

Goldie at Home: Innovative Iowans

Activity Overview: Did you know that Iowa has a state bird? As Iowans commemorate the upcoming 175 anniversary of statehood, the Innovative Iowans program will explore Iowa symbols from rock to tree, and everything in between. This month's activity has young historians bundling up, grabbing their binoculars and heading outdoors to go bird watching.

Connection to Iowa History

The State Historical Museum of Iowa has a rich history of preserving Iowa's natural history, which includes many bird specimens and images. Iowan Maynard Reece became world famous for his wildlife artwork. Reece was born in Arnolds Park, Iowa, in 1920 and began working in 1940 for the Iowa Department of History and Archives, now the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs. In 1949, Reece won his first Federal Duck Stamp competition and would go on to win this award five times throughout his lifetime. Hunters are required to purchase Federal Duck stamps in order to hunt waterfowl. His wildlife illustrations appeared in numerous publications including *Life*, *Saturday Evening Post*, and *Sports Illustrated*. He passed away in 2020 and the State Historical Museum of Iowa holds 46 items from his collection. Learn more about these objects by searching the [museum's collection](#) using Maynard Reece's name.



Instructions ([Watch Video Instructions](#))

- 1 **Print.** Print the attached [Iowa Bird Watching Journal](#).
- 2 **Plan.** Plan how and when you will look for birds. Think about different locations, inside through a window or on a walk in your neighborhood or local park, and for how long.
- 3 **Search.** It may take a few sessions to view a variety of birds. Try watching at different times of the day and exploring new outdoor locations with an adult.
- 4 **Write.** Use the journal to write your observation notes.
- 5 **Share!** If you would like to share your findings with the State Historical Museum of Iowa, please email your research to museum.education@iowa.gov. We want to share your creation with other young historians!
- 6 **Questions to Spark Learning**
 - Iowa chose the Eastern Goldfinch as the official state bird. Why do you think the goldfinch was chosen? Do you think it should be a different type of bird? Why or why not?
 - Maynard Reece became famous for winning a Duck Stamp design competition. Why do you think it is important for someone like Reece to illustrate Iowa wildlife?
 - Iowa is home to many types of birds. Brainstorm ideas of why birds like to live or migrate to Iowa.

Materials

- [Iowa Bird Watching Journal](#)
- Printer
- Writing utensil

Instructions continued on next page

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Instructions continued

7 Additional Resources

Explore these resources below to learn more about identifying birds in Iowa.

- [*The Goldfinch - State Symbols*](#)
- [Iowa Association of Naturalists - Iowa Winter Birds](#)
- [Audubon - Birding in Iowa](#)
- [Iowa Ornithologists' Union - Finding Birds in Iowa](#)

Iowa Bird Watching Journal

Directions: Use this journal to record your observations while bird watching. If you are unsure of the types of birds you find, borrow a book about Iowa birds from your local library or use the Internet to assist your research.

Date & Time	
Type of Bird #1	
Location	
Bird Description Size, Color, Shape	
Additional Notes	
Sketch Use this space to draw the bird.	

Date & Time	
Type of Bird #2	
Location	
Bird Description Size, Color, Shape	
Additional Notes	
Sketch Use this space to draw the bird.	

Iowa Bird Watching Journal

Date & Time	
Type of Bird #3	
Location	
Bird Description Size, Color, Shape	
Additional Notes	
Sketch Use this space to draw the bird.	

Date & Time	
Type of Bird #4	
Location	
Bird Description Size, Color, Shape	
Additional Notes	
Sketch Use this space to draw the bird.	