



MAMMALS, AMPHIBIANS, and REPTILES

of the Minnesota North Shore State Parks area



MAMMALS

Ungulates

- White-tailed Deer *Odocoileus virginianus*
- Moose *Alces alces*

Carnivores

- Red Fox *Vulpes vulpes*
- Coyote *Canis latrans*
- Gray Wolf *Canis lupus*
- Raccoon *Procyon lotor*
- Black Bear, American *Ursus americanus*
- Pine Marten *Martes americana*
- Fisher *Martes pennanti*
- Ermine (Short-tailed Weasel) *Mustela erminea*
- Long-tailed Weasel *Mustela frenata*
- Mink *Mustela vison*
- Striped Skunk *Mephitis mephitis*
- River Otter *Lutra canadensis*
- Mountain Lion (Cougar, Puma) *Felis concolor*
- Lynx *Lynx canadensis*
- Bobcat *Lynx rufus*

Rodents

- Woodchuck (Groundhog) *Marmota monax*
- Eastern Chipmunk *Tamias striatus*
- Least Chipmunk *Eutamias minimus*
- Franklin's Ground Squirrel* *Spermophilus franklinii*
- Gray Squirrel *Sciurus carolinensis*
- Red Squirrel *Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*
- Northern Flying Squirrel *Glaucomys sabrinus*
- Beaver *Castor canadensis*
- Deer Mouse *Peromyscus maniculatus*
- Southern Red-backed Vole *Clethrionomys gapperi*
- Meadow Vole *Microtus pennsylvanicus*
- Muskrat *Ondatra zibethica*
- Meadow Jumping Mouse *Zapus hudsonius*
- Woodland Jumping Mouse *Napaeozapus insignis*
- Porcupine *Erethizon dorsatum*

Lagomorphs

- Eastern Cottontail *Sylvilagus floridanus*
- Snowshoe Hare *Lepus americanus*

Bats

- Little Brown Bat *Myotis lucifugus*
- Northern Myotis *Myotis septentrionalis*
- Silver-haired Bat *Lasionycteris noctivagans*
- Eastern Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus subflavus*
- Big Brown Bat *Eptesicus Fuscus*
- Red Bat *Lasiurus borealis*
- Hoary Bat *Lasiurus cinereus*

Insectivores

- Masked Shrew *Sorex cinereus*
- Arctic Shrew *Sorex arcticus*
- Water Shrew *Sorex palustris*
- Smoky Shrew *Sorex fumens*
- Short-tailed Shrew *Blarina brevicauda*
- Star-nosed Mole *Condylura cristata*

AMPHIBIANS

Toads and Frogs

- Wood Frog *Rana sylvatica*
- Spring Peeper *Pseudacris crucifer*
- Western Chorus Frog *Pseudacris triseriata*
- Northern Leopard Frog *Rana pipiens*
- American Toad *Bufo americanus*
- Gray Treefrog *Hyla versicolor*
- Mink Frog *Rana septentrionalis*
- Green Frog *Rana clamitans*

Salamanders

- Blue-Spotted Salamander *Ambystoma laterale*
- Eastern Newt *Notophthalmus viridescens*
- Redback Salamander *Plethodon cinereus*
- Tiger Salamander *Ambystoma tigrinum*

REPTILES


Turtles

- Painted Turtle *Chrysemys picta*
- Snapping Turtle *Chelydra serpentina*

Snakes

- Common Garter Snake *Thamnophis sirtalis*
- Redbelly Snake *Soreria occipitomaculata*
- Ringneck Snake *Diadophis punctatus*

Did You Know:


 **Frogs** can be identified by their calls, just like birds. The frog chorus is fixed – some frogs start singing in late April while others only begin in June. (Frogs are listed in the order they start calling.)

Bats are beneficial in controlling insects . . . all of Minnesota's 7 species are insect-eaters!

Black bears can be shades of brown, cinnamon, black, and even white (blonde).

Wolves live in packs. A pack is a family of wolves.

Moose habitat along the North Shore begins around Tettegouche State Park. Inland northeastern Minnesota (away from Lake Superior shoreline) is also moose habitat.

 **Caribou & wolverines** are boreal animals that used to live in far northeastern Minnesota until the early 1900s. They are considered extirpated (no longer living) in the state, but can be found in Canada.

Lynx and **Mountain Lions** are rare in Minnesota.

Raccoons, common throughout the state, are **rarely** found in the three northeast counties.

*Franklin's ground squirrels, non-native to the North Shore, are found in Gooseberry Falls State Park.



Animals and the Lake Superior Watershed



Conifer-dependent birds, wolves, pine martens, fishers, black bears, moose, and a host of other animals roam the North Shore Highlands, a name given to the land located along Lake Superior, the world's largest freshwater lake by area. Here, in Minnesota, a variety of northern hardwoods and conifer trees, old growth forests, unusual alpine/sub-arctic rock shore communities as well as other north woods wildflowers, ferns, mosses, lichens, and more can be found within the watershed.

The Lake Superior watershed is not only the lake water, but also the land that surrounds it and all of the rivers that drain into the Great Lake. These tributaries (rivers) connect the lake to the surrounding land, transporting nutrients across the watershed. They provide spawning habitats for Great Lakes fish as well as habitat for numerous species of invertebrates. Many mammals, birds, and other critters rely on the north woods mixed coniferous forests in order to survive as well.

Life in the Forest

· Every species in the ecosystem has a role to play and depends upon another species in order to survive.



· Large trees and the forest understory provide habitat for small and large animals. Shrubs provide excellent cover for small mammals from birds of prey or other carnivores.

· Squirrels and other rodents feed off the seeds found in conifer trees and help disperse them throughout the forest, encouraging new growth in tree seedlings.



· Dead, dying, and hollow trees provide homes and nesting places for all kinds of animals. As trees decay, thousands of insects and other small creatures move in, which in turn provide food for other animals.

· Fallen leaves and dead plants and animals are turned into nutrient-rich soil by little animals (like ants, beetles, millipedes, to name a few). Without these small, underappreciated creatures whose important role in nature often goes unrecognized, the forest wouldn't be the same!

· Natural fire (for example, fire started by lightening) plays a role by helping to thin out overcrowded forests so that other trees can receive more light and grow stronger. Some conifers have serotinous cones (like jack pine or black spruce) that need fire to help free the seeds from its cones. Fire also adds nutrients to the soil.

Animals, the Forest, and You

· Humans have an immense impact on the environment. For example, the North Shore area has some of the most visited state parks in Minnesota. This means hundreds of thousands of people visit each year, some of whom stray off designated trails. Each step off the main trail does just a little damage, but the destruction can add up quickly.



· Soil compaction can cause root damage to trees and kill them. The loss of soil, know as erosion, can also cause severe damage like the clogging of streams with silt. Erosion can also expose a tree's roots and cause it extreme stress and possibly death.

· Animals have their own sources of natural food. Food left by the roadside or in other places by well-intentioned people, often attracts animals to an unnecessary death. Please **help** the wild animals **by not** feeding them.



Plants and Animals are Protected in State Parks.