



HABITAT *home for animals*

Riparian *home along the river bank*

Wetland *home covered with water*

Shrub Land *home covered with brush*

Lava Field *home covered with lava from volcanoes*

Pasture *home growing food for farm animals*

Cropland *home growing corn, wheat or other crops*

Trumpeter Swan

(*Cygnus buccinator*)



The trumpeter swan is the largest waterfowl species native to North America. Named for a loud trumpeting koo-hoo call, which can be heard for a mile or more. With a wingspan over 7 feet, these snow-white birds are truly spectacular. Standing on the ground, an adult trumpeter stands about 4 feet high.

Trumpeters have broad, flat bills with fine tooth-like edges that strain water when the birds eat aquatic vegetation. Trumpeter swans mate for life and may live for 20 to 30 years.

Photography courtesy Tim Sommers

Canada Geese

(*Branta canadensis*)

The Canada goose is the most well-known and widespread goose in North America. These waterfowl are not picky about their water environment; they can be found in all kinds of water all across North America, including public parks, golf courses and agricultural fields.

Canada geese male and female birds have the same markings on their feathers, so it is difficult to tell them apart.



Sandhill Crane

(*Grus canadensis*)



Sandhill cranes are common in fields of eastern Idaho and occasionally in marshes. However, due to a decrease in habitat, sandhill crane populations are decreasing. Their wings alternately flap and glide when they fly. Adults have a bare red crown and gray feathers. Its voice sounds like a low, loud musical rattle. Their distinctive rattling call announces their arrival long before they are seen. Often seen in large flocks except during breeding season. During breeding season they are known for their elaborate courtship dances. Rodents, frogs and insects are its food.

Mallard

(*Anas platyrhynchos*)

This wide-ranging bird is abundant in Idaho, choosing to live near ponds, rivers, marshes and lakes. The mallard is the ancestor of nearly all domestic duck breeds. The male birds have a green head, yellow bill, white neck band and rusty breast while the females are speckled brown with a white tail. The female mallard's speckled brown feathers help her stay camouflaged from predators when she is rearing her young.

Mallard ducks have a varied diet. They eat insects, worms, frogs, snails, slugs, small shellfish, grasses, and other plants that grow near the shore.



Photography courtesy Tim Sommers



Yellow Warbler

(*Dendroica petechia*)

The yellow warbler breeds in Idaho and winters south in Mexico and Peru. No other warbler is so significantly yellow. Both male and females are yellow but males have rusty breast streaks and females either have no streaks or the streaks are faint.

The brown-headed cowbird often lays its eggs in the warbler's nest while the warbler is not present. The warbler often builds a new nest directly on top of cowbird's eggs, sometimes resulting in a stack of nests up to six high.

The most common song of the yellow warbler is a rapid and cheery musical "sweet-sweet-sweet-I'm-so-sweet."

Black-capped Chickadee

(Poecile atricapilla)

A most familiar bird in Idaho, the black-capped chickadee has white cheeks, a black cap and throat, and a gray back. Chickadees winter in Idaho and will hide seeds and other food items for later recovery. Each item is placed in a different spot and a bird can remember thousands of hiding spots.

The common song of the chickadee is easy to remember because it says its name “chick-a-dee-dee-dee.”





Black-throated Sparrow

(Amphispiza bilineata)

This handsome sparrow of the arid Southwest has striking markings on its body, although it blends in very well with its environment. During the dry months of the year, these sparrows feed on vegetation and insects. The birds will visit springs or other water sources, but do not have to for survival because they derive all the moisture they need from the food they eat. They raise their young in the dry upland desert, but is a rare breeder near Menan Butte. Their call is a high bell-like song with two introductory notes followed by queat-queat, toodle-oodle-oodle.

Turkey Vulture

(*Cathartes aura*)

The turkey vulture has a 6-foot wingspan. Feathers are dark brown but the feathers on the neck and upper back are iridescent. From below, the silvery flight feathers contrast noticeably with the darker body and forewing plumage – a distinctive two-toned underwing. It has relatively long and broad wings and a long, rounded tail. In flight, it holds its wings in a strong “V” position. Its head and part of neck are bare, with blackish bristles, generally reddish-colored. Head appears very small and “neckless” relative to body. The skin on head and part of neck is loose allowing the neck to extend during feeding. The bill is ivory-colored, relatively short, and hooked, with large nostrils. One of the few birds with a sense of smell. The feet and legs are pink. Turkey vultures breed in Idaho but migrate south in the winter.



Illustration courtesy Alberta Sustainable Resource Development

Ring-Necked Pheasant

(Phasianus colchicus)



The ring-necked pheasant was introduced into North America from Asia and is established over much of the continent, especially in agricultural lands.

These birds scratch on the ground and dig with their bills for seeds, grasses, leaves, roots, wild fruits, nuts and insects. Males crow with a loud, harsh “koork-kok” which is accompanied by an audible wing whir.

Nests are on the ground, in tall grass or weeds and young are born able to leave the nest and feed themselves right away.

Hungarian Partridge

(Perdix perdix)

Hungarian partridge, also known as gray partridge or hun, are gray-brown in color with reddish-brown markings on the face, side, and tail feathers. These animals are wary, compact, heavily feathered, quail-like birds. They are also an introduced game species from Asia and Europe.

Hungarian partridge seem to survive and even increase in numbers in intensively farmed regions unsuitable for other upland gamebirds. They thrive in areas with abundant small grains, especially wheat and other grain fields.



Skunk

(*Mephitis mephitis*)

Skunks are mammals, usually with black-and-white fur. They are best known for their ability to excrete a strong, foul-smelling odor. Before spraying, skunks act out a series of warnings. These include arching the

back, stamping the front feet, clicking the teeth, shuffling backwards, raising the tail and snarling softly. If all of these warnings are ignored, a jet of pungent, sulphur-containing alcohol, which can cause

temporary pain and blindness, is fired a distance of at least 10 feet.

Skunks are omnivorous, which means they eat both plant and animal material. They eat insects, rodents, lizards, salamanders, frogs, snakes, birds, moles and eggs, along with berries, roots, leaves, grasses, fungi, nuts and just about everything else! Skunks are attracted to dog and cat food, and garbage left outside.



Porcupine

(*Erethizon dorsatum*)

The porcupine has black to brownish-yellow fur and strong, short legs. The porcupine has hairless soles on its feet that help it climb trees, a round body, small ears and small head. Its most recognizable feature is the quills, which it uses for defense. As many as 30,000 quills may exist on all parts of their bodies, except for their stomachs.

When a predator approaches, the porcupine will turn its back, raise its quills and lash out at the threat with its tail. If the porcupine hits an animal with its quills, the quills become embedded in the animal. Body heat makes the barbs expand and they become even more deeply embedded in the animal's skin. However, the porcupine will only attack if it is threatened.



Photography courtesy Tim Sommers

Jack Rabbit

(Lepus californicus)



Although it is called a rabbit, the black-tailed jackrabbit is really a hare. Hares are different from rabbits because their babies, called leverets, are born with all their fur, and their eyes open.

When escaping from a predator, this big, open-county hare can reach speeds up to 35 miles an hour, covering as much as 20 feet in a single leap.

By placing each of her young in a separate nest, a mother jackrabbit decreases the chances that she will lose them all to predators.

Chipmunk

(*Tamias minimus*)

Chipmunks range over most of western North America occupying a wide geographic and altitudinal range.

Living quarters of the chipmunk are generally found underground. Here, a chamber contains a nest and a store of seeds for the winter, where the chipmunk also hibernates.

Favorite foods of the chipmunk include wild berries, seeds from coniferous trees and insects.



Western Rattlesnake

(*Crotalus viridis*)



This snake is brown or slightly greenish-brown, and has large rounded blotches along the back and black and white crossbars on the tail. Rattles are noticeable on the tail and the snake will cause its tail to rattle when threatened.

This snake lives in warm, dry habitats of desert-scrub, grassland, and open pine forest. They are most common in rocky habitats, including stream canyons. Western rattlesnakes often hibernate in large numbers in rock crevices on south-facing slopes. They also hide in the shade of crevices during sunny hot days.

Short-horned Lizard (*Phrynosoma douglassii*)

The common name is the “hornytoad” or “horned lizard.” They have flattened bodies with numerous small horn-like scales on their back and a single row of spine like scales along their side. The color is gray to darker gray tan, or reddish brown with few markings.

The Short-horned lizard is more cold tolerant than other horned lizard species but burrow in soil or occupy rodent holes during the fall and winter. They eat ants, insects, spiders, snails, and soil bugs.



Coyote

(*Canis latrans*)



The coyote is a fast-running carnivore (meat-eater) and is closely related to the wolf. Coyotes probably mate for life and they have 3 to 12 pups each spring. Both parents care for the pups, regurgitating food to help feed them. Coyotes live in small family groups and guard their home territory fiercely, although they are usually afraid of humans. Coyotes make high-pitched howls, yips, yelps and barks. These calls may be a long rising and falling note (a howl) or a series of short notes (yips).

Photography courtesy Tim Sommers

White-tailed Deer

(Odocoileus virginianus)

White-tailed deer can be found in southern Canada and most of the United States, except for the Southwest, Alaska and Hawaii. When a white-tailed deer is alarmed, it may stomp its hooves and snort to warn other deer. It may also “flag” or raise its tail and show its white underside. When a mother deer is running, this white underside can help her fawns follow her. These deer are excellent runners and can reach speeds of up to 30 miles an hour.



Photography courtesy Tim Sommers

Mule Deer

(Odocoileus hemionus)



Mule deer have been named for their large, mobile ears designed to alert them of predators nearby. When startled, a mule deer will move in a series of stiff-legged jumps with all 4 feet hitting the ground together. This gait offers two advantages: it allows the deer to out-distance predators in rough terrain and to see above the thick brush. If necessary, they can turn or completely reverse direction in the course of a single bound.

Elk

(Cervus elaphus)

The elk is the second largest species of deer in the world and one of the largest mammals in North America and eastern Asia, only the moose is larger.

Elk range in forest and forest-edge habitat and must eat and watch for predators at the same time. They fulfill these double needs by gathering in herds. In a group, at least one animal is looking up while others are eating. Even the animals that are feeding are constantly twitching and turning their ears to listen for unusual or warning sounds.

