



Pre-Visit Activity: Six Birds of Theodore Roosevelt Island

Pre-visit activities prepare students for a more meaningful and rewarding visit to Theodore Roosevelt Island. Please complete as many as your schedule allows before bringing your students on their field trip.

Objectives

1) Learn to identify by sight the following six birds of Roosevelt Island:

- Great Blue Heron
- Ruby-throated Hummingbird
- Red-bellied Woodpecker
- Northern Cardinal
- Mallard
- Barred Owl

2) State one fact about each of the above bird species.

Materials

- Field guides or printed pictures of the six birds
- Bird cards (one set for each student)

Procedures

1) Direct students to use the models to accurately color each of the six birds in the booklet.

2) After coloring each bird, students should silently read the information accompanying each picture. They then can test themselves on their bird knowledge by completing the fill-in-the-blank activity.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird

The ruby-throated hummingbird has a glossy green back, crown and sides. Only the male has a fiery red throat, while the female has white spots on her tail. The hummingbird is the only bird able to hover while feeding on nectar and able to fly backwards. Its name comes from the sound made by its swiftly beating wings. They are the smallest of birds.



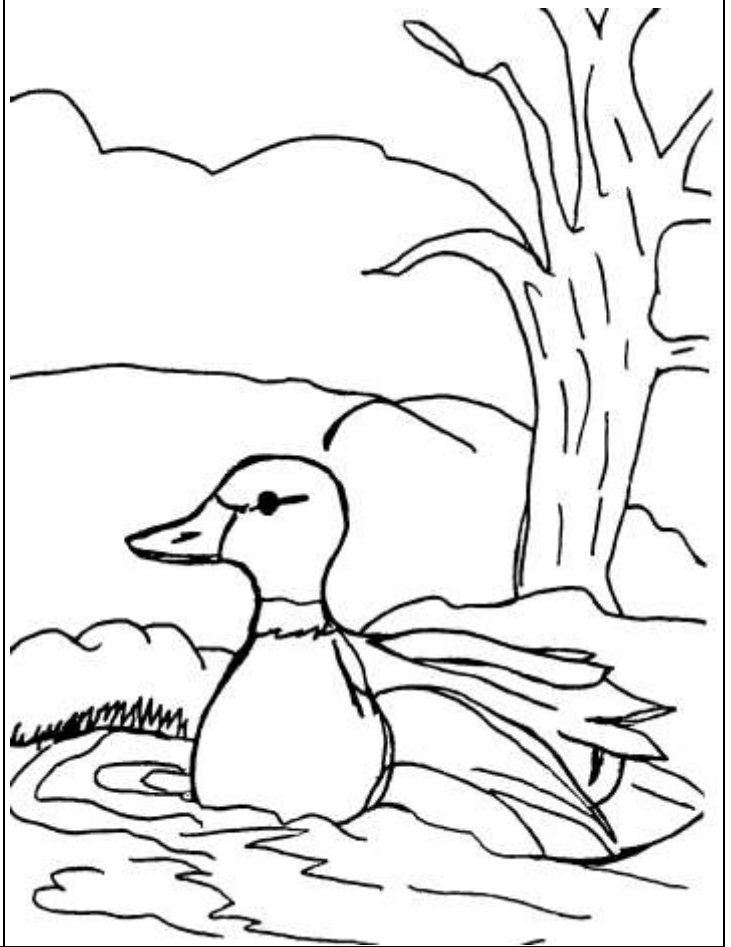
Barred Owl

The barred owl is a large gray-brown bird with a barred pattern across its chest, no ear tufts, a puffy head and dark brown eyes. Its habitats are damp woods and swamp forests, with nests being built in tree hollows. This owl roosts in tree foliage in the day and hunts for prey at night. Some people describe its call as “Who cooks for you, who cooks for you all?”



Mallard

The mallard is the world's most widespread duck. The female is mottled brown with a whitish tail, orange feet and an orange bill. The male is known for his glossy green head with a white neck ring. Look for his yellowish bill, chestnut chest, and his black feathers curled up over his white tail. All mallards have a shiny bluish patch on each wing. Mallards do not dive for food; instead they feed from the water surface or by "up-ending."



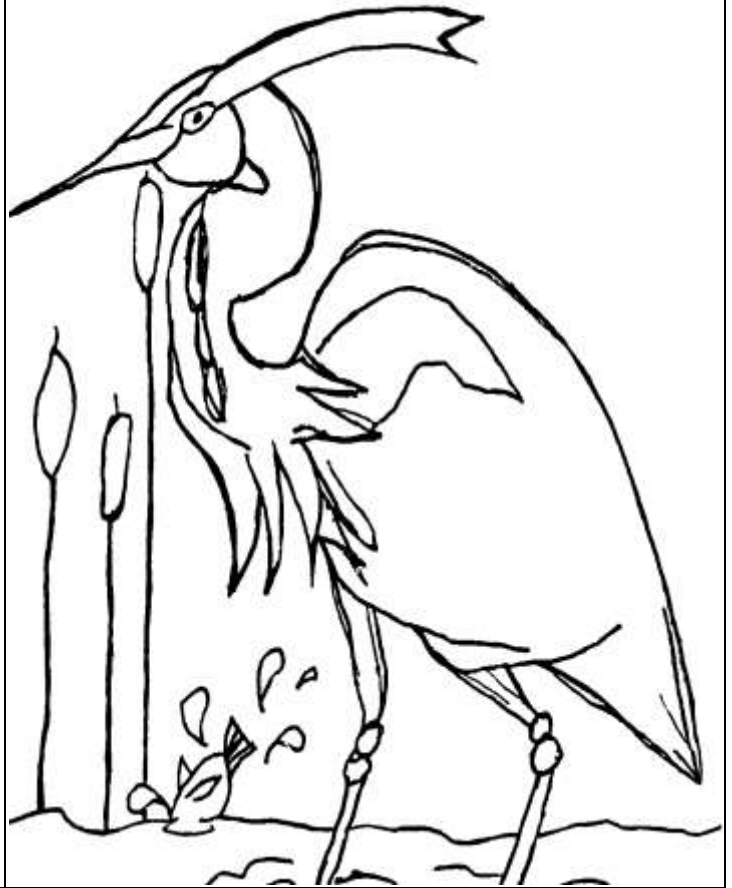
Red-bellied Woodpecker

The red-bellied woodpecker's habitat is an open broad-leaved woodland. It builds its nest by chiseling out a hole in a tree. Its name is misleading since there is only a hint of red on the belly. The male, however, has a red crown and nape, and the female has a red nape. Both have black and white zebra-like backs.



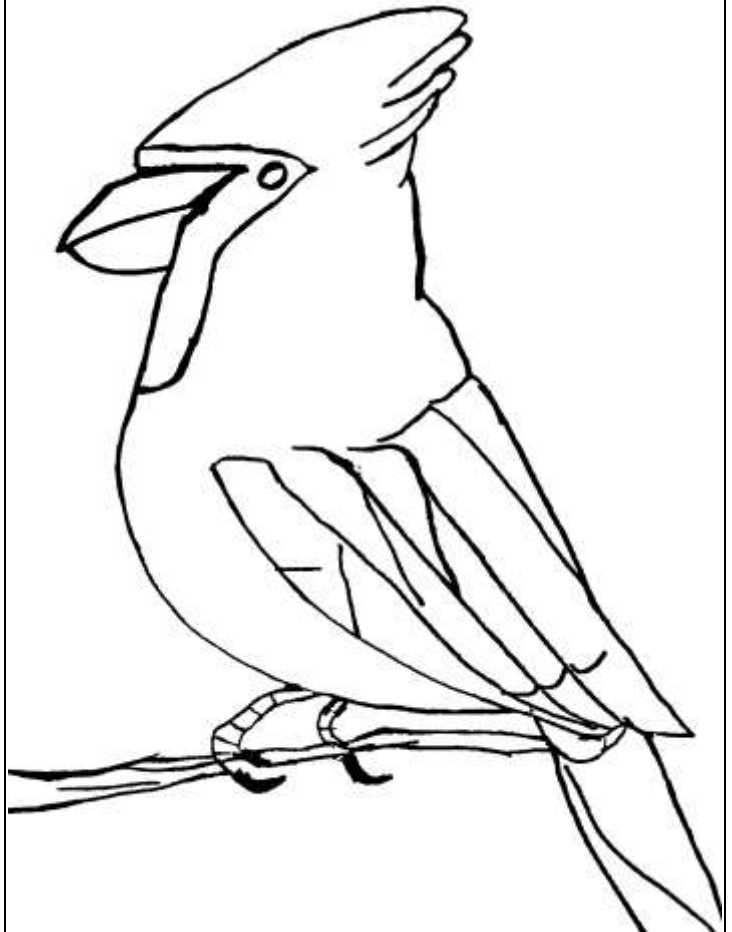
Great Blue Heron

The great blue heron is the largest heron. It catches its food—fish and water animals—with fast jabs of its dagger-like bill while wading in shallow water. This is a very lean bird with long legs, and it stands at least four feet tall. It is gray-blue in color with a white head.



Northern Cardinal

The northern cardinal is a common bird in gardens, thickets, and the edges of woods. Its familiar song can be heard all year. The male is all red with a patch of black below the bill. The female is less red, with more brown. Both birds have a pointed crest and a bright orange bill.



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Read each phrase. Decide which bird best fits the phrase, and write the correct letter in the blank.

a. Mallard

d. Red-bellied woodpecker

b. Ruby-throated hummingbird

e. Great blue heron

c. Barred owl

f. Northern cardinal

_____ 1. Is able to hover

_____ 2. Sings a familiar song in garden

_____ 3. Hunts at night

_____ 4. Has a shiny bluish patch on each wing

_____ 5. Jabs its food

_____ 6. Has a misleading name

_____ 7. Has a pattern of bars on its chest

_____ 8. Is nearly all red if it is a male

_____ 9. "Up-ends" itself to catch food

_____ 10. Has a fiery red throat

_____ 11. Has zebra-like stripes on its back

_____ 12. Has long legs