

# Top Tips for Gentle Referencing

“Gently Referencing” is a term that artist Paul Harfleet uses to describe how he mimics the birds he draws. He uses all sorts of materials to echo the features of his illustrations. From spoons, to bowls to anything that might be lying around the house. Occasionally he makes ‘props’ that resemble a crest or a wattle, he uses wool, pipe-cleaners, papier-mâché and sometimes embroidery. The intention is to echo a favourite feature of the bird that he notices when he draws it, he also might feature what he discovers during his research, such is the case below with the nightjar, the fern he has used comes from a folk name of the nightjar; the fern owl.

## One

Always draw the bird first, this reveals what you find to be the most interesting feature of your subject.

## Two

Does the bird have a crest like the Major Mitchell’s Cockatoo below, or brightly coloured bill, like the mallard duck below?

## Three

Look around you to see if there’s anything that resembles your favourite bird feature. It could be a bowl, or spoon.

## Four

You can use make-up or face paint to echo the colours of the bird you love. Blue eye shadow for a blue tit?

## Five

Ask your friends or family if they might have anything you can borrow, a hat, scarf, or any other accessories.

## Six

Have fun, be silly, play around with unexpected materials, from wool, to paper, you could even make a pom-pom.

