

One Square Yard

Overview:

One Square Yard is a multigenerational, outdoor activity that calls for multiple nature stewardship skills. Participants will pick a space of just one square yard and spend time exploring it in great detail. They will engage in slow-looking and critical thinking, ask questions, document their findings, and share those findings with others. The activity also helps participants see the nature around them in new and surprising ways.



Objectives:

- Practice multiple skills including observation and listening, curiosity and inquiry, documentation, and sharing data.
- Practice focusing on smaller spaces and identifying the diversity of observations.
- Engage in critical thinking by asking questions, describing observations, and attempting to come up with explanations for observations.

Materials:

1. Strings to mark the one-square-yard space
2. Pen and paper to document observations
3. Paper and crayons for the butterfly cutout
4. Printed bingo cards for the analog identifying activity
5. A phone with the Seek app for the digital identifying activity

Activity:

1. Pick an outdoor green space (preferably one that is not too manicured).
2. Ask each participant to pick out a space of one square yard.
3. If you don't have enough space, use one square foot of space, instead.
4. Participants should spend two or three minutes observing and writing down what they see.
5. Ask them to share their highlights with the group.
6. Now let's get a bit more specific. Ask participants:
 - a. to describe different colors (yellow, light green, dark green), shapes (circles, squares, cubes), and lines (straight lines, wavy lines, striated lines) they've seen.
 - b. to spend five minutes or more to expand their lists.
 Next, ask participants what things they noticed that they didn't before?
7. Let's get even more focused. Ask participants:
 - a. to pick one item from their area that they find interesting. For example, a leaf, a small branch, an ant, or some other weird thing they can't identify. Tell them to spend time observing it, and ask:
 - i. What questions about it come to mind?
 - ii. What are its components?
 - iii. How are these pieces connected to each other?
 - iv. What do you think its function is?
 - b. to go to other groups and see what items they chose. Ask them to share with other participants:
 - i. What do they think the item is?
 - ii. Why did they choose that item?
 - iii. What is something they found interesting about the item?
8. Go back inside.
9. Ask participants to make small, butterfly-shaped cutouts and color them based on colors, lines, and/or shapes they noticed.
10. OR make a large butterfly and ask participants to color it together.
11. Hang the butterflies on the wall and enjoy your art!
12. Here's an extra step, if you want even more fun and engagement with nature:
 - **Analog version:** Another version of this activity connects observations to identification. As a part of this outdoor activity, the facilitator can share the most common species bingo cards (attached below). Participants can work together and try to see which of those they might have seen. Participants can take the cards with them and use them with their families and friends to continue their exploration. They can also post and tag their observations on their social media channels with the #NatureStewardship hashtag.
 - **Digital version:** Another way to engage students is by using the [Seek](#) or [iNaturalist](#) apps. This activity is best when participants have cell phones and want to join a community of nature identifiers!

Target Age: Any age group, multigenerational

Time to Prep Activity: 10 minutes

Time to Complete Activity: 15-30 minutes (shorter for younger participants)

Perfect for: Outdoors (backyard, park, schoolyard...)

Other activities that connect:

This activity is deeply engaging. You can follow it with *The Postcard* and *Conservation*, which cover the documentation and sharing of findings. Or, think about making these activities into a habit by learning about *Nature Journaling*. If you want to move on to something less active and that is set indoors, try *Spot the Difference*, *Audio Puzzle*, and *What Creature Are You?*

Stay safe and respectful!

- Be alert and aware of what is going on around you.
- Don't trespass, and make sure you're not invading other people's personal spaces.
- Be careful what you touch, and don't eat anything you find unless you're with a professional forager.
- Be aware of how you interact with other living creatures. Assess if interacting with them can be dangerous or disturbing to you or them.
- If you decide to pick up plants, for those that you know are safe to touch:
 - Don't pick it if there is only one of them.
 - Take only what you need.
 - Leave enough for others and for plants to reproduce.
 - Show gratitude for what you have foraged.

To print:

Nature Bingo background

Nature Bingo North America

Nature Bingo tips

Nature Bingo card for your region



FIELD GUIDES AND BIOBLITZ BINGO REGIONS: BACKGROUND

The field guides and bioblitz bingo regions were chosen based on iNaturalist observations: by searching to see which species were most-observed in each state, we combined states with similar most-observed species into regions. The list below shows which states were included in each region, but feel free to use a field guides and bioblitz bingo sheets from an adjacent region if you think it better represents what people might find in your area.

- **California**
- **Hawaii**
- **Alaska**
- **Pacific Northwest:** Oregon, Washington, British Columbia
- **Desert Southwest:** Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico
- **Great Lakes:** Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, Wisconsin, Manitoba, Ontario
- **South Central & Southeast:** Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Texas, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington DC
- **Northeast:** Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, West Virginia, Quebec, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island
- **North Central Mountain and Range:** Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, Wyoming, Alberta, Saskatchewan



Nature Bingo

North America

These species are some of the most commonly observed plants and animals in North America!
How many can you find?



Mallard Duck
(Anas platyrhynchos)



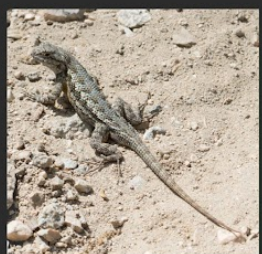
Monarch Butterfly
(Danaus plexippus)



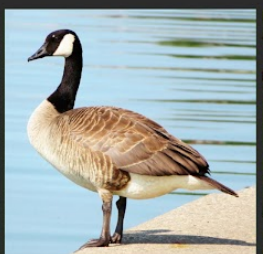
Great Blue Heron
(Ardea herodias)



Red-tailed Hawk
(Buteo jamaicensis)



Western Fence Lizard
(Sceloporus occidentalis)



Canada Goose
(Branta canadensis)



Common Dandelion
(Taraxacum officinale)



White-tailed Deer
(Odocoileus virginianus)



Honey Bee
(Apis mellifera)



Eastern Gray Squirrel
(Sciurus carolinensis)



American Robin
(Turdus migratorius)



Common Yarrow
(Achillea millefolium)

Tips for finding the wilderness in your backyard

All you need to become an explorer are your curiosity and your senses:

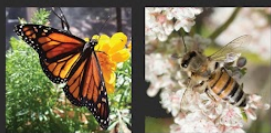
- Look around carefully and watch for movement.
- Listen for birds singing, insects buzzing, and other sounds of life.
- Follow your nose to find fresh flowers or other plants with interesting smells.
- Don't be afraid to get dirty! Carefully look under logs, dig in the dirt, or wade into a stream to find the creatures that live in those places.

Different types of plants and animals can be found in different places:



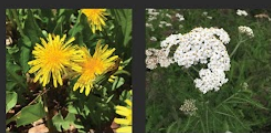
Mallard Duck, Great Blue Heron, Canada Goose

These birds all like to be in or around water, so look for them near ponds and lakes.



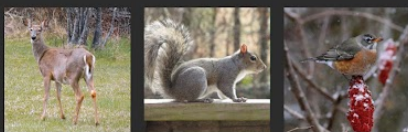
Monarch Butterfly, Honey Bee

Both of these insects like to be around flowers to get nectar (Monarch) or collect pollen (Honey Bee).



Common Dandelion, Common Yarrow

Look for these in your town! Dandelions grow as weeds in lawns and empty lots and Yarrow can be found in parks and open spaces.

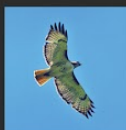


White-tailed Deer, Eastern Gray Squirrel, Robin

All three of these animals can be found in grassy areas near trees, where they look for food.

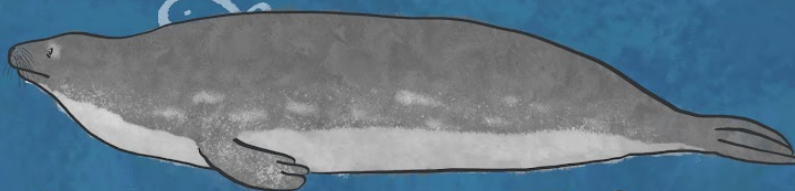
Red-tailed Hawk

Find them perched on telephone wires, poles, and trees near fields where they hunt their prey.



Western Fence Lizard

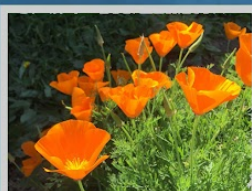
Look for these cold-blooded animals on rocks and logs in warm, sunny spots.



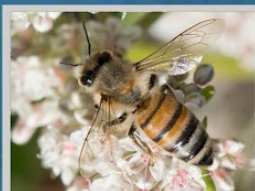
Nature Bingo

California

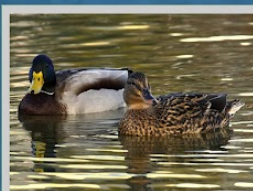
Below are some of the most commonly-seen species in your area. Your goal is to find them! Can you make a bingo by finding four in a row? Can you find them all? When you find one, turn to the back of this sheet to make a sketch or take some notes about the individual you found.



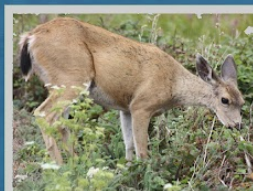
California Poppy



Western Honey Bee



Mallard Duck



Mule Deer



Western Fence Lizard



Red-tailed Hawk



Coast Live Oak



Monarch Butterfly



Anna's Hummingbird



Pacific Poison Oak



Fox Squirrel



Orange Bush Monkeyflower



Garden Snail



Black Phoebe

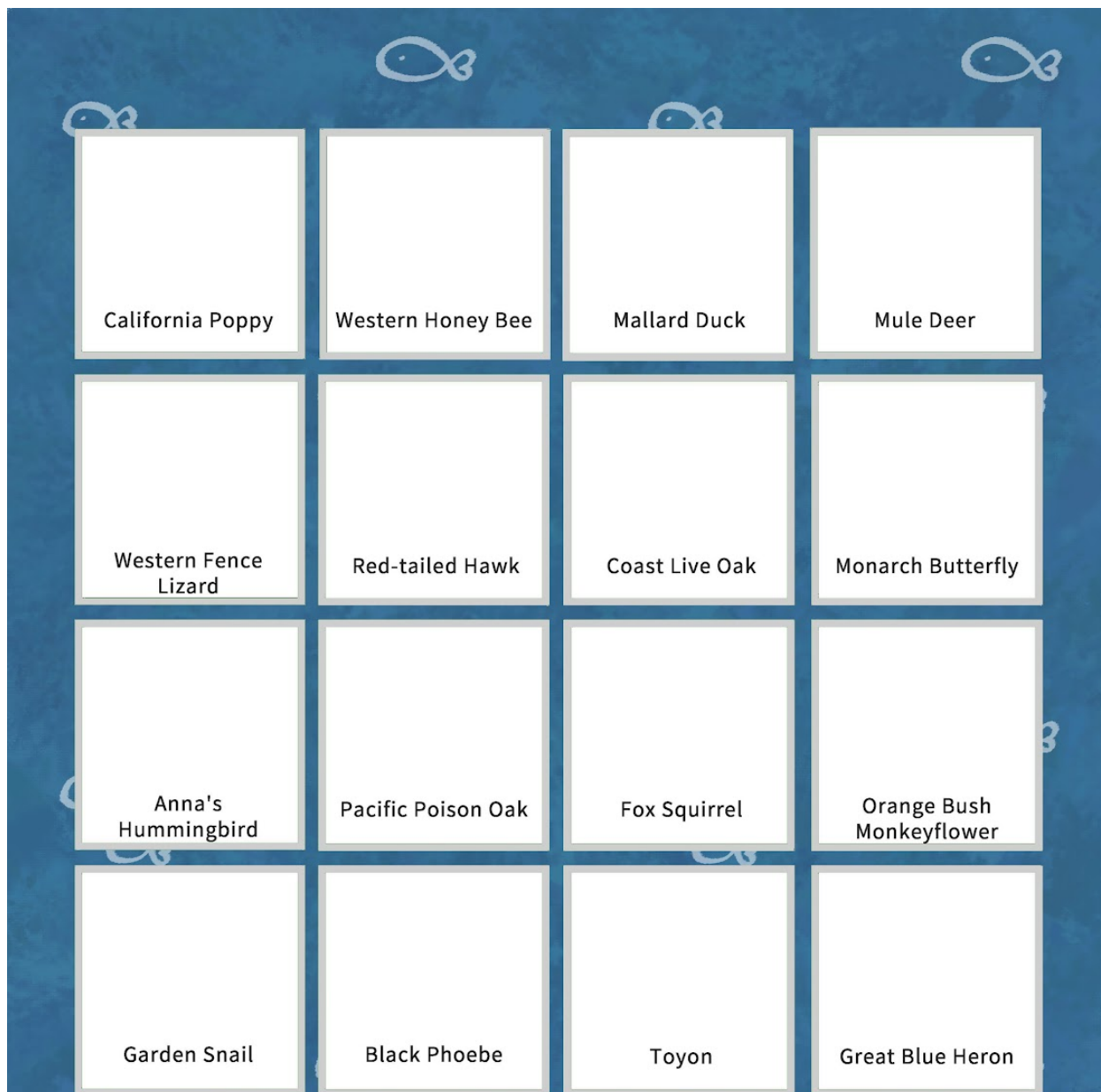


Toyon



Great Blue Heron





Let your curiosity and senses guide you:

- Be careful and gentle while exploring.
- Look around carefully and watch for movement.
- Listen for birds singing, insects buzzing, and other sounds of life.
- Follow your nose to find fresh flowers or other plants with interesting smells.
- Don't be afraid to get dirty! Carefully look under logs, dig in the dirt, or wade into a stream to find the creatures that live in those places.
- Keep track of your discoveries by taking pictures, drawing sketches, and jotting down notes.





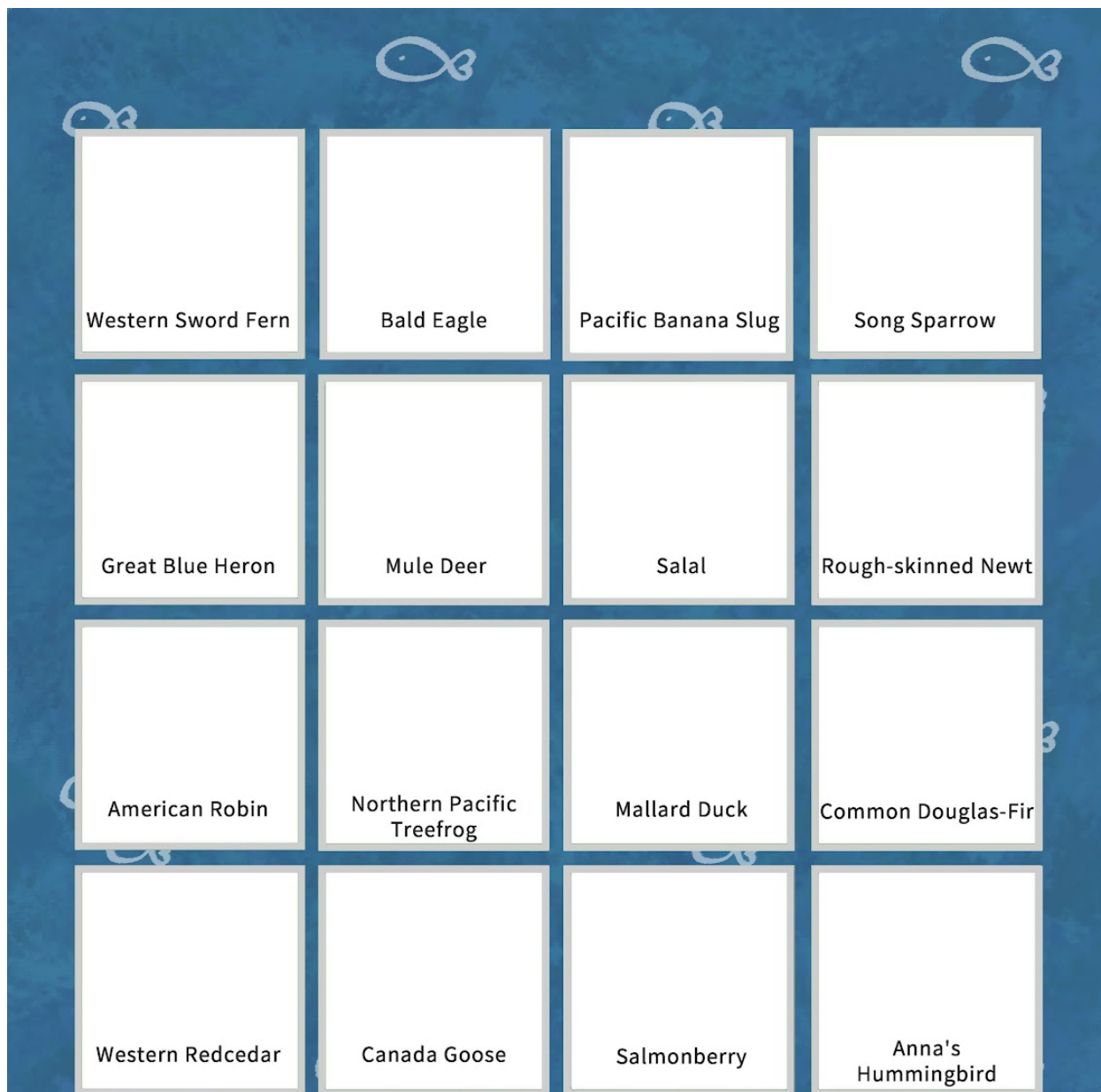
Nature Bingo

Pacific Northwest Region

Below are some of the most commonly-seen species in your area. Your goal is to find them! Can you make a bingo by finding four in a row? Can you find them all? When you find one, turn to the back of this sheet to make a sketch or take some notes about the individual you found.

 Western Sword Fern	 Bald Eagle	 Pacific Banana Slug	 Song Sparrow
 Great Blue Heron	 Mule Deer	 Salal	 Rough-skinned Newt
 American Robin	 Northern Pacific Treefrog	 Mallard Duck	 Common Douglas-Fir
 Western Redcedar	 Canada Goose	 Salmonberry	 Anna's Hummingbird





Let your curiosity and senses guide you:

- Be careful and gentle while exploring.
- Look around carefully and watch for movement.
- Listen for birds singing, insects buzzing, and other sounds of life.
- Follow your nose to find fresh flowers or other plants with interesting smells.
- Don't be afraid to get dirty! Carefully look under logs, dig in the dirt, or wade into a stream to find the creatures that live in those places.
- Keep track of your discoveries by taking pictures, drawing sketches, and jotting down notes.

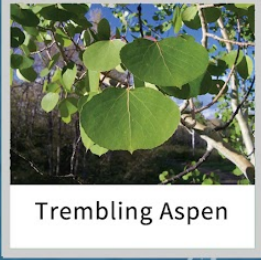
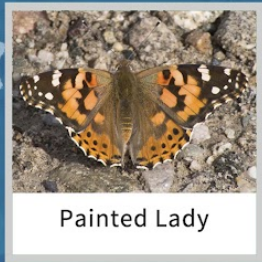
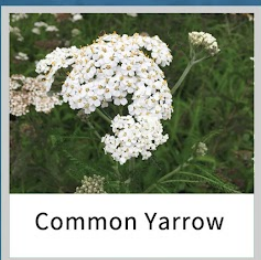




Nature Bingo

North Central Mountains and Range Region

Below are some of the most commonly-seen species in your area. Your goal is to find them! Can you make a bingo by finding four in a row? Can you find them all? When you find one, turn to the back of this sheet to make a sketch or take some notes about the individual you found.



Mule Deer	Mallard Duck	Common Yarrow	Gopher Snake
Painted Lady	Great Mullein	American Red Squirrel	Red-tailed Hawk
American Robin	Russian Olive	Canada Goose	Monarch Butterfly
Black-billed Magpie	Black-tailed Prairie Dog	Trembling Aspen	Dark-eyed Junco

Let your curiosity and senses guide you:

- Be careful and gentle while exploring.
- Look around carefully and watch for movement.
- Listen for birds singing, insects buzzing, and other sounds of life.
- Follow your nose to find fresh flowers or other plants with interesting smells.
- Don't be afraid to get dirty! Carefully look under logs, dig in the dirt, or wade into a stream to find the creatures that live in those places.
- Keep track of your discoveries by taking pictures, drawing sketches, and jotting down notes.



Nature Bingo

Great Lakes Region

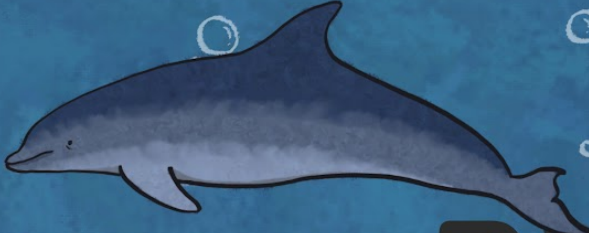
Below are some of the most commonly-seen species in your area. Your goal is to find them! Can you make a bingo by finding four in a row? Can you find them all? When you find one, turn to the back of this sheet to make a sketch or take some notes about the individual you found.

			
Monarch Butterfly	Common Milkweed	Northern Cardinal	Painted Turtle
			
American Toad	Mallard Duck	Common Eastern Bumble Bee	Red-tailed Hawk
			
Eastern Gray Squirrel	Eastern Pondhawk	Red-winged Blackbird	Canada Goose
			
American Robin	Common Garter Snake	White-tailed Deer	Western Honey Bee

 Monarch Butterfly	 Common Milkweed	 Northern Cardinal	 Painted Turtle
 American Toad	 Mallard Duck	 Common Eastern Bumble Bee	 Red-tailed Hawk
 Eastern Gray Squirrel	 Eastern Pondhawk	 Red-winged Blackbird	 Canada Goose
 American Robin	 Common Garter Snake	 White-tailed Deer	 Western Honey Bee

Let your curiosity and senses guide you:











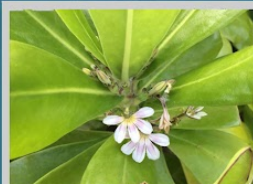
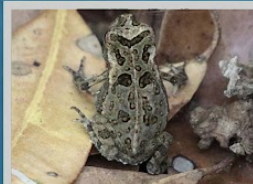
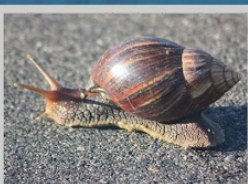



- Be careful and gentle while exploring.
- Look around carefully and watch for movement.
- Listen for birds singing, insects buzzing, and other sounds of life.
- Follow your nose to find fresh flowers or other plants with interesting smells.
- Don't be afraid to get dirty! Carefully look under logs, dig in the dirt, or wade into a stream to find the creatures that live in those places.
- Keep track of your discoveries by taking pictures, drawing sketches, and jotting down notes.



Nature Bingo

Hawaii

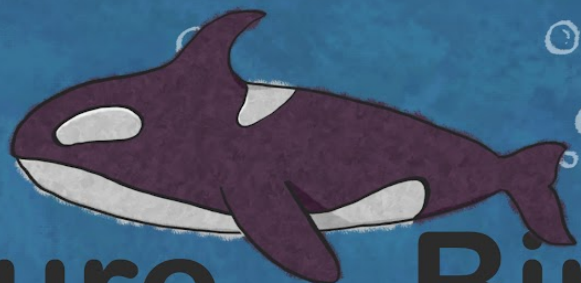
Below are some of the most commonly-seen species in your area. Your goal is to find them! Can you make a bingo by finding four in a row? Can you find them all? When you find one, turn to the back of this sheet to make a sketch or take some notes about the individual you found.

 Zebra Dove	 Green Sea Turtle	 Gold Dust Day Gecko	 Asian Tiger Mosquito
 'Ohi'a Lehua	 Brown Anole	 Red-crested Cardinal	 Pacific Golden Plover
 Common Myna	 Hawaiian Goose (Nene)	 Beach Naupaka	 Cane Toad
 African Giant Snail	 Hawaiian Monk Seal	 Domestic Chicken	 Black-crowned Night Heron

Zebra Dove	Green Sea Turtle	Gold Dust Day Gecko	Asian Tiger Mosquito
'Ohi'a Lehua	Brown Anole	Red-crested Cardinal	Pacific Golden Plover
Common Myna	Hawaiian Goose (Nene)	Beach Naupaka	Cane Toad
African Giant Snail	Hawaiian Monk Seal	Domestic Chicken	Black-crowned Night Heron

Let your curiosity and senses guide you:

- Be careful and gentle while exploring.
- Look around carefully and watch for movement.
- Listen for birds singing, insects buzzing, and other sounds of life.
- Follow your nose to find fresh flowers or other plants with interesting smells.
- Don't be afraid to get dirty! Carefully look under logs, dig in the dirt, or wade into a stream to find the creatures that live in those places.
- Keep track of your discoveries by taking pictures, drawing sketches, and jotting down notes.



Nature Bingo

Northeast Region

Below are some of the most commonly-seen species in your area. Your goal is to find them! Can you make a bingo by finding four in a row? Can you find them all? When you find one, turn to the back of this sheet to make a sketch or take some notes about the individual you found.



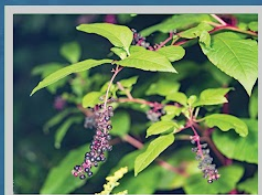
Eastern White Pine



Eastern Gray Squirrel



Mallard Duck



American Pokeweed



Northern Red Oak



American Robin



Eastern Hemlock



Northern Cardinal



White-tailed Deer



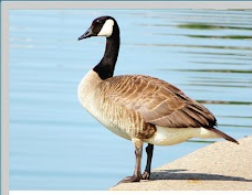
Common Garter Snake



Monarch Butterfly



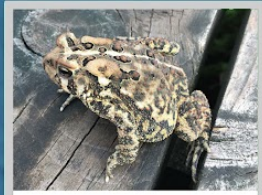
Red Maple



Canada Goose



American Beech



American Toad




Common Dandelion

Eastern White Pine	Eastern Gray Squirrel	Mallard Duck	American Pokeweed
Northern Red Oak	American Robin	Eastern Hemlock	Northern Cardinal
White-tailed Deer	Common Garter Snake	Monarch Butterfly	Red Maple
Canada Goose	American Beech	American Toad	Common Dandelion

Let your curiosity and senses guide you:

- Be careful and gentle while exploring.
- Look around carefully and watch for movement.
- Listen for birds singing, insects buzzing, and other sounds of life.
- Follow your nose to find fresh flowers or other plants with interesting smells.
- Don't be afraid to get dirty! Carefully look under logs, dig in the dirt, or wade into a stream to find the creatures that live in those places.
- Keep track of your discoveries by taking pictures, drawing sketches, and jotting down notes.



Nature Bingo

South Central and Southeast Region

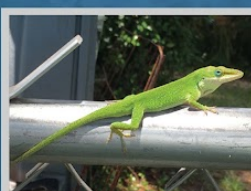
Below are some of the most commonly-seen species in your area. Your goal is to find them! Can you make a bingo by finding four in a row? Can you find them all? When you find one, turn to the back of this sheet to make a sketch or take some notes about the individual you found.



Western Honey Bee



Northern Cardinal



Green Anole



Gulf Fritillary



Great Blue Heron



White-tailed Deer



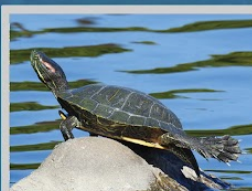
Red-tailed Hawk



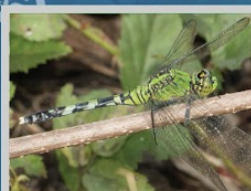
Asian Ladybeetle



Fox Squirrel



Pond Slider



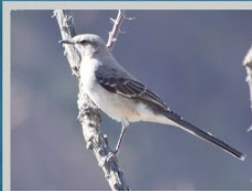
Eastern Pondhawk



Mallard Duck



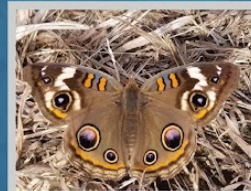
Monarch Butterfly



Northern Mockingbird



Great Egret

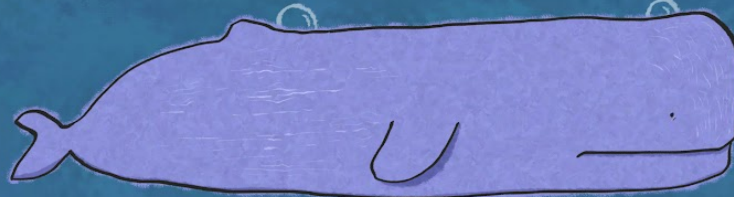


Common Buckeye

Western Honey Bee	Northern Cardinal	Green Anole	Gulf Fritillary
Great Blue Heron	White-tailed Deer	Red-tailed Hawk	Asian Ladybeetle
Fox Squirrel	Pond Slider	Eastern Pondhawk	Mallard Duck
Monarch Butterfly	Northern Mockingbird	Great Egret	Common Buckeye

Let your curiosity and senses guide you:

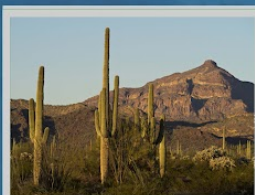
- Be careful and gentle while exploring.
- Look around carefully and watch for movement.
- Listen for birds singing, insects buzzing, and other sounds of life.
- Follow your nose to find fresh flowers or other plants with interesting smells.
- Don't be afraid to get dirty! Carefully look under logs, dig in the dirt, or wade into a stream to find the creatures that live in those places.
- Keep track of your discoveries by taking pictures, drawing sketches, and jotting down notes.



Nature Bingo

Desert Southwest Region

Below are some of the most commonly-seen species in your area. Your goal is to find them! Can you make a bingo by finding four in a row? Can you find them all? When you find one, turn to the back of this sheet to make a sketch or take some notes about the individual you found.



Saguaro



Mourning Dove



Gopher Snake



House Finch



Chain Fruit Cholla



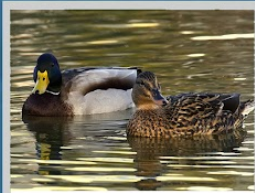
Desert Ironwood



Ocotillo



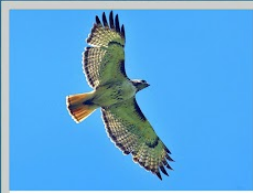
Common Side-blotched Lizard



Mallard Duck



Creosote Bush



Red-tailed Hawk



Soaptree Yucca



Desert Cottontail



American Coot



Fishhook Barrel Cactus



Texas Prickly-Pear



Let your curiosity and senses guide you:

- Be careful and gentle while exploring.
- Look around carefully and watch for movement.
- Listen for birds singing, insects buzzing, and other sounds of life.
- Follow your nose to find fresh flowers or other plants with interesting smells.
- Don't be afraid to get dirty! Carefully look under logs, dig in the dirt, or wade into a stream to find the creatures that live in those places.
- Keep track of your discoveries by taking pictures, drawing sketches, and jotting down notes.








Nature Bingo

Alaska

Below are some of the most commonly-seen species in your area. Your goal is to find them! Can you make a bingo by finding four in a row? Can you find them all? When you find one, turn to the back of this sheet to make a sketch or take some notes about the individual you found.

			
Bald Eagle	Western Hemlock	Fireweed	Dark-eyed Junco
			
Moose	Common Yarrow	Mallard Duck	Devil's Club
			
Sitka Spruce	Brown Bear	Mule Deer	Common Raven
			
American Robin	Glaucous-winged Gull	Salmonberry	American Red Squirrel



Let your curiosity and senses guide you:

- Be careful and gentle while exploring.
- Look around carefully and watch for movement.
- Listen for birds singing, insects buzzing, and other sounds of life.
- Follow your nose to find fresh flowers or other plants with interesting smells.
- Don't be afraid to get dirty! Carefully look under logs, dig in the dirt, or wade into a stream to find the creatures that live in those places.
- Keep track of your discoveries by taking pictures, drawing sketches, and jotting down notes.

