



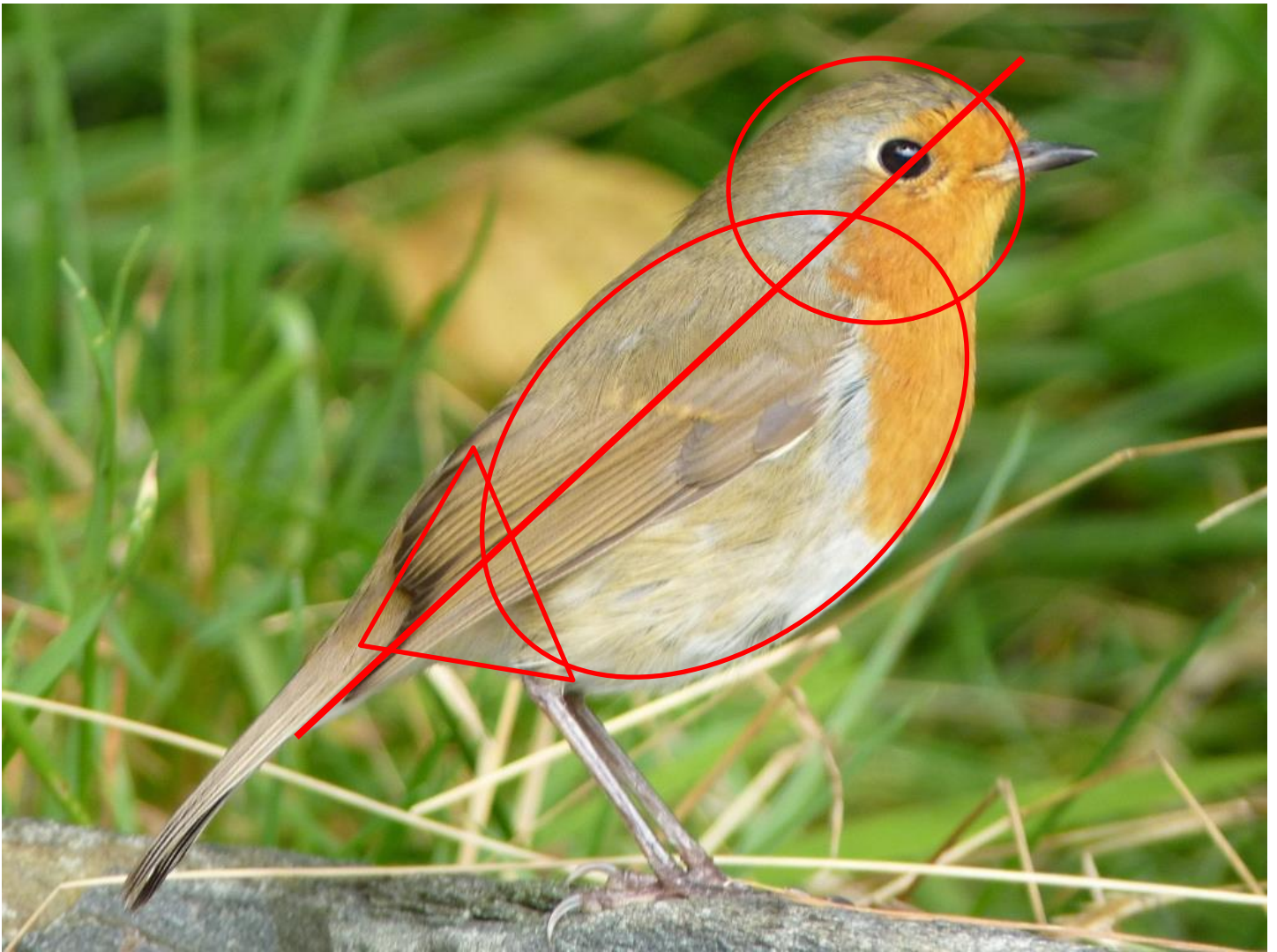
How to Draw a Bird

By Lisa Duncan of Wandering Leaves Studio ©2019

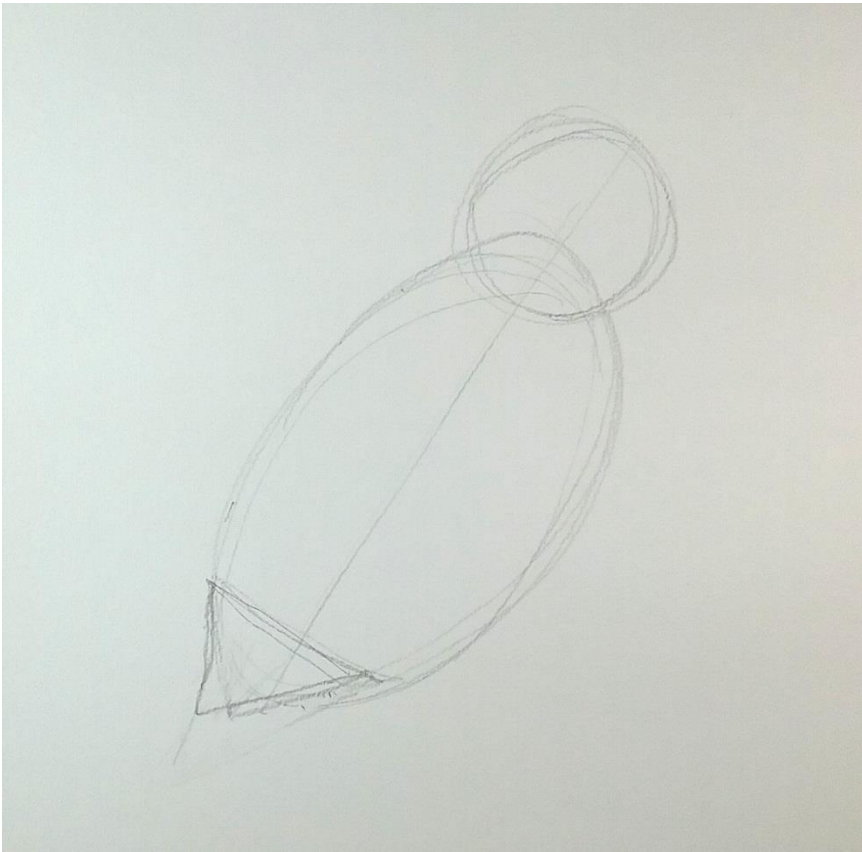


This is your main reference photo. Spend a little bit of time looking it over. The most important part of learning to draw, . . . is learning to see. Look at the angles of his head and tail, as well as his beak and feet.

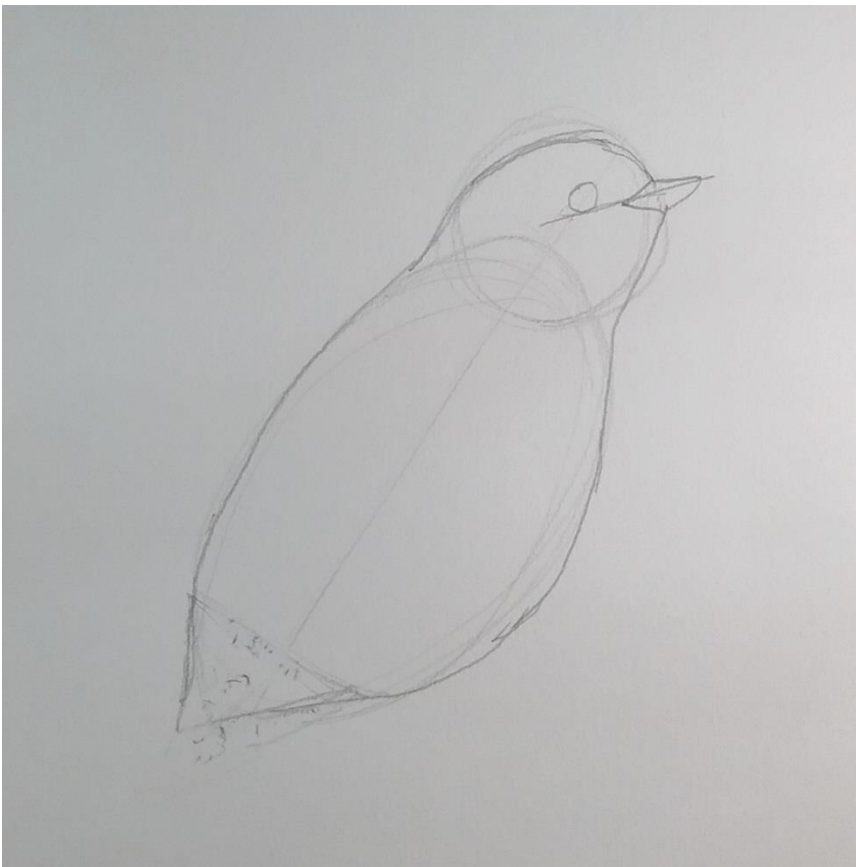
Now let's move on to the next reference photo.



Learning to see, for an artist, includes learning how to pick out the main shapes that make up the bird you're getting ready to draw. Getting these main shapes right and in proportion to each other is the most important part of your drawing.



Use the reference photo with the shape outlines to help you find the main shapes.



Take a little time to refine the shapes. Pay special attention to the neck and throat areas as well as the shape of the belly. Where is the belly full and round?

Draw a reference line indicating the angle of the beak. The eye sits just on top of this line.



Draw a reference line for the bird's center of gravity before adding in the legs and feet.

If you get the angle of the legs wrong, it looks like your bird might topple over!



Draw light reference lines indicating where there are color changes and where the wings sit.



Using the red-filtered image to help you, shade in the darkest areas of the bird with a soft, dark pencil.

Seeing lights and darks can be difficult - colors tend to confuse our eyes. Using a red filter helps us to see the shadows and highlights better. Carry a red filter in the field to help with your nature journaling!



Move back to the full-color reference photo to color your bird. I have used watercolor. You can also try watercolor markers or colored pencil.

Pay special attention to the areas of darks and lights. I've used bright yellow, true orange, and sienna.



Using cobalt blue with a touch of black added to gray it down a bit, color in the areas where the bird's feathers have a blue/gray tint.



Here I used umber to color in the rest of the bird. Pay special attention to the shaded areas on his back and his wing.

Also notice that the tips of the outer wing are really dark.



Now you have a finished bird! Congratulations!

Keep drawing. Practice whenever you get a chance.

I promise - anyone can learn to draw! It just takes time and practice.

Make sure to label your bird—and date it so you can track your progress!

HAPPY DRAWING!