

THE WISDOM OF BIRDS

ORACLE DECK AND GUIDEBOOK



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INTRODUCTION



As long as humans have existed, birds have been alongside us. Whether soaring high overhead, feeding and nesting nearby, or gliding past us on water, they exemplify the elements of air, water, and earth and spark our senses.

Tales of birds have been handed down through oral storytelling for generations, embedding themselves in folklore and becoming interwoven with our cultural beliefs. Ancient civilizations portrayed the beauty of birds in art and artifacts, and connected their characteristics to royalty, gods, and goddesses. Birdsong has the power to wake us in the morning and lift our spirits whenever we hear it sung.

This oracle deck celebrates the wisdom of birds in all their forms. Each card shows a bird in an environment which reflects its typical habitat, along with flowers or plants that broaden their connection with the natural world. The interpretations you'll find in this guidebook are taken from behavioral research, cultural references, and mythology. I hope they provide you with enlightenment, insight, and growth.

USING THE CARDS AND GUIDEBOOK



If you're new to using oracle cards, these tips for making the most of the deck will provide you with a jumping off point, but rest assured, there are no hard and fast rules – how you work with the cards is a personal choice. The intention is to encourage each user to take spiritual or emotional support from the cards or develop a deeper understanding of ways to resolve concerns they have at any given time.

You may wish to use the cards to reflect on where you are in a particular stage of life, or manifest new and exciting changes. Some users find them helpful for developing a growth mindset and to overcome negative thoughts. Others benefit from using them as a mechanism for daily guidance and support, while others dip in and out when they want a new perspective on a specific issue. Just remember, everyone's interpretation of each card will be unique to them.

Before you choose your first card, shuffle the deck as much or as little as you like. Once you have worked with the cards for a while, you could cut and rotate the deck, then reshuffle to create a mixture of upright and reversed cards (see page 10). There are no rules, only your preferences, so do whatever feels comfortable for you.

A good way to familiarize yourself with the deck is to draw a card each morning or before going to sleep at night. Take a card from anywhere in the pack or spread them out and turn over the one that you are most drawn to. Ask yourself one or more of these questions and pay attention to your initial, instinctive emotional response:

♦ HOW DOES THIS CARD MAKE ME FEEL? ♦

HOW DO I RELATE TO WHAT I SEE HERE?

WHAT ASPECTS DRAW MY ATTENTION?

WHAT DO I FEEL OR INTUIT ABOUT THIS BIRD

- AND WHAT IT MIGHT REPRESENT TO ME? ♦

You might like to keep the card close by, such as on your desk while working or in your bag while traveling. If you keep a journal or mood diary, making a note of the card number, bird, or characteristics that you drew each day can help build a picture of your thoughts, feelings, and actions. When looking back on this later on, you may discover outcomes or synchronicities in line with the journey suggested by the cards.

It's entirely your choice whether, or how, you use the interpretations in this guidebook. You might prefer to reflect on your own connection with the card, simply noting the suggested characteristics offered. If you are trying to gain deeper insight into your initial emotional response, the symbology, interpretations, and questions will offer guidance to explore these ideas in more detail.

A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

The terms 'upright' and 'reversed' come from traditional tarot terminology and relate to the way the card is oriented when you draw it.

Upright cards are vertically 'correct', i.e. with the sky at the top and ground below. Their reading is consistent with a direct interpretation of the card's characteristics.

Reversed cards are those presented upside-down. Their reading can be interpreted as the opposite meaning of an upright draw, or encourage you to look within yourself for guidance, instead of to other people.

You may wish to consider these aspects of the cards as you get to know them. Look out for patterns and repetitions as you work with the cards over time.

COLOR

Which color do you notice first? In color theory, cool colors such as greys, blues, and greens are calming, while warm colors such as yellows, pinks, reds, and orange are energizing. Which speak to you and your mood? Are you drawn to the background tone or the shade of each bird, the flower or foliage?

You may find that darker tones alert you to uncertain times ahead, or that lighter shades give a sense of clarity and encourage a fresh start.

ELEMENT

Do you keep drawing air cards, i.e. those showing birds in flight? This could suggest you are ready for change or to broaden your horizons. Earth or land cards, with birds on the ground or on branches might imply a period of stability, or that you are leaving uncertainty behind. Water cards can be a sign that you are in touch with your emotions and intuition.

LAYOUT

Which direction are the birds facing? Birds facing to the right support a translation of looking to the future, optimism, or forward-thinking and anticipation. Birds facing, or looking to, the left may imply reflection or encourage a reconsideration of past actions or behaviors. Upward movement could be seen as rising above old fears and doubts and acceptance of greater possibilities. Downward gestures or positions could imply a need to dig deeper to discover truth and wisdom before moving forwards.

As your personal connection with the cards deepens, you may find you pay more attention to encounters you have with birds in real life. Once you allow your senses to become more aware of bird life when you are out and about, you'll also notice them in art, homeware, jewelry... from feather motifs on textiles to woven designs that remind you of a nest. Enjoy these discoveries as you tune in to the patterns and influence of nature on our human world.

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Barn Swallow
Perspective and Positive change

Barn Swallow

Perspective and Positive change



Although it may be small, the barn swallow travels great distances as it journeys between its summer and winter homes. Good luck, new perspectives, and freedom are some of its key messages, and in some African folklore, swallows symbolize fertility, abundance, and prosperity. The distinctive deep-forked tail and blue-black feathers, flying over golden meadow buttercups, are a reminder that the rhythm of nature is all around, spreading positivity in the purest of ways.

UPRIGHT

Step outside of your comfort zone and try something new. Don't be afraid to set high-level aspirations and take risks to achieve them.

REVERSED

Free yourself from the burdens of past decisions. Abundance and growth will follow from a fresh start, but you may need to start by prioritizing self-care and acceptance before making broader changes.

ASK YOURSELF

What can I do to embrace my creative side?

Is my home my happy place?

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Northern Cardinal
Faith and New beginnings

Northern Cardinal

Faith and New beginnings



If there was ever a bird destined never to blend into the background, the northern cardinal is it. The male's eye-catching bright red feathers, crest, and beak are an energizing and uplifting sight, and some believe that when one crosses your path, new beginnings are about to unfold. Spiritually, this bird is often thought to represent someone who has moved to the afterlife, and their presence is a sign that they are still watching over their loved ones. The contrasting purity of the white lilac flower implies that the world is full of good omens, so long as people are open to noticing them.

UPRIGHT

Renewal is something to celebrate. Take advantage of opportunities that come your way and have faith that your optimism isn't misplaced. Accept your life's purpose and trust your choices.

REVERSED

You might have been resisting change for fear of failure. Commit to not holding yourself back without good cause.

ASK YOURSELF

Would I embrace the chance of a fresh start?
Do the sights and sounds of nature bring
me comfort?

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Barn Owl
Wisdom and Perception

Barn Owl

Wisdom and Perception



This distinctive bird – like the oak tree it sits on – has long represented qualities of wisdom, knowledge, and endurance. Frequently seen as a good luck omen, the owl serves as a protector and guide in ancient Greek mythology and represents Athena, the goddess of wisdom. In some cultures, folklore suggests that barn owl sightings are a portent of death or ill fortune, but most consider the owl to have the powers of prophecy and perception. Hunting efficiently and silently, barn owls have perceptive abilities worth aspiring to.

UPRIGHT

Someone you know may need your guidance and will appreciate your strategic insight to show them a clear path through thorny issues. Be generous with your knowledge and encourage them – or yourself – to explore truths arising from their ongoing spiritual or emotional journeys.

REVERSED

Consider becoming more attuned to your environment. Sometimes things are what they are – don't allow suspicion to cloud your judgement.

ASK YOURSELF

Have I been neglecting my personal growth goals?

What upcoming events should I start to plan for?