



Transcript for *As the Crow Flies* (Feiwel and Friends, an Imprint of Macmillan) Preview Video

Preview (0:00 – 7:03)

Hi everyone! It's Colleen from the KU Natural History Museum. And I'm so excited to remind you about tomorrow's Story Book Science, here on Facebook Live. I'm excited to read the book *As the Crow Flies*. This book is written by Sheila Keenan, and it is illustrated by Kevin Duggan. And we'll be reading it with permission from Feiwel and Friends, which is an imprint of Macmillan. So thank you to them for the permission to read this book!

Now, way back, earlier this summer, we read a book and talked about corvids. So we talked about this family of birds: Family Corvidae. Now, there are lots of different types of birds in this family. Family Corvidae includes crows, jays, magpies, and even ravens. But for tomorrow's book, we're going to talk about one member of Family Corvidae. We're going to talk about the American Crow.

Now, the American Crow, like a lot of the members of Family Corvidae, is extremely smart. So it's an extremely intelligent bird. But, what we're going to do is we're going to look at some of the other features of the American Crow. And these features can help identify the American Crow from all of those other members of Family Corvidae. And what I want to do is I want to go through some of those features with you by using a museum specimen. So I'm going to go grab a museum specimen of an American Crow.

Alright. So, this is an American Crow specimen. Now, when we look at this American Crow, there are a couple things that jump out immediately to me. What do you first see and think of when you see this specimen? Now, for me, what I think of is just how big this crow is. Now, all the way from its tail feathers, all the way to the tip of its bill is about 16 inches. Now, it may be a little hard to see, but 16 inches is also about the size of my arm from my elbow, all the way to the tips of my fingers. So this is a very long bird. Alright?

Now, American Crows, they can be anywhere from 15.8 to 20.9 inches in length, and that's about 40 to 53 centimeters. These are really big birds!

What other things do you notice about this American Crow specimen? What do you notice about its feathers? Well, its feathers are black. And it's a little hard to see in this light, but American Crows not only have black feathers, but they also have feathers that have a little bit of a shine to them. So they're a little bit glossy. That's another feature of the American Crow.

Now, the last thing that I want to point out as a feature of the American Crow is on its head. So you'll notice that it has its bill. And the bill of the American Crow is very long, as you can see, and it's also quite wide. So I'll put the camera on the bill of this bird. Alright.

So I'm going to put this museum specimen away now.

And so we were able to look at a couple of the features of an American Crow. So we looked at the length of the American Crow. We looked at the feathers. And we looked at the bill. But there are all sorts of other features of the American Crow, one of which you can't see, but you can hear. And so I have a recording of a

call of the American Crow, and I want to play that recording for you. So I have my phone, and I just want to play a call.

Caw, caw, caw, caw, caw, caw. Caw, caw, caw, caw, caw, caw, caw.

Alright. So that is the call of an American Crow. Now, they have a lot of different calls. The one that we just listened to is a cawing noise. Alright. So, when the crow makes that call, it makes a caw sound.

Have you ever heard that caw sound before? Have you ever heard an American Crow?

Now, that's just one crow that we listened to making that call. In fact, if you had a lot of different crows, I want you to imagine what that would sound like. Would it be really loud? Or would it be really quiet? What do you think a lot of crows making that cawing noise would sound like?

Now, depending on where you are where American Crows live, sometimes in the fall and the winter months, at night, American Crows gather together. And when they gather together in huge numbers, and I'm talking about hundreds of crows or even thousands of crows, they all make that cawing noise. So do you think that would be really loud? I think it would be loud.

Now, we'll talk tomorrow about American Crows that gather in these really large numbers in the fall and winter months. And when crows do that, when they gather in these huge groups, we call that a roost. And we'll put that as a vocabulary word we'll talk about tomorrow. But before we talk about that tomorrow, I want you to think about the roost. Why do you think crows gather in these huge numbers in a roost during the fall and winter months? Why do you think they do that? Also, I want you to imagine what it would look like, what it would sound like, when all of these American Crows come together in these huge numbers in these roosts. Can you do that for me? Alright. Excellent!

Now, I will see you tomorrow here on Facebook Live at 10AM for Story Book Science. I can't wait to read the book *As the Crow Flies*. And we'll talk more about crows and even look at that museum specimen again. So I'll see you then! Bye!