



Ornithologist for a Day at North Point State Park's Wildlands



Park Quest 2021

Please bring the following items: water, a writing utensil, something to write on, binoculars (recommended), sunscreen, a hat, insect repellent, sturdy hiking boots and a creative mind!

An ornithologist is a person who studies birds. In this 2021 Park Quest, your team will complete each of the following family-friendly activities along the Black Marsh Trail in North Point State Park's Wildlands. Information about the park and a map are on page 4. Each activity mimics a characteristic or trait of one of our native birds that you may see along your travels. Check off each box as you complete each activity. Feel free to go in any order.

ACTIVITIES:

1. Ground Nesters



Unlike most birds who nest in trees, these birds are ground nesters. Particularly, the Killdeer likes to nest on open ground, often gravel. Since there is no structure to stand out from its surroundings, the Killdeer and their nest are great camouflage. The Parking Lot that you are in is the perfect home for a Killdeer. In a safe area of the Parking Lot or on the trail, crouch down and get low and pretend that you are a Killdeer protecting your nest!



2. Bird Songs

Every bird has a song or a unique call. If you have a smartphone handy, look up the sound of a Red-winged blackbird. This is one of the most common birds in this area because they thrive in the marshy habitat of the wildlands. Do you know how to whistle? Can you try to whistle, sing or hum like the Red-winged blackbird? If so, mimic their call down the trail for a minute or two while you walk. If you cannot look up the sound of this bird, feel free to whistle/hum/sing a tune of another bird you may know.



3. BIRD WINGSPAN

Eagle



Buzzard



Goshawk



Falcon



A wingspan is the length of a bird's wings when they are fully opened from the tip to tip. Have everyone on your Park Quest Team spread your wings (arms) and pretend you are a bird. On the lines below, write down the order of the bird (person) who has the largest to the smallest wingspan.

1. _____ Bald Eagle 7 feet
2. _____ Great Blue Heron 6 feet
3. _____ Barred Owl 3.5 feet
4. _____ Red-tailed Hawk 2 feet
5. _____ Blue Jay 1 foot
6. _____ Chickadee 5 inches

4. MOVEMENT & DANCES

We all know that birds can fly and chirp, but did you know that birds can also dance, spin, bob their heads and make other movements to express themselves? A lot of male birds have a specific dance that they perform when they are trying to impress a female so that they can become a pair. In addition to dancing, another kind of movement that birds, such as Starlings, can do is fly in a formation. Birds swoop, dip and fly in intricately coordinated patterns across the sky without bumping into each other. This is called a murmuration. For this activity, dance or move to share a message. Example: Try asking for your water bottle without using words and only movements.



5. FISHING BIRDS

What traits can make a bird great at fishing? Good eye sight, patience, and knowing their surroundings greatly improve a bird's ability to catch fish. When you get near the water on the trail, try scoping out (use your binoculars if you have a pair) a Great Blue Heron. These birds are excellent fishers and love the marsh here for its shallow areas. You can often find them being still in the water waiting for their prey to come near. What is unique about the Heron is that it has long spread out toes with just a little bit of webbing in-between. This is to help spread out its weight so it does not sink in the mud while they are in the water. They also use them to grasp their prey. What is one difference between your feet and those of the Great Blue Heron? Write your answer here: _____



6. BIRDS OF A FEATHER FLOCK TOGETHER



Have you ever seen a group of birds flying together? The reason that birds of the same species are often found teamed up together is for safety. They know how to signal danger to each other with certain sounds and be alert for predators. Even if a predator approaches the group, it may become distracted, confused or overwhelmed from all the different sounds and movements of the flock and retreat. A flock of birds can also form a safe habitat together to nest and scope out food. Teamwork makes the avian dream work. For the last activity, get together with your Park Quest Flock and take a group picture! Feel free to post this picture on social media with the hashtags #ParkQuest2021 #NorthPointStatePark and hashtag your team name!

Write down your team name here and the date you completed this Park Quest activity:

Team Name: _____

Date: _____

Great job, team! Thank you for participating in the North Point State Park 2021 Park Quest!

When you are done, we recommend that you drive down to beach area to grab a picnic table and enjoy a well-deserved snack on the beach and soak in the view of the

Chesapeake Bay!

North Point State Park

8400 North Point Road, Edgemere, MD 21219

Directions to the Trailhead: As soon as you go through the tollbooth, immediately turn a left into Parking Lot A. The trailhead to the Black Marsh Trail starts there.

Hours of Operation: 8 a.m. to sunset daily

Service Charge: Weekends and Holidays, Memorial Day Weekend to Labor Day - \$4 per vehicle for MD residents, \$6 per vehicle for out of state residents.

Weekdays and all other times - \$3 per vehicle for MD residents, \$5 per vehicle for out of state residents. Visit dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands to learn about Park Passes.



Tip: We recommend completing your Park Quest on weekdays as early as possible. North Point has been known to **fill to capacity** and close around noon. Once the park is full visitors will not be allowed to enter the park.

Questions: Please contact (410) 592-2897 for any questions regarding this Park Quest activity or North Point State Park.

North Point State Park

Park Address:
8400 North Point Rd.
Edgemere, MD 21219
Contact: 410-477-0757 Emergencies: 410-260-8888

- Parking
- Scenic Overlook
- Shelter
- Fishing
- Restroom
- Park Office/Visitors Center

- Accessible Features
- Trail (color indicates Blaze)

Park Boundary (Approx.)

Wildlands Boundary (Approx.)

Park Road

10' Contour Interval (from USGS)



Last Updated Jul 2015
North Point State Park website: dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands/Pages/central/northpoint.aspx

