

Quest – Wild Forest Grove

Created by the Sea Birds of the Forest Grove Community School

Quests are fun, free-choice learning adventures that use clues and hints to encourage participants to discover the natural, cultural and historical "treasures" of place and community. If you go questing, don't forget to wear hiking shoes, and bring water, a snack and a buddy!

Each stop on our quests teaches you about one awesome native animal. Our quest also includes a letterbox at each stop. Bring a notebook along on your journey, and you can collect all twelve wildlife stamps! If you bring your own stamp, you can prove you were there too. Remember, though, close and return the letterbox back to the spot you discovered it. Learn more at letterboxing.org.

Location One. Roger's Park

1- Pileated Woodpecker

To start SNAG yourself a good view of the two snags at Roger's Park. Walk until you are right equidistant between them. Now look Northeast to a bench by the sandbox. Directly behind the bench is a big oak tree. Hiding on a perch in the tree you'll find me.

What is your favorite snack?

The Pileated woodpecker's favorite snack is carpenter ants from decaying wood. As you walk around the lake, take a close look for woodpecker holes in snags (dead standing trees).

Location Two: B Street Trail – start from the parking area off 16th Avenue

#1 - Oregon Spotted Frog

Start at the B Street trailhead, and take the right fork towards Gales Creek. Keep a look out for a patch of bare rocks to the left of the trail. There is a small tree just behind the rocks. The letterbox is hidden underneath. If you could hop through these trees, you would find a small pond where our spotted frog might lay its eggs.

Did you know that Oregon Spotted Frogs can't turn their heads? They move their eyes to see in different directions and catch flies. How far can you see without moving your head? Oregon spotted frogs are threatened by invasive animals, like Bull Frogs, and plants, like Himalayan Blackberry.

2- Little Brown Bat

From the junction by the picnic tables, walk roughly 42 steps and look to the left of the path. Hint: the little brown bat letterbox is in the shade in a little brown tree.

Little Brown bats have a bad disease called white nose syndrome. They roost in big colonies, and use echolocation to find insects to eat. They look for dark quiet spots to roost – can you find a good roost farther down the trail?

3 - Gray Wolf

When you make it around the first bend on the main path at B Street trail, head forward until you may see some paw prints – could those be coyote, or wolf? Look to the east of the trail in front of a small dirt pathway, parted by grass. When you make it to the end of this pathway, look into a tree on your left. There you will see our letterbox.

Gray wolves run really fast, up to 37 mph. Their howl can be heard up to 3 miles away! You probably won't see a wolf in the wild because there are only about 112 alive in Oregon today. But, look for the tracks of their cousin – the dog – in the mud along B Street trail.

Location 3. Hagg Lake – Walk from Trailhead 9 “Disc Golf” to Trailhead 11 “Sain Creek 1,” on the west side of the lake. This is about a 2.5 mile trip, out and back.

5- Bald Eagle

We start our journey at the wide open meadow by the Hagg Disc Golf course, below trailhead 9. Imagine you are a mouse, and scurry down through the meadow towards the lake trail. Once you hit the trail, turn left and....phew! safe in the woods out of the sight of eagles.

Look for a post with the number 8 on to the left. Take 25 steps, then you will see a large tree with a crack in it. Facing the tree, look to your left, and find our letterbox under another tree! If you hit the bench, you have gone too far!

Did you know? The Bald Eagle has up to a 7-foot wingspan, and over 7,000 feathers!

6 - Mayfly

Continue on the lake trail. Pass the bench looking out to the lake. Keep an eye out for a small path that leads towards the lake. Take a few steps down it, and look left. Find this letterbox hidden in a crook of a tree a few feet off the ground.

How do you breath? Mayflies nymphs breathe out of Small sacks on their sides. They can only live in cold, clean water. Turn over some rocks in the lake or Sain Creek – if you can find a tiny Mayfly hiding, the water must be clean.

7 - Banana Slug

Let's slow it down a little. Continue on your journey, and look for two snags towards the lakeside of the trail. Who made all the holes in those trees? Walk 4 yards more, then turn around. To spot our letterbox, you might need to get a slug's eye perspective.

Banana slugs are the second largest slugs in the world. They can grow up to 25 cm. They eat plants in this forest and even animal dung.
Can you find a slug trail nearby?

8 - Great Blue Heron

Continue walking the Lake path, until you come to a clearing on the lakeshore with grass. Take a moment to enjoy the view – are there any Great Blue Herons fishing amongst the reeds? Now, turn your back to the lake and look for some sword ferns. Our letterbox is hidden under their leaves.

Great Blue Herons spear their prey, like fish, insects and rodents by jabbing it with long sharp beaks. They can nest up to 100' high in a tree!

9 - Beaver

If you find the heron, here is a bonus box! Walk back the way you came (towards the dam), and look for a box hidden in a tree.

Beavers front teeth contain iron to make them super strong! When they are swimming underwater, they can close their mouth with just their teeth sticking out to carry wood. They also have a set of clear eyelids that act like goggles. Look for beaver chews as you walk.

10 - Tufted Puffin

Look for a small clearing with a side path going away from the lake (before you get to a dip in the trail with a big view of the lake.) To the left of the trail, look for 2 twin trees with white bark (Red Alders!) with a dead branch in between. Look in between the trees, and you will find the letterbox!

How much food can you fit in your mouth at once? Well, the Tufted puffin can hold up to 20 fish in their mouths at once! Don't try that at home!! Puffins nest in burrows in cliffs or steep slopes to hide from predators. If you were a puffin, where would you burrow nearby?

11- Pacific giant salamander

Pass a dip in the trail – is that driftwood or a bridge? Just after that, you'll see a trickle – if it's summer, you're in a pickle –you'll have to look close for clues of where water ran.

Turn right at this spot, a few trots towards the lake. On the right of the trickle, the letterbox is hiding where a salamander might lurk - behind a mossy stick. If you hit the pipe, you've gone too far; turn around I'm not that far.

Fact: Did you know that the Giant Pacific Salamander is the biggest amphibian in Oregon? It can grow up to 13 inches, and live on land or in the water! You might spot them by turning over a log or stone, but be gentle.

12 - Gray Whale

The trail starts to slope uphill – wait! Could that be the roar of the ocean?
Nope, just cars. You rock star, you reached the end of the hike!

On one side of the trailhead, find the sign “11 - Sain Creek 1.” Just across the path is a post surrounded by bracken fern. Peek underneath the fern by the post to find our letterbox.

Not tired yet? You could hike all around the lake, about 13 miles! Think that seems far? Well, gray whales migrate up to 16,000 miles, two times a year! Head to the Oregon coast to see them swimming south in December, then returning north with babies in March