

GARDEN EXHIBITION FALL 2011

A Teacher's Guide to the Exhibit



IN THIS GUIDE:

- History of the Scarecrow
- Scarecrows Through Time
- Scavenger Hunt
- Classroom Activities
- Resources
- Preparing for your Visit

SCARECROWS

Enjoy the fall season as you view dozens of small and tall, silly and scary, sophisticated and sweet scarecrows on the grounds at Cheekwood.



HISTORY OF THE SCARECROW

The scarecrow is one of the most familiar figures of the rural landscape, not only in the United States, but throughout Europe and many other countries of the world. His ragged figure has been recorded in history for hundreds of years. Scarecrows have proved irresistible to writers from William Shakespeare to L. Frank Baum, as well as to filmmakers since the early silent movie. Yet, despite all the fame, the origins and the development of the scarecrow have remained obscured in mystery. We do know they have been used throughout history to thwart the efforts of hungry, crop-eating birds and animals. In fact, the earliest known documentation of scarecrows was written in 1592 when the definition of a scarecrow was recorded as, *“That which frightens or is intended to frighten without doing physical harm; Literally that which - scares away crows, hence the name scarecrow.”*

Long ago, people didn’t realize why the birds, insects, and animals destroyed their crops. Farmers attributed the unexplained occurrences in their fields and elsewhere to unknown gods and spirits. They used symbols in the gardens as a way to honor and appease these gods. Slowly these images transformed into scarecrows.

By the mid 1800s, American scarecrows began to be used as much for decoration as for practical reasons. They started to reveal the creator’s artistic ability and resourcefulness. Today the scarecrow has been replaced by the science of electronics, mechanics, and even chemicals. Still, the humble scarecrow is making a comeback in schools, neighborhoods, and public gardens as a form of decoration. As you will see in this exhibition, no two are alike. Enjoy the unique qualities of all the big and small, frightening and friendly, silly and serious scarecrows lurking in the garden.



SCARECROWS THROUGH TIME

Scarecrow Stories From Around The World

Egyptian Scarecrows

The first scarecrows in recorded history were made along the Nile River to protect wheat fields from flocks of quail. Egyptian farmers put wooden frames in their fields and covered them with nets. The farmers hid in the fields and scared the quail into the nets. Then they took them home and ate them for dinner!

Greek Scarecrows

Twenty-five hundred years ago Greek farmers carved wooden scarecrows to look like Priapus, the son of the god Dionysus. Priapus lived with vineyard keepers, and it is said that he was very ugly. The vineyard keepers noticed that when Priapus played in the vineyards the birds stayed away from the grapes, and the harvest was the best ever. Thus, other farmers decided to make statues that looked like Priapus to use in their vineyards. They painted the figures purple and put a club in one hand and a sickle in the other to make the statue look more dangerous and prepare for a good harvest.

Japanese Scarecrows

About the same time the Greeks made their wooden scarecrows, Japanese farmers also began making scarecrows to protect their rice fields. At first, the Japanese farmers hung old rags, meat, or fish bones from bamboo poles in their fields. They set the sticks on fire, and the smell was so bad that birds and other animals stayed away from the rice. The Japanese farmers called their scarecrows *kakashis* which means "something that smells badly." In later years, Japanese farmers also made scarecrows that looked like people. Many were dressed in a raincoat made of reeds and a round straw hat that rose to a peak in the middle. Bows and arrows were often added to make them look more threatening. These scarecrows were also called *kakashis*, even if they didn't stink!

Europe: The Middle Ages

During the Middle Ages in Europe, farmers made scarecrows which they believed had special powers. In Italy, skulls of animals were placed on the tops of tall poles in the fields. Farmers believed the skulls would scare away birds and protect crops from diseases. In Germany, farmers made wooden witches and put them in their fields at the end of winter. They believed that witches would draw the evil spirit of winter into their bodies so spring could come.

Medieval Britain

In Medieval Britain scarecrows were live boys around 9 or 10 years old. Known as *bird scarers* or *bird shooers*, they patrolled wheat fields carrying bags of stones. If crows or other birds landed in the fields, they would chase them off by waving their arms and throwing the stones. When the Great Plague killed almost half the people in Britain in 1348, landowners couldn't find enough *bird scarers* to protect their crops. So, they stuffed sacks with straw, carved faces in turnips or gourds, and made scarecrows that stood against poles.



A pineapple designates topics for discussion and pre/post visit classroom activities.

SCARECROWS THROUGH TIME

More Scarecrow Stories From Around The World

North America

To protect their corn crops, Native American tribes throughout North America used both scarecrows and *bird scarers*. Most Indian *bird scarers* were adult men. In what is now Virginia and North Carolina, some sat on raised wooden platforms and howled and shouted if crows or woodchucks came near the corn. In Georgia, Creek Indian families moved into huts in their corn fields during the growing season to protect the crop from birds and other animals. Seneca Indians, in what is now New York, soaked corn seeds in a poisonous herb mixture that would make the crows fly crazily around the fields and scare away the other birds.

In the late 1800s, Zuni children in the American Southwest held contests to see who could make the most unusual scarecrow. The Zunis also used twine made from plants to protect their corn fields from pests. They placed cedar poles about 6 to 9 feet apart all over the cornfield. Cords made from the fiber of the yucca plants were strung from pole to pole like clotheslines. Rags, pieces of dog and coyote skins, and the shoulder blades of animals were hung from the lines. The waving rags and clacking blades kept most birds away.

The Colonies and the United States

When Europeans began to settle in North America in the 1600s, the farmers themselves stood guard in their fields to protect the crops they needed for survival. By the 1700s, the growing American colonies needed much more grain. Farmers decided that neither farmers nor *bird scarers* were protecting the crops well enough. Towns all along the Atlantic coast offered bounties for dead crows. So many crows were killed in the 1800s that a new problem arose. Corn borers and other worms and insects, which were once eaten by the crows, were now destroying more corn and wheat than the crows had. Towns stopped offering bounties and farmers began to make scarecrows.

Immigrants who moved to the United States during the 1800s brought with them a variety of ideas for making scarecrows. In Pennsylvania, German farmers built human looking scarecrows called a *bootzamon* or *bogeyman*. His body was a wooden cross and his head was a broom or mop top or a cloth bundle stuffed with straw. The *bootzamon* wore old overalls, a long-sleeved shirt or coat, a worn woolen or straw hat, and a large red handkerchief around his neck. Sometimes a second scarecrow was built to keep the *bootzamon* company. A *bootzafrau* or *bogeywife*, dressed in a long dress or coat and wearing a sunbonnet on her head, was placed on the opposite end of the field. The *bootzamon* and *bootzafrau* guarded cornfields, strawberry patches, and cherry orchards.

THE NAME GAME



Ask your students to match the 'scarecrow' name with the correct country.

Priapus	Greece
Kakashis	Japan
Bird Scareres	Europe/North America
Bootzamon	United States (German Immigrants)
Bootzafrau	United States (German Immigrants)

DID YOU KNOW?

In the United Kingdom, scarecrows have different names depending on the area of the country. A few interesting examples are listed below.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Area</u>
Mommet	Somerset
Hodmedod	Isle of Wight
Mawhini	Suffol, Norfolk

SCARECROWS at Cheekwood



SCAVENGER HUNT

Use the clues below to find a few of the creative and unique scarecrows at Cheekwood!



1

This 'crow has locomotives on the brain,
Look down...it is Thomas the Train!



2

Here we have three fine fellows,
All following a brick road of yellow.



3

This scarecrow loaded the animals two by two,
on an ark he built brand new!



4

This scarecrow's skin is of a different hue,
It is not green, red, or orange...but bright blue!



5

This athletic 'crow has all his gear.
Score! Game day must be near.



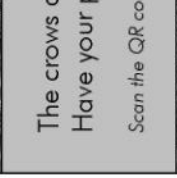
6

It's a bird, it's a plane...it's Pecos Bill.
He is caught in a twister—what a thrill!



7

This 'crow has stars for eyes,
and flower pots for arms, legs, and thighs!



8

The crows are carrying this one away.
Have your picture taken, and join them today!

Scan the QR code to see what else this scarecrow has to say.



9

Around and around they go,
where these crows stop...disco inferno!



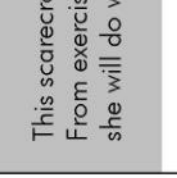
10

This chef baked a special treat,
but what's in his pie may still tweet!



11

Find the scarecrow who is a 'sure shot'.
Count her medals...there are quite a lot!



12

This scarecrow is determined to stay in shape.
From exercising to eating right,
she will do whatever it takes.



ANSWERS: 1. Ciddy Up, Sir Topham Hat; 2. Open Eyes, Open Hears, Open Minds ; 3. Round 'em up Noah, Gen. 6-9; 4. A Smurfy Day at Cheekwood; 5. Soccer Spook; 6. Pecos Bill Rides a Tornado 7. Superheroes of 9/11; 8. Scattered Away; 9. Dis-Crow Inferno; 10. Four and Twenty Blackbirds; 11. Little Sure Shot; 12. Healthy Hanna.

Sponsored by:





CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

CREATE-A-CROW

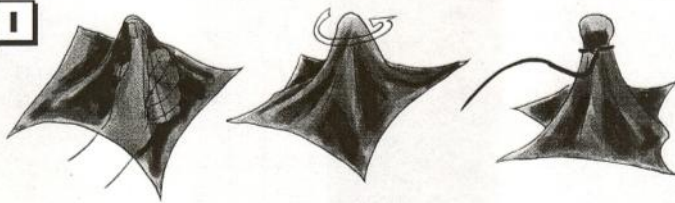
MATERIALS

- Square of black felt, 8"x8" or 10"x10"
- 2 black pipe cleaners
- Small scrap of yellow or orange cloth
(We found that the peel'n'stick felt works best.)
- Peel'n'stick wiggle eyes
- Large cotton balls

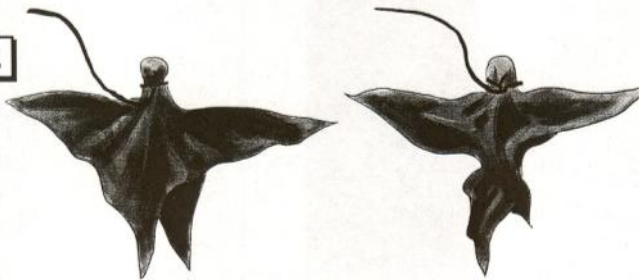
PROJECT DIRECTIONS

1. To form the crow head, place the cotton ball in the center of the felt and fold it down and around your hand. Wrap about 2" of a pipe cleaner around your thumb to make a 1" round head. Twist the pipe cleaner together, leaving one end free.
2. Fold two opposite corners of the felt together, leaving the other two corners outstretched as wings. Bunch up a body and tail with your hand.
3. *This step can be a bit tricky.* Cross the free end of the pipe cleaner from the bird's neck, halfway between one of the wings and the body, under and around the tail, and cross back over and attach to the pipe cleaner end that was tied around the head. There should be a pipe cleaner X shape on the bird's back.
4. Wrap the other pipe cleaner around the crow's body behind the wings and twist together underneath to form a tail. Use the loose ends to form feet.
5. Cut a beak from the yellow or orange cloth. Glue, or adhere, beak and eyes to crow's head.

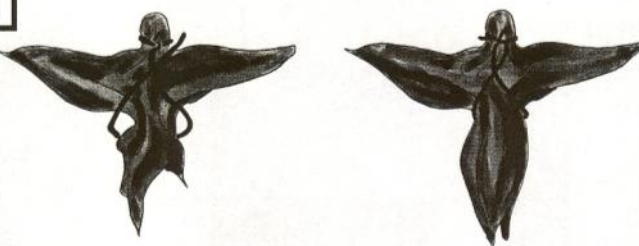
1



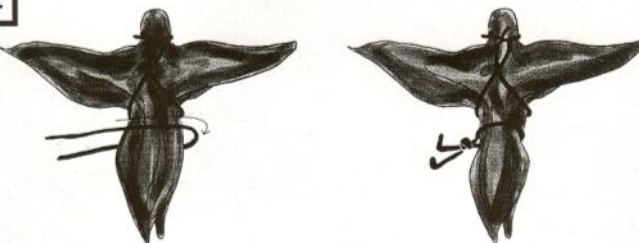
2



3



4



5



This project was taken from Felder Rushing's **Scarecrows**.



CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

HARVEST CORN SCULPTURES

Create beautifully colored Indian or yellow corn to display with your fall or Thanksgiving décor.

MATERIALS

- Empty paper towel rolls – one per student
- White glue in bowls – add a little water to thin the glue
- Old paint brushes
- Small bubble wrap squares slightly longer than the paper towel roll
- Yellow piece of tissue paper large enough to wrap around the tube
Or - for Indian corn use red, blue, purple, brown, and gold pieces of tissue paper torn into pieces
- Green tissue paper strips for leaves of the husk

PROJECT DIRECTIONS

1. Take an empty paper towel roll and cut three 1" inch slits on one end.
2. Bend the cut sections together and tape to form the end of the corn cob. Leave it fairly rounded and not flat.
3. Line up a piece of bubble wrap to one end of the tube. Then roll it around the tube and tape ends to hold it on. You can also brush a little glue on the tube to help hold bubble wrap.
4. Tuck excess bubble wrap into the other end of the tube.
5. Brush glue all over the bubble wrapped tube.
6. To create yellow corn, roll yellow tissue paper around the tube, brush lightly with glue to hold edges, and tuck excess tissue paper into the open end of the tube. Gently press tissue onto bubble wrap to form the kernels. If tissue tears it can be repaired when dry.
7. For multi-colored Indian corn, brush glue on in sections and add different colors of tissue paper. Lightly glue on top of the paper to hold it down.
8. To complete corn, take green strips of tissue paper and glue into the open end. Brush glue inside and stick strips in. Use 3 to 5 strips to complete your sculpture.
9. Dry on wax paper so tissue paper does not stick to surface.

HARVEST CORN SCULPTURES



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Websites:

www.artistshelpingchildren.org/scarecrowscraftsideasdecorationskids.html

www.hummingbirded.com/scarecrows.html

www.abcteach.com/directory/theme_units/scarecrows/

Books:

[Scarecrows](#)
by Felder Rushing

[The Little Scarecrow](#)
by Margaret Wise Brown

[Scarecrow Pete](#)
Ideals Publishing

[Little Bear Makes a Scarecrow](#)
Elise Holmelund Minarik

[The Scarecrow of Oz](#)
by Frank L. Baum

EDUCATION & PUBLIC PROGRAMS DEPARTMENT

www.cheekwood.org

schooltours@cheekwood.org | 615.353.9827

PREPARING FOR YOUR VISIT

The **Scarecrows!** Educator Guide was prepared with the classroom teacher in mind. We hope you will find this packet helpful as you prepare your students for their visit to Cheekwood and also when you return to the classroom.

Garden Etiquette is very similar to indoor museum etiquette.

- Please stay on the paths for the protection of the plant collections and for your own safety.
- Please do not touch or pick the plants or scarecrows.
- Speak in a normal 'inside' voice. Please do not disturb other guests in the garden by yelling or shouting to others.
- Many varieties of wildlife and insects make their homes at Cheekwood. Please do not disturb these valuable members of our ecosystem.
- Stay with your group. Cheekwood is very large, and it is easy to get distracted. We do not want anyone to get separated from their group.

