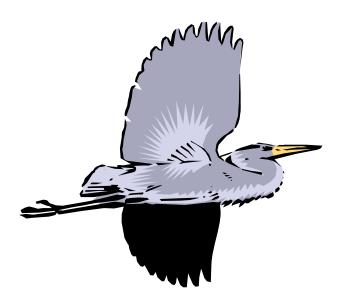
## **MAST ACADEMY OUTREACH**

# MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM Birds of Wakodahatchee

## **Pre-site Package**



MAST Academy Maritime and Science Technology High School Miami-Dade County Public Schools Miami, Florida

## **Birds of Wakodahatchee**

## **Pre-Site Packet**

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### BIRDS OF WAKODAHATCHEE COMPETENCY BASED CURRICULUM - GRADE 8

#### **Earth/Space Science – Honors**

- III. 4. Describe the effects of different cycles on the biotic and abiotic characteristics of the earth.
  - 3. Knows the ways in which humans today are placing their environmental support systems at risk.
  - 1. Explain the interconnectedness of the systems on Earth and the quality of life.
  - 2. Describe how the world ecosystems are shaped by physical factors that limit their productivity.

#### Algebra I – Honors

- IV. 3. Solve concrete and real world problems using patterns and functions.
- V. 1. Collect, organize, analyze, and interpret data by constructing charts, tables, and graphs to predict and explain outcomes.

#### M/J U.S. History

VI. 1. Use appropriate skills and resources to access, analyze, and synthesize information.

#### M/J Language Arts 3- Advanced

- I. 16. Interprets functional reading material, such as newspapers, periodicals, manuals, instructions, schedules, common forms, maps, graphs, charts, tables.
- III. 2. Extends the vocabulary development expectations for the seventh grade using eighth grade or higher vocabulary in reading, writing, and speaking.
  - 4. Acquires and strengthens a personal, active vocabulary in speaking and writing in Interdisciplinary/integrated contexts.
- IV. 1. Follows verbal directions.
  - 5. Asks appropriate, challenging questions for elaboration or clarification during activities such as interviews and discussions.
  - 11. Demonstrates appropriate listening and/or viewing skills in a variety of settings, such as viewing film, television, drama, music and dance.
- V. 2. Interprets and/or constructs questionnaires and graphics, such as charts, tables, graphs, maps, labels, and signs.





## **Teacher Instructions**

View the "Birds of the Everglades/Wakodahatchee Wetlands DVD" with your class. Make a copy of the pre-site packet for each of your students. Before the field trip, review with your students the background information provided. Have students complete the in-class activity. Make additional copies of the bird watching field notes sheet if you wish to expand this activity to more than two birds. If you have field guides and colored pencils available, you may also have the students color in the pictures.

Make a copy of the on-site packet for each of your students. You may make additional copies of the field notes pages if you desire.





Because Wakodahatchee Wetlands is an out of county field trip location, it is essential that you submit your field trip paperwork to your region office **at least one month prior to the date of your trip**.

The MAST Outreach Instructor will meet you at your school site and ride with you to Wakodahatchee Wetlands. The wetlands are located at 13026 Jog Road, between Atlantic Avenue and Woolbright Road in Delray Beach. From North Miami-Dade, it will take approximately 45 minutes to reach the wetlands.

Directions: Take the Florida Turnpike north. Exit at Atlantic Avenue. Drive east 1.5 miles to Jog Road. Turn left. Drive north about one mile. The wetlands are on the right.





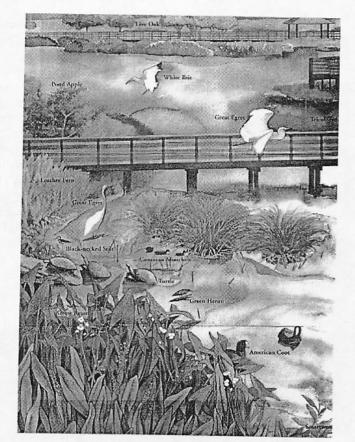
Facilities for lunch are not available at Wakodahatchee Wetlands. You may eat at a nearby park (Morikami Park, on Jog Road south of Linton Blvd.), or at a nearby fast food restaurant (Burger King, call 561-499-1650 for reservations). Insure that each student brings with them on this trip: headgear, sunscreen, insect repellant, a lunch, and plenty of drinking water.

#### **Destination: Wakodahatchee Wetlands**

Wakodahatchee Wetlands is located in Delray Beach, on Jog Road about one mile north of Atlantic Avenue. Created by the Palm Beach County Water Utilities Department, and located adjacent to the county's Southern Region Water Reclamation Facility, Wakodahatchee (which means "created waters" in the Seminole Indian language) is an excellent example of people giving something back to nature.

Fifty acres of unused utilities land have been transformed into a wetlands ecosystem. Every day, approximately two million gallons of highly treated water is pumped into the wetlands. By acting as a natural filter for nutrients that remain, the wetlands work to further cleanse the water.

A three-quarter mile boardwalk (with covered gazebos at various stops) winds through the wetlands, giving you the opportunity to read interpretive signs and learn about water purification, wetlands ecology, natural history, and the interdependence of people and their environment. The wetlands have attracted an abundant variety of wildlife, including turtles, frogs, rabbits, otters, alligators, and over 140 species of birds.



## The Birds of Wakodahatchee Wetlands

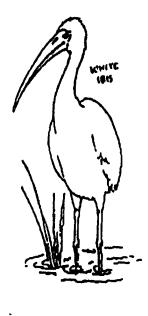
Birds are some of the most colorful and interesting creatures that share our world. South Florida has always been associated with birds. The warm, shallow, and vast Everglades "river" attracted mainly wading birds to this region for thousands of years. In the 1800's, the well-known naturalist and artist, John James Audubon, wrote during a visit to south Florida, "We observed great flocks of wading birds flying overhead toward their evening roosts. They appeared in such numbers to actually block out the light from the sun for some time."

At Wakodahatchee Wetlands, over 140 different species of birds have been sighted. There are many different ways to identify one group of birds from another. In this packet, the terms wading birds, land birds, and birds of prey will be used.

### Wading Birds

Sixteen different species of wading birds live in South Florida. All have long legs for wading into the water to catch their food. The White Ibis is the most common wading bird found here. Unlike many wading birds that prefer to eat fish, the ibis dines mostly on crayfish. This attractive white bird has a long, slender, curved beak, which it uses to probe the mud in search of food.

The Wood Stork is a larger wading bird; however, very few remain. They are an endangered species. The Wood Stork has an unusual way of feeding. With its beak held in the water, the Wood Stork shuffles its feet. As a frightened fish swims away from its feet, it bumps into the bird's beak. The sensitive beak can feel the fish, and it clamps down on it within a fraction of a second. Some believe this movement to be the fastest of any organism in South Florida.



One of the most common herons you would encounter on a visit to the park would be the Green Heron. A relatively small wading bird, the antics of this fisherman are fun to watch. Slowly stalking in shallow water, or hanging from a low tree branch, its dart-like jab at a fish is rarely off target.

Other wading birds you may encounter on a visit include the Great Blue Heron, Great White Heron (a form of Great Blue Heron), Great Egret, Snowy Egret, Tricolored Heron, Little Blue Heron, Cattle Egret, Reddish Egret, Black-crowned Night Heron, Yellow-crowned Night Heron, Least Bittern, American Bittern, Glossy Ibis, and the very colorful Roseate Spoonbill.

## Land Birds

Of the more than 350 birds that have been sighted in South Florida, about 200 are migratory. That is, they spend most of their lives north or south of the Everglades, and visit here when conditions of food and/or climate dictate.

Land birds spend most of their lives in drier areas of the park, like the tree islands (hammocks) or the pineland areas. During winter months, migratory warblers are often seen. These very colorful birds are named warblers for their often beautiful singing. Cardinals, Blue Jays, Meadowlarks, Bobwhites, and Red-bellied Woodpeckers are common on dry ground in the Everglades and reside there year round.

### **Birds of Prey**

The term "birds of prey" describes birds that catch their food by using a hooked beak and claws. Hawks, owls, eagles, kites, and falcons are all considered birds of prey.

Some birds of prey of South Florida include the most common hawk - the Red-shouldered Hawk. This very vocal bird swoops down to feed on lizards and snakes. The most common owl is the Barred Owl. If you hear an owl hooting late at night in the Everglades, most likely it is a barred owl. "Who cooks for you -- who cooks for you all" is one common "English" translation of its call.



Along the mangrove island areas in South Florida, you are likely to see an Osprey dive into the water to catch a fish. About fifty pair of Bald Eagles, who also feed on fish, nest in South Florida.

Perhaps the most interesting, and one of the most threatened birds in South Florida, is the Snail Kite. This bird does not have a varied diet. In fact, it feeds almost exclusively on the meat of the large, brown, aquatic apple snail. Skillfully plucking the snail from the water, the Snail Kite will use its specially adapted beak to pry the snail loose from its shell and then devour it. This attractive bird is an endangered species today due to a "human-caused" decrease in apple snail populations. Draining of prime snail habitat kills off adult snails. Improper flooding of areas drowns the pearl-like snail eggs before they hatch from their grassy perch.

## South Florida's Birds: Yesterday and Today

In the 1930's approximately 250,000 wading birds nested in the Florida Everglades. In the spring of 1990, scientists estimated as few as 2,200 wading birds nested in Everglades National Park. Ninety percent of our nesting wading bird population is gone. Many will return if water managers and park staff are able to return the flow of fresh water through Everglades National Park to its original condition (and keep it there).

Two main reasons have accounted for this dramatic decrease in the members of the wading bird community: fashion and the draining of the wetlands.

In the late 1800's, fashionable ladies' hats were adorned with lacy feathers called plumes. These were taken mostly from herons and egrets. Plume hunters would often shoot the water birds during nesting and leave the helpless young chicks to die. Plume-hunting has been illegal for many years, but by the year 1900, only a few thousand herons and egrets remained. Many merchants made their early fortunes by buying and selling bird feathers.



The Everglades wetland has been reduced to a small fraction of its original size. All creatures, including birds, need food, water, shelter, and space to survive. Without these essential requirements, birds were unable to survive in altered areas of the Everglades.

Each bird relies on a certain type of food and has a special adaptation enabling it to catch its prey. The wood stork is an endangered species today, not solely because of habitat destruction of the wetlands, but also due to irregular water flow into the park. Over the last three decades water managers have, on occasion, dumped too much water into Everglades National Park, flooding out small pools rich in fish, and making it harder for the wood stork to find food to feed its young.

There is hope for the future that more wetland areas will be protected from "development.", or that other areas like Wakodahatchee Wetlands can be created. Water managers and scientists will then be able to recreate the natural flow of the last remaining natural section of the Everglades river.

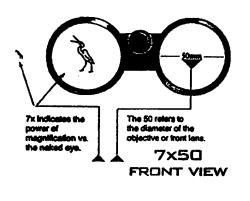
If you have never visited places like Wakodahatchee Wetlands during the winter birdwatching season, you are missing one of nature's finest shows! Seeing close-up the beautiful rainbow colors of the purple gallinule, or the fishing tactics of the anhinga as it spears its prey and swallows it whole, is much better than watching a tape on the TV set.

Experiencing the beauty and ingenuity of birds has inspired people for centuries. Despite the dramatic decline in the population of wading birds, residents of south Florida still live near one of the world's best bird areas. Take advantage of it!

## **Birdwatching Equipment**

### Binoculars

When you go birdwatching, you'll be using BINOCULARS to get up-close looks at the birds you see. Binoculars come in many sizes, such as 7x35, 7x50, and 10x50. What do these numbers mean? Let's use 7x50 as an example.



The first number, in this case the "7," is the magnification. That means this particular binocular magnifies the image seven times, or makes objects look seven times closer. For instance, if you are looking at something 700 yards away, the view through the binoculars will be as if it was only 100 yards away. If you prefer, you can think of the image as seven times larger. Models which have an eight or ten as the first number are eight and ten "power" binoculars. Magnification often is written as an "X," as in 7X.

The second number of the combination is the diameter in millimeters of the objective lens, the lens closer to the object being viewed. The larger the diameter of the objective lens, the more light is allowed into the binoculars. MAST Academy has 7x35 binoculars, with 35 millimeter objective lenses.

## A Field Guide

You will be using this "Local Birds of South Florida" FIELD GUIDE to help you identify the birds you see. Each bird pictured has a brief description of its field marks (features of the bird, see page 10), as well as what time of year it can be seen in South Florida.



### **Field Notes**

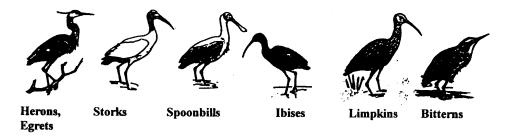
If you are a beginning birdwatcher, you will probably not recognize every bird that you see. By taking careful FIELD NOTES, you will more closely observe the shapes, sizes, colors, and behaviors of the birds you see, as well as the habitat where you saw them; this will make identification of the birds easier. It will also provide a record of your birdwatching adventure.

Bird identification begins by being able to recognize the BASIC BIRD GROUP to which each bird belongs. The birds in each Basic Bird Group are all similar in appearance. Below are sketches of birds in some of the Basic Bird Groups you may see on your field trip. Become familiar with the names of these bird groups.

#### WADING BIRDS

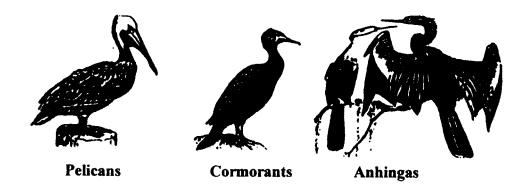
LONG-LEGGED WADERS

Medium to large waterbirds. Long neck and bill. Eat aquatic life in shallow water.



**UPRIGHT-PERCHING WATERBIRDS** Large aquatic fisheaters. Feet far

back on the body. Toes webbed.



#### **WATERFOWL** Duck-like birds.









Ducks

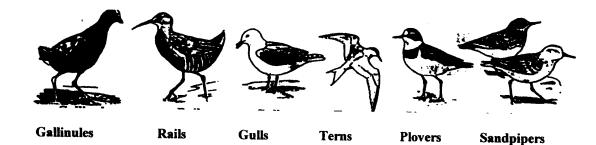
Mergansers

Grebes

Coots

**CHICKEN-LIKE MARSHBIRDS** 

Small to medium-sized wading birds with short necks, long legs and long toes.



**BIRDS OF PREY** 

Sharply hooked bills for tearing meat. Often soar high in the air. Some take live prey, some scavenge.





Kites



Eagles



Hawks

Ospreys



Falcons



Vultures

### LAND BIRDS

PIGEONS,DOVES Small to medium sized birds. Small headed. Walks on the ground. Pointed wings.



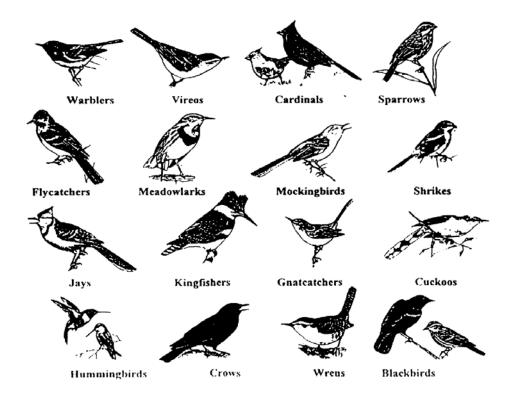
SWALLOWS Long, pointed wings Very fast flyers. WOODPECKERS Tree-clinging birds. eats insects hidden in bark



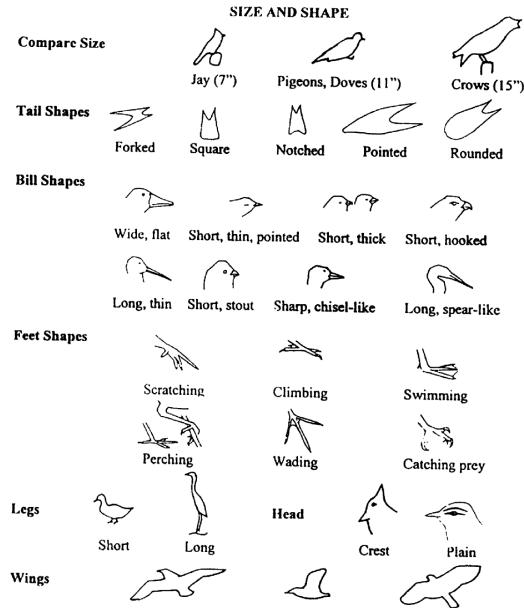


PERCHING BIRDS

Medium to small landbirds. Feet adapted for perching. Three toes in front, one behind.



Once you have recognized the Basic Bird Group to which a certain bird belongs, you can use FIELD MARKS to identify the bird. Field marks are any feature of the bird that helps to distinguish it from other birds. Field marks could include the size and shape of the bird, patterns in markings, or patterns in behavior. In many cases, experienced birdwatchers are able to identify a bird based upon only a few of these field marks. Below are some field marks you could use to help you identify the birds you see:



Long, thin

Short, wide

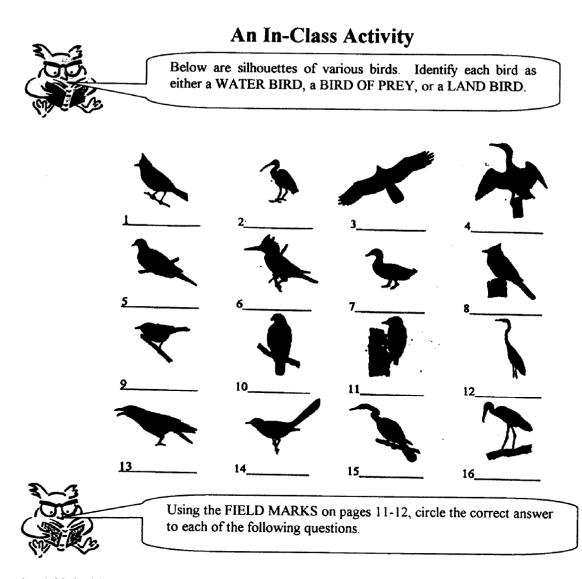
Long, wide

11

#### PATTERNS IN MARKINGS

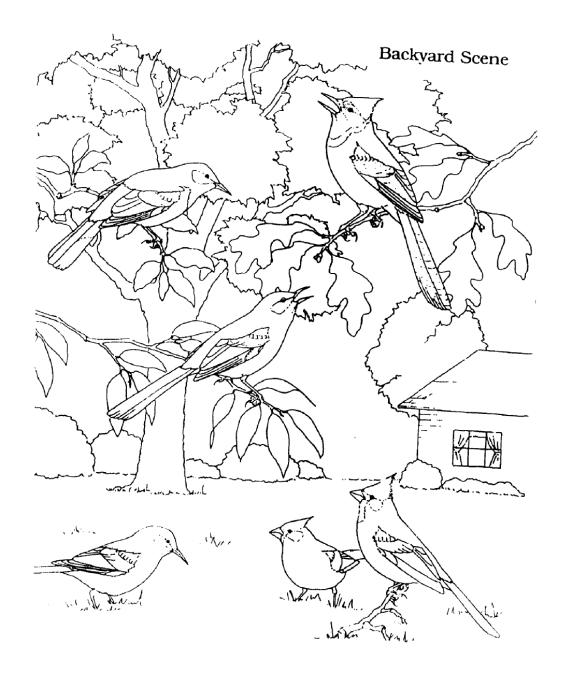


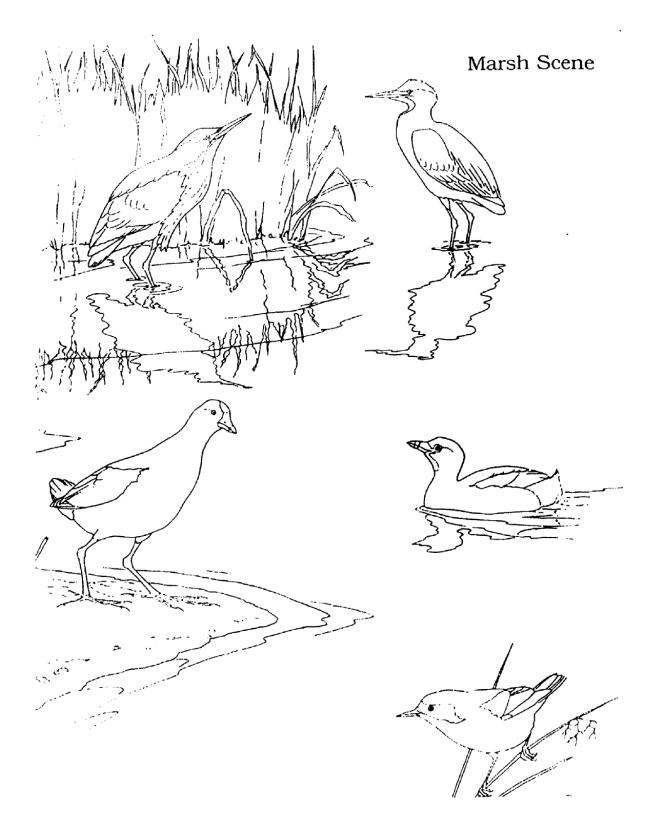
Every time you see a new bird on your field trip, you will record field notes on a form such as the one on page 15. By observing the bird carefully, you should be able to determine and record its size and shape, patterns in markings and patterns in behavior. Space is provided to draw a sketch of each new bird you see. Try to determine the basic bird group to which each bird belongs. Remember, it is not so important to immediately identify each bird you see; instead, it is more important to observe the birds for at least as long as it takes to record field notes. This will allow you to use the notes and your field guide to try to identify the bird at a later time.

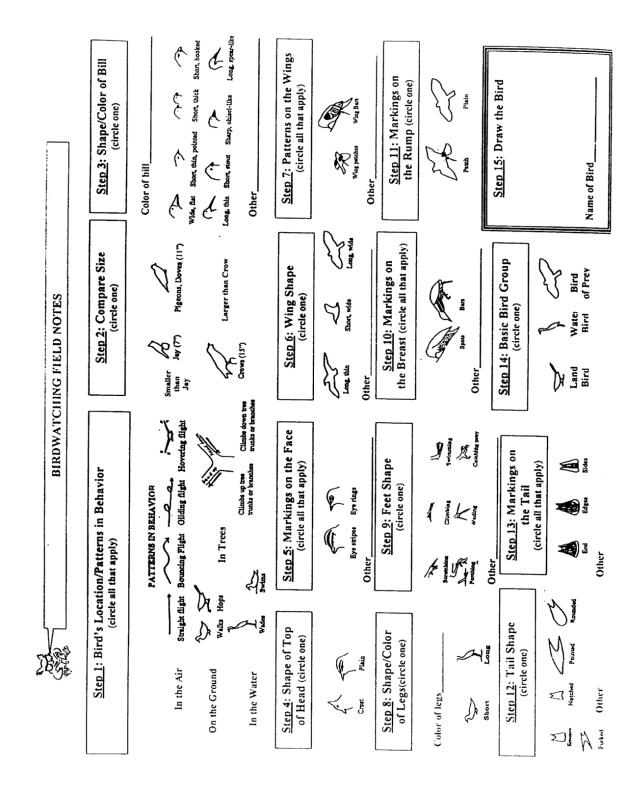


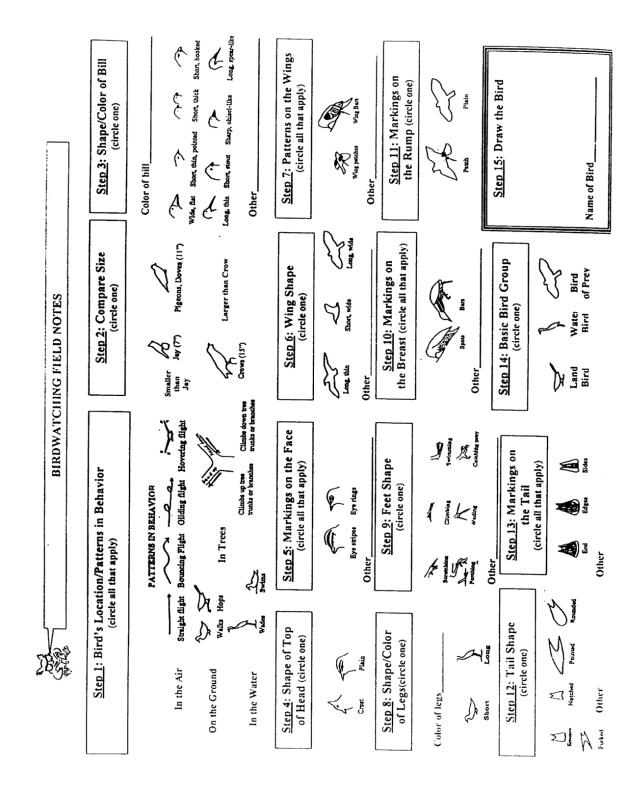
- A bird with a long, spear-like bill is most likely a (a) long-legged wader, (b) bird of prey, (c) waterfowl, (d) land bird.
- 2. A bird with feet shaped for swimming is most likely a (a) long-legged wader, (b) bird of prey, (c) waterfowl, (d) land bird.
- 3. A bird with a short, hooked bill is most likely a (a) long-legged wader, (b) bird of prey, (c) waterfowl, (d) land bird.
- 4. A bird with feet shaped for climbing is most likely a (a) long-legged wader, (b) bird of prey, (c) waterfowl, (d) land bird.

On the next two pages are scenes of birds in two habitats. Practice taking field notes by completing the field note sheets on pages 17-18 for two (2) of these birds, one from each habitat. Use the field note information on pages 8-12 to help you. Using all of the bird pictures, answer the questions below.









## **Online Resources**

The following middle school-level bird watching resources are available online:

All About Birds (Cornell Lab of Ornithology) http://www.birds.cornell.edu/AllAboutBirds/

Urban Bird Studies and Bird Sleuth (Cornell Lab of Ornithology) Students can become citizen scientists to collect data about birds living in their neighborhood! <u>http://www.birds.cornell.edu/programs/urbanbirds/index.html</u> http://www.birds.cornell.edu/birdsleuth

## **Answer Key**

#### Silhouettes

- 1. land bird
- 2. water bird
- 3. bird of prey
- 4. water bird
- 5. land bird
- 6. land bird
- 7. water bird
  8. land bird

14. land bird

9. land bird
 10. bird of prey

11. land bird

12. water bird

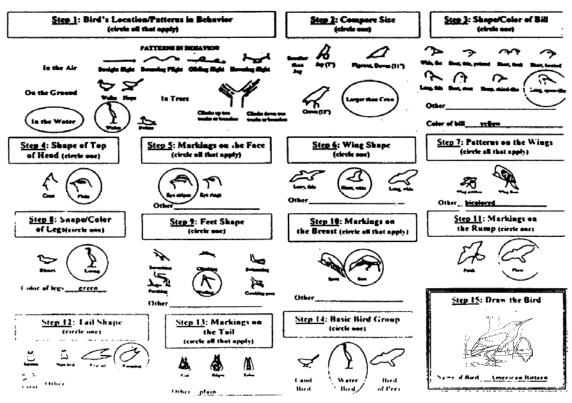
13. land bird

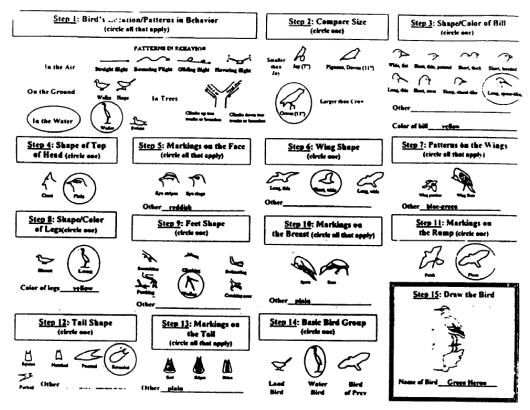
- 15. water bird
  - 16. water bird

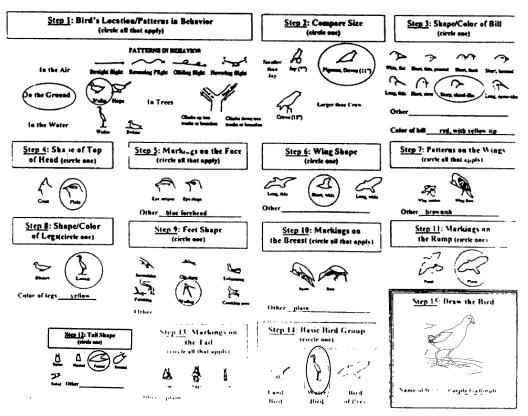
#### **Field Marks**

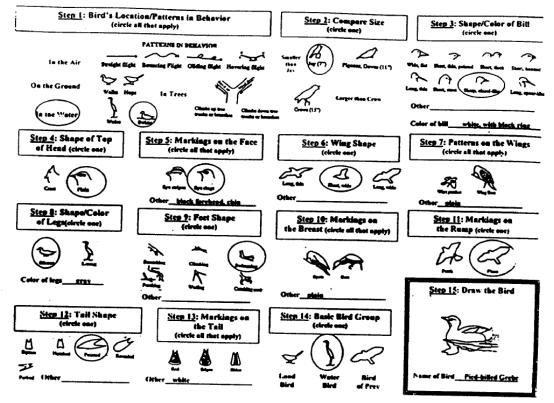
- 1. a
- 2. c
- 3. d
- 4. d

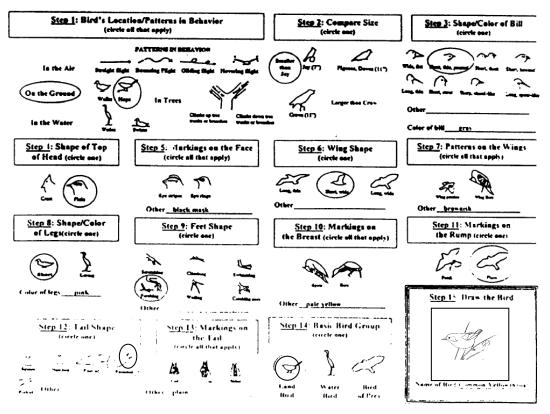
#### **Field Notes**

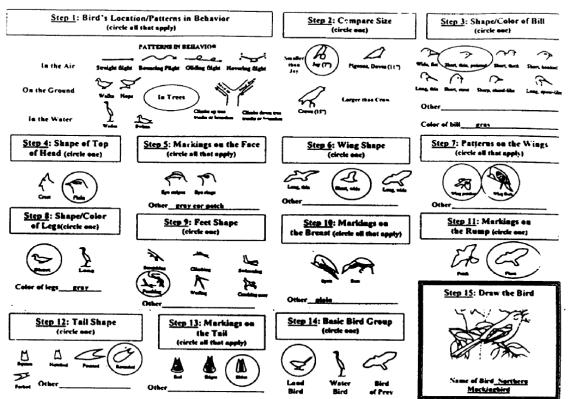


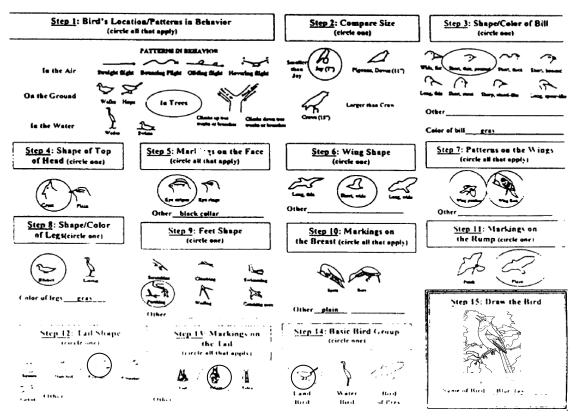


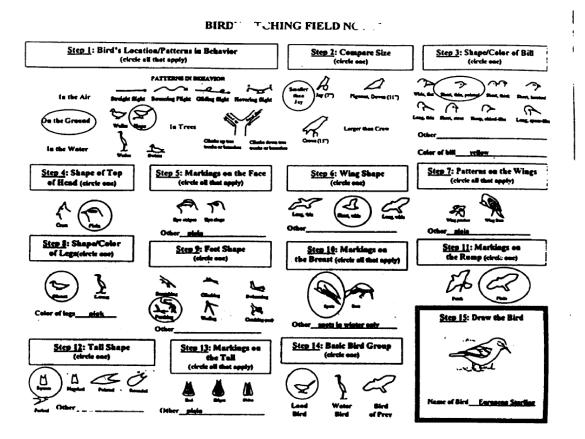


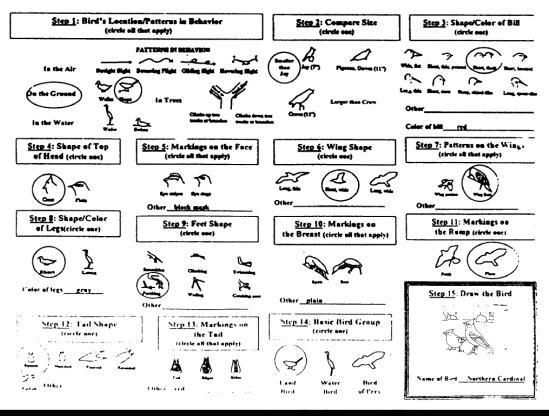


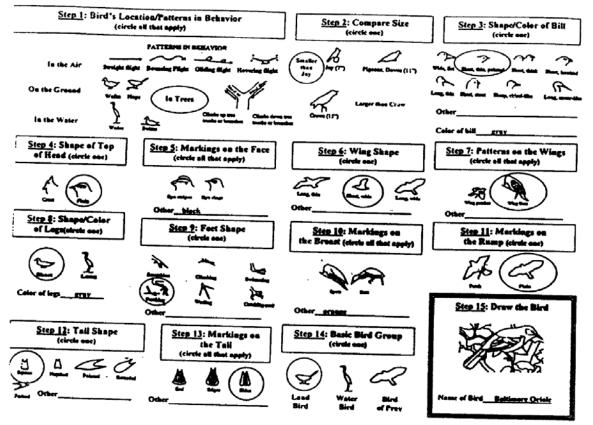












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Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended - prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, or national origin.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 - prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender.

Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA), as amended - prohibits discrimination on the basis of age with respect to individuals who are at least 40.

The Equal Pay Act of 1963, as amended - prohibits sex discrimination in payment of wages to women and men performing substantially equal work in the same establishment.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 - prohibits discrimination against the disabled.

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Florida Civil Rights Act of 1992 - secures for all individuals within the state freedom from discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap, or marital status.

School Board Rules 6Gx13- <u>4A-1.01</u>, 6Gx13- <u>4A-1.32</u>, and 6Gx13- <u>5D-1.10</u> - prohibit harassment and/or discrimination against a student or employee on the basis of gender, race, color, religion, ethnic or national origin, political beliefs, marital status, age, sexual orientation, social and family background, linguistic preference, pregnancy, or disability.

Veterans are provided re-employment rights in accordance with P.L. 93-508 (Federal Law) and Section 295.07 (Florida Statutes), which stipulate categorical preferences for employment.

**REVISED 8/1/01**