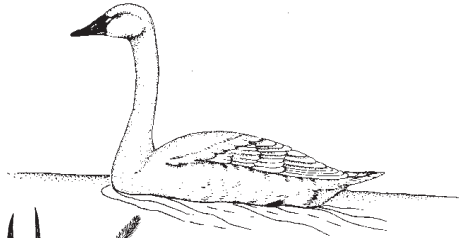
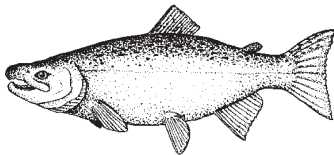
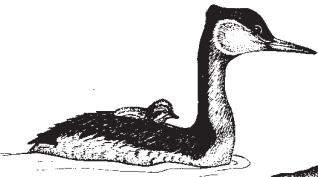




Potter Marsh Field Journal



Name _____



Visiting Potter Marsh

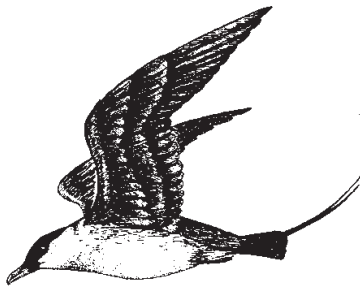
Potter Marsh is part of the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge, which is a state refuge managed by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

Weather: Potter Marsh is usually cooler than the rest of Anchorage. It is a good idea to dress in layers and wear appropriate footwear (no open toed shoes, sandals or flip-flops). You may want to bring a warm hat and gloves if the weather is cold.

Please don't litter: Potter Marsh is often windy. Items that are not clipped or tied down may blow into the marsh. While on the boardwalk, keep all pens, paper, notebooks, backpacks, and other gear off the top of the railing where they could accidentally fall over. Please be mindful of this, as it is extremely difficult to retrieve anything dropped and we want to protect the wetlands from litter and items that could be potentially dangerous to wildlife.

Facilities and Food: There is one pit-toilet restroom at the marsh and no running water. Food is prohibited on the boardwalk and airstrip. If you do bring food to the marsh, please eat it in the parking lot. This is so we can minimize trash and avoid attracting bears. Please pack out all trash.

No Dogs Allowed: Dogs are not allowed on the boardwalk. They are permitted in the parking lot but must be on a leash.



Basic Birding Tips

Potter Marsh is a great place to go bird watching. Being a birder is like being a detective. Try to observe the bird as keenly as you can, then flip through a birding field guide to see if you can figure out what kind of bird it is that you saw.

Have fun birding but remember, do not disturb birds by getting too close or touching their nests. Protect the environment and don't litter.

So how do you get started? When observing birds, look for these clues to determine their identity:

Bill: Note shape, color, length, curve and markings. Also observe the size of the bill.

Color: Overall body colors and special patches of color are one of the easiest clues to a bird's identity. Check the body, head, back, chest, tail feathers, legs, eyes and feathers around the eyes for different colors.

Special Markings: Look for stripes, dots and bands on the bird's wings, head, tail and body.

Size: Note the body length, wingspan and body proportions (how big the head or wings are compared to its body). Of course you won't be able to measure the bird from a distance, so just try to make your best guess, comparing it to other birds or objects. Is it bigger than your fist? Larger than your foot?

Habitat: Different birds occupy different territories. Observe where you saw the bird for clues to a bird's identity, looking for things like whether you are on the coast, in a forest or high up in the mountains, or whether the bird is perched in a tree or swimming in the water. Birding books all have range maps that show where different bird species are found.

Behavior: Observing how birds behave can be challenging but can really help with clues for bird identification. Note sounds, flight patterns, where the bird lands, what it eats and how it interacts with other birds.

Have fun birding!



Potter Marsh Scavenger Hunt

A bird flying. Draw a picture of it here.

An invertebrate found in Potter Marsh. If you learned the species' name, write it here.

An insect: mosquito, butterfly or dragonfly? sketch it here.

A bird calling or screeching. Listen and copy the sound.

A place where saltwater or freshwater enters the marsh.

A person using binoculars to watch wildlife. Draw some binoculars here.

Draw, describe or simply check the items in each box as you find them. Fill out all the spaces in a row or column, or every space if you like!



<p>An animal track. It can be real or a replica. Draw it here.</p>	<p>A tree. Do you know what kind of tree it is? If so, write it below.</p>
<p>A mammal or a photo of a mammal that lives at Potter Marsh. Write the name of the mammal here.</p>	<p>A sign about the first people to use this area. Who are they?</p>
<p>What is the larger refuge that Potter Marsh belong to? What is the name?</p>	<p>Look up close at something. Draw it here.</p>
<p>Shelter for an animal. What is it?</p>	<p>Food for a bird. What is it?</p>

Invertebrate Observation Sheet



What kind of invertebrates did you see? Try to sketch and describe them here.

Sketch invertebrate	Describe invertebrate

What is an invertebrate? Any animal without a backbone, including worms, insects and mollusks.

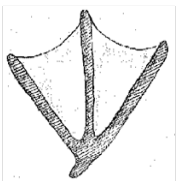
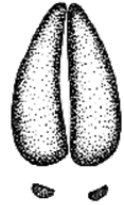
Sketch invertebrate	Describe invertebrate

Field Notes: Collection method, observations, weather, etc.

What eats invertebrates?

Animal Tracks

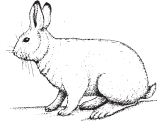
Find an animal track or tracks. Draw a picture of each track you found. Measure width and length (including nail prints and heel pad) and write those measurements down next to your drawing. What kind of animal is it? Can you tell what it was doing (walking, running, hopping, etc.)?



Animal Scat

Find some animal scat. Draw a picture of what you found (real or fake). What kind of animal is it from? Can you tell what the animal was eating?

Mammals



Name a mammal that is found at Potter Marsh.

Draw it here. Do you know some of the foods it eats?

Mammal: A mammal is a warm-blooded animal that has a backbone. This makes a vertebrate. Female mammals feed their young milk. Mammals can live in both cold and warm climates. All mammals are the only animals that have hair. Examples of mammals are humans, bears, beavers and whales.

Review: Name three things that make an animal a mammal?

Name some other animals that are mammals (these can be animals not found at Potter Marsh).

Water Quality at Potter Marsh

Various parameters such as temperature, pH, dissolved oxygen and turbidity determine how well a water body like Potter Marsh can support various aquatic plants and animals.

Temperature:

Aquatic animals (stream insects, salmon) are sensitive to changes in water temperature and require a certain temperature range to survive and thrive. If water temperature is outside that range for a long time, organisms can be stressed and die.

What is the water temperature of Potter Marsh? _____

pH:

pH is a measurement of the acidic or basic quality of water. The pH scale ranges from a value of 0 (very acidic) to 14 (very basic), with 7 being neutral. Most aquatic animals prefer a range of 6.5 to 8.0. They are adapted to a specific pH level and may die, stop reproducing, or move away if the pH of the water varies beyond this range.

What is the pH of Potter Marsh? _____

Dissolved Oxygen:

Dissolved Oxygen (DO) is important to the health of aquatic ecosystems. All aquatic animals need oxygen to survive. Waters with consistently high dissolved oxygen levels are most likely healthy and stable environments, and are capable of supporting a diversity of aquatic organisms.

What is the DO level at Potter Marsh? _____

Is this a poor, fair or good level to support water life? _____

Turbidity:

Turbidity is the measure of the relative clarity of water. Turbid water is caused by suspended and colloidal matter such as clay, silt, organic and inorganic matter and microscopic organisms.

Is the water in Potter Marsh clear or turbid? _____

Field Observations

What was the weather like today? Describe it below:

Sunny? Yes ___ No ___

Cloudy? Yes ___ No ___

Precipitation (rain or snow) Yes ___ No ___

Temperature? _____

Windy? Yes ___ No ___ Wind direction? _____

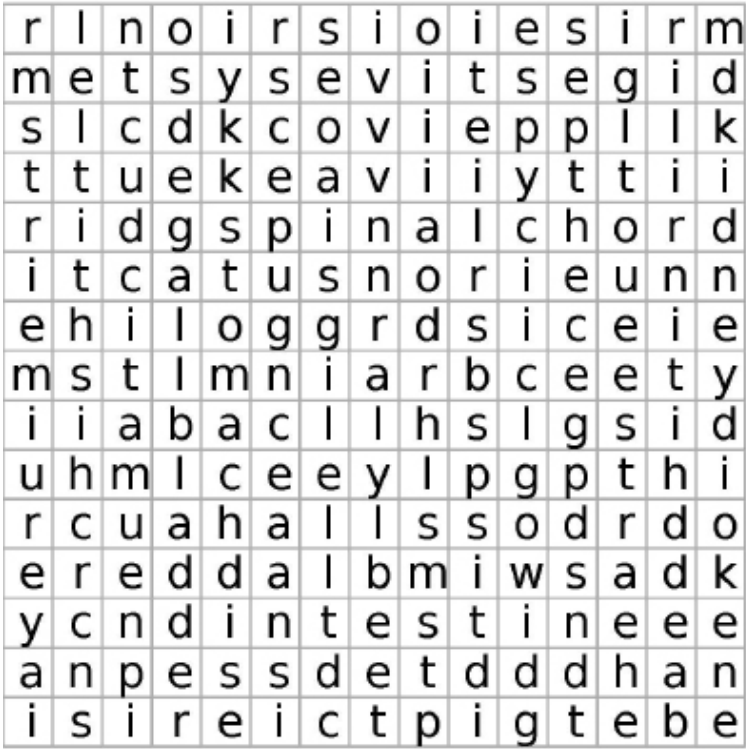
Watershed

What watershed are you in right now?

Draw a picture showing the watershed. Don't forget to draw arrows showing the path that water will travel through your watershed.

Watershed: A watershed is the area of land where all of the water drains into the same place. Watersheds come in all shapes and sizes. In the Continental U.S., there are 2,110 watersheds. When Hawaii, Alaska, and Puerto Rico are added, there are 2,267 watersheds.

Internal Fish Anatomy-Word Search



brain
 digestive system
 eggs
 esophagus

gall bladder
 gills
 heart
 intestine

kidney
 liver
 milt
 ovaries

pyloric caeca
 spleen
 stomach
 swim bladder



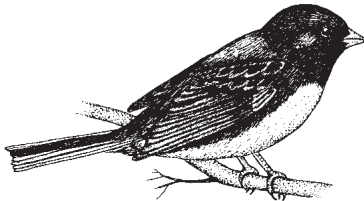
Field Trip Notes

What did you like best about your field trip? What did you learn?
Draw more pictures of birds or other wildlife here, if you like.

BIRDS of POTTER MARSH

An abbreviated checklist of birds regularly seen at the marsh

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Red-necked Grebe | <input type="checkbox"/> Horned Grebe |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trumpeter Swan | <input type="checkbox"/> Tundra Swan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Canada Goose | <input type="checkbox"/> Mallard |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pintail | <input type="checkbox"/> Green-winged Teal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Shoveler | <input type="checkbox"/> American Wigeon |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Canvasback | <input type="checkbox"/> Greater Scaup |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Common Goldeneye | <input type="checkbox"/> Bufflehead |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Red-Tailed Hawk | <input type="checkbox"/> Bald Eagle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Harrier | <input type="checkbox"/> Sandhill Crane |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Golden Plover | <input type="checkbox"/> Greater Yellowlegs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lesser Yellowlegs | <input type="checkbox"/> Red-necked Phalarope |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wilson's Snipe | <input type="checkbox"/> Pectoral Sandpiper |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Solitary Sandpiper | <input type="checkbox"/> Spotted Sandpiper |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Glaucous-winged Gull | <input type="checkbox"/> Mew Gull |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bonaparte's Gull | <input type="checkbox"/> Arctic Tern |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Great Horned Owl | <input type="checkbox"/> Short-eared Owl |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Downy Woodpecker | <input type="checkbox"/> Hairy Woodpecker |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alder Flycatcher | <input type="checkbox"/> Violet-green Swallow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tree Swallow | <input type="checkbox"/> Black-billed Magpie |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Common Raven | <input type="checkbox"/> Black-capped Chickadee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Swainson's Thrush | <input type="checkbox"/> Ruby-crowned Kinglet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Shrike | <input type="checkbox"/> Orange-crowned Warbler |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yellow-rumped Warbler | <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Waterthrush |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rusty Blackbird | <input type="checkbox"/> Common Redpoll |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White-winged Crossbill | <input type="checkbox"/> Lincoln's Sparrow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Savannah Sparrow | <input type="checkbox"/> Dark-eyed Junco |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White-crowned Sparrow | <input type="checkbox"/> Lapland Longspur |



Thank you for coming to Potter Marsh. We hope you enjoyed your time here and we hope you return often!



The Alaska Department of Fish and Game manages Potter Marsh, which is part of the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge, a state wildlife refuge.

ADF&G would like to thank the following partners for their help with and generous support of Potter Marsh Discovery Day:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Alaska Zoo
Bird Treatment and Learning Center
Chugach National Forest-U.S.D.A. Forest Service
Alaska Sealife Center
Municipality of Anchorage Parks and Recreation
Ducks Unlimited
Anchorage Waterways Council
Friends of the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge
Audubon Alaska
Anchorage Audubon
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
Home Depot & Bekkala Enterprises (plant presses)
Falconer Dutch Overly
Get Outdoors Anchorage
Kaladi Brothers and Tia's Hot Dogs

Note: Filling out this journal may take more than one visit to Potter Marsh. You may keep your journal and continue working on it each time you visit Potter Marsh.