

Wildlife Habitat Education Program: Wildlife Identification Guide

Authors:

Robert Cordes, Asst. Regional Biologist, Maine Dept. of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

Robert Chapman, Purdue Extension Wildlife Specialist

Rod Williams, Purdue Associate Professor of Wildlife Science

The National 4-H Wildlife Habitat Education Program (WHEP) was created to introduce students to wildlife and fisheries management principles and

techniques by developing knowledge of ecoregions, wildlife species natural history, and wildlife management practices. In 2014, the Wildlife Challenge activity was added to the National WHEP Invitational Career Development Event. The activity tests students' identification skills and general knowledge of wildlife species. It follows a lab practical format, where a student moves between stations to answer multiple-choice questions or identify species through pictures, study skins, skulls, or calls.

The ability to identify wildlife species is an important skill for students participating in WHEP. The species in this guide provide key identification characteristics of all species listed in the national WHEP manual (http://www.whep.org/National_WHEP_Manual.html).

The WHEP manual was developed to be the primary training tool for the National WHEP invitational. The manual covers several key components:

- WHEP invitational activities and scoring,
- descriptions of 16 ecoregions,

- natural history of over 100 wildlife species,
- wildlife management practices, and
- accompanying appendices for definitions of key technical terms and food resources.

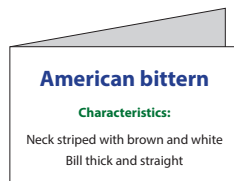
The WHEP manual provides all the information a student needs to know about habitat requirements, appropriate management practices, and general information for each listed wildlife species. It does not provide key identification characteristics of wildlife species. This companion document for the WHEP manual helps youths develop wildlife identification skills.



Using the Flashcards

This document allows students to print, cut out, and fold each page to create flash cards to use as study aids. Each flash card includes an image(s) depicting the specimen on one side and key characteristics for identification on the other. Most images on the flash cards show preserved specimens—which are what students are likely to see at the contest. By showing students images of specimens they may see on contest day, the flash cards emphasize key characteristics students will use to identifying a particular wildlife species.

During the Wildlife Challenge, a student may be required to identify a species by only a portion of a specimen (e.g., wing, skull, or tail feathers) or by gender, a photograph, or a call. **It is important to note that colors in lab specimens can fade, especially bird bills and feet as well as skins or scales of fish, amphibians, and reptiles.**



The flash cards are separated into Birds, Mammals, Mammal Skulls, Reptiles, Amphibians, and Fish. When males and females within a species show significantly different characteristics, a separate flash card for each gender is included. Some species represented in the manual have similar characteristics and often can only be distinguished by the geographic locations where the specimens are found. WHEP Ecoregions are included in the text to aid identification and allow students to quickly sort flash cards for contest preparation.

Commonly used mnemonics for the songs and calls of the bird species are included on the cards. There are several online resources with audio that students can use identify wildlife by call. For example, bird calls can be found on Cornell Universities' Lab of Ornithology website: <http://www.allaboutbirds.org/>.

Study Suggestions

Students have different study methods, and they learn and retain information in different ways. This guide provides students with key characteristics for identifying species, but each student must decide which characteristics are most important for identification. Students may wish to highlight the key characteristic(s) most meaningful to them on each flash card. Similarly, students can arrange these cards by ecoregion or taxonomic group.

Acknowledgements

The authors sincerely thank Dr. Donald P. Reed, Louisiana State University, and Dr. Amanda F. Shearin, Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, for reviewing earlier drafts of this publication. Their thoughtful comments and suggestions greatly improved the final product. We are grateful for the generosity of Alan Resetar, Kevin Swagel, Rebecca Banasiak, Mary Hennan, and Dave Williard, curators at The Field Museum in Chicago for the use of their facility and specimens. Finally, we recognize Megan Kuechle, Extension Assistant, Purdue University, for her photographs of the 142 specimens in this publication. Unless otherwise noted, all photographs are credited to Megan Kuechle.



Photo by Robert Chapman

Other Resources and Literature Cited for This Document

Burt, W. H. and R. P. Grossenheider. 1980. *A Field Guide to the Mammals of North America North of Mexico*. Peterson Field Guide Series number 5. Houghton Mifflin Company. New York, NY, 289 pages.

Chapman, R. N. and R. N. Williams. 2010. *Common Indiana Mammals*. Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service. West Lafayette, IN, FNR-413.

Eddy, S. and J.C. Underhill. 1969. *How to Know the Freshwater Fishes*. Wm. C. Brown Company Publishers. 215 pp.

Elbroch, M. 2006. *Animal Skulls: A Guide to North American Species*. Stackpole Books. 726 pp.

Feldhamer, G.A., B.C. Thompson, and J.A. Chapman. 2003. *Wild Mammals of North America: Biology, Management, and Conservation*. The Johns Hopkins University Press. 1,216 pp.

Jones, J.K. and R. W. Manning. 1992. *Illustrated Key to Skulls of Genera of North American Land Mammals*. Texas Tech University Press. 75 pp.

Johnson, T. R. 2000. *The Amphibians and Reptiles of Missouri*. Missouri Department of Conservation. Jefferson City, MO, 400 pages.

MacGowan, B. J., B. A. Kingsbury, and R. N. Williams. 2005. *Turtles of Indiana*. Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service. West Lafayette, IN, FNR-243.

MacGowan, B. J., R. N. Williams, and Z. Walker. 2009. *Snakes of the Central and Northeastern United States*. Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service. West Lafayette, IN, FNR-405.

Myers, P., R. Espinosa, C. S. Parr, T. Jones, G. S. Hammond, and T. A. Dewey. 2006. *The Animal Diversity Web* (online). <http://animaldiversity.org>.

Sibley, D. A. 2000. *The Sibley Guide to Birds*. Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. New York, NY, 545 pp.

Whitaker, J.O. and W.J. Hamilton. 1998. *Mammals of the Eastern United States*. Comstock Publishing Associates. 583 pp.

Williams, R. N, B. J. MacGowan, B. Kingsbury, and Z. Walker. 2006. *Salamanders of Indiana*. Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service. West Lafayette, IN, FNR-261.



American bittern

WHEP Ecoregions: Wetland

1. Short, thick neck with bold, vertical, reddish-brown streaks
2. Short green-yellow legs
3. Black stripe from the bill and down the neck
4. Vocalization: repeated *gunk kerlunk*



American black duck

WHEP Ecoregions: Northeast Mixed Forest

1. Dark brown duck
2. Wing patch (speculum) is black and blue, no white bars
3. Olive-green bill
4. Streaked, gray/light brown throat
5. Vocalization: similar to mallard, females a low *gwaak* or rapid *gegege*; males a slow *rhaeb* and whistled *tseep*



American kestrel, male

WHEP Ecoregions: Great Plains Grasslands–Shortgrass Prairie, Hot Desert, Intermountain–Foothills Zone, Intermountain–Sagebrush Zone, Mediterranean

1. Long-tailed falcon with pointed wings
2. Bold, black face mask
3. Reddish-brown back
4. Blue-gray wings
5. Reddish-brown tail with single, dark band at tip
6. Vocalization: high-pitched and repeating *kleekleekleeklee*



American kestrel, female

WHEP Ecoregions: Great Plains Grasslands–Shortgrass Prairie, Hot Desert, Intermountain–Foothills Zone, Intermountain–Sagebrush Zone, Mediterranean

1. Long-tailed falcon with pointed wings
2. Bold, black face mask with white in between black
3. Tan to light brown back with barring
4. Dark-barred wings
5. Reddish-brown tail with dark barring
6. Vocalization: high-pitched and repeating *kleekleekleeklee*





American robin

WHEP Ecoregions: Urban

1. Plain, orange breast
2. Dark back and wings
3. White eye-ring
4. Vocalization: short, whistled phrases
cheerily, cheer up, cheer up, cheerily, cheer up



American wigeon

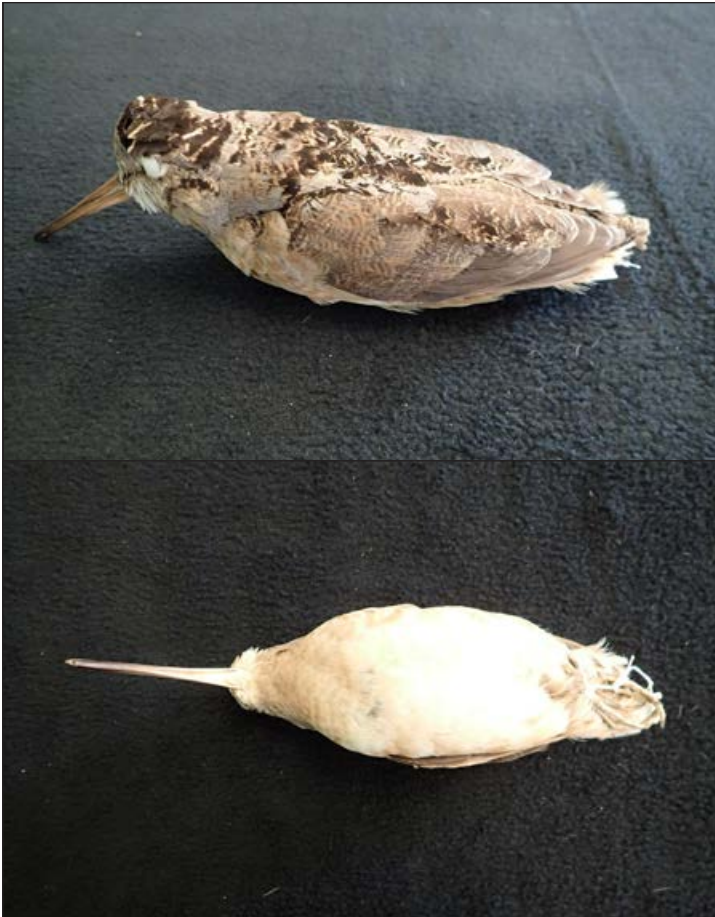
WHEP Ecoregions: Woodland

1. Bold, green eyebrow
2. Males have a white or buffy head; females have a grayish brown head
3. Large, white wing band on upper wing
4. Blueish bill with black tip
5. Vocalization: males—a squeaky whistle that sounds like a squeaky toy; females—a low *graahr*

American woodcock

WHEP Ecoregions: Eastern Deciduous Forest, Northeast Mixed Forest

1. Long, slender bill
2. Uniform orange-brown coloration on breast, sides, and extending under the wings
3. Back is dark with two light bars down each side
4. Large, dark, banded head with a gray forehead
5. Vocalization: short *peent*, followed by whistling created by wings during flight



barred owl

WHEP Ecoregions: Southeastern Mixed and Outer Coastal Plain Forest

1. Brown-barred breast
2. Orange-yellow bill
3. Dark-brown eyes
4. No ear tufts
5. Vocalization: *who, who, who cooks for you all*





black-backed woodpecker

WHEP Ecoregions: Northeast Mixed Forest

1. Dark-backed woodpecker
2. Large head, short tail
3. Gray and white streaked breast
4. Male has a yellow spot on the forehead; female's head is all black
5. Vocalization: sharp *chek* and a harsh rattle

BIRDS



black-bellied whistling duck

WHEP Ecoregions: Prairie Brushland

1. Long neck, pinkish legs, and a bright red bill
2. Back and chest reddish-brown, belly black
3. Head brownish-gray with a white eye-ring and a dark brown stripe
4. Wings have a bold, white stripe and black-tipped flight feathers
5. Vocalization: high-pitched series of whistles

BIRDS

black-capped chickadee

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain-Subalpine Zone

1. Prominent, black head and throat
2. Bold white cheek
3. Buff to orange-brown patch on sides
4. Vocalization: *fee-bee, cheeseburger, or chickadeedeede*



black-throated sparrow

WHEP Ecoregions: Hot Desert

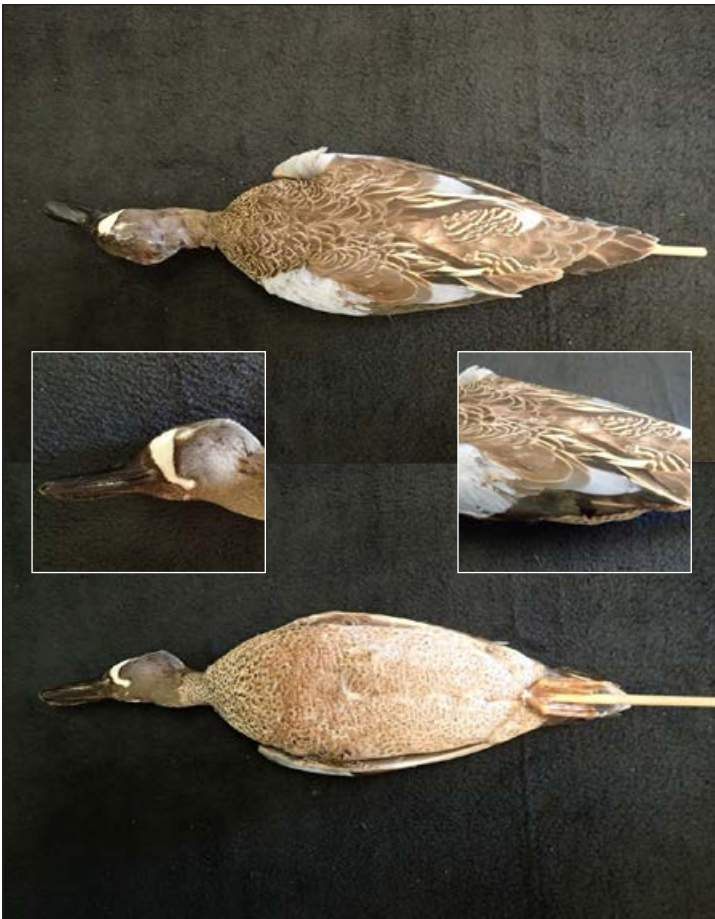
1. Black throat patch
2. Small songbird with gray body
3. Head is black with 2 bold, white stripes
4. Vocalization: two short notes followed by a short trill or buzz



blue-winged teal, male

WHEP Ecoregions: Great Plains Grasslands–Shortgrass Prairie, Great Plains Grasslands–Tallgrass/Mixed Prairie, Hot Desert

1. Head with a large, white crescent in front of face
2. Wings with powdery blue upper wing feathers and iridescent green wing patch (speculum)
3. Small, white patch on the hip before a dark rear
4. Vocalization: high whistled *wheet, wheet*



blue-winged teal, female

WHEP Ecoregions: Great Plains Grasslands–Shortgrass Prairie, Great Plains Grasslands–Tallgrass/Mixed Prairie, Hot Desert

1. Wing with powdery blue, upper wing feathers with dark wing patch (speculum)
2. Grayish-brown all over with a dark eye line and white eye-ring
3. Pale spot at the base of the bill and a pale chin
4. Vocalizations: loud, evenly spaced quacks



Brewer's sparrow

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain-Sagebrush Zone

1. Gray-brown body
2. Narrow, but complete, white eye-ring
3. Streaked back of the neck
4. Vocalization: long series of dry buzzes, trills, and whistled notes



broad-winged hawk

WHEP Ecoregions: Eastern Deciduous Forest, Northeast Mixed Forest, Southeastern Mixed and Outer Coastal Plain Forest

1. Short tail with black tip and a single, thick, white band that is visible
2. Orange-brown, streaked breast
3. Dark wings above, white below with dark black border
4. Vocalization: high pitched *kee-eee*



brown thrasher

WHEP Ecoregions: Eastern Deciduous Forest, Northeast Mixed Forest

1. Reddish-brown back and tail
2. Belly is white with dark-brown, spotted streaks
3. Wings have 2 white wing bars
4. Vocalization: variable phrases in pairs, sound like the bird is saying *plant a seed, plant a seed, bury it, bury it, cover it up, cover it up, let it grow, let it grow, pull it up, pull it up, eat it, eat it*



California quail

WHEP Ecoregions: Mediterranean

1. Gray-brown gamebird
2. Scale-patterned breast and back of the neck
3. Black neck and gray chest
4. Males have a brown head with long, curved forehead plume, a bold white eye-brow, and neck stripe
5. Females have a pale, brown-gray forehead with a short, straight forehead plume
6. Vocalization: *Chi-ca-go*



California thrasher

WHEP Ecoregions: Mediterranean

1. Brown-gray back and tail
2. Belly and breast are orange-brown
3. Thick curved bill
4. Dark eye line and cheek
5. Vocalization: mix of varied whistles and sounds



Canada goose

WHEP Ecoregions: Wetland

1. Black head and neck with a white chin strap
2. Body is gray with a white rump patch and black tail feathers
3. Vocalization: low-pitched *ahonk*



common nighthawk

WHEP Ecoregions: Urban

1. Slate-gray body with long, pointed wings
2. White bar under the wing
3. Small beak with whisker-like feathers at base
4. Vocalization: nasally *peent*; also a booming sound produced by the wings that resembles air moving over a bottle or can



crested caracara

WHEP Ecoregions: Prairie Brushland

1. Head white with a black crown
2. Large, thick bill with blue tip and prominent hook
3. Skin between bill and eyes (lores) orange to yellow
4. Neck and breast white and flecked with black
5. Back, belly, and wings are black
6. Tail white with black-tipped band
7. Vocalization: rapid *chchchch*





crissal thrasher

WHEP Ecoregions: Hot Desert

1. Slate-gray songbird with a long tail
2. The bill is long, thin, and curved downward
3. Reddish-brown feathers under the tail
4. Vocalization: series of warbled phrases

BIRDS



dickcissel, male

**WHEP Ecoregions: Great Plains
Grasslands–Tallgrass/Mixed Prairie**

1. Pale brown back with dark streaking
2. Yellow breast and belly
3. Black bib under a white throat patch
4. Wings with reddish-brown shoulder patches
5. Head streaked with grey, white, and yellow stripes
6. Vocalization: *dick, dick, dick, ciss, ciss, cissal*

BIRDS



dickcissel, female

WHEP Ecoregions: Great Plains Grasslands–Tallgrass/Mixed Prairie

1. Pale brown back with dark streaking
2. Light yellowish-gray breast and belly
3. No throat patch
4. Brown head with yellow eyebrow



dusky grouse

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain–Foothills Zone, Intermountain–Montane Zone, Intermountain–Subalpine Zone

1. Body grayish with white or light-colored flanks
2. Yellow eyebrow that turns orange to red during courtship
3. Red air sac bordered by white feathers along the bottom
4. Dark tail with gray band at tip
5. Females are mottled grayish and lack the colored eyebrows and air sacs
6. Vocalization: very deep, soft hooting

Note: The eyebrows and air sacs of male lab specimens may not be visible



eastern bluebird

WHEP Ecoregions: Urban

1. Reddish-brown throat and sides with a white belly
2. Males have a bold blue back, head, and tail
3. Females have a light blue-gray back, head, and tail
4. Vocalization: low-pitched warbling *ch'ch'ch churrr chup*; loud, low pitched *tu-a-wee*



eastern meadowlark

WHEP Ecoregions: Eastern Deciduous Forest

1. Yellow throat and belly
2. Distinct Black V on the breast
3. Dark line through the eye and white eye brow
4. Yellow dash in front of the eye
5. Vocalization: *seeooh, see-eeeyer*

European starling

WHEP Ecoregions: Urban

1. Greenish black body with a spotted belly
2. Purple, iridescent neck
3. Yellow bill
4. Vocalization: resembles other birds; warbles, whistles, chatter, liquid sounds, trills, and rattles



ferruginous hawk

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain-Sagebrush Zone

1. Large, feathered legs
2. Snow-white breast, reddish-brown back
3. Pale head with gray cheeks
4. Pale reddish tail
5. Vocalization: scratchy *kree-aa*





Gambel's quail

WHEP Ecoregions: Hot Desert

1. Back, neck, and chest gray
2. Light yellow/creamy brown belly
3. Crown reddish-brown with a large, black head plume, black chin, and forehead bordered with white
4. White forehead stripe
5. Black belly patch
6. Females have a gray head with a small head-plume
7. Vocalization: muted *ga way gaga ga way gaga*



golden eagle

WHEP Ecoregions: Hot Desert

1. Largest raptor in North America
2. Nape of neck a golden color
3. Large, gray bill with a black tip
4. Large, heavy feet and feathered legs
5. Vocalization: low-pitched *kwow kwow*

golden-cheeked warbler, male

WHEP Ecoregions: Woodland

1. Distinct, dark eye-line
2. Sides of head golden yellow
3. Black forehead, crown, nape, and back
4. Vocalization: buzzy *ter-wih-zeee-e-e-e chy*



golden-cheeked warbler, female

WHEP Ecoregions: Woodland

1. Distinct, dark eye-line
2. Gray crown and pale yellow sides of the face
3. Olive-green back with black streaks





golden-fronted woodpecker

WHEP Ecoregions: Prairie Brushland

1. White rump patch
2. Yellow-orange back of the neck and base of the bill
3. Males have a red crown; females have a gray-tan crown
4. Vocalization: rolling *churr* and a repeated *kek kek kek*



golden-winged warbler, male

WHEP Ecoregions: Eastern Deciduous Forest

1. Gray body
2. Bright yellow forehead
3. Large, yellow patch on each wing
4. Black eye and throat patches
5. Vocalization: *bzee zay zay zay*



golden-winged warbler, female

WHEP Ecoregions: Eastern Deciduous Forest

1. Gray body
2. Body lighter gray with gray eye and cheek patches
3. Yellow on wings, rather than a patch
4. Dull yellow-green forehead



grasshopper sparrow

WHEP Ecoregions: Great Plains Grasslands–Tallgrass/Mixed Prairie

1. Dark crown stripes with a whitish central stripe
2. Yellow wrist feathers on leading edge of wing
3. Complete grayish white eye-ring
4. Breast pale buff to buffy brown and unstreaked, white belly
5. Vocalization: *pit-up-zeeeeeee*

great horned owl

WHEP Ecoregions: Eastern Deciduous Forest, Pacific Coastal Forest

1. Two feather tufts on each side of the head that resemble horns
2. Mottled grayish-brown with reddish-brown to gray facial disk outlined in black
3. White throat patch
4. Vocalization: *hoo h'hoo hoo hoo*



greater prairie-chicken

WHEP Ecoregions: Great Plains Grasslands–Tallgrass/Mixed Prairie

1. Short, rounded tail
2. Long feathers on the back of the neck
3. Dark brown barring on body
4. Males have yellowish-orange air sacs and eye combs
5. Females lack air sacs and eye combs, and have a barred tail
6. Vocalization: low-pitched, booming *whhoo-doo-doooooh*; may also sound like it is laughing



greater roadrunner

WHEP Ecoregions: Woodland

1. Long tail
2. Streaked, brown body and neck
3. Stripe of bare skin behind the eye
4. Vocalization: males a series 3 to 8 coos, females a bark-like sound



greater sage-grouse

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain-Sagebrush Zone

1. Dark brown-gray body, with a black belly and white breast
2. Large, wobbly air sacs that fill when displaying
3. Sharp-pointed tail feathers
4. Prominent, thin plumes on back of head
5. Females lack the above characteristics and are drab, brown-gray, speckled throughout
6. Vocalization: series of wisps and low booms and pops





hairy woodpecker

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain–Montane Zone, Intermountain–Subalpine Zone, Pacific Coastal Forest

1. Bill more than half the length of the head
2. Back black with a white, central stripe
3. Black wings with variable spots and streaks of white
4. Black crown and a wide, black eye-stripe
5. Males have a red patch on the back of the head, females lack the red patch
6. Vocalization: harsh *wiki wiki wiki*

BIRDS



house finch

WHEP Ecoregions: Urban

1. Gray-brown streaks on belly and sides
2. Males have an orangish-red head and neck
3. Females have a plain, brown head and muted gray-brown streaks on the breast
4. Vocalization: jumbled warbling of short notes that end in an upward or downward slur

BIRDS

house sparrow, male

WHEP Ecoregions: Urban

1. Silvery cheek patch
2. Black bill, breast, and throat patch
3. Gray crown
4. Reddish-brown eye-stripe and back of the neck
5. Vocalization: single or series of simple *cheep* or *chirrup* notes



house sparrow, female

WHEP Ecoregions: Urban

1. Silvery cheek patch
2. Pale eye-stripe
3. Gray brown breast, throat, and bill





house wren

WHEP Ecoregions: Urban

1. Reddish-brown body
2. Barred tail and wings
3. Plain gray-brown elsewhere
4. Vocalization: series of long, jumbled bubbling sounds



ladder-backed woodpecker

WHEP Ecoregions: Hot Desert, Woodland

1. Back, shoulder, and wings with alternating, horizontal, black and white stripes
2. Black eye-stripe that curves around the cheek and connects with the bill
3. Males have a red crown that extends past the eye, females have a black crown
4. Vocalization: short *peek* calls and a descending whinny, *chichichichurr*



lark bunting, male

WHEP Ecoregions: Great Plains Grasslands–Shortgrass Prairie

1. Large, round bill
2. All black with a white wing patch
3. Vocalization: variable series of metallic sounding *witeo witeo witeo toowee toowee t't't't't't't*



lark bunting, female

WHEP Ecoregions: Great Plains Grasslands – Shortgrass Prairie

1. Large, round bill
2. Upperparts brown with dark streaks
3. Underparts whitish with brown streaks
4. White to creamy patch along edge of folded wing

Lawrence's goldfinch, male

WHEP Ecoregions: Mediterranean

1. Gray body with a long tail, yellow breast, and yellow rump
2. Black face and forehead
3. Pale gray cheek
4. Yellow wing bars
5. Vocalization: series of trills, burry notes, and chatter



Lawrence's goldfinch, female

WHEP Ecoregions: Great Plains Grasslands – Shortgrass Prairie

1. Gray body with a yellow breast
2. Long tail and yellow rump
3. Gray head and neck





loggerhead shrike

WHEP Ecoregions: Southeastern Mixed and Outer Coastal Plain Forest

1. Gray body and a long black tail with white tips
2. Gray head with a black mask
3. Pale breast
4. Black wings with white patch near wing-tips
5. Vocalization: rhythmic series of short trills, rasps, and buzzes

BIRDS



long-billed thrasher

WHEP Ecoregions: Prairie Brushland

1. Very long tail and long, sturdy bill
2. Brown upper body with two white wing bars
3. Dark gray cheeks, and a white throat
4. Breast and belly white with heavy black streaks
5. Vocalization: variable, warbling notes repeated 2 to 4 times and no pause between notes

BIRDS

mallard, male

WHEP Ecoregions: Great Plains Grasslands–Shortgrass Prairie, Intermountain–Foothills Zone, Intermountain–Sagebrush Zone, Mediterranean, Wetland

1. Brown duck with orange feet
2. Wing with a blue wing patch (speculum) bordered by white in front and behind
3. Green iridescent head
4. Bright yellow bill
5. Reddish-brown breast, silvery sides, black rear
6. Curlicue tail feathers
7. Vocalization: slow *rhaeb* and whistled *tseep*



mallard, female

WHEP Ecoregions: Great Plains Grasslands – Shortgrass Prairie, Intermountain – Foothills Zone, Intermountain – Sagebrush Zone, Mediterranean, Wetland

1. Brown duck with orange feet
2. Wing with a blue wing patch (speculum) bordered by white in front and behind
3. Orange bill with a mottled black in the center
4. Head is pale brown with a dark eye-stripe and dark crown
5. Body and wings are a medium brown, mottled with buffy margins
6. Vocalization: females a low *gwaak* or rapid *gegege*, males a slow *rhaeb* and whistled *tseep*





marbled murrelet

WHEP Ecoregions: Pacific Coastal Forest

1. Dark back and head
2. Bold white cheek and throat “chin-strap”
3. Bold white on belly and sides of rump
4. Pointed wings and small tail
5. Vocalization: *keer*



Photo by Wesley Skidmore

mountain bluebird, male

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain-Montane Zone, Urban

1. Blue-gray body
2. Bright, shiny blue upper body and wings
3. Silvery-gray to blue belly
4. Vocalization: variable, low-pitched *churr* sounds



Photo by Wesley Skidmore



mountain bluebird, female

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain–Montane Zone, Urban

1. Blue-gray body
2. Dull, grayish-brown overall with a light blue rump, tail, and flight feathers
3. Head and neck mostly gray with small amount of blue
4. Vocalization: variable, low-pitched *churr* sounds



mourning dove

WHEP Ecoregions: Eastern Deciduous Forest, Great Plains Grasslands–Shortgrass Prairie, Great Plains Grasslands–Tallgrass/Mixed Prairie, Intermountain–Foothills Zone, Intermountain–Sagebrush Zone, Mediterranean, Southeastern Mixed and Outer Coastal Plain Forest, Woodland

1. Light brown to gray body
2. Black ovals on back and wings
3. Black crescent on the cheek
4. Males have a bluish-gray crown, pinkish breast, and iridescence along the neck
5. Females have a brownish crown, breast with little to no pink, and less iridescent neck
6. Vocalization: *hoowaa hoo hoo hoo*



northern bobwhite

WHEP Ecoregions: Eastern Deciduous Forest, Great Plains Grasslands–Tallgrass/ Mixed Prairie, Prairie Brushland, Southeastern Mixed and Outer Coastal Plain Forest, Woodland

1. Plump, reddish-brown game bird
2. Back is brown and gray wings
3. Slight crest on head that creates a rounded peak when raised
4. Broad, dark eyeline that extends onto the collar
5. Males have a white eyebrow and throat
6. Females have a buffy brown eyebrow and throat
7. Vocalization: *bob-white*

BIRDS



northern flicker

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain–Foothills Zone, Intermountain–Sagebrush Zone, Urban

1. Large, pale brown woodpecker with black barring on the back
2. Breast has a black patch
3. Distinctive gray head with red spot on back of the head
4. White rump patch
5. Tan to brownish-yellow belly with black spots
6. Males have a black or red mustache, females lack the mustache
7. Vocalization: loud *keeoh* or a soft *woika woika woika* or *kekekeke*

BIRDS

northern goshawk

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain–Montane Zone, Intermountain–Subalpine Zone, Northeast Mixed Forest

1. Gray with long, rounded tail and broad wings
2. Broad, white eyebrow
3. Breast gray with fine, horizontal barring.
4. Tail has 3 to 5 faint, dark bands
5. Vocalization: high-pitched *kree kree kree*



northern harrier, male

WHEP Ecoregions: Great Plains Grasslands–Shortgrass Prairie, Great Plains Grasslands–Tallgrass/Mixed Prairie

1. Long tail and long narrow wings
2. White rump patch on the upper base of the tail
3. Dark gray hood
4. Mostly pale gray with black wing tips
5. Tail gray and may have thin, dark bars
6. Vocalization: series of *kek* notes



northern harrier, female

WHEP Ecoregions: Great Plains Grasslands–Shortgrass Prairie, Great Plains Grasslands–Tallgrass/Mixed Prairie

1. Long tail and long narrow wings
2. White rump patch on the upper base of the tail
3. Dark brown facial disk and head
4. Brown above and streaked brown or buff below
5. Strongly barred flight feathers
6. Brown tail with several dark bands
7. Vocalization: series of *kek* notes



northern pintail, male

WHEP Ecoregions: Wetland

1. Long, pointed tail
2. Wing with an iridescent green wing patch (speculum) bordered by a buff-brown band in front and white band behind
3. Brown head and throat
4. White breast that extends as a thin line up each side of the head
5. White patch on the hip
6. Black rump
7. Vocalization: *liquid tlooo*





northern pintail, female

WHEP Ecoregions: Wetland

1. Long, pointed tail
2. Wing with an iridescent green wing patch (speculum) bordered by a buff-brown band in front and white band behind
3. Head and neck a light brown
4. Body and wings medium brown with reddish-brown margins
5. Bill black
6. Vocalization: short quack

BIRDS



Nuttall's woodpecker

WHEP Ecoregions: Mediterranean

1. Back, shoulder, and wings with alternating, horizontal, black-and-white stripes
2. Solid black bar on upper back
3. Narrow, black eye-stripe that curves around the cheek and connects with the bill
4. Males have a red crown on the back of the head, females have a black crown
5. Vocalization: double *pitik* note

BIRDS



ovenbird

WHEP Ecoregions: Eastern Deciduous Forest, Northeast Mixed Forest

1. Orange streak bordered by two black stripes on head
2. Belly a creamy white with black blotches organized into streaks
3. Throat white with a black streak on either side resembling a Fu Manchu mustache
4. Small, olive-colored songbird with long, pinkish legs
5. White eye-ring
6. Vocalization: *teacher, teacher, teacher, teacher*



peregrine falcon

WHEP Ecoregions: Urban

1. Dark mustache facial mask that extends behind the eye (black)
2. Medium-sized, dark gray raptor with pointed wings and a short tail
3. Breast and underwings uniformly streaked
4. Prominent, hooked bill
5. Wingtips reach the tail when perched
6. Vocalization: high-pitched *shreeshreeshreeshree*



prairie falcon

WHEP Ecoregions: Woodland

1. Brown raptor with pointed wings, short tail, hooked bill, and sharp talons
2. Pale brown mask, incomplete and white behind the eye
3. Breast spotted
4. Rounded wingtips, which do not reach the tail
5. Vocalization: harsh *kak, kak, kak*



prothonotary warbler

WHEP Ecoregions: Southeastern Mixed and Outer Coastal Plain Forest

1. Yellow-colored songbird with black eye
2. Head, breast, belly, and upper back are yellow
3. Plain blue-gray wings
4. Vocalization: ringing *tweet, tweet, tweet, tweet*

pyrrhuloxia, male

WHEP Ecoregions: Prairie Brushland

1. Long tail and a long, thin, pointed crest (looks similar to northern cardinal)
2. Pale gray overall with deep red on crest, face, throat, central breast, and belly
3. Tail red underneath
4. Bill yellow
5. Vocalization: variable whistles (similar to northern cardinal but shorter and higher pitched)



Photo by Wesley Skidmore



Photo by Wesley Skidmore

pyrrhuloxia, female

WHEP Ecoregions: Prairie Brushland

1. Long tail and a long, thin, pointed crest (looks similar to northern cardinal)
2. Brownish-gray overall with no red
3. Bill a dull grayish-yellow





red-cockaded woodpecker

WHEP Ecoregions: Southeastern Mixed and Outer Coastal Plain Forest

1. Small, slender bill
2. Black-striped back
3. Gray, dull, streaked breast
4. White cheek that extends to the back of the neck
5. Males with a small red spot on back of the crown, females have no red spot
6. Vocalization: raspy *sklit*



red-eyed vireo

WHEP Ecoregions: Southeastern Mixed and Outer Coastal Plain Forest

1. Yellow-green colored songbird
2. Gray crown and eye-stripe and a red eye
3. White breast
4. Vocalization: asks a question then answers *where are you, here I am, over here*

red-tailed hawk

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain-Foothills Zone, Pacific Coastal Forest, Woodland

1. Large, heavy-bodied hawk with a distinctive reddish-brown tail (above)
2. Underwings, breast, and belly white, with the exception of a brown, streaked belly band
3. Leading edge of shoulder with dark patches under the wings
4. Vocalization: high-pitched *kee-eeee-arr*

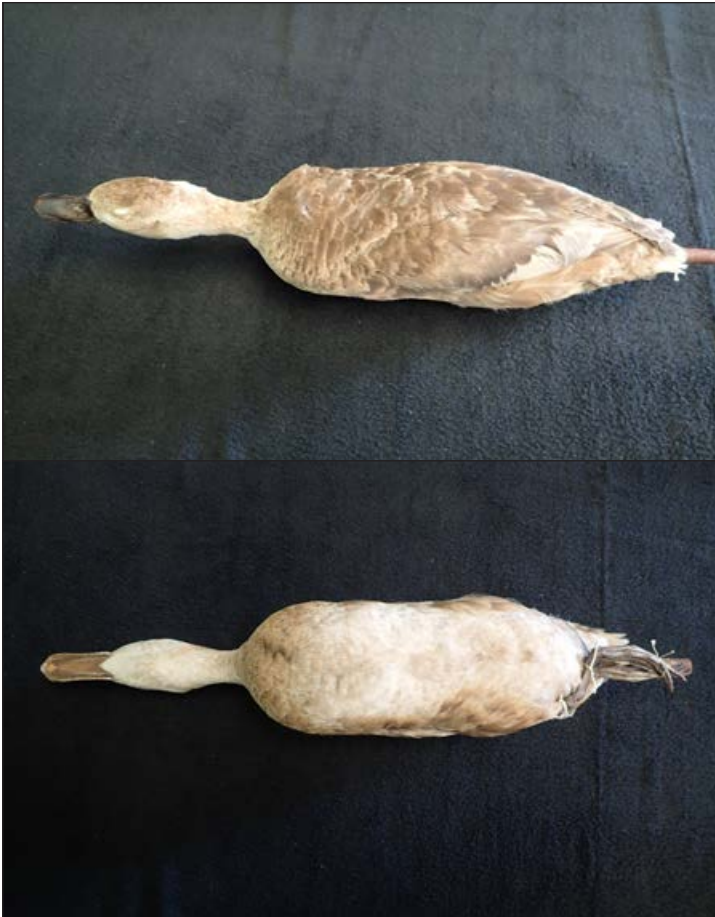


redhead, male

WHEP Ecoregions: Wetland

1. Steep forehead and squared-off crown
2. Blue-gray bill with a black tip
3. Upper wing with light-gray feathers
4. Reddish-brown head
5. Black breast and rump
6. Silvery belly and sides
7. Vocalization: descending *awooorrr*





redhead, female

WHEP Ecoregions: Wetland

1. Steep forehead and squared-off crown
2. Blue-gray bill with a black tip
3. Upper wing with light-gray feathers
4. Pale, reddish-brown overall
5. Throat and face next to bill paler than rest of body
6. Light eye-ring
7. Vocalization: descending *awooorrr*



ring-necked pheasant, male

WHEP Ecoregions: Great Plains Grasslands–Tallgrass/Mixed Prairie

1. Long, barred tail
2. Red cheeks
3. Pale yellow bill
4. Body color varies from coppery to iridescent green with a silvery patch on the upper wings
5. Vocalization: loud, harsh, crowing *skwok skwok* or *swogok*



ring-necked pheasant, female

WHEP Ecoregions: Great Plains Grasslands–Tallgrass/Mixed Prairie

1. Long, barred tail
2. Body light brown with dark brown spotting
3. Pale, gray-white, throat white
4. Small brown bill
5. Vocalization: loud, harsh, crowing *skwok skwok* or *swogok*



rock pigeon

WHEP Ecoregions: Urban

1. Gray body with two black bars on the wings
2. Dark head with red eye
3. White spot on the base of the bill
4. Green-purple iridescence on neck
5. Vocalization: series of *coos*



ruby-throated hummingbird

WHEP Ecoregions: Urban

1. Small-sized hummingbird with green back
2. White belly
3. Dark eye-stripe
4. Males have a red, iridescent throat
5. Females have a white throat
6. Vocalization: series of rapid chirps



ruffed grouse, male

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain-Montane Zone, Northeast Mixed Forest, Pacific Coastal Forest

1. Body color reddish-brown or gray
2. Head crest gives head a triangular shape when raised
3. Black ruff on the back of the neck during courtship
4. Complete band along the base of the tail feathers
5. Makes a drumming sound that starts slowly, then becomes faster by compressing air during wings beats



ruffed grouse, female

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain-Montane Zone, Northeast Mixed Forest, Pacific Coastal Forest

1. Body color may be reddish-brown or gray
2. Head crest gives head a triangular shape when raised
3. Tail band broken in the center
4. Lacks black ruff at the base of the neck



sage thrasher

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain-Sagebrush Zone

1. Gray-brown body
2. Pale yellow eye
3. Slender bill
4. Streaked breast
5. White wing bars
6. Vocalization: variable and complex mix of melodic notes



scaled quail

WHEP Ecoregions: Great Plains Grasslands–Shortgrass Prairie

1. Tufted crest tipped with white
2. Strongly scaled appearance to neck, throat, and breast
3. Head and throat gray and relatively unmarked
4. Vocalization: two noted *pe-cos*



sharp-tailed grouse

WHEP Ecoregions: Great Plains Grasslands–Shortgrass Prairie

1. Medium-sized grouse
2. A distinctive spike-like tail with two long, central tail feathers
3. Back and sides brown spotted with white
4. Belly and breast white with variable spotting and brown chevrons
5. Males have pink to violet air sacs and eye combs
6. Females lack air sacs and eye combs and have a paler, more barred crown
7. Vocalization: low pitched *owalow owalow* and a low cooed *oooo*



song sparrow

WHEP Ecoregions: Urban

1. Reddish-brown body
2. Coarse, brown streaks come together into a central spot on the breast
3. Brown, lateral throat stripes
4. Vocalization: 2 to 6 well-spaced phrases finishing with a buzz or trill

BIRDS



sooty grouse

WHEP Ecoregions: Pacific Coastal Forest

1. Body grayish with white or light-colored flanks
2. Yellow eyebrow that turns orange to red during courtship
3. Yellow air sac bordered by white feathers along the bottom
4. Dark tail with thin, gray band at tip
5. Females dark grayish-brown, mottled brown, and white throughout, and lack air sacs and eye combs
6. Vocalization: five low-pitched, soft hoots

BIRDS

southwest willow flycatcher

WHEP Ecoregions: Hot Desert

1. Olive-colored songbird
2. Two light gray wing bars on each wing
3. Bill short and wide with hair-like feathers at the base
4. Vocalization: *fitzbeew*



spotted sandpiper

WHEP Ecoregions: Wetland

1. Short-legged shorebird with pinkish legs
2. Breast and belly white with dark spots
3. Bill orange to yellow with a black tip
4. Dark eye-stripe
5. Vocalization: rapid series of *weet* notes





spotted towhee

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain–Foothills Zone, Intermountain–Montane Zone, Pacific Coastal Forest

1. Small, black, conical bill
2. Back, tail, head, neck, throat, and chest black
3. Wings black with white spots
4. Sides reddish-brown and belly white
5. Vocalization: *drink-your-tea*

BIRDS



Virginia rail

WHEP Ecoregions: Wetland

1. Short, triangular tail
2. Reddish overall with gray cheeks
3. Long, reddish bill with black top and tip
4. Sides black with white bands
5. Chestnut-brown wings
6. Vocalization: *kidik kidik kidik*

BIRDS

western bluebird, male

WHEP Ecoregions: Urban, Woodland

1. Reddish-brown throat and breast
2. Bold blue back, head, wings and tail
3. Blue belly
4. Orange continues on upper wings
5. Vocalization: mixture of variable *kew*-like notes



Photo by Wesley Skidmore



Photo by Wesley Skidmore

western bluebird, female

WHEP Ecoregions: Urban, Woodland

1. Reddish-brown throat and breast
2. Light blue-gray back and head
3. Blue tail and white belly
4. Vocalization: mixture of variable *kew*-like notes



Photo by Wesley Skidmore



Photo by Wesley Skidmore

western kingbird

WHEP Ecoregions: Mediterranean, Prairie Brushland

1. Short, square tail
2. Pale gray head, neck, breast, back, and upper wings
3. Crown with a small, orange patch
4. Bright yellow belly
5. Black tail with white outer feathers
6. Vocalization: harsh *kit kit kit*



white-tailed ptarmigan

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain-Subalpine Zone

1. Small- to medium-sized grouse with two distinct color phases, mottled brown in summer and white in winter
2. Speckled, black-and-white breast
3. White belly and tail
4. Red eyebrow
5. Females have a brown breast and belly, yellow-brown speckled in summer
6. Vocalization: various clucks, chatters, and loud cries



white-winged dove

WHEP Ecoregions: Hot Desert, Prairie Brushland

1. Uniform, pale brown with a grayish-brown belly
2. Broad, white streak along the edge of the wing when folded
3. Small, black patch under the cheek
4. Vocalization: *coo coo kuh cooo*



wild turkey, male

WHEP Ecoregions: Eastern Deciduous Forest, Great Plains Grasslands–Tallgrass/ Mixed Prairie, Intermountain–Foothills Zone, Northeast Mixed Forest, Prairie Brushland, Southeastern Mixed and Outer Coastal Plain Forest, Woodland

1. Head and neck bare
2. Dark-colored feathers with iridescence that appear metallic blue or bronze
3. Wing-tip (primary) feathers light and heavily barred with dark bands
4. Head often bright red, and can get blue and white, especially in spring during the mating season
5. Projection of hair-like feathers extending from the breast that resemble a long beard
6. Body feathers black-tipped
7. Well-developed spurs on the back of each leg
8. Vocalization: explosive gobble





wild turkey, female

WHEP Ecoregions: Eastern Deciduous Forest, Great Plains Grasslands–Tallgrass/Mixed Prairie, Intermountain–Foothills Zone, Northeast Mixed Forest, Prairie Brushland, Southeastern Mixed and Outer Coastal Plain Forest, Woodland

1. Head and neck bare
2. Dark-colored feathers with iridescence that appears metallic blue or bronze
3. Wing-tip (primary) feathers light and heavily barred with dark bands
4. Light, blue-gray head
5. Beard mostly lacking, although a few may have a small beard
6. Body feathers brown-tipped
7. Vocalization: variable clucks

BIRDS



Wilson's snipe

WHEP Ecoregions: Wetland

1. Short legs and a very long, straight bill
2. Dark brown back with white or buff stripes
3. Head with dark and light stripes and a dark crown
4. Sides white with brown barring
5. Vocalization: high-pitched, repeating *pika pika pika*

BIRDS

wood duck, male

WHEP Ecoregions: Eastern Deciduous Forest, Pacific Coastal Forest, Southeastern Mixed and Outer Coastal Plain Forest

1. Thin neck and a long crest that droops from the back of the head
2. Upper wing dark brown with iridescent blue in the center of the wing (coverts) and white trailing edge on the secondary flight feathers
3. Colorful with a glossy green crown and crest
4. White neck ring and chin stripe
5. Red, yellow, white, and black bill
6. The back dark, tan sides and reddish-brown belly separated by a white and dark stripe
7. Vocalization: repeated, rising *zweep*



wood duck, female

WHEP Ecoregions: Eastern Deciduous Forest, Pacific Coastal Forest, Southeastern Mixed and Outer Coastal Plain Forest

1. Thin neck, and a long crest that droops from the back of the head
2. Upper wing dark brown with iridescent blue in the center of the wing (coverts) and white trailing edge on the secondary flight feathers
3. Mostly brownish body with a grayish head
4. White throat and a white, oval-shaped eye-ring
5. Bill gray
6. Vocalization: high pitched *ooweeek*, *ooweeek*





yellow-rumped warbler, male

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain–Montane Zone, Intermountain–Subalpine Zone

1. Yellow patches on rump and sides of the breast
2. Dark gray with yellow throat patch and yellow crown
3. White crescents above and below the eye
4. Black on breast and black streaks on white side
5. White wing patch on upper wing feathers
6. Vocalization: slow, variable trill



yellow-rumped warbler, female

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain–Montane Zone, Intermountain–Subalpine Zone

1. Yellow patches on rump and sides of the breast
2. Brownish-gray overall
3. Light gray head with pale yellow throat
4. Two white wing bars

American beaver

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain–Montane Zone, Pacific Coastal Forest, Wetland

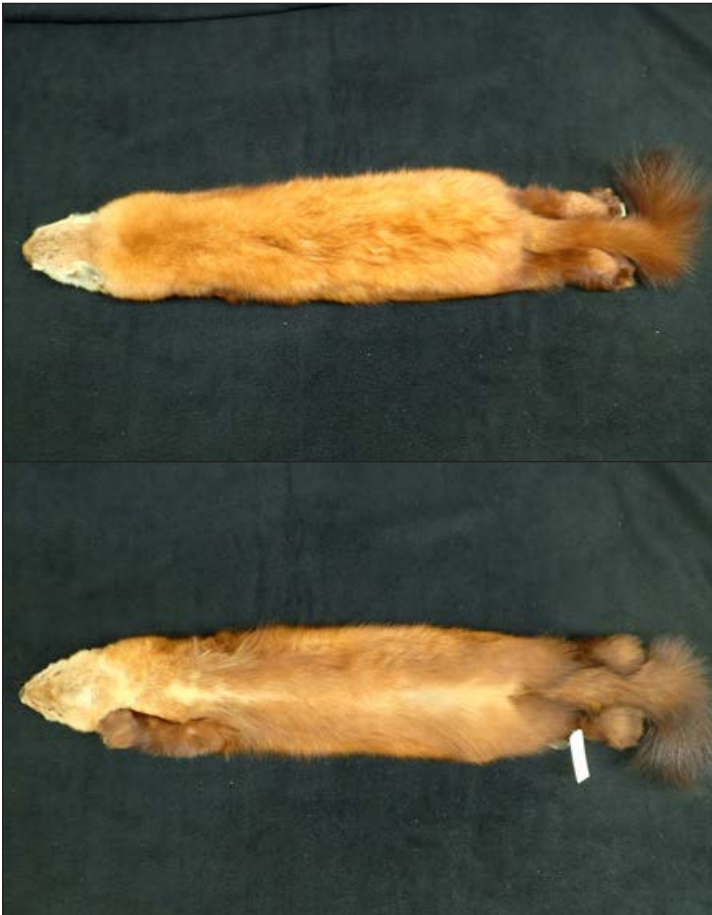
1. Large, plump-bodied rodent with thick dark- to light-brown fur
2. Broad, scaly, paddle-like tail
3. Webbed hind feet, with a split claw on the second toe



American marten

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain–Montane Zone, Intermountain–Subalpine Zone

1. Small weasel, size of a small house cat
2. Fur along the back long, shiny, and varies from reddish-brown to chocolate-brown
3. Tail and legs dark brown
4. Chest often marked with a distinct cream-colored throat patch





big brown bat

WHEP Ecoregions: Urban

1. Large bat, 4 to 5 inches long
2. Long, brown fur that appears uniform, but face, ears, and wings are black
3. Skin between hind legs without fur
4. Short, round, fleshy projection rising up from the inner ear (tragus)



black bear

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain-Montane Zone

1. Large mammal (may reach 500 lbs), that has long, coarse fur, usually black (but can be brown, cinnamon, or blond)
2. Face with a pale brown muzzle that contrasts against body color

Photo by R. Cordes



black-tailed jackrabbit

WHEP Ecoregions: Woodlands

1. Long-eared hare, with black spots at the tips of the ears
2. Fur mixed brown with black “pepper” spots
3. Extremely long hind legs
4. Tail with black stripe

MAMMALS



black-tailed prairie dog

**WHEP Ecoregions: Great Plains
Grasslands–Shortgrass Prairie, Hot Desert**

1. Small, stout ground squirrel with brownish to brownish-red fur
2. Last one-third of short tail is usually black-tipped

MAMMALS



bobcat

WHEP Ecoregions: Eastern Deciduous Forest, Pacific Coastal Forest

1. Light brown to gray fur, streaked/spotted coat with spotted underparts
2. Short ear tufts
3. Short tail—the tip black above, white below

MAMMALS



Brazilian free-tailed bat

WHEP Ecoregions: Woodlands

1. Medium-sized bat, 3½ inches long
2. Dark, velvety fur, uniform in color
3. Tail extends well beyond skin connecting hind legs

MAMMALS



Photo by Steve Hillebrand - USFWS

collared peccary

WHEP Ecoregions: Prairie Brushland

1. Small, pig-like, hooved mammal
2. Grizzled, gray and brown, bristly fur
3. White to yellowish collar of fur extends over the shoulder and onto the throat

MAMMALS



Photo by USFWS

Columbian black-tailed deer

WHEP Ecoregions: Pacific Coastal Forest

1. Very similar to Mule deer, i.e., large mule-like ears, large white rump patch
2. Tail broad with dark brown to black completely covering the tail
3. Darker face, including a dark band across the forehead forming a "unibrow"

MAMMALS

common muskrat

WHEP Ecoregions: Wetland

1. Plump rodent with glossy, brown fur
2. Tail long, naked, scaly, and slightly flattened vertically (like a rudder)
3. Hind feet partially webbed with stiff hairs along the toes



coyote

WHEP Ecoregions: Great Plains Grasslands–Shortgrass Prairie, Great Plains Grasslands–Tallgrass/mixed Prairie, Hot Desert, Intermountain–Foothills Zone, Intermountain–Sagebrush Zone, Pacific Coastal Forest, Prairie Brushland, Southeast Mixed and Outer Coastal Plain Forest, Urban, Woodlands

1. Dog-like mammal with pointed ears and a long slender muzzle
2. Fur variable in coloration, but black-tipped along the back with a white belly and throat patch
3. Tail long and bushy with a black tip



desert cottontail

WHEP Ecoregions: Hot Desert, Intermountain–Sagebrush Zone, Mediterranean, Urban

1. Rabbit with light tan to gray fur on sides and rump with a rusty-colored neck
2. Belly and underside of small cotton-ball-like tail are white
3. Long ears and hind feet (ears slightly larger than eastern cottontail)



eastern cottontail

WHEP Ecoregions: Eastern Deciduous Forest, Great Plains Grasslands – Tallgrass/ Mixed Prairie, Southeast Mixed and Outer Coastal Plain Forest, Urban

1. Rabbit with speckled brown-gray fur on sides and rump with a rusty colored spot on back of the neck
2. Belly and underside of small cotton-ball-like tail are white
3. Long ears and hind feet, ears slightly smaller than desert cottontail

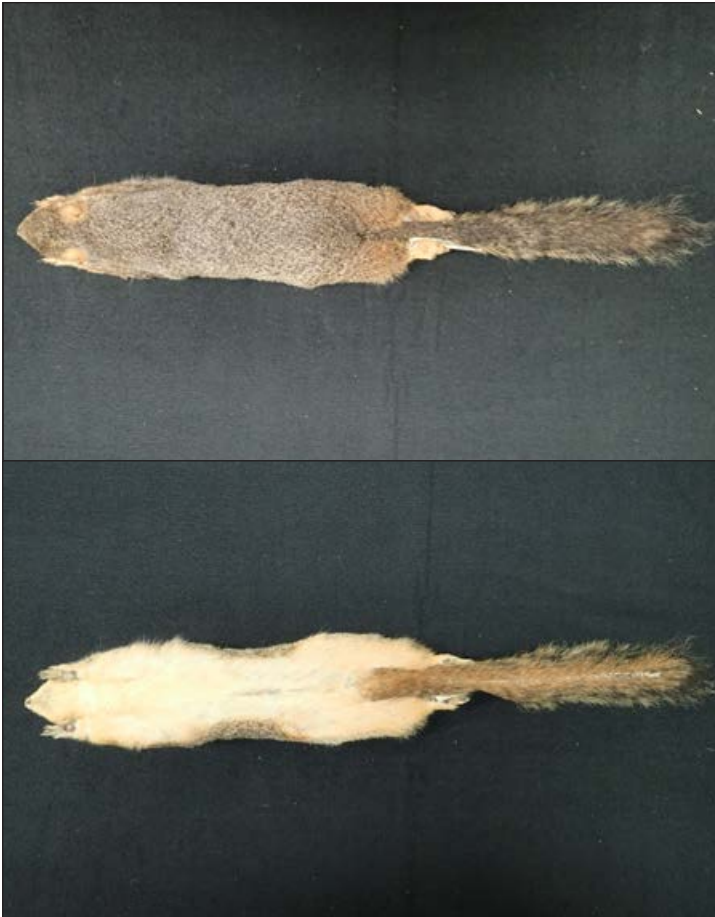


eastern fox squirrel

WHEP Ecoregions: Southeast Mixed and Outer Coastal Plain Forest

1. Largest of the three tree squirrels with grizzled gray and black fur along back and orange underneath
2. Long bushy tail with orange underneath

MAMMALS



eastern gray squirrel

WHEP Ecoregions: Eastern Deciduous Forest, Urban

1. Tree squirrel, slightly smaller than a fox squirrel with gray fur above and white underneath (although, they can sometimes be solid black)
2. Long, bushy tail with gray and white fur
3. Prominent white eye-ring

MAMMALS





Photo by R. Cordes

elk

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain – Foothills Zone, Intermountain – Montane Zone, Intermountain – Subalpine Zone, Pacific Coastal Forest

1. Second-largest North American deer, with a tan body and dark brown fur on head, neck, and legs
2. Conspicuous buff-colored rump with a small tail
3. Head long with large ears; males have large, widely branching antlers

MAMMALS



fisher

WHEP Ecoregions: Northeast Mixed Forest

1. Dark brown, fox-sized weasel with short round ears
2. “Grizzled” dorsal appearance because of tri-colored guard hairs
3. Long, dark brownish-black tail

MAMMALS



gray fox

WHEP Ecoregions: Eastern Deciduous Forest

1. Dog-like mammal the size of a house cat, with salt-and-pepper colored fur
2. Long, bushy tail with distinct black stripe along the top
3. Sides of the neck, back of the ears, outsides of legs, and areas around the belly are reddish
4. Tip of the tail, sides of the nose, and chin are black

MAMMALS



Indiana bat

WHEP Ecoregions: Eastern Deciduous Forest

1. Small bat (less than 2 inches) with mouse-like ears
2. Fur dark gray or brown
3. Short, inconspicuous toe hairs that do not extend beyond toes

MAMMALS

mink

WHEP Ecoregions: Wetland

1. Long, slender weasel with a pointed face, short ears and legs, and long tails
2. Fur dark brown with a small white patch on the chin, throat, chest, and belly
3. Tip of the tail nearly black
4. Partially webbed feet



moose

WHEP Ecoregions: Northeast Mixed Forest

1. Largest deer species with dark brown to black fur
2. Large, elongated nose; long slender legs
3. Males have large palm-like antlers



Photo by R. Cordes

mountain cottontail

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain-Foothills Zone, Urban

1. Rabbit with a grayish-brown body and a white belly
2. Ears short and rounded with black margins
3. Long, hind legs covered in a reddish brown color
4. Large tail that is dark on top and light underneath



mountain lion

WHEP Ecoregions: Hot Desert

1. Largest North American cat with short yellowish- to grayish-brown fur
2. Tail long and cylindrical, about 1/3 the total length of the animal
3. Throat and chest white and the belly buffy
4. The muzzle stripes, back of the ears, and tip of tail, are black



Photo by USFWS



New England cottontail

WHEP Ecoregions: Northeast Mixed Forest

1. Rabbit with relatively short, black-rimmed ears
2. Often has a black spot on the forehead between the ears
3. The body can range from reddish-brown to grayish-brown

MAMMALS



pronghorn

WHEP Ecoregions: Great Plains Grasslands–Shortgrass Prairie, Hot Desert, Intermountain–Sagebrush Zone

1. A hooved, deer-like mammal
2. Black horns with a forward prong and backward hook
3. Males: a small, black cheek patch
4. White rumps and small tails

MAMMALS

Photo by James C. Leupold - USFWS



raccoon

WHEP Ecoregions: Mediterranean, Southeast Mixed and Outer Coastal Plain Forest, Urban, Wetland

1. A gray-bodied mammal with a distinctive, black facial “mask”
2. Bushy, ringed tailed with 4 to 7 dark bands

MAMMALS



red fox

WHEP Ecoregions: Great Plains Grasslands–Tallgrass/Mixed Prairie

1. Slender, dog-like mammal with long nose, bushy tail, and pointed ears
2. Fur ranges from pale yellowish-red to deep reddish-brown on the back with white bellies (can also be silver or nearly black in color)
3. Tips of the ears, lower legs, and feet are black, while the tail is tipped in white

MAMMALS



red squirrel

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain-Subalpine Zone, Northeast Mixed Forest, Pacific Coastal Forest

1. Tree squirrel with reddish fur and white belly and underparts
2. Prominent, dark line in the fur along the sides
3. White eye-ring

MAMMALS



river otter

WHEP Ecoregions: Wetland

1. A weasel with a long, streamlined body and a thick, tapered tail; short legs; and webbed feet
2. Fur dense, soft, and dark brown to almost black
3. Heads wide and rounded with small ears and golden-brown cheek fur

MAMMALS



Photo by USFWS

Rocky Mountain mule deer

WHEP Ecoregions: Great Plains Grasslands–Shortgrass Prairie, Hot Desert, Intermountain–Foothills Zone, Intermountain–Montane Zone, Intermountain – Sagebrush Zone, Intermountain–Subalpine Zone, Mediterranean

1. Deer with a white rump and thin, white, black-tipped tail
2. Fur dark brown-gray, dark and light ash-gray, to brown or reddish
3. Males: large, forked antlers

MAMMALS



snowshoe hare

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain–Montane Zone, Intermountain–Subalpine Zone, Northeast Mixed Forest

1. Rabbit with two color phases—white in winter, brown in summer
2. Tail black above, white below
3. Large ears bordered with black
4. Large hind feet with heavily furred soles

MAMMALS



Photo by Donna Dewhurst - USFWS

white-tailed deer

WHEP Ecoregions: Eastern Deciduous Forest, Great Plains Grasslands–Tallgrass/ Mixed Prairie, Northeast Mixed Forest, Prairie Brushland, Southeast Mixed and Outer Coastal Plain Forest, Urban, Woodlands

1. Deer with reddish-brown fur in summer and gray fur in winter
2. Large, bushy tail, dark on upper side—white underneath
3. Males: antlers

MAMMALS



Photo by NPS

wild pig

WHEP Ecoregions: Mediterranean, Prairie Brushland, Southeast Mixed and Outer Coastal Plain Forest, Woodlands

1. Coarse, bristly hair
2. Hair color varies, may be speckled or solid-color
3. Large, pointed ears

MAMMALS



American beaver

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain–Montane Zone, Pacific Coastal Forest, Wetland

1. Large, heavy boned skull, 4–7 inches in length
2. Massive incisors with orange coloration on front surfaces



American marten

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain–Montane Zone, Intermountain–Subalpine Zone

1. Short snout
2. Long braincase
3. Five upper cheek teeth on each side, only 4 in the mink (species commonly confused with the marten)

big brown bat

WHEP Ecoregions: Urban

1. Small in size, $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch
2. Two upper incisors on each side
3. Three lower incisors on each side



black bear

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain-Montane Zone

1. Very large (9–14 inches long) with a wide nose
2. Heavy, wide-spreading cheek bones (zygomatic arch)
3. Large, prominent canines





black-tailed jackrabbit

WHEP Ecoregions: Woodlands

1. Skull similar to eastern cottontail, but larger (3½ to 4 inches long)
2. Small, peg-like incisors behind large front incisors
3. Sides of skull with porous openings (fenestrae)



black-tailed prairie dog

WHEP Ecoregions: Great Plains Grasslands–Shortgrass Prairie, Hot Desert

1. Wide gap between incisors and cheek teeth
2. Relatively straight and broad cheek bones (zygomatic arch)
3. Slit-like holes behind upper incisors relatively wide



bobcat

WHEP Ecoregions: Eastern Deciduous Forest, Pacific Coastal Forest

1. Rounded skull, extremely short snout
2. Large, well-formed eye sockets (orbits)
3. Only three cheek teeth



Brazilian free-tailed bat

WHEP Ecoregions: Woodlands

1. Small skull, 1/2- to 3/4-inch
2. Only one upper incisor per side
3. Three lower incisors on each side

collared peccary

WHEP Ecoregions: Prairie Brushland

1. Overall skull shape long, slender, and sloping
2. Long, sharp canines protrude from the side
3. Upper canines grow downward (instead of outward as in the wild pig)



Photo by Robert Cordes

Columbian black-tailed deer

WHEP Ecoregions: Pacific Coastal Forest

1. Hard to differentiate from mule deer, found in different regions
2. Large, slender skulls that taper to the front, 9 to 12 inches long
3. Lacks upper incisors
4. Deep pit in front of eye socket (pit shallow in white-tailed deer)
5. Males: antlers or pedicles may be present



Photo by Deloy Roberts

common muskrat

WHEP Ecoregions: Wetland

1. Skull much smaller than a beaver with white incisors
2. Braincase large, over half the length of the skull



coyote

WHEP Ecoregions: Great Plains Grasslands–Shortgrass Prairie, Great Plains Grasslands–Tallgrass/Mixed Prairie, Hot Desert, Intermountain–Foothills Zone, Intermountain–Sagebrush Zone, Pacific Coastal Forest, Prairie Brushland, Southeast Mixed and Outer Coastal Plain Forest, Urban, Woodlands

1. Six to 9 inches long with long, slender snout and prominent canines
2. Broad and heavy cheek bones (zygomatic arch)
3. Long, tall ridge along back half of the skull (sagittal crest)





desert cottontail

WHEP Ecoregions: Hot Desert, Intermountain-Sagebrush Zone, Mediterranean

1. Small skull (2½ to 3 inches) (similar to eastern cottontail, but found in arid regions)
2. Small, peg-like incisors behind large, front incisors
3. Sides of skull with porous openings (fenestrae)



eastern cottontail

WHEP Ecoregions: Eastern Deciduous Forest, Great Plains Grasslands-Tallgrass/Mixed Prairie, Southeast Mixed and Outer Coastal Plain Forest, Urban

1. Small skull, 3 inches long
2. Small, peg-like incisors behind large front incisors
3. Sides of skull with porous openings (fenestrae)



eastern fox squirrel

WHEP Ecoregions: Southeast Mixed and Outer Coastal Plain Forest

1. Small, rounded skull about 2½ to 3 inches long
2. Four cheek teeth (five in eastern gray squirrel)



eastern gray squirrel

WHEP Ecoregions: Eastern Deciduous Forest, Urban

1. Small, rounded skull about 2 to 2½ inches long
2. Five upper cheek teeth; first cheek tooth (premolar) small and peg-like





elk

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain–Foothills Zone, Intermountain–Montane Zone, Intermountain–Subalpine Zone, Pacific Coastal Forest

1. Large, slender skull that tapers to the front, 15 to 21 inches long
2. A pair of small, round canines present on upper jaw (not present on moose)
3. No upper incisors
4. Males: antlers or pedicles may be present



fisher

WHEP Ecoregions: Northeast Mixed Forest

1. Short snout
2. Long braincase (total skull length, 3 to 5 inches long)
3. Five upper cheek teeth on each side (only four in the mink, a species commonly confused with fisher)



gray fox

WHEP Ecoregions: Eastern Deciduous Forest

1. Four to 5 inches long, with a long slender snout and prominent canines
2. Ridge along the brain case (sagittal crest) forms a "U" shape



Indiana bat

WHEP Ecoregions: Eastern Deciduous Forest

1. Very small, around ½-inch long with a gap in the front of the palate
2. Two upper incisors on each side
3. Three lower incisors on each side

mink

WHEP Ecoregions: Wetland

1. Long, slender skull with a short snout
2. Long braincase (total skull length 2 to 3 inches)
3. Four upper cheek teeth each side (American marten and fisher have five)



moose

WHEP Ecoregions: Northeast Mixed Forest

1. Large, slender skull that tapers to the front, 20 to 25 inches long
2. Lacks upper incisors
3. No canines on upper jaw (present in elk)
4. Males: antlers or pedicles may be present





mountain cottontail

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain-Foothills Zone, Urban

1. Small skull (2 to 2 ½ inches) (similar to eastern cottontail, but found in different regions)
2. Small, peg-like incisors behind large, front incisors
3. Sides of skull with porous openings (fenestrae)



mountain lion

WHEP Ecoregions: Hot Desert

1. Rounded skull with a very short nose
2. Large eye sockets that face forward
3. Four upper cheek teeth (bobcat has only three)



New England cottontail

WHEP Ecoregions: Northeast Mixed Forest

1. Small skull (3 inches long) (similar to eastern cottontail, but found in different regions)
2. Small, peg-like incisors behind large, front incisors
3. Sides of skull with porous openings (fenestrae)

MAMMAL SKULLS



pronghorn

WHEP Ecoregions: Great Plains Grasslands–Shortgrass Prairie, Hot Desert, Intermountain–Sagebrush Zone

1. Large, slender skull that tapers to the front, 9 to 11 inches
2. Lacks upper incisors
3. Distinct, vertical horn cores that grow from the eye socket
4. Large circular eye sockets

MAMMAL SKULLS



racoon

WHEP Ecoregions: Mediterranean, Southeast Mixed and Outer Coastal Plain Forest, Urban, Wetland

1. Triangular in shape with a short, broad nose
2. Braincase domed and rounded (3½ to 5½ inches long)
3. Cheek teeth blunt



red fox

WHEP Ecoregions: Great Plains Grasslands-Tallgrass/Mixed Prairie

1. Five to six inches long, with a long slender snout and prominent canines
2. Ridge along the brain case (sagittal crest) forms a "V" shape



red squirrel

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain-Subalpine Zone, Northeast Mixed Forest, Pacific Coastal Forest

1. Small, rounded skulls about 1½ to 2 inches long
2. Four cheek teeth (the larger eastern gray squirrel has five)



river otter

WHEP Ecoregions: Wetland

1. Four to 5 inches long
2. Short nose
3. Large, flattened braincase
4. Five upper cheek teeth (larger than American marten or fisher)



Rocky Mountain mule deer

WHEP Ecoregions: Great Plains Grasslands–Shortgrass Prairie, Hot Desert, Intermountain–Foothills Zone, Intermountain–Montane Zone, Intermountain – Sagebrush Zone, Intermountain–Subalpine Zone, Mediterranean

1. Hard to differentiate from Columbian black-tailed deer, found in different regions
2. Large, slender skull that tapers to the front, 9 to 12 inches long
3. Deep pit in front of eye socket (white-tailed deer have shallow pit)
4. Lacks upper incisor
5. Males: antlers or pedicles may be present



Photo by Deloy Roberts

snowshoe hare

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain–Montane Zone, Intermountain–Subalpine Zone, Northeast Mixed Forest

1. Small skull (3 to 3½ inches); similar to eastern cottontail, but found in areas with deep snow
2. Small, peg-like incisors behind large, front incisors
3. Sides of skull with porous openings (fenestrae)



white-tailed deer

WHEP Ecoregions: Eastern Deciduous Forest, Great Plains Grasslands–Tallgrass/Mixed Prairie, Northeast Mixed Forest, Prairie Brushland, Southeast Mixed and Outer Coastal Plain Forest, Urban, Woodlands

1. Large, slender skull that tapers to the front, 8 to 12 inches long
2. Shallow pit in front of eye socket (mule deer have deep pit)
3. Lacks upper incisors
4. Males: antlers or pedicles may be present



Photo by Rod Williams

wild pig

WHEP Ecoregions: Mediterranean, Prairie Brushland, Southeast Mixed and Outer Coastal Plain Forest, Woodlands

1. Overall skull shape long (10 to 12 inches), slender, and sloping (concave)
2. Canines grow outward instead of downward (as in the collard peccary)





eastern box turtle

WHEP Ecoregions: Eastern Deciduous Forest

1. Smooth, domed top shell (carapace) with flared sides
2. Shell usually brown or black with yellow or orange patterns of lines, spots, or blotches
3. Bottom shell (plastron) large and hinged to allow total closure
4. Body usually brown with yellow, orange, or white spots and streaks
5. Male: concave-shaped bottom shell (plastron)
6. Female: flat-bottom shell (plastron)

REPTILES



eastern indigo snake

WHEP Ecoregions: Southeast Mixed and Outer Coastal Plain Forest

1. Shiny, blue-black iridescent color along the head and entire body
2. May have red to orange chin and throat coloration
3. Smooth scales along body
4. Longest snake in the United States

REPTILES



eastern snapping turtle

WHEP Ecoregions: Wetland

1. Large head and sharp, curved beak
2. Tail long and saw-toothed along the top
3. The top shell (carapace) varies from brown, black, or olive with serrated front edge
4. Bottom shell (plastron) small and cross-shaped
5. Feet fully webbed with large claws



Gila monster

WHEP Ecoregions: Hot Desert

1. Lizard with small, beady scales
2. Short, fat tail
3. Legs stout with heavy claws
4. Chin, neck, legs, and feet black; rest of the body mottled yellow, orange, or pink pattern.



gopher tortoise

WHEP Ecoregions: Southeast Mixed and Outer Coastal Plain Forest

1. Land turtle with a dark gray upper shell (carapace) and yellow bottom shell (plastron)
2. Stumpy, elephant-like hind limbs, flattened forelimbs
3. Male: concave-shaped bottom shell (plastron)
4. Female: flat bottom shell (plastron)



plains hog-nosed snake

WHEP Ecoregions: Great Plains Grasslands–Shortgrass Prairie, Great Plains Grasslands–Tallgrass/ Mixed Prairie

1. Uprturned nose used for burrowing
2. Grayish-brown or light olive-green coloration on back with around 40 darker olive-green spots
3. Belly white, but black under the tail; the head lighter colored than the body
4. Scales along body keeled



Texas horned lizard

WHEP Ecoregions: Prairie Brushland

1. Flat-bodied lizard
2. Several spines protrude from the head, along the sides of the body and tail
3. Two large, central head spines are the most prominent
4. The body gray or tan with white, red, or yellow marks and variable dark-spotted patterns on back

REPTILES



timber rattlesnake

WHEP Ecoregions: Eastern Deciduous Forest

1. Stout-bodied snake with a black-tipped tail with rattles
2. Body color ranges from sulfur yellow to brown, gray, or black with dark bands across the back
3. Large, angular head with small, round pit located between the eye and the nostril (loreal pit)

REPTILES



western diamond-backed rattlesnake

WHEP Ecoregions: Woodlands

1. Stout-bodied snake with tail tipped with rattles and 3 to 7 black and white bands
2. Light-brown to gray coloration with distinctive dark diamond patches along back
3. Large, angular head with a pair of dark to black stripes on the head running from its eye to jaw
4. Similar to the timber rattlesnake, has a small, round pit located between the eye and the nostril (loreal pit)



American bullfrog

WHEP Ecoregions: Wetland

1. Largest frog in North America
2. Skin smooth and ranges in color from green to olive to brown
3. Lacks folds of skin ("ridges") along the back
4. Dark brown bars on hind legs, belly white to cream
5. The external eardrum (tympanum) round and larger than the eye in males; tympanum about the same size as the eye in females





crawfish frog

WHEP Ecoregions: Wetland

1. Light-tan to gray body and white belly
2. Back and sides with dark spots bordered by a tan to yellowish outline
3. A fold of skin or ridge extends from the eye to the thigh on each side

AMPHIBIANS



Monterey salamander

WHEP Ecoregions: Mediterranean

1. Reddish-brown to orange in color
2. Legs often lighter color than the rest of the body
3. Tail narrower at base (constricted)

AMPHIBIANS



northern red-legged frog

WHEP Ecoregions: Pacific Coastal Forest

1. Greenish-brown frog with smooth skin and a narrow waist
2. Hind legs and lower abdomen reddish in color
3. Folds or ridges along the back prominent and reach the thigh

AMPHIBIANS



rough-skinned newt

WHEP Ecoregions: Pacific Coastal Forest

1. Salamander with dry glandular (“warty-looking”) skin
2. Dark color on the back and yellow to orange underside
3. Lacks costal grooves (rib-like grooves in the chest)

AMPHIBIANS





tiger salamander

WHEP Ecoregions: Wetland

1. Stout-bodied salamander with a large head and small eyes
2. Numerous yellowish spots or blotches on the back and sides, which continue onto the belly
3. Coloration varies, but usually has dark brownish-black background

AMPHIBIANS



wood frog

WHEP Ecoregions: Northeast Mixed

1. Frog with dark black "robbers mask" through its eye
2. Smooth tan to rust-colored skin
3. Obvious skin folds or ridges along the back, often interrupted near thigh
4. Prominent white line on the upper lip

AMPHIBIANS

Photo by Brian MacGowan



bluegill

WHEP Ecoregions: Eastern Deciduous Forest, Great Plains Grasslands–Shortgrass Prairie, Great Plains Grasslands–Tallgrass/Mixed Prairie, Hot Desert, Mediterranean, Northeast Mixed, Prairie Brushland, Southeast Mixed and Outer Coastal Plain Forest, Wetland, Woodlands

1. Deep-bodied, olive-green sunfish
2. Black lobe at the edge of gill covering (operculum)
3. Blue to purple-colored cheek along the gill
4. Black spot at base of dorsal fin

FISH



channel catfish

WHEP Ecoregions: Southeast Mixed and Outer Coastal Plain Forest

1. Long, slender fish with no scales (smooth skin) and whiskers (barbels) around the mouth
2. Sides brown to gray with dark spots along each side
3. Deeply forked tail
4. Three barbed spines, one on the back and two just above the belly

FISH

Coho salmon

WHEP Ecoregions: Pacific Coastal Forest

1. Linear body with bluish back, silver sides and belly
2. Sparsely spotted on dorsal and tail fin
3. Mouth and gums white
4. Black tongue

FISH



cutthroat trout

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain Montane, Intermountain Subalpine

1. Linear silver to yellow-green body, but lacks a pinkish-red stripe along the side (rainbow trout has pinkish-red stripe)
2. Red or orange slash marks or lines on lower jaw
3. Dark spots along body and tail fin

FISH





largemouth bass

WHEP Ecoregions: Eastern Deciduous Forest, Great Plains Grasslands – Shortgrass Prairie, Great Plains Grasslands–Tallgrass/Mixed Prairie, Hot Desert, Mediterranean, Northeast Mixed, Prairie Brushland, Southeast Mixed and Outer Coastal Plain Forest, Wetland, Woodlands

1. Thick-bodied fish with green back, white belly, and a prominent dark black streak along its side
2. Corner of jaw extends past the eye (when mouth closed)
3. Dorsal fin separated with a deep notch

FISH



rainbow trout

WHEP Ecoregions: Intermountain Foothills, Intermountain Montane, Intermountain Sagebrush, Intermountain Subalpine

1. Silvery sides with a pinkish band along its side
2. Small, dark spots over the entire fish including the tail fin
3. Rose-colored gill

FISH

It is the policy of the Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service that all persons have equal opportunity and access to its educational programs, services, activities, and facilities without regard to race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin or ancestry, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, disability or status as a veteran.
Purdue University is an Affirmative Action institution. This material may be available in alternative formats.

Jan 2016