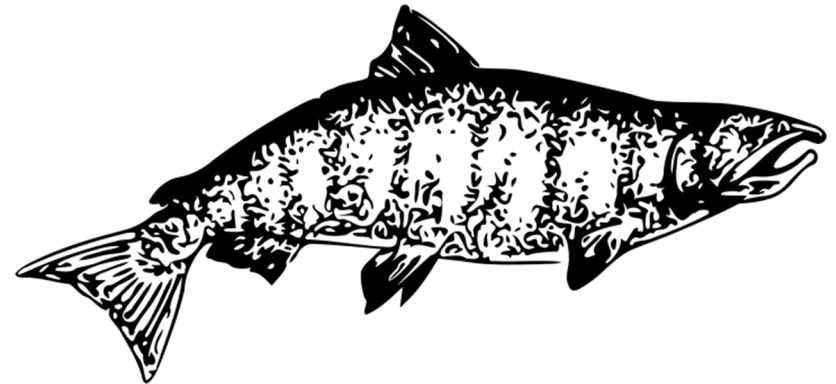


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[www.fws.gov/Refuge/Ridgefield](http://www.fws.gov/Refuge/Ridgefield)



# **NATURE GUIDEBOOK**

Steigerwald Lake National Wildlife Refuge



**Your Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Instructions

1. This book is a guidebook to help you engage with the refuge through many different activities including recording bird observations, identifying plants, creating a sound map of your surroundings, and imagining up new life!
2. At the beginning of each section of this journal, it explains how to use the following pages and complete that activity.
3. These activities can be completed in any order you wish, or not at all! This book is meant to be a guide for you in the refuge, not a quiz of nature knowledge.
4. Most importantly, enjoy your experience and nature and see what you notice about your surroundings and how complex nature really can be under the surface!



**Describe any animals you see that are not birds!**

**Give it a name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Characteristics (Ex. small, insect, colorful)

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Behavior (Ex. buzzed in circles, hid in bushes)

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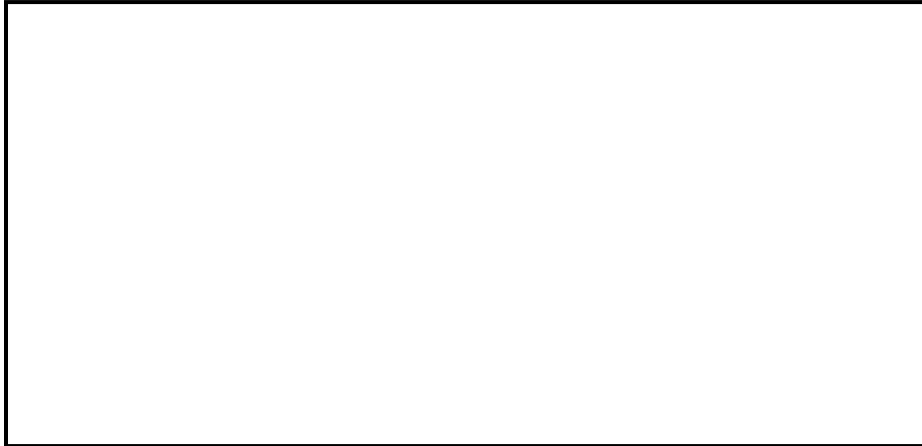
**Give it a name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Characteristics (Ex. small, insect, colorful)

---

Behavior (Ex. buzzed in circles)

---



**Room to Sketch**

## **BIRDS AT THE REFUGE**

Below are only a few of the birds you may see on the refuge. Do not feel limited to what is shown here because we could not fit the hundreds of bird species that visit the refuge throughout the year on one page!

As you see new types of birds, create an entry for them on the following pages, including a physical description, observations of their behavior, and the sound it makes.

If you can name the bird, great! You can also ask someone for help in identifying it, or use a bird guide. If all else fails, give it your own name! You also have the option to try sketching what you see in the box provided.



American Coot



Northern  
Shoveler



Killdeer



Canada Goose



Great Blue  
Heron



Egret



Barn Swallow



Bald Eagle



Song Sparrow



Turkey Vulture



Wood Duck

**Bird #1:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Physical Characteristics (Ex. striped, yellow chest)

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Behavior (Ex. high up in trees, hops on the ground)

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Sound Description (Ex. ca-CAW, beep-beep-beep)

---

**Bird #2:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Physical Characteristics (Ex. striped, yellow chest)

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Behavior (Ex. high up in trees, hops on the ground)

---

Sound Description (Ex. ca-CAW, beep-beep-beep)

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**Bird #3:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Physical Characteristics (Ex. striped, yellow chest)

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Behavior (Ex. high up in trees, hops on the ground)

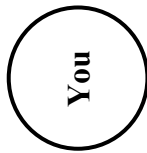
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Sound Description (Ex. ca-CAW, beep-beep-beep)

---



**Room to Sketch**



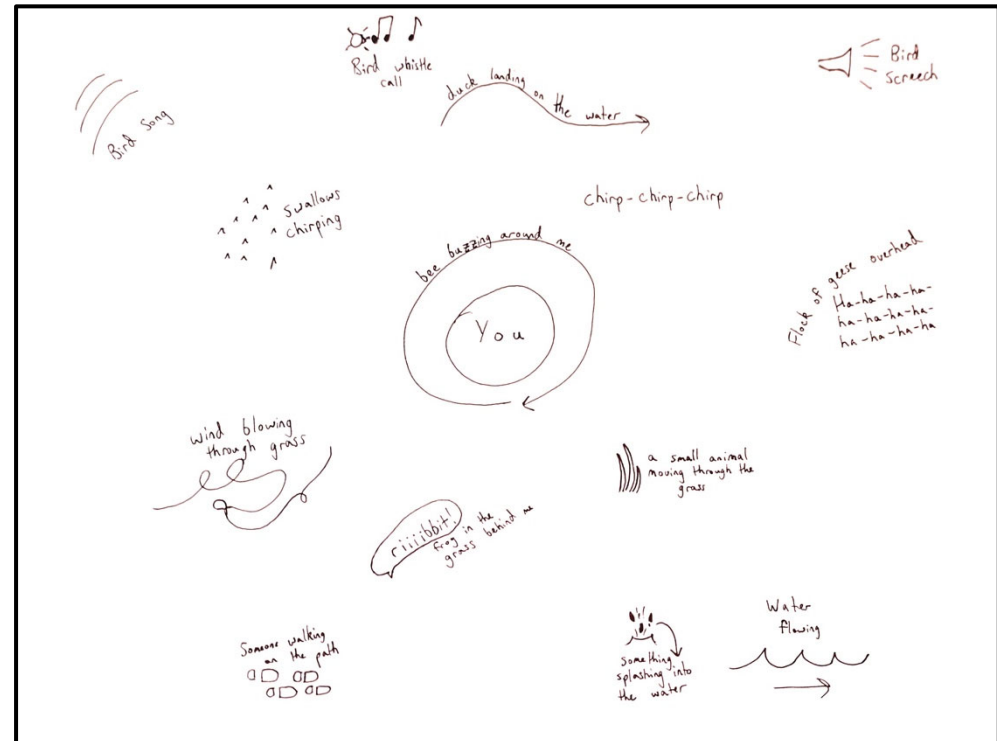
## Sound Map

For this activity, you are going to find a quiet spot to sit for roughly 3 to 5 minutes and take in the many sounds around you!

Things you may hear on the refuge:

- A variety of bird calls, songs, or quacks, water flowing or trickling, frogs croaking, footsteps on the path, wind blowing, animals moving or splashing in the water, insects buzzing

Every time you hear a new sound, document on your sound map where you heard it in relation to you and a way to mark each sound. Each new sound could be a different color, different shape, words describing the sound, or a picture depicting what you think you heard! This is an example sound map.



## IMAGINE: New Species

New life is created when it adapts to its environment.

**Can you imagine a new species of plant and bird or animal that might appear on the refuge?**

Make a rough sketch, give it a name, and why it evolved to be that way!

### **Things to Think About:**

- What conditions does it live in?
  - Does it thrive in lots of sunlight? Does it like the shade?
  - Does it live in the water? By the water? Or only on land?
- What does it eat?
  - How does it get food? From the sun? Hunting other animals? Finding bugs? Scavenging plants?
  - What does it have that allows it find food? Great sense of smell? Powerful vision? X-ray vision?
- What are some unique features?
  - Does the plant grow an interesting new berry? Does it taste good? Or is it poisonous?
  - Does your animal have antlers? An interesting beak? Is it colorful? Or does it camouflage?

## New Species of Plant

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**What caused it to evolve that way?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Other features:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



## New Species of Bird/Animal

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**What caused it to evolve that way?** \_\_\_\_\_



**Other features:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_