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# Bird Photography Boosts Mental Well-being

## Description

A new Canadian study finds that birdwatching could greatly benefit brain health as people age. This might also apply to bird photography, a similar popular hobby.

Researchers found that expert birdwatchers have denser brain regions related to attention and perception. This density may enhance communication between neurons, which are cells that send messages in the brain.

Lead researcher Erik Wing explains that our brains can change and adapt, a concept known as neuroplasticity. Learning new skills can help maintain mental flexibility and health.

The team studied birdwatchers because the hobby requires special cognitive skills. Their brains showed structural changes, especially in areas used for identifying birds in difficult situations.

The study suggests birdwatching might reduce normal age-related brain changes. Although it doesn't prove that birdwatching stops cognitive decline, it supports brain health.

Professor Benjamin Katz of Virginia Tech notes that birdwatching involves many activities like being outdoors, exercising, socialising, and observing nature. Bird photography includes these as well, with birdwatchers often using cameras to capture their experiences.

Erik Wing says our lifelong interests shape brain structure. Understanding this can help people use their knowledge to support brain health through life. Many photographers spend years practising, just like birdwatchers.

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## Vocabulary List:

1. **Neuroplasticity** /ˌnjʊərəʊs'plæstɪsɪti/ (noun): The ability of the brain to change and adapt as a result of experience.
2. **Cognitive** /'kɒɡ.nɪ.tɪv/ (adjective): Relating to the processes of thought understanding and learning.
3. **Perception** /pə'rɛpʃən/ (noun): The way in which something is regarded understood or interpreted.
4. **Density** /'dɛn.sɪ.ti/ (noun): The degree of compactness of a substance in this case brain regions.
5. **Enhance** /ɪn'hæns/ (verb): To improve the quality value or extent of something.
6. **Structural** /'strʌk.tʃər.əl/ (adjective): Relating to the arrangement or framework of something.

## Comprehension Questions



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## Multiple Choice

1. What did the Canadian study find about birdwatching?
  - Option: It has no effect on brain health
  - Option: It could greatly benefit brain health as people age
  - Option: It decreases cognitive skills
  - Option: It is not a popular hobby
2. Who is the lead researcher mentioned in the study?
  - Option: Professor Benjamin Katz
  - Option: Erik Wing
  - Option: John Smith
  - Option: Sara Johnson
3. Which cognitive ability is enhanced in expert birdwatchers?
  - Option: Memory
  - Option: Attention and perception
  - Option: Logical reasoning
  - Option: Mathematical skills
4. What concept explains the brain's ability to change and adapt?
  - Option: Neurogenesis
  - Option: Neuroplasticity
  - Option: Neuroscience
  - Option: Neurochemistry
5. What activity is NOT mentioned as part of birdwatching?
  - Option: Being outdoors
  - Option: Exercising
  - Option: Playing sports
  - Option: Observing nature
6. Birdwatching could potentially reduce what type of changes?
  - Option: Nutritional changes
  - Option: Age-related brain changes
  - Option: Personality changes
  - Option: Physical changes



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### True-False

7. Birdwatching requires special cognitive skills.
8. The study proves that birdwatching completely stops cognitive decline.
9. Bird photography is mentioned as a similar hobby to birdwatching.
10. Erik Wing is not involved in the research study.
11. Birdwatching has no socializing aspects according to the research.
12. Researchers found no structural changes in the brains of expert birdwatchers.

### Gap-Fill

13. Birdwatching could greatly benefit brain health as people age, which might also apply to bird \_\_\_\_\_.
14. Researchers found that expert birdwatchers have denser brain regions related to attention and \_\_\_\_\_.
15. The concept that explains our brains can change and adapt is called \_\_\_\_\_.
16. The study suggests that birdwatching might reduce normal age-related brain \_\_\_\_\_.
17. Birdwatching involves activities like being outdoors, exercising, and \_\_\_\_\_.
18. Understanding how lifelong interests shape brain structure can help support brain \_\_\_\_\_ through life.

### Answer

**Multiple Choice:** 1. It could greatly benefit brain health as people age 2. Erik Wing 3. Attention and perception 4. Neuroplasticity 5. Playing sports 6. Age-related brain changes

**True-False:** 7. True 8. False 9. True 10. False 11. False 12. False

**Gap-Fill:** 13. photography



14. perception 15. neuroplasticity 16. changes 17. socialising 18. health

## Vocabulary quizzes

### Multiple Choice ( Select the Correct answer for each question. )

1. Which term refers to a microorganism that can cause disease in the bloodstream?

- Option: Virus
- Option: Bacterium
- Option: Fungus
- Option: Protozoa

2. What biological response is characterized by redness, heat, swelling, and pain?

- Option: Infection
- Option: Inflammation
- Option: Allergy
- Option: Necrosis

3. What molecule carries genetic information in living organisms?

- Option: RNA
- Option: Proteins
- Option: DNA
- Option: Lipids

4. What term describes bacteria that are not affected by antibiotics?

- Option: Sensitive
- Option: Resistant
- Option: Dormant
- Option: Virulent

5. What treatment uses chemical substances to kill or slow the growth of cancer cells?

- Option: Radiation
- Option: Surgery
- Option: Chemotherapy
- Option: Immunotherapy

6. What is the term for the temperature at which a solid becomes a liquid?



- Option: Boiling point
- Option: Melting point
- Option: Freezing point
- Option: Sublimation point

7. Which mineral is essential for muscle and nerve function?

- Option: Calcium
- Option: Magnesium
- Option: Potassium
- Option: Iron

8. What type of function refers to mental processes such as thinking and remembering?

- Option: Cognitive
- Option: Emotional
- Option: Physical
- Option: Creative

9. Who is a professional that advises on nutrition and diet planning?

- Option: Physician
- Option: Dietitian
- Option: Chef
- Option: Nurse

10. What term describes the brain's ability to adapt and change?

- Option: Neurotransmission
- Option: Neuroplasticity
- Option: Neurogenesis
- Option: Neuroscience

**Gap-Fill ( Fill in the blanks with the correct word from the vocabulary list. )**

11. The \_\_\_\_\_ effect relates to the impact of ions on caloric content.

12. The \_\_\_\_\_ is used in air conditioning and refrigeration systems.

13. Water is commonly known as a universal \_\_\_\_\_.

14. High levels of \_\_\_\_\_ can adversely affect health.

15. Some chemicals are known to be \_\_\_\_\_ and can cause harm.



16. The Mediterranean diet is known for its numerous health \_\_\_\_\_ .
17. Meat, fish, and dairy are rich sources of \_\_\_\_\_ .
18. The \_\_\_\_\_ of a material affects its buoyancy in water.
19. Exercise can \_\_\_\_\_ cognitive function and memory.
20. The \_\_\_\_\_ components of a cell include its membrane and organelles.

**Matching Sentences ( Match each definition to the correct word from the vocabulary list. )**

21. The Mediterranean diet is renowned for its health benefits and balance of nutrients.
22. Maintaining proper nutrition is essential for optimal brain health throughout life.
23. The nervous system transmits signals throughout the body via network of nerves.
24. Regular exercise helps to strengthen and build muscles, enhancing physical capacity.
25. Personal stories can serve as powerful sources of inspiration for others.
26. Achieving a balance between physical, mental, and emotional well-being is vital for overall health.
27. Different cultures can shape one's perception of beauty and success.
28. Chemotherapy can be an effective treatment for certain types of cancer.
29. Regular practice can help enhance skills and improve performance.
30. Exposure to toxic substances can lead to serious health issues.

**Answer**

**Multiple Choice:** 1. Bacterium 2. Inflammation 3. DNA 4. Resistant 5. Chemotherapy 6. Melting point  
7. Magnesium 8. Cognitive 9. Dietitian 10. Neuroplasticity

**Gap-Fill:** 11. ionocaloric 12. refrigerant 13. solvent 14. stress 15. toxic 16. benefits 17. proteins 18. density  
19. enhance 20. structural

**Matching sentence:** 1. Mediterranean 2. brain health 3. nerves 4. muscles 5. inspiration 6. health 7.  
perception 8. chemotherapy 9. enhance 10. toxic



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