



For the following activities that correspond to the "Intro to Minnesota Map Activity – WORKSHEET", use the following tips and tools to help you.

**Activity A - Minnesota's State Symbols, etc.**



**L**ake Superior agates. Common loons. Pink and white lady's slippers and Norway pines. Walleyes and wild rice. All are characteristic of Minnesota, and all capture the essence of the state. Over the course of Minnesota's statehood, the Legislature has adopted 16 such symbols to identify the state's great resources and quality of life.

## The State Seal

**T**he Great Seal of Minnesota has been around for 150 years — even before Minnesota became a state. But its existence has not been without controversy.

It was on May 25, 1858 — two weeks after Minnesota became a state — that then Secretary of State Francis Baasen said to Gov. Henry H. Sibley that, "My office being without a seal, I can of course do no official act unless you make some direction in the matter."

Sibley immediately authorized the use of the territorial seal until a new design could be created and agreed upon.



That seal, essentially the same one in use today, was used while the Legislature debated a new one.

In 1858, the Legislature approved a vastly different seal, but for some reason it was never officially adopted into law. Historians still aren't sure why, but speculation has it that Sibley didn't like the design and conveniently "lost" the bill in favor of the territorial design. In any case, the Legislature, in 1861, when notified that the governor may have acted outside his authority, approved the design and it was signed into law.

So the essential elements of the territorial seal — a barefoot settler plowing a field near the Mississippi River, an American Indian riding a horse and a sunset — have remained ever since.

But these too, have changed slightly over the years. Prompted by American Indian objection, the Legislature, in

1983, decreed that the American Indian should face the settler by riding south rather than fleeing west.

Capt. Seth Eastman, an artist who was also the commanding officer at Fort Snelling, designed the seal. ▼

## The State Bird

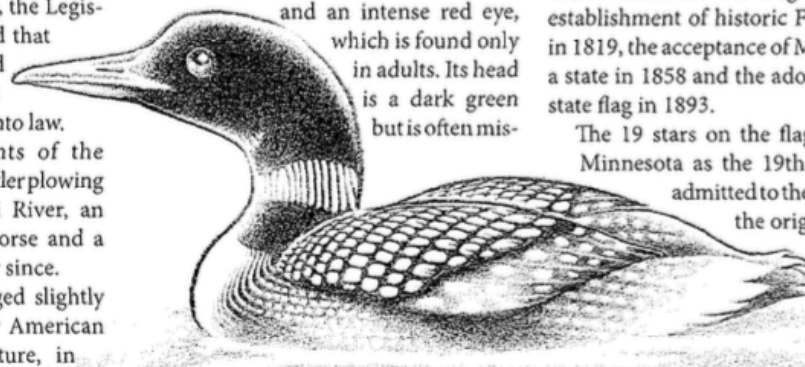
**T**he Legislature adopted the common loon as the state bird in 1961. Since then, it has become one of the most revered of Minnesota symbols.

The sleek-looking bird can attain speeds of up to 60 mph and can travel great distances under water. The loon's legs are near the rear of its body, enabling it to dive under water quickly, quietly and with great speed.

But its legs weren't made for walking. The loon earned its name from the old English word "lumme," meaning awkward person. The loon ventures on land only when nesting and breeding. And even then, the nest is always near the water.

Its wings are also very small. As a result, the loon, which averages about 9 pounds, needs between 20 yards and a quarter mile to take off.

Its distinctive features include a black-and-white checkered pattern on its back and an intense red eye, which is found only in adults. Its head is a dark green but is often mis-



taken for black. The description applies to both males and females, making it difficult to distinguish them.

Loons are loners and prefer Minnesota's isolated lakes, leading some to label their distinctive call as "the loneliest voice on earth." ▼

## The State Flag

**T**he Minnesota state flag was adopted by the state Legislature in 1893 when it accepted the design submitted by Amelia Hyde Center of Minneapolis.

The flag depicts the state seal on a blue background. The seal shows a pioneer plowing the virgin prairie and an American Indian on horseback. At the top of the seal is the state motto, "L'Etoile du Nord," or star of the north. Three dates on the flag signify the establishment of historic Fort Snelling in 1819, the acceptance of Minnesota as a state in 1858 and the adoption of the state flag in 1893.

The 19 stars on the flag symbolize Minnesota as the 19th state to be admitted to the Union after the original 13. The largest of

these stars is centered above the seal to symbolize the north star state.

The original flag had two sides, blue on one side and white on the other. But because the flag was so expensive to make, and because it was easily damaged in high winds, the Legislature adopted the one-sided, all-blue design in 1957. The



idea was to produce the flag more cheaply to urge people to display it in preparation for the state's centennial in 1958. ▼

## The State Fish

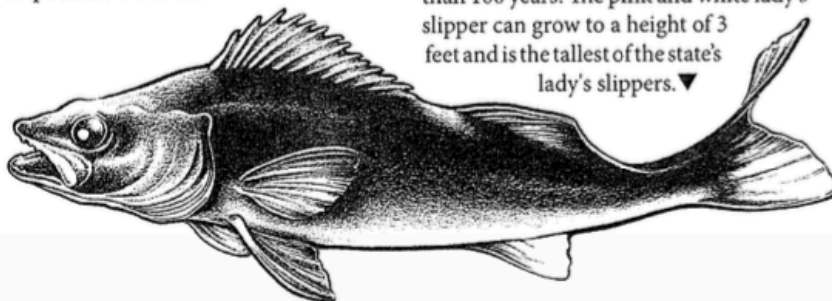
Of all Minnesota's state symbols, none is more eagerly sought after than the walleye — the official state fish.

Every year in Minnesota, more than 1 million anglers take to the water on one of the state's 1,700 walleye lakes in pursuit of the elusive walleye.

In May 1965, the Minnesota Legislature adopted the walleye as the state fish. It was chosen for its value to both sport and commercial fishing.

The walleye gets its name from its eyes, which have a milky appearance like bluish-white marbles. But it's known by a variety of other names, too — yellow pike, yellow perchpike and yellow pickerel.

Minnesota's record walleye, caught in 1979 in the Sea Gull River at Saganaga Lake in Cook County, weighed 17 pounds, 8 ounces. ▼



## The State Flower

You might think twice before picking the Minnesota state flower — the pink and white lady's slipper. In 1922, the Legislature passed a law making it illegal to pick the rare flower that is typically found in the swamps, bogs and damp woods of northern Minnesota.

But its history as the state flower began nearly 30 years prior. It was in 1893, that a group of women preparing an exhibit of the state's products for the World's Fair in Chicago decided they should have a state flower to decorate their display. They petitioned legislators to adopt the wild lady's slipper as the state flower, and the Legislature complied. But several years later, officials discovered that the wild lady's slipper named in law didn't grow in Minnesota.

So during the 1902 special session of the Legislature, a new resolution was adopted that changed the state flower to the pink and white lady's slipper. A member of the orchid family, the pink and white lady's slipper is one of Minnesota's rarest wildflowers. It blooms in late June or early July, and it takes between four and 16 years before the plant produces a flower. Under the right conditions, lady's slippers can live for more than 100 years. The pink and white lady's slipper can grow to a height of 3 feet and is the tallest of the state's lady's slippers. ▼



## The State Gemstone

Although the Legislature didn't adopt the Lake Superior agate as the official state gemstone until 1969, agates were being formed about a billion years before that.

As the North American continent began to split apart (caused by molten rock moving deep beneath the earth's surface), iron-rich lava poured out of the huge crevasses. These flows are now exposed along the north and south shores of Lake Superior.

The stone's red color comes from iron, the major industrial mineral in the state. The concentration of iron, and the extent to which the iron has oxidized, determines the color of the stone. Puddles of quartz-rich solutions that crystallize inside the gas pocket under low fluid pressure cause the white bands that are typically found in agates. The parallel nature of the bands indicates the agate's position inside the lava flow.



Characteristics of the agate include a glossy, waxy appearance, a pitted surface texture and iron-oxide staining. The stone is translucent. ▼

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## The State Mushroom

The *morchella esculenta*, commonly known as the morel, sponge mushroom or honeycomb morel, became Minnesota's official state mushroom in 1984.

The morel is considered one of the most highly prized and delicious of all edible mushrooms.

The morel's cups resemble cone-shaped sponges, pitted like a honeycomb. The morel is usually 4 inches to 8 inches high.

It grows from early May to early June in the Twin Cities metropolitan area among leaves or wood ashes in open woods, along roadsides and in partially shaded meadowland. ▼

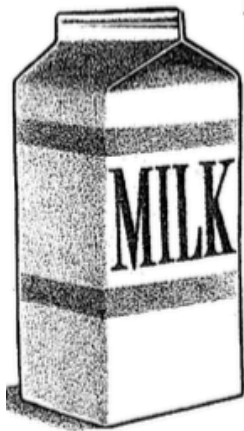


## The State Drink

In 1984, the Legislature designated milk as the official state drink. Why? For starters, there are many more dairy cows than lakes in the state.

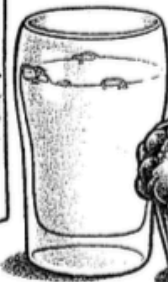
In 2010, Minnesota's 470,000 milk cows produced enough milk to rank Minnesota sixth nationally in milk production behind California, Wisconsin, New York, Idaho and Pennsylvania. The average cow in Minnesota produced about 2,260 gallons in 2010.

In pounds, the top three counties in Minnesota for milk production in 2009 were Stearns with 1.345 billion, Winona with 625 million and Morrison with 493 million. One gallon of milk weighs 8.6 pounds.



In 2010, Minnesota farmers marketed nearly \$1.45 billion in milk.

While state whey



production is increasing, the greatest percentage of milk produced is used to make butter, cheese, ice cream and yogurt. ▼

## The State Muffin

As an exercise to see how a bill becomes law, a class of third-graders from South Terrace Elementary School in Carlton, Minn., proposed that the blueberry muffin be designated as the state muffin.

In 1988, their bill was signed into law. The idea for the blueberry muffin bill arose in a social studies class when the third graders were studying the state's symbols.

They asked themselves a question: If Minnesota were to have a state food, what would it be? The answer they gave was the

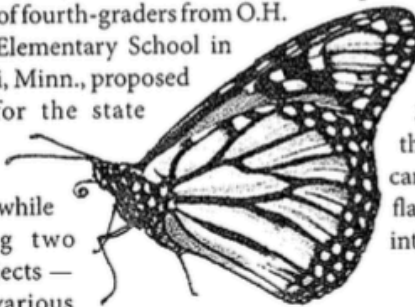
blueberry muffin. They reasoned that wild blueberries are plentiful and popular in northern Minnesota, and farmers from across the state grow wheat. ▼

## The State Butterfly

Minnesota may not be the only place where the Monarch butterfly is easily spotted, but the popular fluttering insect was named the state butterfly by the Legislature in 2000.

A group of fourth-graders from O.H. Anderson Elementary School in Mahtomedi, Minn., proposed the idea for the state butterfly to the Legislature while combining two school projects — studying various butterflies and learning about the lawmaking process.

The Monarch is one of six popular families of butterflies in Minnesota. Distinguished by their distinctive orange-brown wings, marked by black veins and a black border with two rows of spots, Monarchs cannot stand the cold winters here and will migrate south to Mexico every fall. Those that survive the winter travel north to Minnesota and Canada throughout the spring, laying eggs along the way. August is the best month to see Monarchs in Minnesota. ▼



## The State Grain

For centuries, wild rice has been a staple for the Indians of northern Minnesota.

To recognize that, and the fact that Minnesota is a leading producer of natural wild rice in the nation, the state Legislature adopted wild rice as the official state grain in 1977.

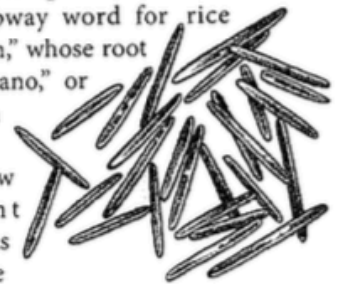
Wild rice, which is really a grain, grows naturally in the many lakes and rivers in the northern half of the state.

Like oats, the grain of wild rice is surrounded by a hull that is removed during processing.

The Ojibway word for rice is "manomin," whose root word is "mano," or spirit — an indication of how important the rice was and is to the Ojibway.

The rice was traditionally harvested by women in late August and early September. Today, the season is regulated by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

Sticks or flails, no longer than 30 inches long, are used to bend the wild rice grass into a boat or canoe. The stalks are then gently flailed to knock the grains loose and into the boat or canoe. ▼



## The State Photograph

A world-renowned photograph became the state's 14th state symbol.

Shot in Bovey, Minn., by Eric Enstrom in 1918, "Grace" features an elderly man sitting pensively with his head bowed and hands folded. He is leaning over a table, and on the table is a pair of spectacles resting atop a thick book, a bowl of gruel, a loaf of bread and a knife.

A copy of the state photograph is displayed in the Office of the Secretary of State in St. Paul.

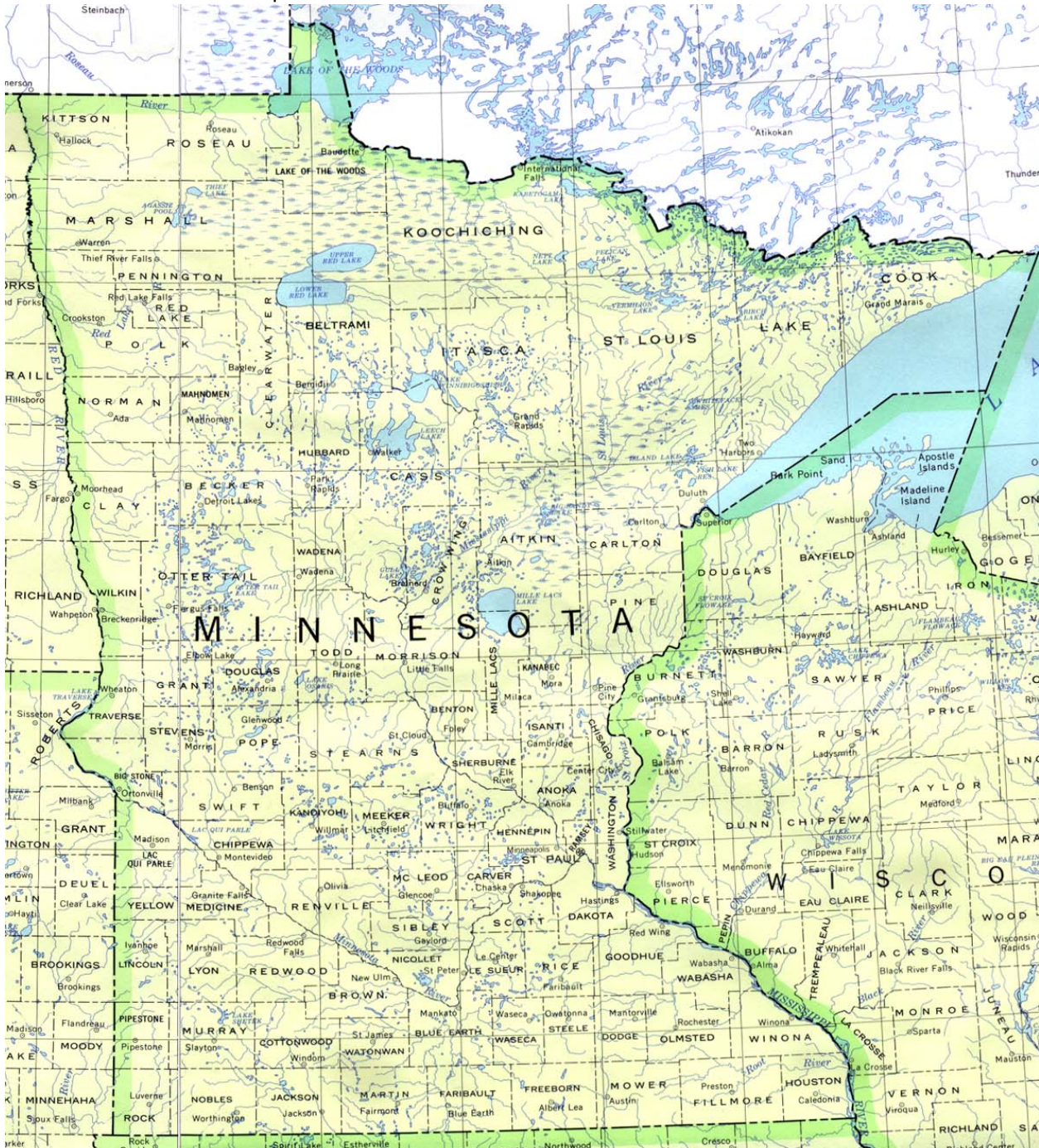
Enstrom shot the photograph in black and white, but as "Grace" became more popular Enstrom's daughter, Rhoda Nyberg, began hand painting the prints in oil. ▼



## Activity B - Minnesota Physical and Political Map

Use the following to complete the map activities in Activity B:

- Maps in your **textbook**
  - Page 500
  - Page 501
- This local map of Minnesota:



- Or, you can use the internet:

[www.Google.com](http://www.Google.com)

<http://mrsnydershistory.weebly.com/lessons--assignments-etc.html>