



WILDLIFE OF WESTERN WASHINGTON



The forests of Western Washington are teeming with fascinating and varied wildlife. Some scuttle around in the leaf litter hunting for insects, while others hunt from the cover of the forest. Here you'll meet the most common mammals, amphibians and reptiles in this part of the state.



OPOSSUM

Didelphis virginianus

Found: Nocturnal, spend the day in dens. Urban and suburban environments.

Food: Omnivore, insects, dead animals, worms, reptiles, berries, fruits and small mammals.

Description: Solitary marsupial. The long tail helps to climb and for balance on the ground. "Playing opossum" means to freeze or pass out as a defense mechanism.



BEAVER

Castor canadensis

Found: Along rivers, streams, lakes, and marshes. Create dams to pool water and dens for nesting.

Food: Herbivore, leaves, inner bark, and twigs of trees. Shrubs, ferns, aquatic plants, and grasses.

Description: Largest rodent in N. America weighing up to 40 lbs. and 3' in length. Semi aquatic w/ webbed hind feet.



WESTERN GRAY SQUIRREL

Sciurus griseus

Found: Low elevation oak and pine trees. Mature stands with canopy for nesting sites.

Food: Herbivore, nuts, acorns, tree buds, berries, leaves and twigs. Will eat fungi, insects and bird eggs occasionally.

Description: largest tree squirrel in WA. Gray upper parts, creamy undercoat and long bushy tail with white edges.



NORTHERN FLYING SQUIRREL

Glaucomys sabrinus

Found: Mixed forests in snags, holes, boxes or nests.

Food: Omnivore, seeds, nuts, fungi, fruit and insects.

Description: Nocturnal. Smallest in WA at 10-12" in length. Brown or dark gray above and creamy below. Large dark eye, wide flat tail. Membrane between legs aids in gliding up to 150 feet.



AMERICAN PIKA

Ochotona princeps

Found: Cascade mountains usually at high elevation. Talus (rock) fields.

Food: Herbivore, store food over summer for winter use. Grasses, forbs, leaves, moss, needles.

Description: Small round bodies and no visible tail. Shades of gray to tannish brown. Large round ears. Related to rabbits and hares.



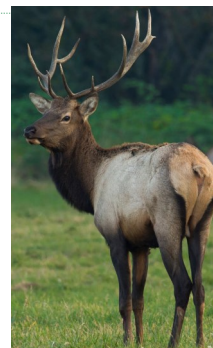
COLUMBIA BLACK TAIL DEER

Odocoileus hemionus columbianus

Found: West of the Cascades in brushy, logged lands and coniferous forests. Edge habitat.

Food: Herbivore, browse on trees, shrubs, ferns, grasses, berries and lichen.

Description: Dark reddish-brown hair and triangular tail with black on top and white underneath.



ROOSEVELT ELK

Cervus elaphus roosevelti

Found: West of the Cascades in temperate rainforests, meadows, timber harvests or other openings.

Food: Herbivore, graze on grasses, flowers, ferns and shrubs.

Description: Light brown in winter to reddish tan in summer. Antlers grow in spring and shed late winter. Adult weights 7-900 lbs. and stand 4.5-5ft tall.



LITTLE BROWN BAT

Myotis lucifugus

Found: Common across the US. In WA most common in conifer and hardwood forests with water nearby.

Food: Carnivore, emerging aquatic and other insects. Forage over water, forest edges and lawns.

Description: Small yellow to olive color, ears dark brown. Echolocation, round wing tips and low wing loading make it maneuverable in flight.



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COYOTE
Canis latrans



Found: Occupy most habitat types from dense forest and urban areas.

Food: Omnivore, prefers small mammals, but will eat berries.

Description: color shades of black, brown, gray, yellow, rust and tan. Shorter bushier tails that drag on ground. Average weight 20-35 lbs. and 25" tall. Various vocalizations.



BLACK BEAR
Ursus americanus



Found: diverse forested habitats. Suburban areas where greenbelts facilitate movement.

Food: Omnivore, variety of plants, berries, nuts, scavenge mammals, fish and birds.

Description: Black or brown with a light brown snout. Weigh 100-300 lbs. and 3" shoulder height. Important seed dispersers.



BOBCAT
Lynx rufus



Found: Rock cliffs, outcroppings and ledges are important for shelter and raising young. Brush or trees for cover.

Food: Carnivore, small mammals and rodents.

Description: brown/buff with dark brown stripes and spits on some parts. Darker in Western. Small feet not adapted for snow. WA. Weigh 20-30 lbs.



COUGAR
Puma concolor



Found: Canyons, rocks, dense brush and forests to provide cover.

Food: Carnivore, deer, elk, and mountain goats. Kills an elk every 9-12 days. Buries food for later.

Description: Reddish brown to gray with black tip on tail. Largest of cats in WA. Weigh 140-180 lbs. and 30" at shoulder height. Kittens are spotted up



PACIFIC TREE FROG
Pseudacris regilla



Found: adaptable, sea level rainforest to high elevation and dry interior areas of WA.

Food: Insects, toes adapted to climb trees. Catch prey with long tongue.

Description: most common in WA, 2 inches in length and bronze brown to light lime green. Black mask extends from the snout to shoulder. Call mainly at night.



ROUGH SKINNED NEWT
Taricha granulosa



Found: West of cascade crest active at low elevation year round, migrate to water starting in Jan.

Food: Small terrestrial or aquatic invertebrates.

Description: Poisonous. Stocky, brown with rounded snout, rough skin and bright orange belly.



COMMON GARTER-SNAKE
Thamnophis sirtalis



Found: coastal and mountain forests to sagebrush deserts, close to water.

Food: Earthworms, amphibians, slugs, snails, insects and small fish. Immune to toad toxins.

Description: Non venomous with brightly colored stripes (yellow, green, blue) that run lengthwise along the body. 2-3 ft in length.



GOPHER SNAKE
Pituophis catenif



Found: warm dry habitat, deserts, grasslands and open woodlands.

Food: Constricts prey, mostly small rodents. Locate prey with smell.

Description: Non venomous. Often mistaken for a rattlesnake for it's behavior.