



Mammals

The diverse wildlife in Grand Teton National Park and the John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Memorial Parkway complements the spectacular scenery. As part of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, these two national parks contain numerous communities. Each community must supply the basic needs of wildlife: food, water, shelter and space. Familiarity with wildlife communities and behaviors allows you to improve your chance of viewing these animals in their environment.



Communities

Alpine

Elevation, wind, harsh winters and brief summers force the plants and animals living here to adapt. Plants grow as mats and animals are few. Look for yellow-bellied marmots, pikas and bighorn sheep seeking shelter in rocky outcrops.

Forests

From treeline to valley floor, forests provide cover and food for many mammal species. Lodgepole pines dominate, but forests also contain other pines, firs, aspens and spruces. Look for elk, mule deer, martens, red squirrels, black bears and snowshoe hares.

Sagebrush

Sagebrush flats occur on semi-arid, rocky soils covering the valley floor. More than 100 species of grasses and wildflowers flourish along with sagebrush. Lack of cover makes large animals conspicuous. Look for pronghorns, coyotes, bison, badgers, elk and Uinta ground squirrels.

Rivers, Lakes and Ponds

Aquatic habitats and adjacent forests, marshes and meadows fulfill the needs of many forms of wildlife. Diverse and abundant vegetation offers excellent food and cover. Look for moose, river otters, beavers, muskrats, coyotes and mule deer.

Where to Look: Driving and Hiking

Northern Jackson Lake

Highway 89/191/287 follows the eastern shore of Jackson Lake north of Colter Bay. Enjoy a view of the Teton Range and look for wildlife in the aspen groves and meadows alternating with extensive conifer forests. Lush meadows attract mule deer and elk, while the lake attracts American white pelicans, Canada geese and other waterfowl.

Colter Bay

Sagebrush, meadows and forests provide habitat for many mammals. Deer feed at the edge of conifer forests. Uinta ground squirrels flourish in dry sagebrush meadows, while red squirrels chatter incessantly from conifer forests. Look for occasional snowshoe hares and martens. Trails lead to ponds inhabited by beavers, muskrats, waterfowl and river otters, or may provide a view of bear, moose or elk.

Willow Flats

North of the Jackson Lake Dam moose browse on willow shrubs. At dawn and dusk, elk graze on grasses growing among willows. Predators such as wolves and grizzly bears pursue elk calves in early summer. Beavers create ponds by damming streams that also harbor muskrats and waterfowl.

Oxbow Bend

The slow-moving water of this cut-off meander of the Snake River provides habitat for fish such as suckers and trout that become food for river otters, beaver and muskrats. Moose browse on abundant willows at the water's edge. Elk graze in the open aspen groves to the east while grizzly bears occasionally look for prey.

Teton Park Road

Extensive sagebrush flats are interspersed with stands of lodgepole pines and aspens. Pronghorn

gather in small groups where they browse on sagebrush. Black bears cross between forests and plains. At dawn and dusk look for elk grazing on grasses on the forest edge.

Snake River

This riparian area attracts a variety of wildlife. Elk and bison graze in grassy meadows along the river. Bison also eat grasses in the sagebrush flats on the benches above the river. Moose eat willows that line the waterway, and beaver strip bark.

Blacktail Ponds

This turnout is located 0.5 mile north of Moose Junction on Highway 26/89/191. Old beaver ponds have filled in and now support grassy meadows where elk graze during cool parts of the day. Moose browse on willows growing along the river.

Two Ocean and Emma Matilda Lakes

Elk graze during dawn and dusk, and seek refuge from the heat of the day in nearby forests. Moose browse on willows growing along the lakeshore. Mule deer, coyotes, black and grizzly bears, martens and red squirrels also frequent this area.

Cascade and Death Canyons

Look and listen for pikas and marmots in boulder fields along the trails. Moose browse on willows and other shrubs growing along creeks. Black bears frequent the canyons and grizzly bears are becoming more common.

Taggart Lake and Beaver Creek

Willows growing along Beaver Creek provide food for moose. Elk graze on lush grasses and deer browse on shrubs while black bears sometimes frequent the area.

Mammal List

Order Artiodactyla (Even-toed Ungulates)

Antilocapridae – Pronghorn Family
c Pronghorn *Antilocapra americana*

Bovidae – Cattle Family

c Bison *Bos bison*
r Mountain Goat *Oreamnos americanus*
u Bighorn Sheep *Ovis canadensis*

Cervidae – Deer Family

a Elk (wapiti) *Cervus elaphus*
c Mule Deer *Odocoileus hemionus*
u White-tailed Deer *Odocoileus virginianus*
c Moose *Alces alces*

Order Carnivora (Meat eaters)

Canidae – Dog Family

a Coyote *Canis latrans*
u Gray Wolf *Canis lupus*
u Red Fox *Vulpes vulpes*

Felidae – Cat Family

r Mountain Lion (Puma) *Felis concolor*
o Canada Lynx *Felis lynx*
r Bobcat *Felis rufus*

Mustelidae – Weasel Family

u American Marten *Martes americana*
c Short-tailed Weasel *Mustela erminea*
r Least Weasel *Mustela nivalis*
c Long-tailed Weasel *Mustela frenata*
u American Mink *Mustela vison*
r Wolverine *Gulo gulo*
c American Badger *Taxidea taxus*
c Striped Skunk *Mephitis mephitis*
u North American River Otter *Lontra canadensis*

Procyonidae – Raccoon Family

u Northern Raccoon *Procyon lotor*

Ursidae – Bear Family

c Black Bear *Ursus americanus*
c Grizzly Bear *Ursos arctos*

Order Chiroptera (Bats)

u Long-eared Myotis *Myotis evotis*
a Little Brown Bat *Myotis lucifugus*
c Long-legged Myotis *Myotis volans*
u Hoary Bat *Lasiurus cinereus*
c Silver-haired bat *Lasionycteris noctivagans*
c Big Brown Bat *Eptesicus fuscus*
r Townsend's big-eared bat *Corynorhinus townsendii*
r Fringed myotis *Myotis thysanodes*

Order Lagomorpha (Rabbits and Hares)

c American Pika *Ochotona princeps*
c Snowshoe Hare *Lepus americanus*

Order Rodentia (Gnawing Mammals)

c Yellow-pine Chipmunk *Neotamias amoenus*
c Least Chipmunk *Neotamias minimus*
r Uinta Chipmunk *Neotamias umbrinus*
c Yellow-bellied Marmot *Marmota flaviventris*
a Uinta Ground Squirrel *Spermophilus armatus*
c Golden-mantled Ground Squirrel *Spermophilus lateralis*
c Red Squirrel *Tamasciurus hudsonicus*
r Northern Flying Squirrel *Glaucomys sabrinus*
c Northern Pocket Gopher *Thomomys talpoides*
c American Beaver *Castor canadensis*
a Deer Mouse *Peromyscus maniculatus*
c Bushy-tailed Woodrat *Neotoma cinerea*
r Western Heather Vole *Phenacomys intermedius*
a Meadow Vole *Microtus pennsylvanicus*
a Montane Vole *Microtus montanus*
a Long-tailed Vole *Microtus longicaudus*
u Water Vole *Microtus richardsoni*
r Sagebrush Vole *Lemmiscus curtatus*
c Southern red-backed vole *Clethrionomys gapperi*
c Common Muskrat *Ondatra zibethicus*
u Western Jumping Mouse *Zapus princeps*
c North American Porcupine *Erethizon dorsatum*

Order Soricomorpha – Shrew Family

c Masked Shrew *Sorex cinereus*
c Dusky Shrew *Sorex monticolus*
r Dwarf Shrew *Sorex nanus*
u American Water Shrew *Sorex palustris*
r Preble's Shrew *Sorex preblei*
u Vagrant Shrew *Sorex vagrans*

Symbol Key

a Abundant – likely to be seen in appropriate habitat and season.
c Common – frequently seen in appropriate habitat and season.
u Uncommon – seen irregularly in appropriate habitat and season.
o Occasional – seen only occasionally in appropriate habitat and season.
r Rare – unexpected even in appropriate habitat and season.

Species list and abundance categories based on NPS Species List accepted status and occurrence research report.

Etiquette for Wildlife Viewing

Do not approach or harass wildlife.

- Use binoculars, a spotting scope or long camera lens for close-up views and photographs.
- Maintain a distance of at least 100 yards from bears and wolves, and 25 yards from all other wildlife. Do not position yourself between an adult and its offspring; adults may attack.
- Never touch, pick up or disturb young. Mothers will sometimes leave their offspring temporarily while they search for food.
- If your actions cause an animal to flee, you are too close. You have also deprived other visitors of a viewing opportunity.

Do not feed wildlife.

Feeding wild animals including ground squirrels and birds makes them dependent on people. Normal behavior and nutrition may be altered and could impact an animals' ability to survive winter. Habituation to people may result in aggressive behavior for all animals.

Bear Safety

Black and grizzly bears live throughout the park and may be active at any time. Follow these precautions or ask a ranger for more information:

- Do not allow bears to obtain human food. This may result in aggressive behavior. Often then the bear becomes a threat and must be destroyed.
- Avoid encounters. Make noise such as clapping, shouting or singing so bears are aware of your presence. Be especially careful in dense brush or along streams where bears may not hear you.
- Do not run from a bear. Running may elicit an attack. If the bear is unaware of you, change your route to avoid the bear. If the bear is aware of you but not aggressive, back away slowly, talking in an even tone.
- If a bear charges, stand still, do not run. Bears often "bluff charge," stopping before contact. Remain still until the bear stops, then back away slowly. Do not drop your pack; it may protect your body if attacked.

