

# Bird Patch ~ Water Birds Segment

The patch itself is divided into four segments:

1. The Bald Eagle representing birds of prey.
2. The Pileated Woodpecker representing woodpeckers.
3. The Cardinal representing songbirds.
4. The White Egret representing shore birds/wading birds.



Girls may earn any portion of the Bird Patch or they may earn it in its entirety. The patch may be worn on the back of the vest, sash, glory jacket, or appropriate garment where patches are displayed.

There is also a tote that can be checked out from either the council headquarters in Sarasota or Girl Scout service center in Fort Myers. Though not required to complete the patch, the tote has many useful items in it including binoculars, field guides, and educational games.

Decide on a particular category of bird that you would like to study, woodpeckers, birds of prey, shore birds, or songbirds, and select activities from the following suggestions. Complete the first three activities regardless of which category you choose.

## The Birder's Code of Conduct

It is important that Girl Scouts always leave a place better than they found it and that we all follow the Birder's Code of Conduct.

- ❖ Ask permission before entering private property.
- ❖ Do not litter, talk loudly, or make other loud noises.
- ❖ Do not trample plants or harm other animals to look at a bird.
- ❖ Observe nests with baby birds from a distance.
- ❖ Do not flush (scare away) birds unnecessarily, especially when other birders are watching.

Spy birds can be very difficult to see. They often move quickly, are small, and are afraid of people. Binoculars can be very helpful for observing birds. Follow the steps below to help you practice using binoculars. Then, use binoculars to go bird watching.

1. Put the binoculars around your neck and adjust the eye width to match your own.
2. Take them away from your face.
3. Locate the object you want to view. (The idea is to look at the object and bring the binoculars up to view the object, not to put the binoculars up to your face and then search for an object.)
4. While looking at the object, bring binoculars up to your eyes.
5. Adjust the focus until the object in the binoculars is clear.

## How to use a field guide

- Familiarize yourself with the parts of the field guide.
- Learn what markings are important to notice.
- Study silhouettes to help you quickly identify the family of bird.



# Water Birds Segment



## **DISCOVER:**

- ❖ What is the difference between a shore bird and a wading bird?
- ❖ Birds have lots of colors and markings on their bodies to help identify them. The shape of their bodies, tail, wings, and beak are also useful for telling them apart. Learn which parts of bird's bodies are commonly used for identification and learn to identify at least eight different species of bird using these special features.
- ❖ Birds are important in many cultures throughout the world. They can be found in everything from art of ancient civilizations to national symbols in many countries. Use a form of art to show that birds are important to you. You could draw or paint a picture, create a work in clay or clothing, or even write a story or poem. Be creative and display your work.

## **CONNECT:**

- ❖ How does the water cycle affect wading birds in Everglades National Park?
- ❖ If you like birds, you might want to have a career working with birds. An ornithologist is a scientist who studies birds out in the field. They use techniques like capturing and banding birds to help keep track of bird populations. Wildlife rehabilitators work with injured birds to nurse them back to health and release them into the wild. Zoos and aviaries also have staffs who work directly with birds. Contact someone who works with birds and find out what their job is like. If possible, visit them at their place of work to see them in action.

## **TAKE ACTION:**

- ❖ Think about how a bird's habitat could change. What could happen in nature that would make it hard for a bird to live? What might humans do to the bird's habitat that makes it difficult to survive? Many birds are losing their habitat. They are having a hard time finding food, water, or shelter suitable for them to live. Do a service project to help improve natural bird habitat by planting trees or shrubs to give birds shelter. Or, plant flowers that might provide seeds or berries for birds to eat. Be sure you have permission ahead of time for your service project and that you are only planting native species.
- ❖ Many ornithologists rely on help from the public to gather information about bird populations. There are many opportunities to help ornithologists both locally and nationally by participating in a bird count. Participate in a bird count event and report your findings to the event organizers.

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