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| **iLearn BI 101** | **Community Ecology Assessment:**  **When Animals Defend Themselves** | Name: |

**Procedures:**

Now is your opportunity to demonstrate what you have learned about community ecology. After completing this activity and question set you will be submitting this document for grading through the course website. Upon completion of this assignment with the minimum required score, you will have completed the Community Ecology module. The details on the grading and submission process can be found on the course website.

Bird watching has become an increasingly popular pastime in the last several decades. According to the Fish and Wild life department, an estimated 20% of Americans consider themselves birdwatchers. The Cornell University Ornithology Lab ([http://www.allaboutbirds.org](http://www.allaboutbirds.org/)) has a tremendous volume of information about birds, and is a premier resource for information, appreciation and conservation education for birdwatchers and the scientific community alike. Your task is to explore this site, and find an example of a bird species that uses some form of defense method that you read about in the text this week. This could be camouflage coloration, startle coloration or patterns (i.e. eyespots) or some other aspect that allows a bird to defend itself in the survival game. Think about community interactions as you explore this site, and try to make some connections to the vast array of adaptations and variation seen in the natural world.

For the bird species you have chosen, answer the following questions by clicking on the grey text box and begin typing. Be sure to answer the questions in your own words, using appropriate vocabulary and terminology learned in the lecture, lab, and reading materials. It is expected that each answer is 2 – 3 paragraphs in length. For complete and thoughtful answers, you may have to explore beyond the Cornell Ornithology Lab website to find your information. When completed, submit this document through the submission page on the course website.

1. Before describing your bird species of choice discuss some the important roles that birds play in an ecosystem. In other words, why should we care about birds?

1. What species of bird did you choose to research? Discuss what you drew you to this particular bird.

1. With a focus on the interactions your bird species has within its community (predation, competition, etc), describe the typical habitat of your species. Discuss aspects such as where around the world your bird can be found and examples of other types of species that can be found sharing its habitat (both plant and animal),

1. What types of resources does this bird require to complete its lifecycle? (Remember, resources include things like food, shelter, migratory and reproductive requirements, etc.)

1. Describe the defense method that your bird employs. Include in your explanation the purpose of this strategy. What does this strategy help the bird obtain/avoid/achieve? Does it have any other interesting behaviors or traits that help it survive?

1. Insert a picture of your bird species by clicking on the image icon below:

