



# **Why Buzzard Is a Loner**

**A Uintah/Ouray Ute Tale**

## Cultural Note

Just as the birds in this story held a council meeting to decide how to deal with Buzzard, Ute people, to this day, have council meetings to discuss problems and solutions for their people. At these meetings, everyone has the right to express his or her opinion and be heard and listened to.

Although some Native American Indian stories can only be told during the winter time, this story can be told any time of the year.

## Vocabulary

burst

frantically

perch

spiraling

wobbled

The Native American Indian Literacy Project was made possible by funds from the Utah State Office of Education (USOE). It is a joint effort of the USOE and San Juan School District Media Center. For more information about this project, contact Shirlee Silversmith at (801) 538-7838.

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# Why Buzzard Is a Loner

A Uintah/Ouray Ute Tale



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Have you ever wondered why Buzzard is always seen alone?

On a mountainside far away, there once was a sad, lonely Koocheegat, Buzzard. He sat on his perch day after day with his head hanging down. He did not laugh. He did not sing. He did not talk to the other animals. He just sat there, day after day.



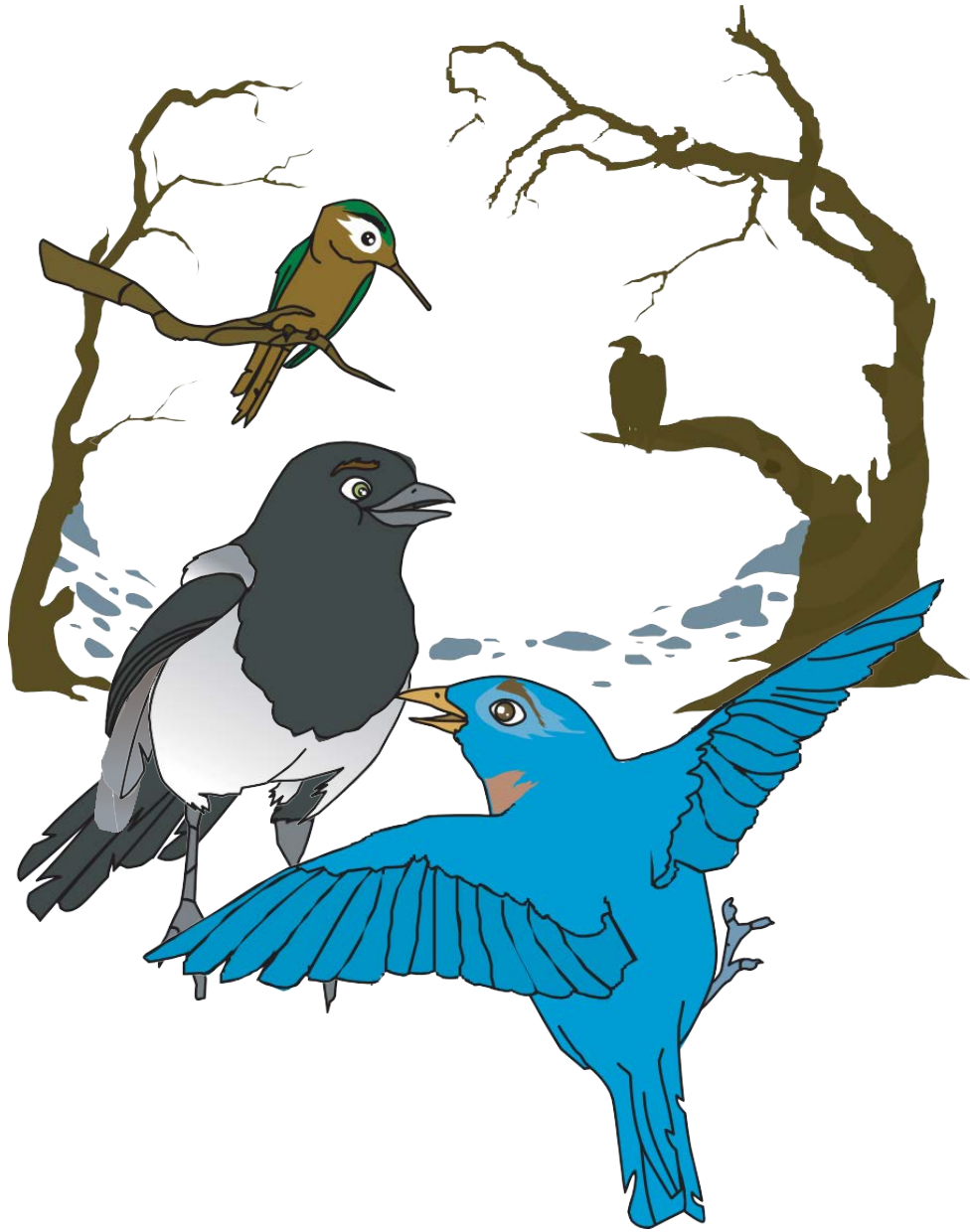
The other birds watched him for many days. The bluebirds flew above him. Buzzard wouldn't look up.



The small hummingbirds zoomed around him. Buzzard wouldn't look up.

Mahmahkurahch, Magpie, hopped in front of him and waved his wings. But Buzzard wouldn't look up.





After many days, the birds decided something needed to be done. They gathered for a council meeting. They came up with a plan. They would try to make Buzzard laugh!

Bluebird said, "I will dance round and round. That will make him laugh!"



Hummingbird zoomed up and said, "I will dance sideways in crazy zigzags."

Magpie flapped his wings and said, "I will dance round and round and sideways. He's sure to laugh at that!"

"Let's go and try all those things," the birds all agreed.



The next day, the birds flew to Buzzard's perch and landed in front of him.

Bluebird danced round and round, spiraling in circles in front of Buzzard. Buzzard looked up at Bluebird, but he only sighed, then looked away.





Hummingbird zoomed up close. She danced sideways in silly zigzags. Buzzard looked up at Hummingbird. He blinked his eyes at her, sighed, then looked away.



Magpie stepped forward. He danced round and round, then sideways. He spun in a circle until he was dizzy, and he wobbled and bobbed and fell down on his head!

Buzzard looked up. He watched Magpie for several minutes, then burst out laughing. He couldn't stop!

They had done it! The bird council had succeeded, and they cheered as Buzzard laughed and laughed and laughed.

But suddenly, a great flurry of flapping wings erupted as the birds scrambled over one another.





"Yeow! Let's get out of here!" they all squawked.

They covered their noses and flew away as fast as they could, for Buzzard had... the WORST breath! Poor Buzzard! He had never brushed his teeth a day in his life. No wonder Buzzard was a loner!

The moral of this story, boys and girls, is to always brush your teeth, so your friends won't run away from YOU!



## Glossary

*kivf - mountain*

*koocheegat - buzzard*

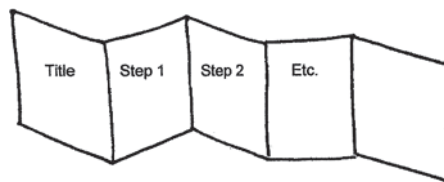
*mahmahkurahch - magpie*

*moo tah tahch - hummingbird*

*siveep - tree*

## Reading Suggestions

- An accordion book is a great way to visually sequence time, events, or procedures. Make an accordion book to sequence the events in this story. Use any size paper. Fold it into equal segments and draw pictures on each of the segments.



- Bird watching is a fun hobby. Do you know anyone who likes to bird watch? Go to <http://www.birdwatching.com> on the Internet to learn how to get started with bird watching.

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