

# STEAM Projects Are Just Ducky

Each autumn, the students at Critchlow Adkins Children's Centers gear up for Waterfowl Festival fun with a series of STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math) activities. These projects are a wonderful opportunity for the children to learn about the amazing animal and plant life they are surrounded by on the Eastern Shore. This year, the students participated in two educational projects related to ducks that you can do at home with your child.

Early literacy is an important focus at Critchlow Adkins, so STEAM projects are often paired with age-appropriate books. This helps enhance the children's understanding of the material and brings the words on the page to life.

Before digging into this year's Waterfowl STEAM, read the book, *Just Ducks*, by Nicola Davies. *Just Ducks* is a wonderful story from the perspective of a young girl who observes the Mallard ducks that live near her home in the city. She describes the ducks' day from morning

until night, including everything from how they appear to what they eat, where they play, and where and when they sleep. Also, there is a read along of the book available at <https://bit.ly/CACCJustDucks>. Now, let's fly into some STEAM Projects.

### Duck Feather Science

How are ducks able to stay warm while swimming in cold water, especially during the winter months? Their feathers are coated in a waxy oil that keeps them warm and dry. Test this out with a simple project.

Download and print a coloring book page with a picture of a duck from <https://bit.ly/duckcolor> or another source. Have your child color the picture of the duck using crayons. Make sure that the drawing is entirely covered in crayon, with no gaps. Next, with a dropper or straw, place several drops of water on the colored duck picture.

You should observe that the water is not absorbed by the paper. Why is this happening? Just like a duck's feathers, the wax from the crayons is



Children enrolled at CACC learn how to make a duck nest during a recent STEAM program.

repelling the water.

### Building A Duck's Nest

Using *Just Ducks* and other sources like *National Geographic* (<https://bit.ly/natgeo-ducks>), search for information on Mallard ducks, which are common here on Maryland's Eastern Shore. Pay special attention to how Mallards build their nests. How big do they need to be for a mother duck to lay her eggs? What types of materials do they use? What

shape are they?

Now, head outdoors to find and collect supplies to build your own Mallard duck nest. Look for twigs, weeds, vines, leaves, mud, and other materials that you think a duck might use. Take your materials home and put them together to build a nest. As an added challenge, try using only your thumb and forefinger to pick up the materials and put the nest together. This provides a perspective on

how a mother mallard uses her beak for this process.

When done, compare the finished product to the pictures in the storybook and online. How closely does it resemble the Mallard's nest?

While doing these projects, the most important things to remember are to get as creative and have tons of fun learning together. Visit the Critchlow Adkins website at [cacckids.org](http://cacckids.org) to learn more about CACC's mission and access a whole collection of STEAM activities.

Critchlow Adkins Children's Centers is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing quality, financially accessible childcare for children and their families in a nurturing, diverse, safe, and enriching environment. Critchlow Adkins serves families from across the Mid Shore at its five childcare sites, where children from age 2 through 12 can participate in all-day preschool programs, before- and after-school care, and summer camps.

Learn more about CACC at [cacckids.org](http://cacckids.org).



## The Stage @ OCC

# Bria Skonberg

November 30th 7:30pm  
at the Oxford Community Center

Limited "VIP Experience" tickets \$150  
General Seating \$65

More Information & Tickets  
[OXFORDCC.ORG](http://OXFORDCC.ORG)


