

the SAN JUAN
PRESERVATION
TRUST

Activity #1: Be a Birder at Mount Grant Preserve (SJ Preservation Trust)

The top of Mount Grant allows for 360-degree views of the surrounding islands, waterways, and distant mountains. While hiking quietly to this destination, you will hear and see many different bird species along the way.

There are an estimated 10,738 species of birds world-wide. For some people, imagining finding every bird on this earth is a thrilling possibility that can turn into a lifelong adventure. One example of a birding legend is ‘bird girl’ Mya-Rose Craig who set the world record for being the youngest person to sight 5,000 birds. Mya-Rose started birding at the age of 4 and by 17 has 5,369 birds (# from 2019) on her “life-list”. That’s half the world’s bird species! A ‘life-list’ is a record of all the different birds you have seen and have successfully identified. Start your “life-list” at Mount Grant Preserve!



Photo to use:

“Bird girl” Mya-Rose Craig *Photo by Helen Craig & published in the Independent*

You will need to:

- Pick at least one person in your family to be your birding buddy (two sets of eyes are better than one).
- Pack a pair of binoculars and download the Merlin phone app from Cornell Lab or pack a bird guide to help you identify birds.
- Check off the birds you **see or hear** (remember to travel slowly and quietly so you can hear the bird songs and observe their movements all around you).

While hiking at Mount Grant Preserve, can you add any of these birds to your “life-list”?

- ☐ Turkey Vulture (soars, rarely flaps, wings held in “V” shape)
- ☐ Spotted Towhee (search along the edge of forests and in thickets, call sounds like “Riiight?”)

- ☐ Dark-eyed Junco (white outer tail feathers flash in flight and while hopping on the ground, bill is pale pinkish)
- ☐ White-crowned Sparrow (song sounds like “oh me, oh pretty, pretty me”)
- ☐ American Robin (song sounds like “cheerily, cheer up, cheer up, cheerily, cheer up”)
- ☐ Olive-sided Flycatcher (sound sounds like “quick-three-beers”)
- ☐ Common Raven (tail is wedge shaped, not flat like a crow)
- ☐ Chestnut-backed Chickadee (small bird, often in flocks)

Did you find other birds that were not listed here? What were they?

Now that you are on your way to becoming a birder, imagine yourself 10 years from now. How many birds are on your “life-list”? What places will you have visited to find these birds? Write, draw, or have a family member help you here.”

Activity #2: Play Summer Bird Bingo! Choose your island preserve(s).

Birding preparations: same as Activity #1

Cross out the birds you can identify (see or hear).

Insert Bird Bingo Card

Did you get a bingo? If so on what preserve(s)? Take a photo of yourself with your card and share it with us!

Next Page...

Create an imaginary bird living on San Juan Island.

What does it look like?

What name would you call it?

What habitat does it live in? (*A habitat is a home of a bird. Being able to connect specific birds with their habitats will help you become a better birder!*)

Write, draw, or have a family member help you here.

Activity #3 Be a Bird Detective at Sportsman's Lake Preserve (SJ Preservation Trust)

This northeastern shoreline of Sportsman's Lake was donated to the Preservation Trust by Helen Irene Dogan. Her legacy ensures that the view to the far shore remains open and that the wildlife will forever benefit from this undeveloped buffer of freshwater habitat. Many waterfowl and marsh birds live here.

Remember that some birds can be identified by their songs or behaviors (Brown Creepers "creep" up trees, Violet-green Swallows swoops above water catching insects, and Red-winged Blackbird songs sound like "conk-la-reeeeder").

Be a Bird Detective - find a quiet place and sit still and silent for ten minutes.

If you see a bird, what is it doing?

If you hear a bird, what does it sound like to you?

Use the blank space to draw and write your answer.

Next page...

A preserve is a place set aside to protect a natural resource (such as wildlife, water, and/or forest).

Imagine that one day, in the future, you can donate a preserve.

What would it be named?

What would you protect and how?

Write, draw, or have a family member help with your answer here.

Activity #4 Play Native Wildflower Bingo! Choose your island preserve(s).

You may have noticed that many wildflowers have bloomed in the spring and are now going to seed or berry. However, there are some native flowering plants that bloom in the summer.

Play bingo and cross off the flowers that you find. Using the iNaturalist phone app or a plant identification guide will help you win this game.

Insert Flower Bingo Card ...

Did you win bingo? What preserve(s) did you find the most flowers on? Take a photo of yourself with your card and share it with us!

Next page...

Create an imaginary flower growing on San Juan Island.

What does it look like (what color are the flower petals, what shape are the leaves, do the roots grow deep or do they spread along the ground, etc.)?

What about scent? What type of pollinators would be attracted to this flower? *A pollinator is an animal or insect that moves pollen from flower to flower, assisting with the flower's life cycle.*

Write, draw, or have a family member help you here.