

ASK AL

Al Grass has worked as a career park naturalist and ranger throughout B.C. Now he is a well-known nature tour leader and photographer. Al especially likes birds, insects and spiders. Photo Credit: Robert Alexander, B.C.



How Did The Nuthatch Get Its Name?

In British Columbia there are three different Nuthatches - White-breasted, Pygmy and Red-breasted. We mostly see the Red-breasted Nuthatch with its "yank-yank" voice in coastal parts of the province. The other two are found in the province's interior.

Nuthatches go head down on tree trunks, poking for insects. Nuthatch and hatchet (a small axe) both mean to "chop". A Nuthatch's beak is like a little chisel which is used to "chop" nuts and seeds. Peanuts (without shells) are a Nuthatch favourite. Did you know that a group of Nuthatches is called a "jar"? Nuthatches are wonderful birds - full of character and charm.

"My favourite restaurant" says the nuthatch.



Photo credit: Al Grass, B.C.

Using A Coconut To Make A Barn Swallow Nest

A Family Project - By Dr. Doowitt



1.

1. All the materials needed except for the power tools (jig-saw and 4.5mm drill).

2. Choose a spherical coconut that has been husked. Drill out the 3 holes you can see and pour out the milk.



2.



3.

3. Starting at a hole, use an electric jig-saw to cut the coconut shell in half then into quarters. Use a strong spoon to remove the coconut meat.

4. Attach the strapping as shown.



4.

Voilà! your nest is ready to put up inside an open shed, or under the roof overhang.



'With many thanks to Marjorie Cutaran and Adam Macfie of Grenfell, Saskatchewan who gave me the idea, to Stephen King from University of Regina and to Alex Soloducha and Matthew Howard from the CBC.'