

Name: _____

Date: _____

Teacher Sheet: Sagebrush Steppe Habitat Assessment

✓ Fledglings

Provide information about the location and habitat components found at this site.

Habitat Assessment Site:

Petroglyph Point

Habitat components found at this site:

Food: Seeds, juniper berries, insects

Water: Small puddles on some rocks, and water in the plants

Shelter: Caves, trees, rocks

Space: There is a lot of continuous open space

Using your observation skills, walk through the habitat and search for these specific sagebrush steppe habitat aspects. Place a tally mark next to each aspect each time you observe it. If there is anything interesting you come across, write a description of your findings. You will discuss the habitat assessment results at the end.

Sagebrush steppe Habitat Aspect	Tally	Interesting Observations
Large area of native grasses and herbs (soft stemmed plants)		<i>I saw 5 types of grasses all in one area</i>
Large area of sagebrush and other shrubs		<i>In the areas with large sagebrush several birds were observed</i>
Scattered, mature junipers, with no more than 10% canopy cover (mature junipers will have a rounded top, broken branches, & lichen growth)		
Signs more management is needed (examples may be young junipers or cheatgrass)		<i>Near the trail there was cheatgrass</i>

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Using the information on the previous page and the chart on this page, answer the following questions.

Sagebrush Steppe Habitat Aspect	Associated Obligate Bird Species
Large area of native grasses and herbs	Grasshopper Sparrow
Large area of sagebrush and other shrubs	Sage Grouse, Sage Sparrow, Brewer's Sparrow
Scattered, mature junipers	Ferruginous Hawk, Chipping Sparrow, Raven

1. Which habitat aspect did you find the most of? Which bird species are most dependent on this habitat aspect?

We found the most large sagebrush and other shrubs, which is important for the Sage Grouse, Sage Sparrow and Brewer's Sparrow

2. How many mature juniper trees did you come across during your observation? What information does that give us about the health of this habitat?

We saw 3 young juniper trees. Since the area around Petroglyph Point used to be underwater, these trees represent the encroachment of western juniper into sagebrush steppe.

3. Did you see any evidence of juniper management? What evidence did you observe?

I saw several stumps where western juniper had been removed.

4. Given your assessment results, do you think that this sagebrush steppe habitat is healthy or do you think it needs more management? Why?

I think this sagebrush steppe habitat is pretty healthy, but there could be more management of the cheatgrass near the trail.