

Welcome!

We're glad you're here and interested in learning about the nature surrounding you on the Boston Harbor Islands. Check out some safety reminders below as you explore.

BE ALERT! BE SAFE! ✖

Before you get started, there are a few things you should know to stay safe on the islands:

Stay on marked trails and out of tall grass.

Make sure you stay out of grass taller than the palm of your hand. Do a full-body tick check at home!

Stay off of, and above, sea walls.

The rock walls surrounding the islands can be dangerous to walk or sit on. *Make sure you use safe beach access points!*

Stay out of fenced areas.

There may be areas surrounded by fencing – *make sure to stay out!* Ask park staff if you are unsure of off-limit areas.

Respect wildlife and leave no trace.

Don't approach wild animals, or pick or eat wild plants. If you temporarily catch marine life or insects, make sure to keep them in a container with enough water or air and release them where you collected them. *Help preserve the park by leaving nothing behind!*

TURN ON YOUR SENSES AND TUNE INTO NATURE

All of your senses (except for taste) will be your best tools to discover biodiversity around the island.



Look – Look carefully at your surroundings. Get up close and look at plant leaves and flowers, bend down to look in the grass, and keep your eyes peeled on the beaches.



Listen – Find a quiet place on the islands and listen for birds and insects.



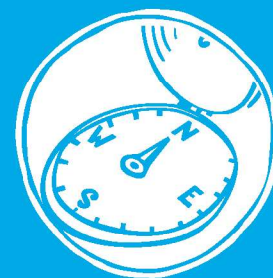
Feel – Have an adult help you decide what is safe to touch, and use your fingers to feel if something is smooth, fuzzy, or slimy!



Smell – Take a deep breath and follow your sense of smell. Some interesting plants may be awaiting you!



This activity is supported and was collaboratively developed and created by the National Park Service, Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, and Boston Harbor Now. All images can be found on npgallery.nps.gov.



GRAB&GO: EXPLORE

Be a Boston Harbor Birder

Boston Harbor Islands

Explore the birds that call Boston Harbor home

THE SCOOP:

Ages: 6+ yrs.

Time: 1 hour+

Materials: Pen or pencil

Boston Harbor Bird Bingo



Birds are some of the most diverse and common wildlife in the Boston Harbor. How many birds have you seen today and where did you see them? Do birds stay on the islands or can you find them in the city too? Race against a partner to be the first to find three birds in a row! For an extra challenge, try and find all nine of the species described below.

☐ Great Black-backed Gull

Dark, black back and wings, and pink legs

Largest gull species in the world, will be notably larger than other gulls



☐ Barn Swallow

Long, deeply forked tail, dark bluish coloring with pale, reddish throat and breast

Keep an eye out on island docks and around visitor centers



☐ Canada Goose

Large bird with long, black neck and dark brown back

Can be found in the water or grazing in grassy areas in pairs or flocks



☐ Common Tern

Gray wings with a white body, and a fully black-capped head

A protected species on the islands, found in open spaces and sandy beaches



☐ Free Space - Herring Gull

Gray wings with black tips and pink legs; look for NO ring around bill

Extremely common across the city and harbor



☐ Double-crested Cormorant

Large, darkly colored bird with orange/yellow beak

Dives for food in clear open water; keep an eye out while on ferries or at water's edge



☐ Red-winged Blackbird

Black bird with distinctive red patches on wings

Common on the Boston Harbor Islands; keep an eye out around trees and visitor centers



☐ American Robin

Look for rufous (red) breast with dark head and back and listen for sweet, melodic calls

Can be found on lawns and fields searching for food



☐ Wild Turkey

Iconic large bird with small head and feet

Look up! This bird may be found roosting in trees

