

ENGAGE Nature Note - From Clouds to Birds

By: Emile Taschereau

I was outside on the John Adams Middle School campus in Santa Monica, California at 2:43 pm on December 14, 2023. I was surrounded by birds of all different sorts and clouds in the sky. The birds that I saw were ravens, pigeons, and seagulls. It was cool outside and I could smell the traces of food that was eaten at lunchtime. I could hear a plane flying above.

This was my first time observing the clouds, and so the experience was completely new to me. I liked the peacefulness of observing them. I identified the clouds I saw with a cloud chart. There were many contrails around because of all the airplanes arriving and departing from Los Angeles International Airport (LAX).

There is at least one contrail in the sky at all times. Some clouds weren't contrails like cirrostratus, altostratus, cirrocumulus, etc. ([GLOBE Cloud Chart](#)) My observations weren't as good as some of the others that were viewing the clouds but I am happy with what I did observe. There was quite a bit of litter on the ground and it saddened me to see a seagull pick it up in its beak and swallow it. This made me wonder how many birds die annually from the consumption of plastic and other hazardous materials.

I would like to research ways we can help the environment and the birds alike from being killed by human activities. I can do this by finding a reliable website and using the information given to me I can formulate a plan to help the birds and the environment.