



“Home for the Holidays” Ornaments

Planting Fields Arboretum State Historic Park is dedicated to creating educational materials that are fun, engaging, and which foster a love and respect for nature, history, and the arts.

This Learning Kit has been designed for teachers, students, families, and adult-crafters to create your own Planting Fields-related holiday ornaments. There are several ornaments to create as well as supplemental educational resources that relate to each ornament. Please note that any materials needed will not be supplied unless crafters have been directly invited to participate in our Home for the Holidays Community Outreach Program. Contact Katie Walsh, Community Engagement Manager, for more information: kwalsh@plantingfields.org.

We hope that you have a “hoot” of a time crafting and that you will visit us for “Home for the Holidays”! See [Happenings Calendar – Planting Fields Foundation](#) for more details.

<p>“Who, who, who is going to make me?”</p> <p>Ornament #1</p>	<p>Sweetgum Santa</p> <p>Ornament #2</p>	<p>“What did the Fox Say?...Yippy!”</p> <p>Ornament #3</p>
		

Name: _____

Date: _____

All About Owls



Directions: Before you watch “All about Owls” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m0XgSrdYQRY>, examine the following vocabulary words found in the video. Can you guess what these words mean?

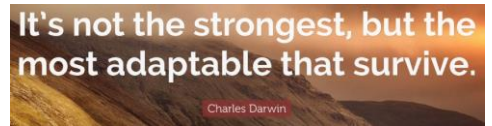
Nocturnal



Species



Versatile



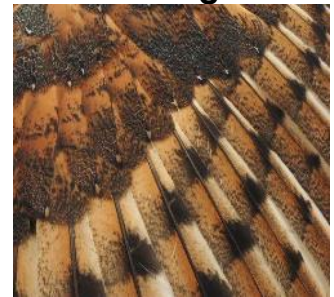
Continent



Swivel



Plumage



Regurgitate



Predator



Digested



Dissecting



Prey

Pellets



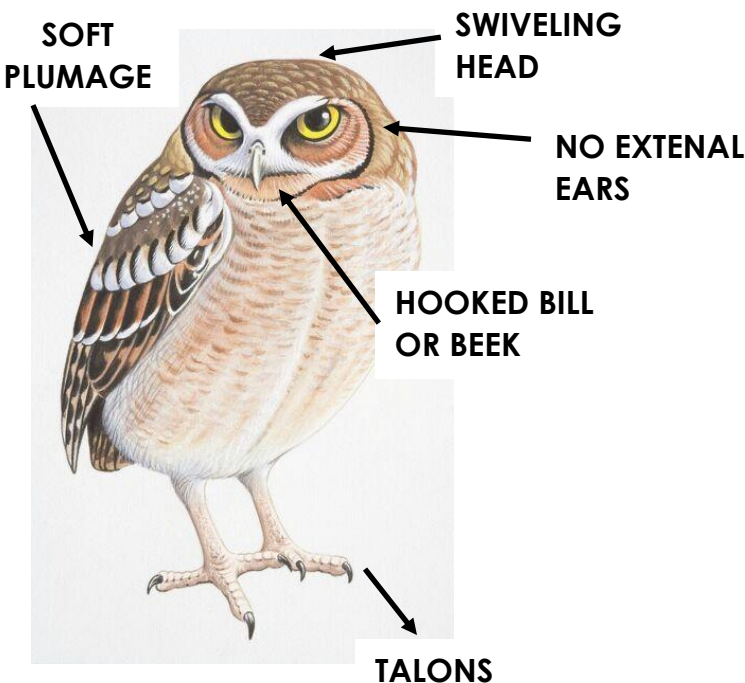
Hoot



Now use one of these words in a sentence: _____

Directions: Now watch “All about Owls for Kids: Backyard Bird Series – Free School” and **circle whether each sentence is true or false:**

- True or False **Owls hunt during the daytime.**
- True or False **There are over 200 species of owls from around the world.**
- True or False **You can find owls on the continent of Antarctica.**
- True or False **Owls can move their eyes in every direction to see.**
- True or False **Owls’ soft feathers allow them to fly silently so that prey cannot hear them coming.**
- True or False **Owls swallow their prey whole.**
- True or False **Like some other birds, owls love to eat berries.**
- True or False **Some owl species care for their babies up to a few months.**
- True or False **All owls hoot like “who, who”.**



Did you know?

Owls have an asymmetrical face (or a face that is not even on both sides) because one of their ear openings is higher than the other. This helps them pinpoint a sounds’ exact location. This is important because it helps the owl find prey and avoid predators (or an animal that could hurt the owl).

Owls are farsighted meaning they can see objects farther away better than those up close. They cannot see anything clearly within a few centimeters from their eyes.

What is something else you learned about owls that you found interesting?

“Who, who, who is going to make me?”



Materials Needed*:

- Pinecones
- Owl template (next page)
- Felt
- Brown pipe cleaners
- Elmer's glue and a paint brush (or hot gun/a hot glue gun)
- 9-inch yarn strand

**Materials provided only to the Home for the Holidays Community Outreach Program; glue not included*

***From: Pine Cone Owl Ornaments (Kid's Craft) - Lia Griffith**

Video Tutorial:

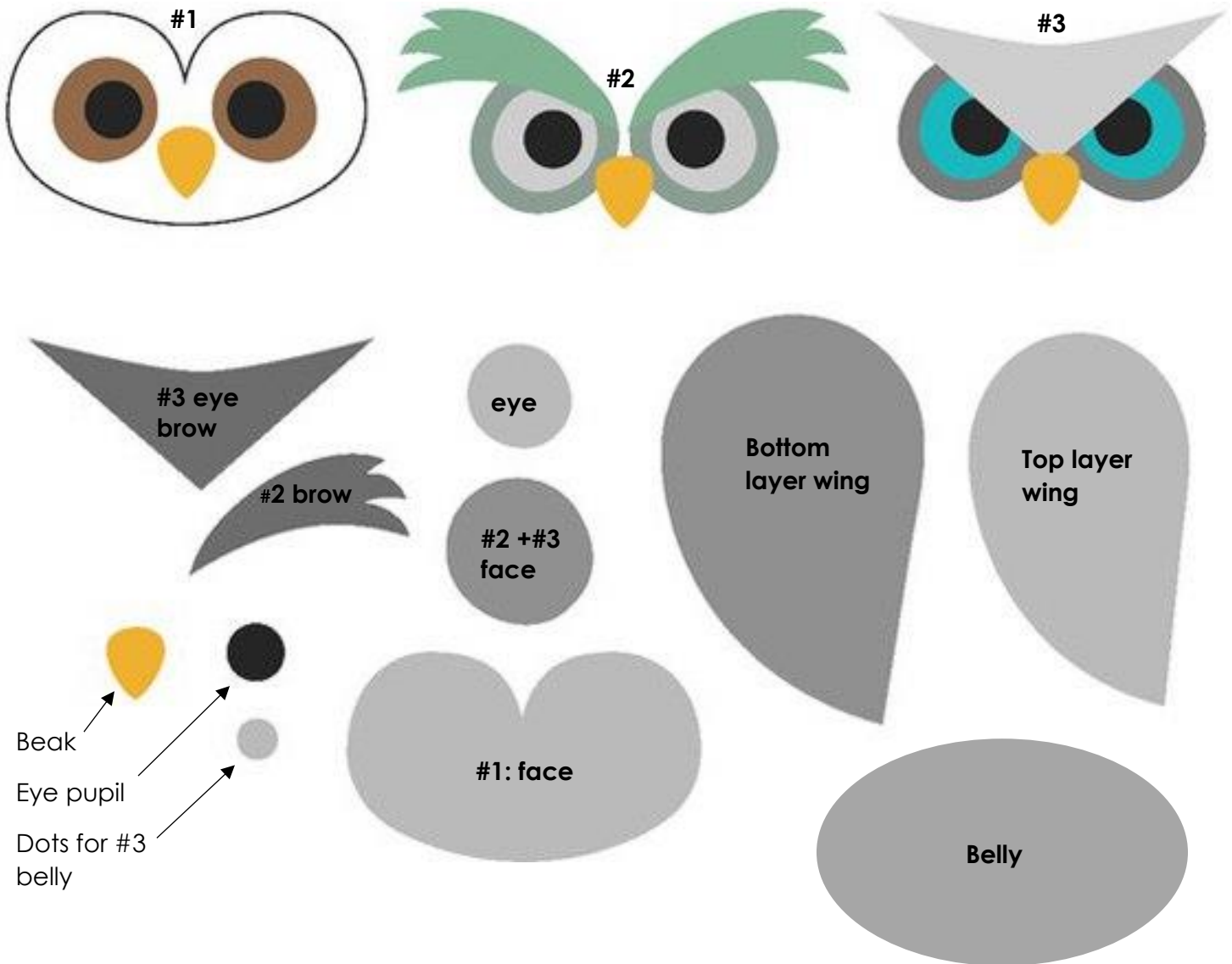
[\(69\) How to Make Pinecone Owls Using Felt - YouTube](#)

Directions:

- 1) Gather your tools and materials. Template can be found on the next page or here: [Pine-Cone-Owls-Template.jpg \(560×391\) \(ideas4diy.com\)](#).
** You may need to adjust the template based on pinecone size*
- 2) Carefully wrap the center of the yarn around the top of the pinecone. Tie the ends to make a loop.
- 3) Trim pieces of felt according to the owl template (next page).
- 4) Using Elmer's glue and a paint brush (or a hot-glue gun), glue together your pieces of felt to create the owl face and wings
- 5) Glue the owl's face and wings onto the pinecone either using Elmer's glue or, with adult supervision, hot glue and a hot-glue gun.
- 6) Cut the brown pipe cleaner into one-inch sections. Bend to make into an “L” and, with adult supervision, glue three into owl feet using a hot-glue gun.

Owl-Pattern Template

*Sized for a large pinecone



Owls will end up looking like this (below). Any color felt can be used.





Which Native Owl does your ornament most look like?



EASTERN SCREECH OWL:

“Small, stocky owl with large head and no neck. Pointed ear tufts. Varies in color from gray to reddish-brown. Intricate pattern is perfect for camouflage against tree bark. Yellow eyes. Active at night when they prey on small birds and mammals. More often heard than seen; listen for its whinny and longer trill (visit link to hear). Roosts and nests in cavities [holes], including nest boxes. Found in a variety of habitats with trees, particularly near water”. [Eastern Screech-Owl - eBird](#)

Scientific name:
Megascops asio

Length: 6.3-9.8 in

Weight: 4.3-8.6 oz

Wingspan:
18.9-24.0 in



GREAT HORNED OWL:

“Large owl with distinctive ear tufts. Found in a variety of habitats across North America from dense woods to prairie and deserts with at least some trees. Also, found in wooded towns and suburbs. Typically, well-camouflaged dark brown overall but varies in color. Often engages in haunting duets, with males and females hooting back and forth (visit link to hear hoots). Preys upon a variety of animals, including mammals, birds, and reptiles.”

Scientific name:
Bubo virginianus

Length:
18.1-24.8 in

Weight:
32.1-88.2 oz

[Great Horned Owl - eBird](#)

Wingspan: 39.8-57.1 in



BARN OWL:

“Barn owls have a very distinct appearance, with a heart shaped white face and black eyes. They like to roost and nest in barns and silos, hence their name, but also in dense trees and cavities. After dark, they fly low over open fields, grasslands, and marshes, listening for prey scurrying below. In fact, it is thought they have the best ability of any animal to locate prey by sound alone! They will nest in owl boxes built to the appropriate size. They can be found year-round in New York but are rarely spotted.” [10 Types of Owls in New York - \(With Pictures\) - Bird Feeder Hub](#)

Scientific name:
Tyto alba

Length: 12.6-15.8 in

Weight: 14.1-24.7 oz

Wingspan:
39.4-49.2 in

Listen to their call here:
[\(54\) What does a Barn Owl sound like? - YouTube](#)



BARRED OWL:

“This large owl can be found year-round in NY. They do not migrate, and don't tend to stray far once they establish a territory. They have a round head with a gray face, white breast with long brown streaks, and a brown and white mottled back. You will most likely be alerted to them by their distinctive sounding hoot that carries far, often described as sounding like “who cooks for you?”. During courtship, mated pairs perform a chorus of bizarre sounding cackles, hoots, caws, and gurgles called caterwauling.” [10 Types of Owls in New York - \(With Pictures\) - Bird Feeder Hub](#)

Scientific name:
Strix varia

Length:
16.9-19.7 in

Weight:
16.6-37.0 oz

Wingspan: 39.0-43.3 in

Listen to hoot here: [\(54\) Barred Owl Calls To Mate \(Amazing Vocals!\) - YouTube](#)

Name: _____
Teacher: _____

Date: _____
Class: _____

Sweetgum Santa

Kit Contains*

- Doll pin stands
- Red acrylic paint
- White and red paper
- Mini-white pompoms
- 6mm googley eyes
- Sweetgum balls
- Skein of yarn

Materials Needed

- Doll pin stand
- 2 Small paint brushes
- Red acrylic paint
- Small scissor
- White paper
- Red construction paper
- A mini-white pompom
- Elmer's glue or a glue stick/hot glue and hot-glue gun
- 6mm googley eyes
- Sweetgum ball
- 6-inch length of yarn



**Materials provided only to the Home for the Holidays Community Outreach Program*

Today, you will be making an ornament with something called a “sweetgum ball”. Let’s take a guess what a sweetgum ball is.



What am I?

- A. Dragon Eggs
- B. Contains seeds for the sweetgum tree
- C. A home for insects
- D. Contains a sweet and sticky substance (called sap) that provides the tree it comes from with energy
- E. A pod out of which insect larvae (or babies) will hatch

Did you guess correctly? Flip to the back to check your answer and learn more about sweetgum!

Now let's make your Sweetgum Santa:

Directions:

- 1) To make the body: Paint the doll pin stand with red paint. Leave to the side to dry.
- 2) To make the hat:
 - Using the provided template (below), cut out a red "Santa" hat from red construction paper and a small white rectangle for the hat's fur lining
 - Glue the white portion to the bottom of the hat using a glue stick or a small paint brush and a small dab of Elmer's glue
 - Glue the mini white pompom to the tip of the hat
- 3) To make the face: Glue two 6 mm googly eyes to the sweetgum ball (where you would find eyes on a person) using a hot-glue gun (or lots of Elmer's glue)
- 4) Attach the loop: Fold the 6-inch strand of yarn so that the ends are touching and then glue those ends to the back of the Santa hat. *You can also glue an ornament hook to the Santa hat, if you are making this separately from our Community Outreach Program.
- 5) To put your Santa together:
 - Using a hot-glue gun, glue the hat to the top of the sweetgum ball
 - Using a hot-glue gun, place glue on the top rim and inside of the doll pin stand; then place the sweetgum ball on top of the doll pin stand



Template for Santa Hat:



white

Let's Learn More about Sweetgum!



Sweetgum trees (botanical name *Liquidambar*) have several special characteristics that can help us identify these cool trees.

Shape and Size

A fully grown American sweetgum is about 60 and 80 feet tall (about the height of a 6-8 story building) and up to 60 feet wide (about the length of 2 school buses). It has a tall, straight trunk with a wide cone-shape crown.



Leaves

Sweetgum trees are **deciduous** flowering trees which means that they lose their leaves in fall. During the autumn, they can be identified by their extremely bright, colorful leaves which tend to drop last compared to other tree species. (They also are among the last to grow their leaves back in springtime). The American sweetgum has leaves shaped like a 5-point star that smells sweet and citrusy when crushed.



Spiky balls

Most sweetgum tree varieties have spiky balls that contain their seeds. These spikey balls hang in clusters and are called sweetgum balls, gumballs, sweetgum fruits, or capsules. They can measure up from 1-3 inches across. They fall off the tree between December and April.



Green = immature
Brown = mature and ready to fall

Flowers

Unlike its fall foliage, sweetgum flowers are not that pretty. They have small clusters of yellow-greenish flowers.



Roots

Its roots are relatively shallow, so it is best to plant them away from sidewalks and buildings to prevent them from lifting up the concrete or foundation.



Bark











The bark is light gray with vertical (running up and down), irregular (not straight) ridges.



[Sweetgum Trees \(Gumball Tree\): Types, Leaves - Identification \(Pictures\) \(leafyplace.com\)](https://www.leafyplace.com/Sweetgum-Trees-(Gumball-Tree)-Types,-Leaves-Identification-(Pictures)-)

Created by Jocelyn Russo, Planting Fields Foundation Education Manager

Can you identify which belongs to a Sweetgum Tree?

<p>A</p> 	<p>B</p> 	<p>C</p> 
<p>D</p> 	<p>E</p> 	<p>F</p> <p>The roots of this tree smell like root beer.</p>
<p>G</p> 	<p>H</p> 	<p>I</p> 
<p>J</p> 	<p>K</p> <p>The leaves smell citrusy and sweet when crushed.</p>	<p>L</p> 

<p>(A) Sweetgum tree silhouette</p> <p>(D) Immature sweetgum balls</p> <p>(F) Sassafras Tree</p> <p>(I) Sweetgum Tree bark</p> <p>(L) Poison Ivy</p>	<p>(B) Sweetgum leaves</p> <p>(E) Sycamore Tree bark</p> <p>(H) Grand Fir (Evergreen Tree)</p> <p>(K) Sweetgum Leaves</p>	<p>(J) Pinecones from a Pine Tree</p> <p>(G) Maple Leaf</p>
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Answer Key:

Name: _____
Teacher: _____

Date: _____
Class: _____

“What did the Fox Say?...Yippy!”



Materials Needed:

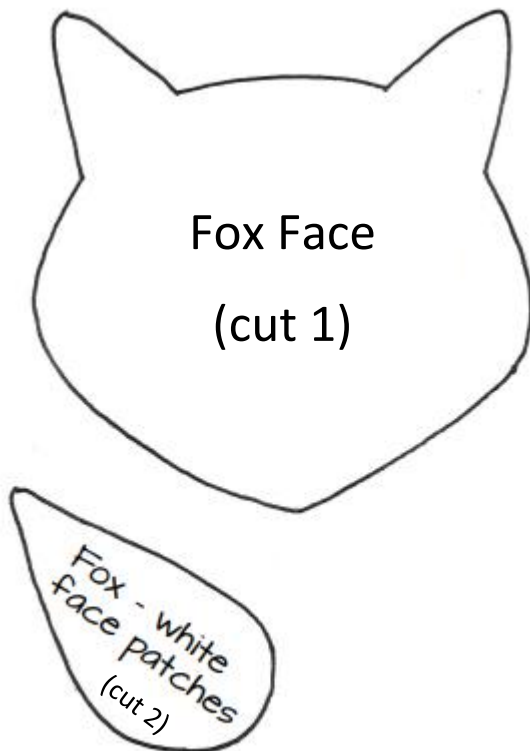
- White and Orange Felt
- A small paint brush (for glue)
- A mini-black pompom or black paper circle (from a 3/16"-1/4" single hole-punch)
- Small scissor
- Fox-pattern template
- Elmer's glue
- 6-inch yarn strand
- Black magic marker or sharpie

Kit Includes*:

**Materials provided only to the Home for the Holidays Community Outreach Program*

- White and Orange Felt
- Black construction paper
- Fox-pattern template
- Skein of yarn

Fox-Pattern Template



Directions:

- 1) Cut out the pieces of the fox-pattern template and then cut out the orange fox face and 2 white fox face patches
- 2) Using a small paint brush and Elmer's glue, glue the face patches onto the fox face in the location shown in the photo above
- 3) Glue the small black circle (created with the hole punch) or, if creating at home, the mini black pompom onto the tip of the face.
- 4) Using a black magic marker or sharpie, draw 2 black dots for eyes
- 5) Make a loop with the yarn and then glue the ends at the back of the ornament's top

A special thanks to “Frugal Fun for Boys and Girls” for this ornament. If you are interested in crafting more felt animal ornaments, you can check out their webpage at: [The Cutest Ever No-Sew Felt Woodland Animal Christmas Ornaments - Frugal Fun For Boys and Girls \(frugalfun4boys.com\)](http://TheCutestEverNoSewFeltWoodlandAnimalChristmasOrnaments-FrugalFunForBoysandGirls(frugalfun4boys.com))

Now let's more about foxes' connection to Long Island and Planting Fields:

Using the “[Mammals of Long Island](http://MammalsofLongIsland.iNaturalist)” iNaturalist website:
[Mammals of Long Island · iNaturalist](http://MammalsofLongIsland.iNaturalist)



- How many fox species are on Long Island?
- What other species of animals are found here on Long Island?
- These are all mammals, so the characteristics that they have in common are largely the characteristics of mammals. What do they have in common?
- Take an educated guess (or hypothesis) what characteristics make an animal a mammal. Check if you're right here: [mammal - Kids | Britannica Kids](http://mammal-Kids.BritannicaKids) | [Homework Help](http://HomeworkHelp)

Foxes at Planting Fields?

If there are foxes on Long Island, there are definitely foxes at Planting Fields. **Why not come for a visit and take a nature walk here? Maybe you'll spot a fox!**

Not only are there live fox here, but there are several images of fox in Coe Hall. Click this link to have your parents/guardians schedule a tour of Coe Hall: [Tours and Tickets – Planting Fields Foundation](http://ToursandTickets-PlantingFieldsFoundation).

Can you find these fox images in Coe Hall? Can you find any more?





PLANTING FIELDS

If you are creating ornaments separately from our Home for the Holidays Community Outreach program and would like to donate your ornament(s) to Planting Fields Foundation for display during Home for the Holidays:

Please contact Katie Walsh, Planting Fields Foundation Community Engagement Manager at 516-922-8680 or kwalsh@plantingfields.org.

If you have any questions about this Learning Kit or any other educational resources/programs:

Please contact Jocelyn Russo, Planting Fields Foundation Education Manager at 516-922-8666 or jrusso@plantingfields.org

*Additionally check out Planting Fields Foundation's "Learn" webpage at <https://plantingfields.org/>