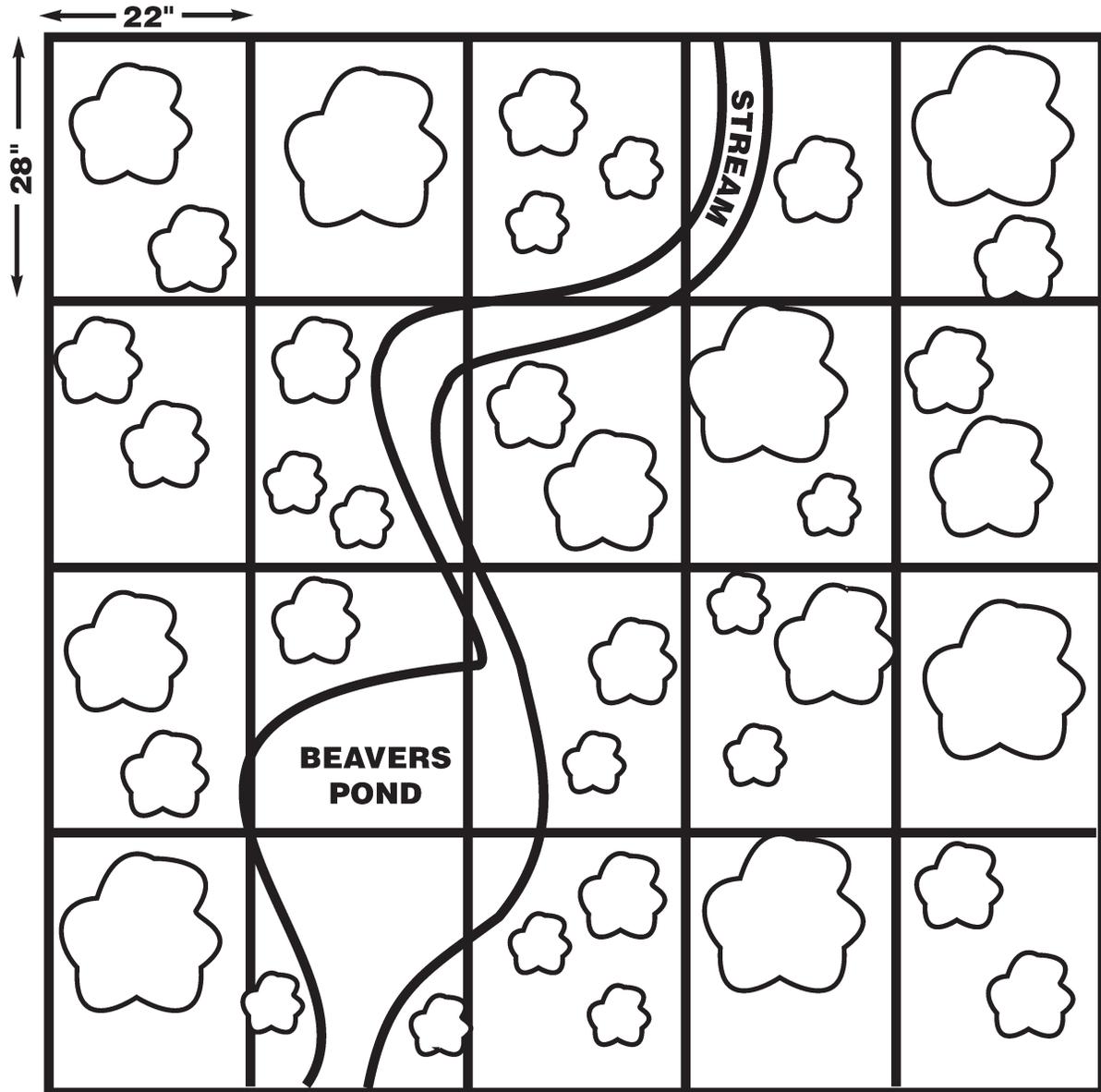




## Forest Habitat Activity Board

The activity board can be made out of 20 pieces of sturdy paper or poster board, with each section approximately 22" X 28". Place the sections next to each other on the floor or ground. Use a black permanent marker to draw the trees, stream, and beaver pond.

Use this sample Forest Habitat Activity Board for ideas. You can keep the design simple, as shown here, or color in the trees, stream, and beaver pond. You may want to number the sections on the back so you can take it apart and put it back together again easily. *(If you are working with a smaller group, or are unable to go outside, this can be created as a board game.)*





## Bird Cards

The following birds are dependent on forests in the United States for their habitat. Most of the species are common throughout much of the United States.

<p><b>COOPER'S HAWK</b></p> <p>I am about 15-20 inches long. My feathers are a dark blue-gray color above. I have a white underside with rusty-colored bars. My nest is a mass of sticks placed about 20 or more feet above the ground in a tree. Watch out! I hunt during the day and I eat small mammals and birds.</p>	<p><b>GREAT HORNED OWL</b></p> <p>I am about 18-25 inches long and my wings span over 4 feet. I am dark brown and gray with a white throat patch and large ear tufts. I have big yellow eyes so I can see at night. I often take over an unused nest of a hawk or crow, high up in a tree. I am a night-time predator and I eat mammals, birds, reptiles, and frogs. I am called "the tiger of the woods."</p>	<p><b>LONG-EARED OWL</b></p> <p>I am 12-15 inches long and my wing span is a little over 3 feet. I am a mottled brown color and I have big ear tufts. I often nest in a deserted nest of a crow, hawk, or squirrel. I have excellent hearing and eyesight, which help me hunt at night. I eat small rodents, shrews, and rabbits.</p>
<p><b>WOOD DUCK</b></p> <p>I am 17-20 inches long. I am a beautiful, crested, multicolored duck. Many people think I am one of the loveliest birds in the world! I live in wooded rivers, ponds, and swamps. My nest is a cup of downy feathers in a hole in a tree or in a nest-box. I eat plants that grow in the water, small fish, nuts, and fruit.</p>	<p><b>PILEATED WOODPECKER</b></p> <p>I am a large woodpecker, about 16-19 inches long, and quite shy. I am black with white stripes on my neck. I have a bright red crest on my head. I use my beak to make large rectangular holes in trees. I make my nest in these tree holes, about 15-70 feet above the ground. I eat ants and other wood-boring insects. Sometimes I eat berries.</p>	<p><b>HAIRY WOODPECKER</b></p> <p>I am about 9-10 inches long. I have black and white feathers and a long beak. My nest is made of woodchips in a hole in a tree. I help trees by eating insects that bore in trees. I also eat berries and seeds. I drum on wood with my strong beak to let other Hairy Woodpeckers know I am looking for a mate.</p>
<p><b>BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE</b></p> <p>I am about 5 inches long. I have a black "cap" and throat, white cheeks, and a gray back. One of my calls sounds just like my name: "chick-a-dee-dee-dee." I make my nest out of plant fibers, feathers, and moss. My nests are usually in a hole in a tree or in a birdhouse. I eat insects, seeds, and berries.</p>	<p><b>WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH</b></p> <p>I am 5-6 inches long. I have black on the crown of my head, a white face, a blue-gray back, and white underneath. I make my cup-shaped nest in a cavity in a tree or in a birdhouse. I eat nuts, seeds, insects, and fruits. I am a good gymnast—I often scamper down tree trunks headfirst in search of insects.</p>	<p><b>BROWN CREEPER</b></p> <p>I am about 5 inches long. My feathers are brown-streaked above and whitish below. I tuck my nest beneath a wedge of bark on a tree. My nest is made of moss, twigs, feathers, and bark strips. I creep up a tree, moving around it looking for insects and spiders.</p>
<p><b>WARBLING VIREO</b></p> <p>I am 5-6 inches long. I am an olive green color and am hard to spot in the forest. I have a beautiful warbling song. My cup-shaped nest is made out of strips of bark, plant fibers, and even spider web. I often place my nest high up in a tall tree near a stream. I eat insects, spiders, and berries.</p>	<p><b>WOOD THRUSH</b></p> <p>I am about 8 inches long. My feathers are brown above and white below with large blackish spots. I have a rich, flute-like voice. My nest is shaped like a cup and I like to place it in a bush or very young tree. I like to eat insects. I also like to eat berries, such as those found on dogwood and black cherry trees.</p>	<p><b>YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER</b></p> <p>I am about 4-5 inches long. I have a bright yellow throat, a face patterned with black and white, and gray on my head and back. For many people, seeing me return from my migration is a sign that spring has finally arrived. I often hang my cup-shaped nest in a sycamore or pine tree. I like to eat insects and spiders.</p>



## Scenarios

**R**ole-play each of these scenarios, and consider what might happen to you, as a bird, if each one actually occurs.

### Scenario 1 – Cowbird Delight

**A** new suburban town called “Cowbird Delight” has just been developed. Eight sections of forest were cut to develop this town. *(Remove 8 sections from the forest. The birds that were in these sections must leave the forest.)*

This new development has opened many new areas for the Brown-headed Cowbird to feed. The Brown-headed Cowbird likes to feed along forest edges, farms, feed lots, roadsides, and towns. A female Cowbird flies into the forest and lays its eggs in the nests of 20 different Warbling Vireos. The Cowbird eggs hatch first. When the Warbling Vireo eggs hatch, the young are pushed out of their nest by the bigger Brown-headed Cowbird. *(If you are a Warbling Vireo, your breeding has not been successful. You must leave the forest.)*

### Scenario 2 – Pesticides, Caterpillars, and Birds

**A** large tract of forest habitat in a recreation area in your state has been infested with caterpillars. The people who use this area are complaining about the caterpillars. They are concerned that the caterpillars are destroying the leaves of the forest trees. They are also concerned because the caterpillars are found in such great numbers that they are ruining their recreational experience. The forest managers of this area have decided to spray a pesticide over this forest to control the caterpillars. The pesticide worked and greatly reduced the number of caterpillars.

A big problem, however, resulted from this spraying. Yellow-throated Warblers could not find enough caterpillars to feed newly hatched babies. The nesting season was not successful and the warblers left this forest in search of a better area to live. *(If you are a Yellow-throated Warbler, your breeding has not been successful. You must leave the forest.)*

### Scenario 3 – Where are the Birds of Prey?

**B**ird watching is one of Jesse and Trina’s favorite hobbies. Each spring they look for birds in a forested area they have been visiting for the past 10 years. Some of their favorite birds to spot are birds of prey, such as the Cooper’s Hawk, Great Horned Owl, and Long-eared Owl.

This spring when Jesse and Trina arrive at the forest, they notice that a large part of the forest had been cleared for a new development. Eight sections of forest were cut for this development. *(Remove 8 sections from the forest. The birds that were in these sections must move over into the remaining sections.)*

They also notice that after spending several days bird watching, they could not find any of their favorite birds of prey. They meet a wildlife biologist. She explains that clearing the land for the development caused many small mammals to leave this forest in search of other places to live. The Cooper’s Hawk, Great Horned Owl, and Long-eared Owl are birds of prey. They depend on small mammals for their food. Because there are fewer small mammals in this forest, many of the birds of prey left to find a better place to live with more food. *(If you are a Cooper’s Hawk, Great Horned Owl, or Long-eared Owl, you cannot find food and you must leave the forest.)*



## Scenario Wrap-up

### Scenario 1 \_\_\_\_\_

1. What happened when part of your forest was taken away?
  
2. What do you think happened to the Warbling Vireo to cause it to leave the forest?  
How will this affect the numbers of Warbling Vireos inhabiting this forest in the future?
  
3. What do you think eventually happened to the birds that had to leave the forest?

### Scenario 2 \_\_\_\_\_

1. Why do you think the Yellow-throated Warbler left the forest?
  
2. Do you think the Yellow-throated Warbler will find a more suitable place to live?

### Scenario 3 \_\_\_\_\_

1. What happened when part of your forest was taken away?
  
2. Why do you think the hawk and owls left the forest?
  
3. Do you think the hawk and owls will find a better place to live?