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A Guide to Nature ID Apps

The **Audubon Bird Guide** app allows the user to identify a bird based on observations, learn more about bird species through the field guide, explore birding hotspots, share photos, and keep track of all bird sightings. The field guide features over 3,000 photos, over eight hours of audio clips of songs and calls, multi-season range maps, and in-depth text by leading North American bird expert Kenn Kaufman.

The **Merlin Bird ID App** is very useful in helping you identify a bird you see based on its size, colors, where you saw it (trees, flying overhead etc.), time of day, and your location. It acts a field guide with both pictures and sounds, and has numerous catalogs of bird species for specific regions of the world.

The **e-Bird App** goes hand-in-hand with the Merlin Bird App above and is the official community science app that Cornell Lab of Ornithology uses to track bird populations. As a user, you create a checklist in which you log all of the birds you are able to identify while you are birding and then submit the list when you are done. The app even tracks your personal stats so you can see how many total species you've seen and where you've seen them.

BirdSong ID USA is an app that can automatically identify a bird by its call or song. It focuses on birds of the United States and requires the user to input a recording of the call they hear. The app is available for \$5.

The **iNaturalist** app is another community science app designed to help users identify any and all things nature through pictures or sounds. iNaturalist reinforces user identifications through peer review by experts and other users, giving you more confidence in your observations.

Seek by iNaturalist is an easy-to-use app to identify trees, plants, and animals using image recognition software. Simply hold your camera up to a plant, organism, or leaf and the app will identify it in real-time.

Virginia Tech's VTree uses your location to generate a list of likely trees in your area. Answer a short list of questions to help narrow down the possibilities and identify the tree or woody plant you are examining. Explore different species through detailed fact sheets with pictures of leaves, flowers, fruit, twig, and bark.

The **Flora of Virginia** app is based on the comprehensive book by the same name and covers the flora of Virginia, Maryland, and West Virginia, along with many regions east of the Mississippi. The app has information on nearly 3,200 plant species in nearly 200 families and allows the user to identify a plant using a helpful graphic key. The app is available for \$20.