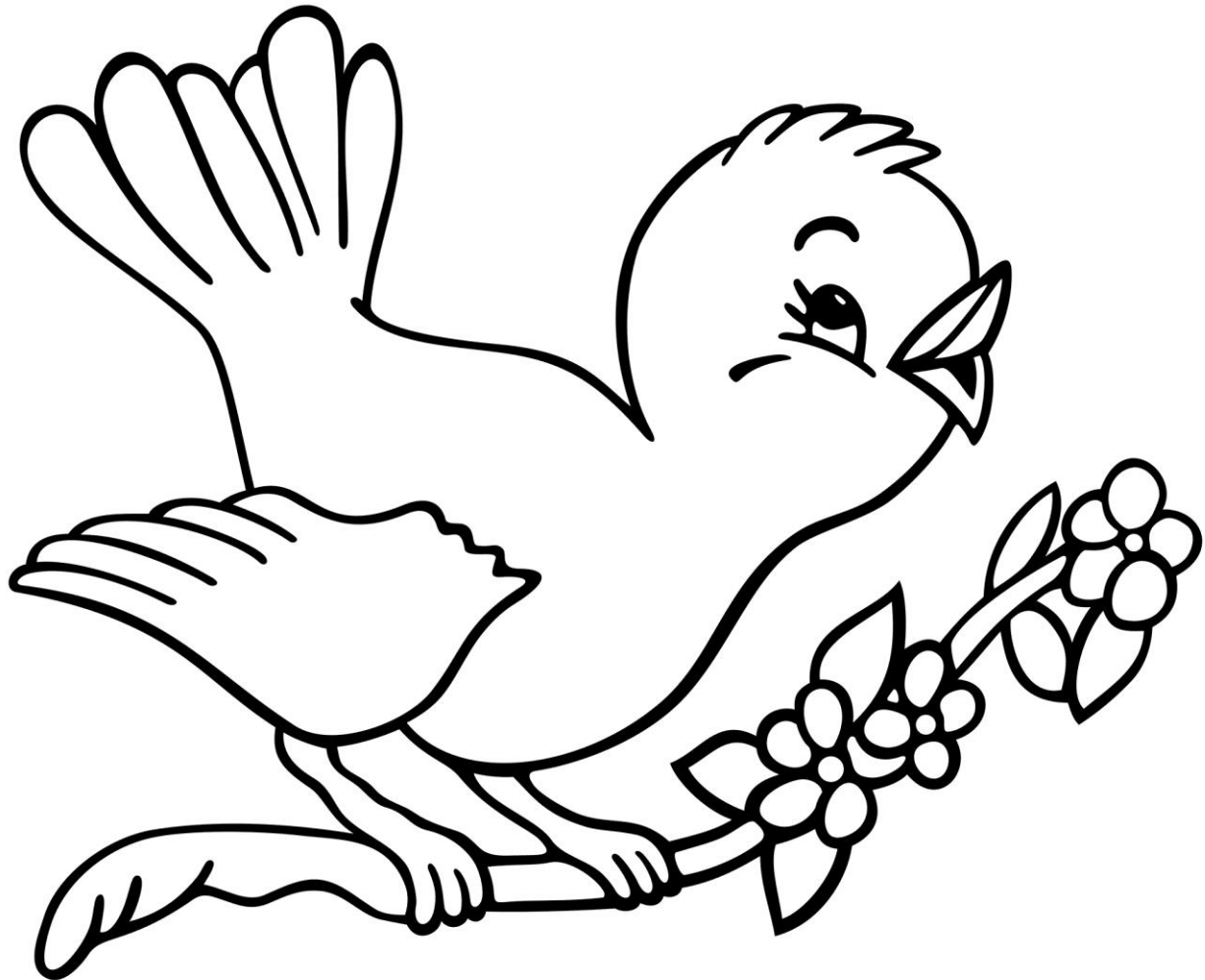


Christmas Bird Stories and Songs

By Kathy Warnes



The Goldfinch and the Crown



I sing sweetly and flash my color gold,
My eyes scan worlds and my heart beats bold,
I sweep the blue sky with powerful wings,
They help me conquer whatever life brings.
I feast on thistles and thrive on thick thorns,
I build strong nests where my babies are born.
Then one year seeking a newer face
I built my nest in a different place,
Weaving tightly, I tucked it snugly thin.
In stable rafters close behind an inn.
My babies chirped for food, but I took time,



To watch a baby in the manger climb,
Laugh at the lambs and wave at the donkey,
Snatch the starlight flooding the room brightly.
As I fed my babies bits of thistle down,
The manger baby clutched a thorny crown,
His mother smiled my mother's smile,



“I’m Mary, come sit with me awhile.”

Then my hasty heart turned humble and tame,

When she said, “I already know your name.”

The Tale of the Nightingale



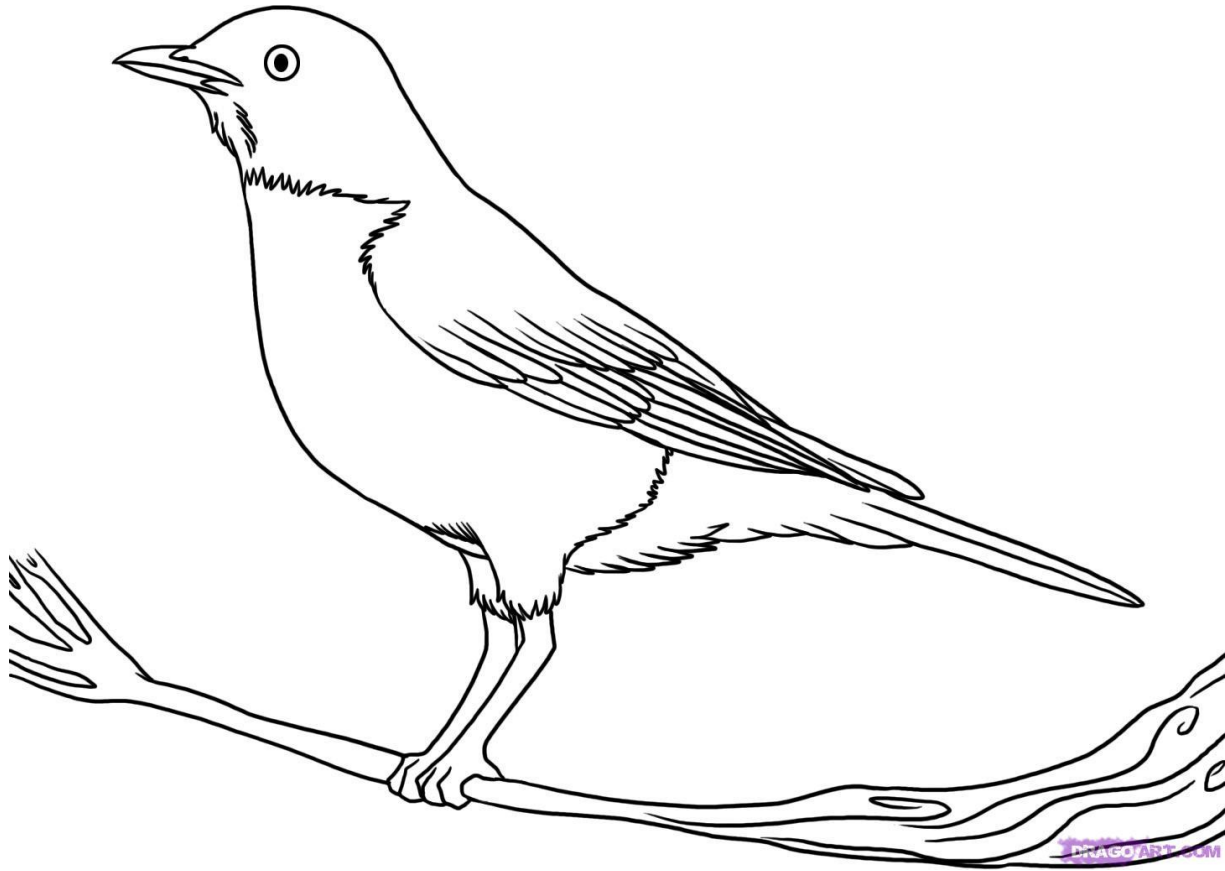
Small, brown and plain, I am a humble bird,
Struggling to make my tiny voice heard,
Mostly contented to live within me,
Yet sometimes I glimpsed what I dreamed could be.
I dreamed myself singing a song so pure,
It hid false notes and screeches for a year.
Waking days my songs came out common brown,

Ordinary as feathers daily grown.
Then one night after I had gone to bed,
A flower song floated above my head,
The notes were daffodils and daisies,
Dancing in a warm and gentle spring breeze.
Other notes carried away all the need
Of using slingshots or buying birdseed,
Sang of a world of plenty and peace,
I didn't want that song to ever cease,
And I didn't want to make the mistake,
Of opening my eyes full wide awake.
Then angel faces and angel voices,



Shouted, “ Wake up, glad tidings and rejoice,
Wake up and come join the angel chorus,
We need your voice to sing and blend with us.”
“I don’t believe you need my quiet song,
I don’t sing loud and I can’t sing for long,”
They smiled at me, “We know you’re not coy,
You don’t know your voice brings the gift of joy.
You sing of God’s joy and of God’s delight,
In the gift He sends the world this night.”
They flapped their wings, but I still shook my head,
Could it be true what these angels said?
A shining angel tapped me with his wing,
“Come join us and open your mouth and sing.”
I opened my mouth with hope and great care,
And my heartfelt song of praise filled the air,
I’m still small and brown but I sing with joy,
About a manger and a baby boy.

The Robin and the Sleepy Shepherds



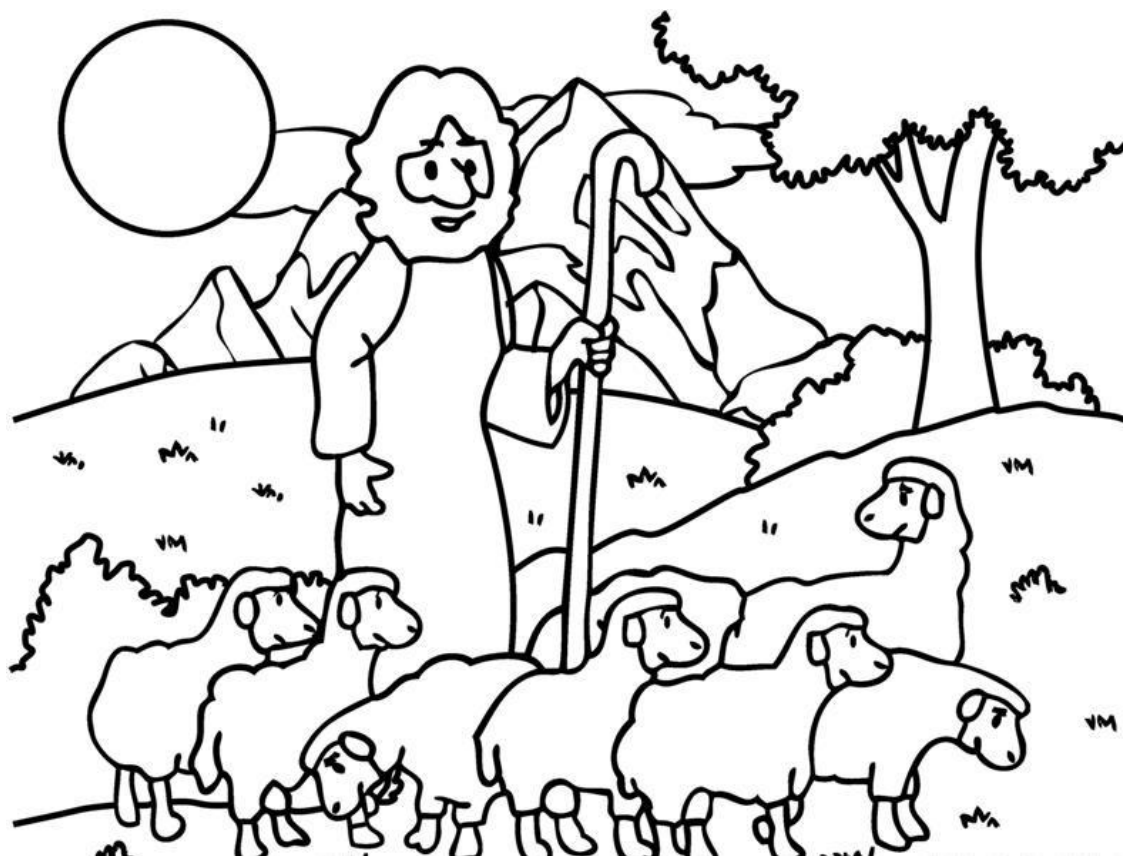
I, perched on a branch of an olive tree,
Outside the walls of Bethlehem city,
My olive gray breast blended with the bark
I watched the fire dance, sputter and spark
The night tiptoed in, face starry and deep
While the shepherds snored, peacefully asleep.
Sleepy, I tucked my head under my wing.
I, a robin, believed that I could sing,
But angel choirs- some loud and some long,

Woke my ears with notes unearthly and strong
They sang the story of heaven's delight,



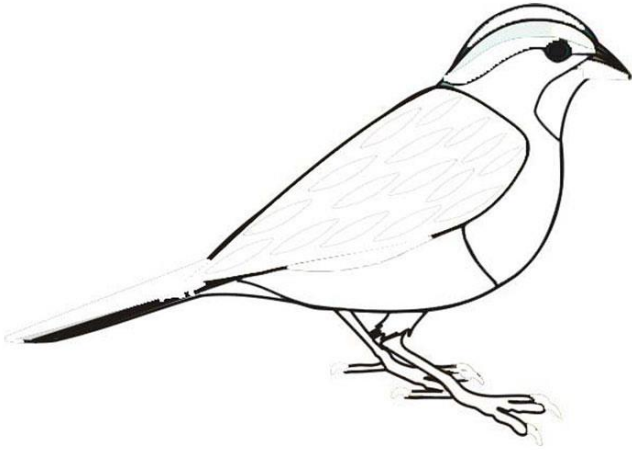
Glad tidings of a child born this night.
Angels light lit up the heavens beyond,
While the shepherds snored nearly to the dawn.

Suddenly I, too, sang angel stories
Notes from heaven describing its glories,
Music stairways to heaven up and down,
While snoring shepherds still slept on the ground.
I resolved to jolt the shepherds awake,
Flapping my wings in a thunderstorm shake,
I fanned the shepherd's fire up so high,
The flames followed the angels to the sky.
I stood flapping my wings- shaking my head,
The flames singed my breast from olive to red,
After great wing flapping and greater noise,
Finally the shepherds opened their eyes!
Collecting their sheep they took hurried flight,



To the stable to witness the miracle night,
The red breasts of all robins tell the story,
Of the Christ child's birth and shepherd's glory.

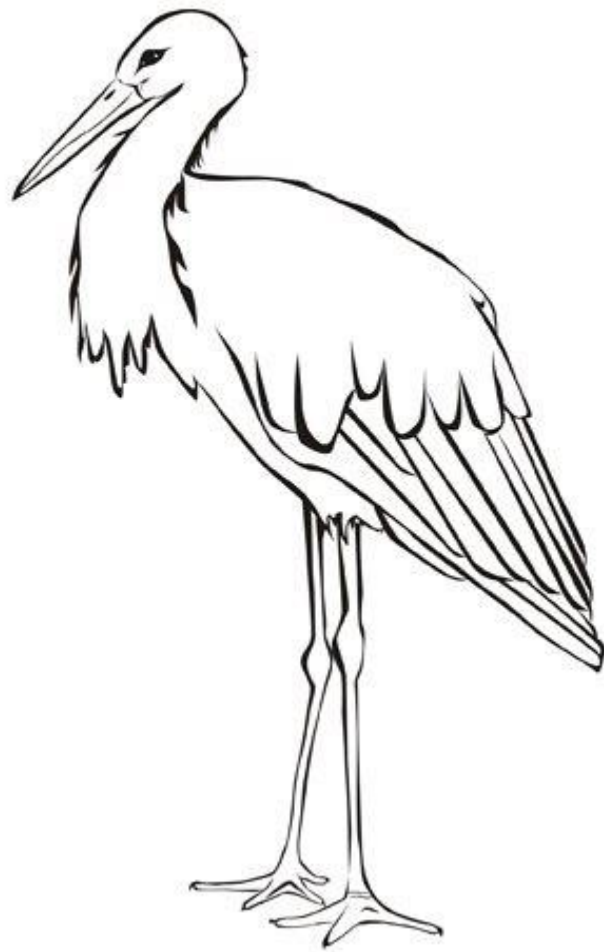
One Small Sparrow



If I had a colored peacock tail,
If my feathers weren't so brown and pale,
If my voice were lark lilted or crow loud
I would seek Him, I'd join the flocking crowd,
The wise old owl and the bright blue jay,
Have treasures to give Him every day.
The cardinal gave red feathers home grown,
The robin a worm he dug on his own,
I, sparrow, had for the gift of my best,
A pussy willow twig picked for my nest.
While I waited in that crowded stable,
Mary beckoned, "Come here when you're able."
I made my way through the crowd of the worthy,

What did the mother of God want with me?
Why did Joseph smile and stroke my head?
“Give your gift to the child, “Joseph said.
When I bent over to give my gift to Him,
The pussy willows tickled his chin,
He held out his hands and laughed merrily.
I laughed too; our laughs blending perfectly.

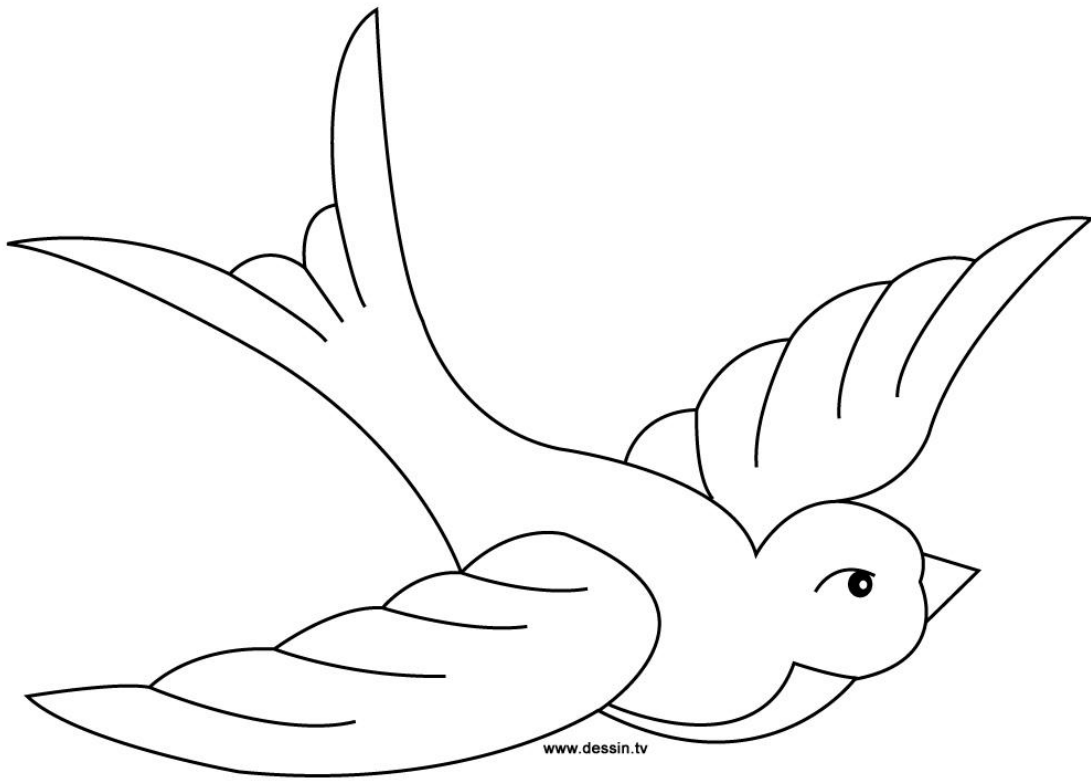
Silent Stork



She comes back each year but she makes me wait,
When she at last arrives I, stork, celebrate,
By building a stick nest on a chimney top,
I welcome spring with a jump and a hop.
I salute her with a kiss from my beak,

Since I can't sing and have no voice to speak.
But my eyes have seen and my heart has heard,
Here's my story, I shout every word.
An angel brought a virgin tidings of joy
He told Mary she would have a baby boy,
His name would be Jesus and from the start
His life would transform the human heart.
I watched them all by the manger at rest
I watched them all from my rooftop nest.
I beak wove their stories into my soul,
I take them with me wherever I go,
It's not what I speak but it's what I do,
(Legend says I sometimes bring babies too!)

Swallow on the Stable Wall



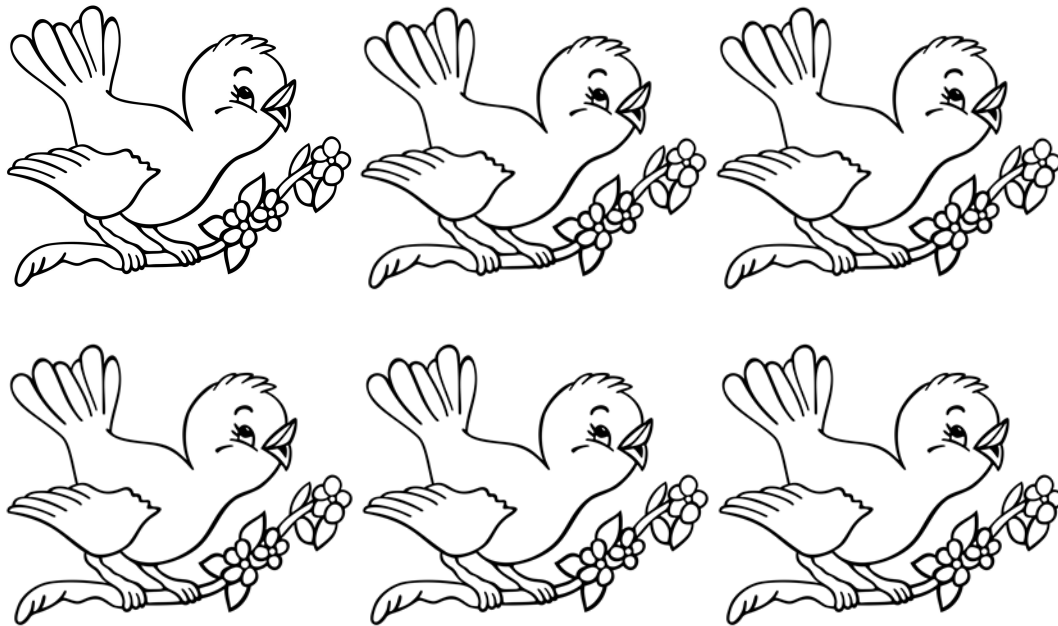
Medieval people thought winter bound,
Swallows buried themselves in the ground,
Then they returned at the first sign of spring,
To build their nests and community sing.
Some Renaissance painters thought swallow nests
With a stable wall viewpoint were the best.
Building my nest and keeping babies fed,
I don't have time to peek above my head!
But I assure you I fly south each fall,

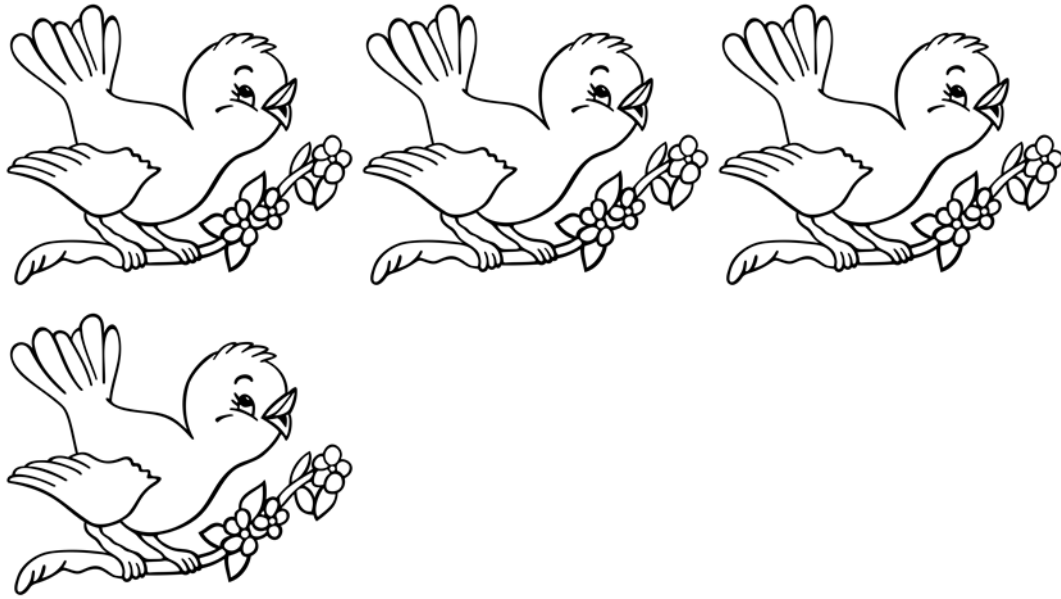
I don't spend the winter buried at all.
I enjoy the south's warm and buggy best,
While the north snow flakes through its winter rest.
Then siren spring calls me with her wiles,
I fly over long life stretching miles,
Returning to the home I love most on earth
Thinking about Christ's stable and rebirth.

The Ten Birds of Christmas

(To the tune of “The Twelve Days of Christmas”)

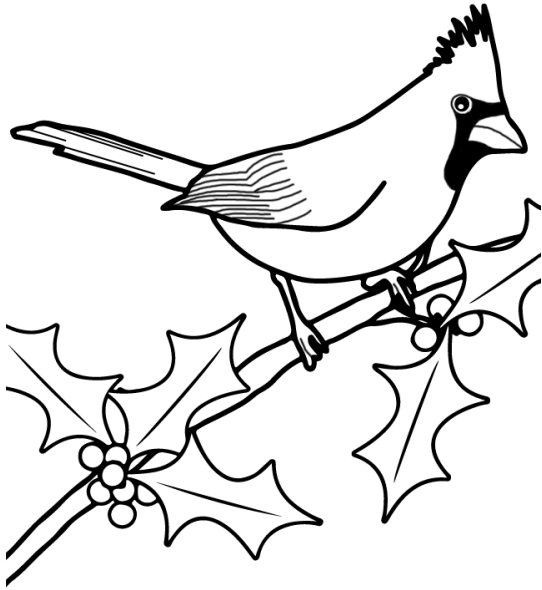
There were ten birds of Christmas each sitting in a tree,
And they all told their stories to me.



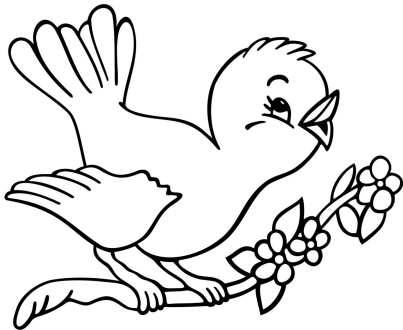


While the ten birds tell me their stories,
Color me with Christmas glory!

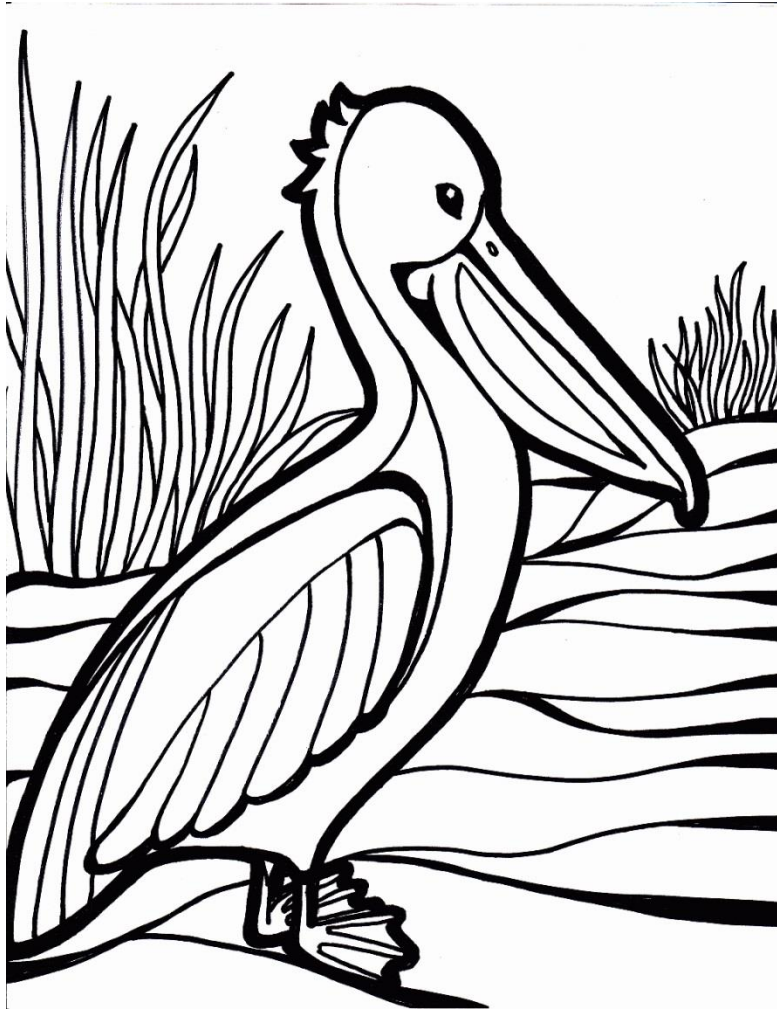
Quiet Cardinal



I am a cardinal singing you much Christmas cheer,
I live north all 12 months of the year,
My eggs hatch in 12 days and I give to you,
Twelve holly berries and a dozen fruit cakes too!
There were ten birds of Christmas each sitting in a tree,
And they all told their stories to me!

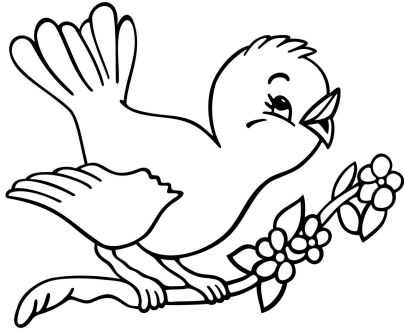


Perky Pelican

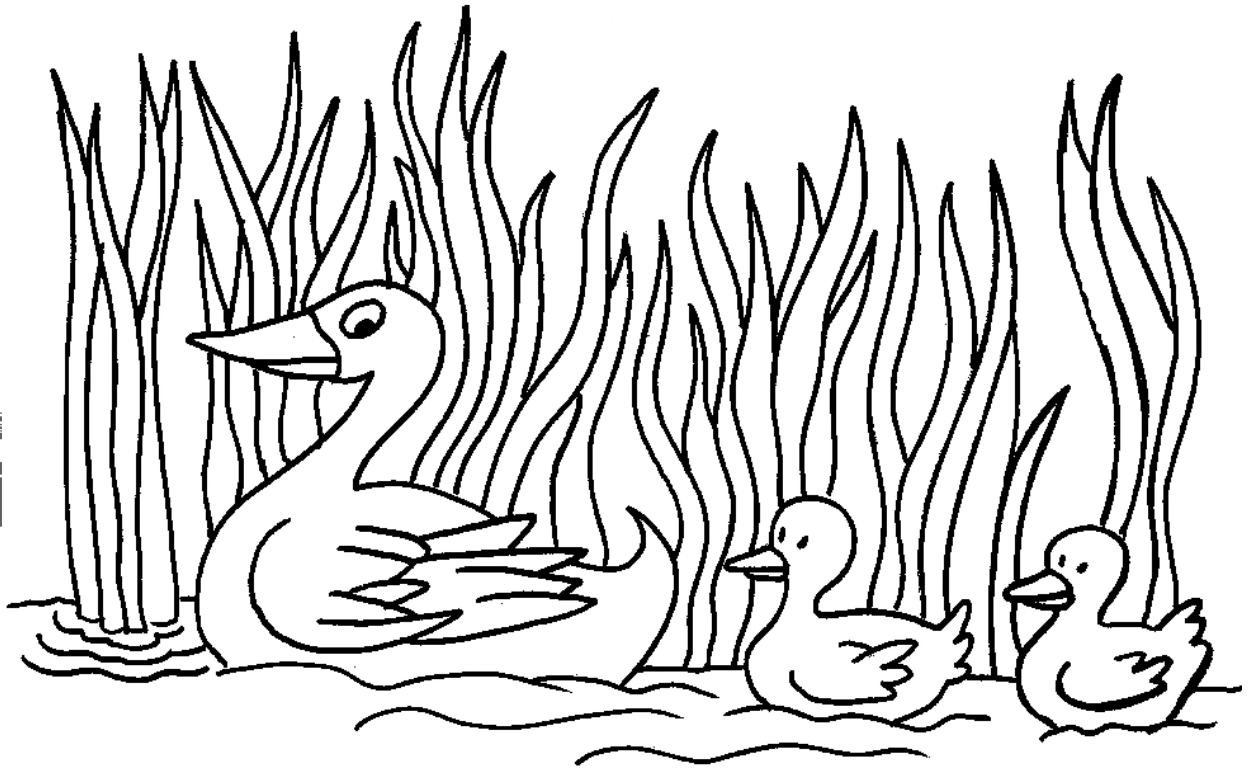


Legend says I fed my babies with my blood,
Sacrificing like Christ for everybody's good,
I, pelican, became a symbol of the Savior,
Middle Ages artists drew me with much favor,
To be a symbol of Christ is my greatest wish
But I'm more remembered as a gulper of fish,
Speaking very honestly while I'm yelling,

I don't squawk loudly enough for story telling,
Then I remember fishing boats creaking by,
The power of a baby's small cry.
There were ten birds of Christmas each sitting in a tree,
And they all told their stories to me!



Lucky Ducks



Quack! Quack! I am mother with my two baby ducks.

My two babies and I are down on our luck,

Our pond froze stiff when winter came down,

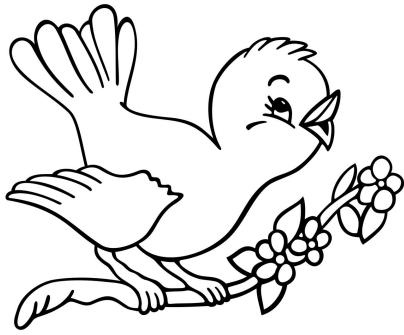
So we are just swimming around and around,

Looking for a home to make our beds,

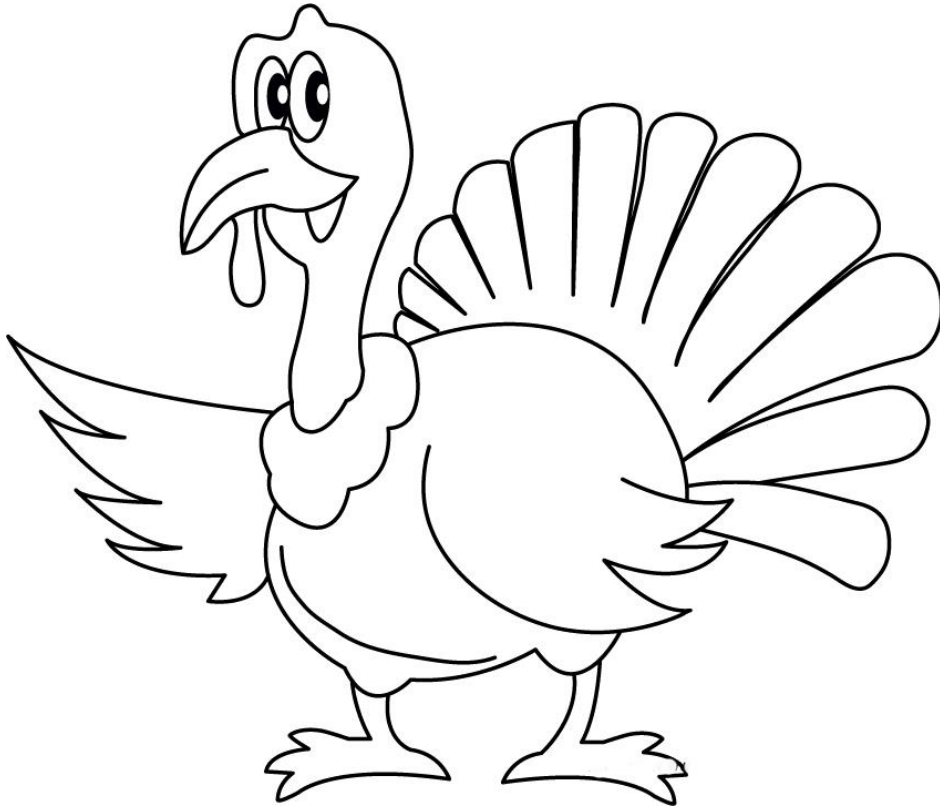
A place to shelter our hearts and heads.

We swam into a small side puddle,

A stable and a tree sat beside it in a huddle,
We heard some noise, should we look or hide?
We tiptoed to see what was inside,
A baby in a manger lay,
Smiling and playing with the hay,
We found our home with him in the cattle stall,
We are the luckiest ducks of all!
There were ten birds of Christmas each sitting in a tree,
And they all told their stories to me!



Turkey and Teddy Bear





I'm Turkey, and I have a gift to give to the child,
Teddy Bear has tame fur, but his eyes are wild,
The sparrows told me about the baby in the hay,
I'm hurrying to meet him so we can play,
Tag, crack the whip, and hide and seek,

(Teddy the bear promised not to peek!)

Teddy Bear is cuddly and Teddy Bear is warm,

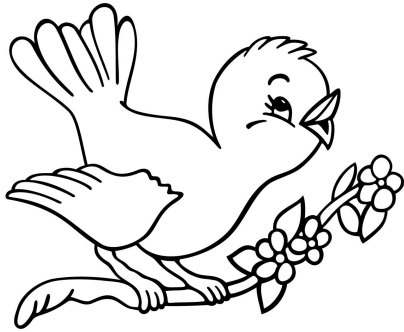
He'll keep Baby Jesus safe from harm,

Teddy Bear can laugh and Teddy Bear can sing

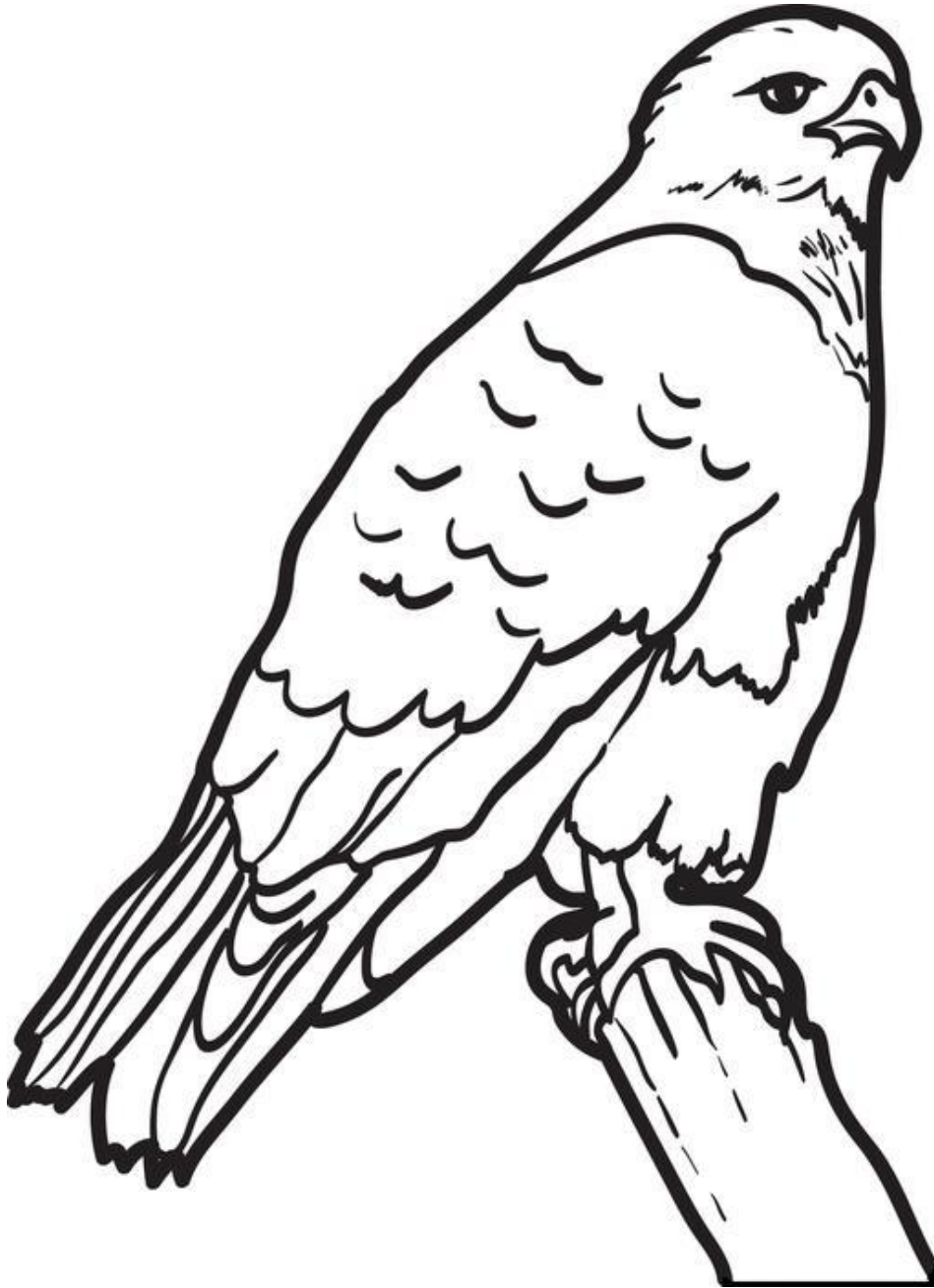
I just have to teach him to stop gobbling!

There were ten birds of Christmas each sitting in a tree,

And they all told their stories to me!

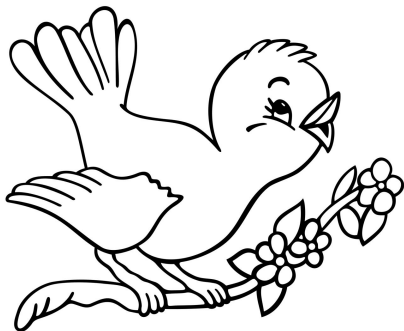


Humble Hawk



I am Hawk and my mission is to stalk

Every animal that can run, fly, or walk,
I threatened to peck a pig into ham,
I even hunted a peaceful lamb.
I screech and scatter my wild, fierce cry,
In bold sound letters across the sky.
One day flying through skies bright blue,
I bumped into angels flying too.
I followed them to a stable and manger,
Perched by a child sleeping there,
Listened to the angels sing of his birth,
He came to live God's glory on earth.
Then he opened his eyes and smiled at me,
My heart beat less fiercely,
My will to fight fled,
I hugged the lamb. I bowed my head.
There were ten birds of Christmas each sitting in a tree,
And they all told their stories to me.

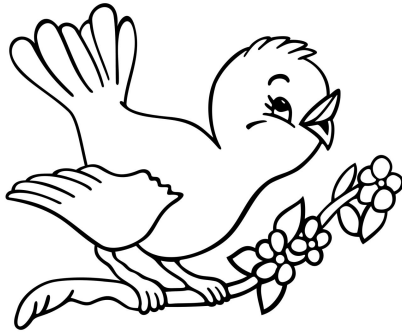


Eagle Wings



An eagle I am, a proud and humble one,
Daily I fly close to the blazing sun,
Then I dive into the water and surface fresh and new,
To freshen my feathers and energy too.
God gave me wings and faith to power them,

A prophet wrote that my strong wings reach heaven.
The shadow of my wings fell across a baby's face,
Born in a manger and born with glory and grace.
I helped foretell the news of his birth,
I was a messenger between heaven and earth,
But before my pride puffs my heart and soul asunder,
The baby's birth reminds me whose wings I shelter under.
There were ten birds of Christmas each sitting in a tree,
And they all told their stories to me.

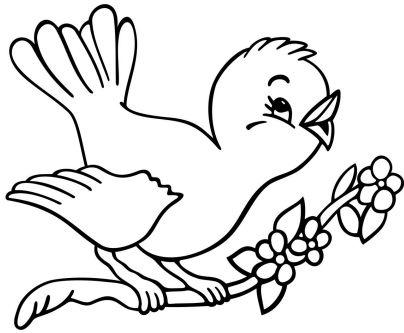


Boisterous Blue Jay



I am Blue Jay, being noisy is my choice,
I tell my stories at the top of my voice,
I show off my feathers, so blue and so sleek,
And chase other birds away with my sharp beak.
One day I heard a cries coming from a stable
I saw a nest of baby sparrows trapped on a gable,
I rescued them I tell you with great pride,
I helped them and their mother safely inside,
There lay a baby in a manger filled with hay,
I hopped over to tell him about my great day,

He looked at me without saying word,
It was the loudest message I ever heard,
I bowed my head and heart together,
He patted my head and I gave him a feather.
There were ten birds of Christmas each sitting in a tree,
And they all told their stories to me!

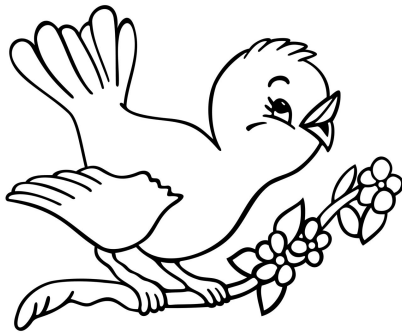


Cocky Crow

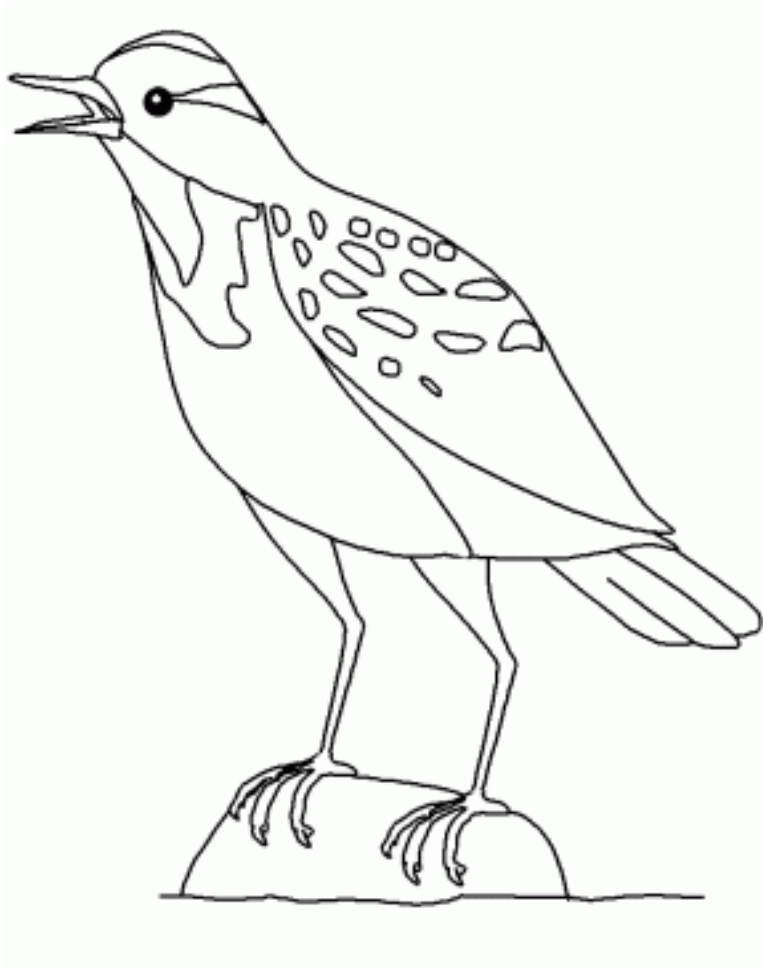


I Crow, am bad luck, some people say,
But I met a child one long ago day,
He lay shivering in a manger bed,
Without a blanket or pillow for his head.
I used my feathers black and bold
Wove him a blanket to use against the cold.
He smiled at me as I tucked Him in,
Fastening it securely around his chin.
Someone- I know it was a sheep-
Said that the Christ child couldn't sleep,
Under a blanket colored unlucky black,
The sheep insisted I take it back.

Sadly I pulled the blanket away,
I looked at child, I didn't know what to say.
Then before my astonished eyes,
A strange thing happened, a big surprise,
Suddenly, right there in my sight,
The blanket turned a purest white.
To this day I can't explain why,
To this day I don't even try,
I believe that my gift stood apart,
Because I made it from my heart.
There were ten birds of Christmas each sitting in a tree,
And they all told their stories to me!

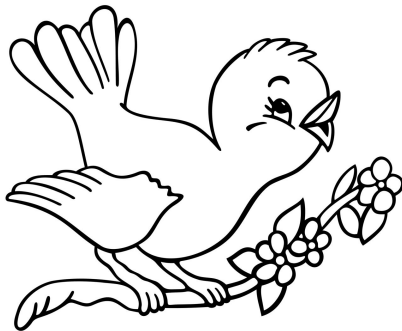


Road Runner Race



I stood alone watching desert shadows long,
Listening to the coyote song,
Watching sunset paint the sky,
With rainbow color ty dye.
I felt something happening on this night,

Something different hovering out of sight,
Suddenly I heard angels singing,
So loudly they set the heavens ringing,
Wise men passed following a single star,
Carrying gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.
I followed them, running to overtake them,
They told me they were traveling to worship Him.
I raced them, running with the wind,
To the stable with the star above,
He surrounded with his love.
This is how I remember that night,
I might not remember each detail right,
I keep running to let everyone know,
This story has a long way to go!
There were ten birds of Christmas each sitting in a tree,
And they all told their stories to me!



Seeing Eye Owl



Owl, I have huge wise eyes that see far away,
They saw into the stable in Bethlehem that day,
The child had been born the night before,
I saw a donkey peeking in the stable door.
The angels crowding the midnight sky,

Left cloud prints as they sang on high,
I traced them with my own wings as I flew by,
I sat on the stable roof guarding the child,
Who who I ask people seeking him,
Even today I hoot the same question.
There were ten birds of Christmas each sitting in a tree,
And they all told their stories to me!

