

The Birder's Hunt

Every bird the archipelago's occurrence record was searched for, from the eagle you will certainly see to the ones nobody has found here yet.

Explorer: _____

How it works

1. Take a photograph of each thing on the list. Any camera counts - a phone is fine.
2. Tick the box when you have the picture, and write down where you were.
3. You do not have to get them in order, and you do not have to get them all.
4. Stay on roads, trails and public beaches. Ask before you cross anyone's land.
5. Look, don't touch: leave the plants growing and the bark on the trees.
6. If an animal changes what it is doing because of you, you are too close. Back away.

How hard is it? ★☆☆☆☆ seen all the time ★★★★★ very rarely seen

Before you go

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ A camera, or a phone | ☐ Water, and a snack |
| ☐ Sunscreen and a hat | ☐ Shoes you can get wet |
| ☐ A pencil for this book | ☐ Bug spray in summer |

Commonest first. Protected species are not cards - they are on their own page at the back.



Bald eagle

The biggest bird here, with a white head. Look at the tops of tall trees near the water.

Protected. Nests are not to be approached, though the birds themselves are the easiest big raptor here to photograph.

★☆☆☆☆

WHERE _____



Common loon

You will hear it before you see it. Watch a quiet lake early in the morning.

★☆☆☆☆

WHERE _____



Wild turkey

Big, dark, and walks instead of flying. Look along the edges of dirt roads.

★★☆☆☆

WHERE _____



Merlin

A small falcon that flies fast and straight over open ground.

★★☆☆☆

WHERE _____



Ruffed grouse

Hides in the leaves, then bursts out with a loud whirr and makes everyone jump.

★★☆☆☆

WHERE _____



Savanna sparrow

A small streaky sparrow of open grass, often with a yellow smudge in front of the eye.

★★☆☆☆

WHERE _____



Eastern bluebird

Bright blue back, orange chest. Sits on fence posts and wires in open fields.

★★☆☆☆

WHERE _____



American bittern

A marsh bird that freezes and points its beak at the sky so it looks like reeds.

★★☆☆☆

WHERE _____



American woodcock

Round brown bird with a very long beak. Comes out at dusk in spring.

★★★☆☆

WHERE _____



Eastern meadowlark

Bright yellow chest with a black V. Sings from fence posts in open fields.

★★★☆☆

WHERE _____



Bobolink

The male looks like he is wearing his suit backwards - black below, white and cream above. Bubbling song over hayfields.

★★★★☆

WHERE _____



Horned lark

A pale bird of bare open ground, with tiny black horns and a black mask. Look on the airstrip edges and gravel.

★★★★☆

WHERE _____



Grasshopper sparrow

A flat-headed little sparrow of dry grassland whose song really does sound like an insect.

★★★★☆

WHERE _____



Lapland longspur

A winter visitor from the far north, usually in flocks on open ground. Only six records here.

★★★★★

WHERE _____



Dickcissel

A grassland bird more at home in the prairies. Two records - finding one would be a genuine event.

★★★★★

WHERE _____



Upland sandpiper

A long-necked shorebird that lives in dry fields, not on the shore, and perches on fence posts. Two records.

★★★★★

WHERE _____



Northern goshawk

A big forest hawk, fierce and hard to see. Queried in the record and never found here - so this one is a long shot by definition.

★★★★★

WHERE _____

Look, but don't go near

These are on the island, and they are not on your list. Some are protected by law, some are so rare that walking near them is the danger, and some nest in big noisy colonies that abandon their eggs if people come close. You can still photograph them - from far away, with a long lens, from a boat or a road. A photograph is never worth a nest.

Bald eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*

Protected. Nests are not to be approached, though the birds themselves are the easiest big raptor here to photograph.

Common tern *Sterna hirundo*

Nests in crowds too, and panics the same way. Watch these from a boat, well out.

Caspian tern *Sterna caspia*

Nests in a big noisy crowd on the outer islands. If people come close the whole colony lifts off at once and the eggs go cold.

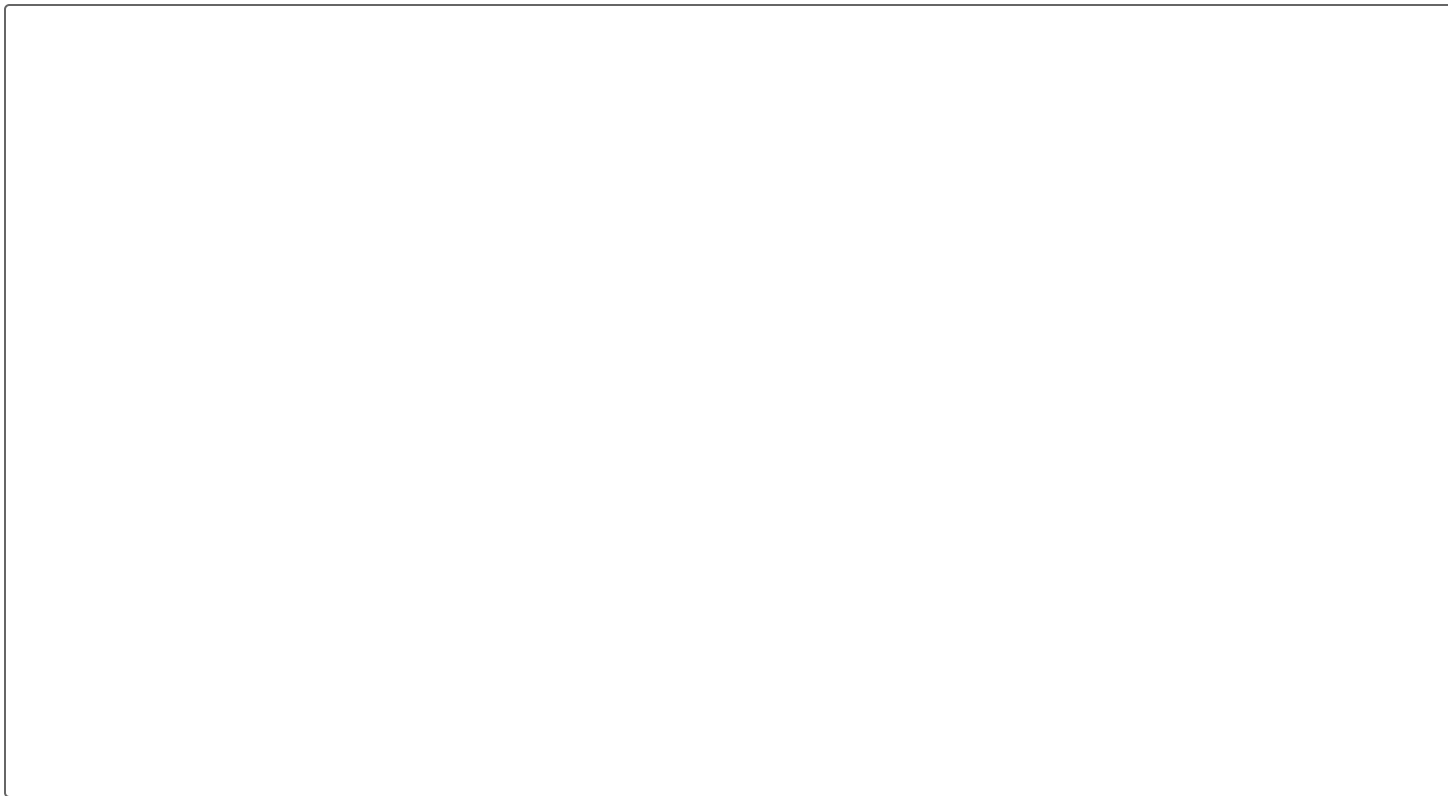
Piping plover *Charadrius melodus*

A tiny beach bird that lays its eggs straight onto the open sand, where they look exactly like pebbles. One footprint can end a whole family. Part of High Island is closed every spring and summer so they can nest.

Peregrine falcon *Falco peregrinus*

The fastest animal alive. Only eleven have ever been recorded here, so if you see one you are very lucky - and you should stay well away from where it nests.

Draw the best thing you found



Made from the Beaver Island Archive. Nothing here was made up: the animals come from public observation records, the trees and plants from forest surveys, 1800s land-survey field notes and natural-features reports, the ground from geological mapping, and the places from the archive's own encyclopedia. The complete list, and the reasons behind each entry, is at beaverislandarchive.org/photo-hunt/.