



Park Quest 2021 Chapman State Park Is For The Birds



Community Science

Science is for the birds, and so is Chapman State Park! With this Park Quest, you will learn how much fun collecting community science data can be as a volunteer ornithologist. *Community science* is when every day people collect scientific data for real research projects. **What do you think an ornithologist studies?**

To complete this Quest, you will need to visit at least THREE different habitats (or extend your Quest to visit ALL five!) at Chapman State Park and record your bird observations as Community Science Ornithologists. You will record your observations here, then if you are able to please submit your data to eBird, a free community science app from the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology.

eBird



Chapman State Park (CSP) has a rich history of volunteer involvement and community science. May Counts and Christmas Bird Counts have taken place here annually for many years. The Friends of Chapman State Park compiled the CSP Bird Field Checklist and volunteers are currently collecting data in the park for the Maryland-DC Breeding Bird Atlas 3, and are using eBird, the community science app you will use on this Quest!

Along with eBird, use the CSP Bird Checklist to keep track of your sightings, and perhaps consider starting your own Life List of the birds you have seen too.

If you need help with bird identification, use a field guide or the free Audubon Bird Guide App to help identify what you are seeing. Listen to their calls and songs with the app to help with identification. If you can't figure out a bird's name, make notes about it's colors, beak or bill, feet or behaviors. You may wish to also make a sketch or try to take a photo of the bird.

Important Bird Area

Chapman State Park (CSP) was designated an *Important Bird Area* (IBA) by the National Audubon Society because of its significance to birds.



Birds play an important role in an ecosystem, and are often environmental indicators. An IBA is a distinct area that provides essential habitat for one or more species of birds in breeding, wintering, or migration.

Do you know which IBA is closest your home?

When you return home, visit <https://www.audubon.org/important-bird-areas> and discover the answer.

Habitat Is The Key

Knowing the habitat requirements of a bird makes it easier to find the species of bird you are looking for, or help you identify a species based on the habitat you find it in. Habitats at CSP include *forest, meadow, riverside, old age forest and swamp*. **Visit three or more different habitats (or extend the quest to include all five different habitats) and note the differences in the habitat descriptions boxes. While visiting each of these habitats, try to identify and record at least two species of birds.** Remember to submit your data using eBird.

Start your Quest at the Park Gate and walk the long driveway toward the house. Look and listen for birds along the driveway as you pass through the woods and lawn. **Which birds did you spot in this area?**

When you arrive at the house, go to the riverside porch. Pearson Chapman built Mount Aventine in 1840, when his family home burned to the ground. An Eastern Phoebe pair often build a nest of moss on the porch at the top of one of the columns. Check to see if they are there now, and if you can find and identify them, observe their behaviors and report your data. **Were you able to find the Eastern Phoebe?**

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Habitat Descriptions

Meadow

As you exit the porch, take the path straight ahead through the meadow toward the Potomac River.

Describe the meadow habitat in the space below.

Try to identify at least 2 species of birds in the meadow. Record them below and report them using eBird, if you are able.

Chapman State Park is rich in both nature and history! The Chapman Family first arrived at this location in 1740, when Nathaniel Chapman bought this property known as Grimes Ditch. At the time, he worked for Augustine "Gus" Washington, father of George Washington, as iron master of Principio Iron Works. In addition to that job, Nathaniel started the family fishery and ferry businesses. Like the herons, cormorants, ospreys and eagles that lived here too, his family also depended the rich natural resource of fish from the Potomac River.

Potomac River and Shore

Continue from the meadow to the Potomac River. While on the shores of the Potomac, look for bird species, who like the Chapman Family, depend on fish for the survival of their families. **Describe the river and shore habitat in the space below. Try to identify at least 2 species of birds in this area. Record them below and report them using eBird, if you are able.**

Forest

CSP consists of 2,254 acres, part of which are Old-Age Forest. This habitat type is home to several species of birds known as *Forest Interior Dwelling Species*, including the Pileated Woodpecker. The American Birding Association (ABA) has declared 2021 the Year of the Pileated Woodpecker! As Maryland's largest woodpecker, at about the size of a crow, it is also the bird Woody Woodpecker was modeled after. Several pairs of this large woodpecker live in the park. Search for it by sight or sound while hiking in the forest.

Use the Audubon Bird Guide app to listen to how they sound. If you are confident that you can identify them or any other bird by their song or call, you can report it to eBird!



The Pileated Woodpecker can be found every forested part of the Park. However, you are very likely to find them on the trail marked in red on your map. **Were you able to see (or hear) a Pileated Woodpecker?**

Old Age-Forest & Swamp

To extend your Quest, visit the Old-Age Forest along this trail and the swamp next to the river. *This will add approximately 30 minutes to the time you spend on this Quest.* **Describe the old age forest and swamp habitat in the space below. Try to identify at least 2 species of birds in each area. Record them below and report them using eBird, if you are able.**

This Park Quest was sponsored by the Friends of Chapman State Park. Visit their website at <https://www.friendsofchapmansp.org> to learn more about the park, Mt. Aventine, and upcoming activities and events. You can also visit them on Facebook at Friends of Chapman State Park or send an email to mountaventinecsp@gmail.com