ROYAL CANADIAN ARMY CADETS

RED STAR

INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE

SECTION 3

EO M221.03 – IDENTIFY PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL WILDLIFE

Total Time: 60 min

PREPARATION

PRE-LESSON INSTRUCTIONS

Resources needed for the delivery of this lesson are listed in the lesson specification located in A-CR-CCP-702/PG-001, Chapter 4. Specific uses for said resources are identified throughout the Instructional Guide within the TP for which they are required.

Review the lesson content and become familiar with the material prior to delivering the lesson.

Learning stations are a form of group work, where the cadets learn by sorting through information presented. When setting up learning stations, ensure there is enough room for each cadet to be comfortable, and adequate space for writing down information. When the cadets arrive at a learning station, all information needed shall already be available. These stations should be placed closely together to minimize time for movement; however far enough apart to avoid interruptions from other groups. For this lesson, choose and set up a minimum of four learning stations for provincial/territorial wildlife.

Photocopy handouts located at Annexes A and B.

PRE-LESSON ASSIGNMENT

N/A.

APPROACH

An in-class activity was chosen for TP1 as it is an interactive way to provoke thought and stimulate interest among cadets.

An interactive lecture was chosen for TP2 to orient the cadets to potential risks of animals in the field and present background material.

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW

N/A.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson the cadet shall be expected to know characteristics of their provincial/territorial wildlife, specifically those that may be encountered when in the field.

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IMPORTANCE

It is important for cadets to be able to identify the wildlife in their province/territory. There are many species of wildlife throughout Canada, and they differ in each province. While on an expedition, cadets may encounter a variety of wildlife in their natural habitats. Most conflicts between man and nature can be avoided by being able to identify wildlife and knowing their specific characteristics. All cadets should be aware of what to do when they come across wildlife in the field.

Teaching point 1 **Introduce the Cadets to Provincial/Territorial Wildlife**

Time: 40 min Method: In-Class Activity



The provincial/territorial wildlife information sheets for this activity are located at Annex A.

The provincial/territorial wildlife worksheet for this activity is located at Annex B.



Cadets should be aware of any provincial/territorial wildlife left out of this activity. If time permits, give the cadets the opportunity to read the remaining information sheets.

ACTIVITY

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this activity is to gain knowledge of some provincial/territorial wildlife that cadets may encounter when in the field.

RESOURCES

- Provincial/territorial wildlife information sheets;
- Provincial/territorial wildlife worksheets; and
- Pens/pencils.

ACTIVITY LAYOUT

Four learning stations will be set up and clearly marked for each of the chosen wildlife and will include:

- provincial/territorial wildlife information sheets, which will include:
  - the general description;
  - the habitat;
  - the diet; and
  - any unique characteristics;
- provincial/territorial wildlife worksheets; and
- pens/pencils.

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ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS

1. Divide cadets into four groups and place each group at one of the wildlife learning stations.

2. Assign each group a leader. The group leader will be responsible for assigning tasks to fellow cadets. Each station will need a recorder and a reader.

3. Cadets will have eight minutes at each station to fill out a provincial/territorial worksheet (it is only necessary for each group to fill out one worksheet).

4. After eight minutes, the groups will rotate clockwise to the next station, where they will have another eight minutes to complete a provincial/territorial worksheet.

5. Rotate the groups through the remaining stations.

6. Have the cadets share the information they recorded from the station they have just completed with the rest of the cadets. In most cases, the groups will have recorded the same information for each station. If a group has listed different information, it will be shared after the presenting group has finished.

SAFETY

N/A.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 1

The cadets' participation in the activity will serve as the confirmation of this TP.

Teaching point 2 **Discuss Potential Risks of Animals in the Field**

Time: 10 min Method: Interactive Lecture



The word "attack" is referred to numerous times throughout this TP. Ensure cadets are aware that an attack is a form of violence and does not always indicate injury or harm.

Though attacks are uncommon, stress the importance of knowing what to do if the situation ever arises.

BEARS

Bear attacks are uncommon. Wild animals generally prefer to avoid human contact and bears are no exception. Most documented encounters occurred when the bear's natural avoidance behaviour shifted to aggression. This shift is normally caused from one, or a combination of, the following:

- They are suddenly surprised.
- They are protecting young or food.
- They follow food and food-like odours to humans.
- They are provoked by other animals (e.g. dogs).
- They are accustomed to people and have lost their natural fear.

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The best way to live safely with bears is to avoid contact with them. There are important prevention actions that can be taken, such as:

- making noise;
- hiking in groups and mainly in the daylight;
- staying on established trails;
- using extra caution when travelling near rushing water or into the wind;
- staying in open area as much as possible; and
- disposing of garbage frequently, in designated areas.



When hiking/training in an area that has bears, always have bear spray or pepper spray on hand.

If you carry bear spray, be aware that wind, spray distance, rain, freezing temperatures, and product shelf life can all influence its effectiveness.

When a Bear Attacks

According to Parks Canada there are two kinds of attacks, based on the bear's behaviour—defensive and predatory.

Defensive Attack. This attack normally occurs when the bear is feeding, protecting its young and/or unaware of a person's presence. It attacks mainly because it sees the person as a threat. It is the most common type of attack.

Predatory Attack. This attack normally occurs when the bear is stalking a person along a trail and then attacks. It may also happen at night.

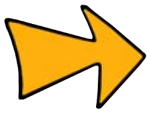
In Tawrell, P., *Camping and Wilderness Survival*, Leonard Paul Tawrell states the following actions to take when a **black bear** attacks.

- Do not play dead.
- Fight back – hit its snout, try to poke a stick in its eye, throw dirt or rocks into its eyes, do anything to distract attention.
- Do not climb a tree or run. Black bears can climb trees very fast!

In Tawrell, P., *Camping and Wilderness Survival*, Leonard Paul Tawrell states the following actions to take when a **grizzly bear** attacks.

- Play dead by lying flat on the stomach with legs spread out, cover the neck with intertwined fingers, and have elbows covering the face. Spread the legs out to prevent the bear from rolling you over.
- Do not attempt to run, as the bear can outrun you and the action of running will trigger the bear's predatory instinct.
- If the bear rolls you over, keep rolling to land on the stomach.
- At this point the bear might get bored and leave. Do not move until it is clear that the bear has left. It might only be lying nearby and resting.
- If the bear starts to lick your wounds, the attack has turned very serious and fighting back is necessary. Try hitting it on its snout or poking a stick or finger in its eyes.

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There are bear-specific characteristics to note.

Black Bears. Black bears have been known to be on the lookout for “easy” calories. Once they find human food or garbage (if they are food-conditioned), they continue to seek it out from backpacks, picnic tables, coolers, etc. When accustomed to humans, their natural fear fades and they take more chances to find food.

Grizzly Bears. The most common circumstance of attack is the “sudden encounter“. To decrease chances of coming into a conflict, regularly make noise when hiking.

Polar Bears. Polar bears have been known to stalk humans as prey. They do not generally attack, but if someone is alone, they are easy prey for a hungry polar bear. When in polar bear country, a firearm is essential for safety.

WOLVES

Most people will never see a wolf; they are shy and generally avoid humans. Wolves can, however, lose their fear of humans and may approach camping areas or homes.

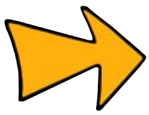
Attacks by healthy wild wolves do occur but are rare. The majority of attacks have been from rabid wolves.

Preventative actions include:

- Never feed wolves or any other wildlife.
- Dispose of all garbage.
- Ignore them as much as possible if they come into sight.
- Never allow a wolf to get close.
- Never approach a wolf.

According to the International Wolf Centre, if a wolf acts aggressively (growls or snarls) or fearlessly, actions that should be taken include:

- raising and waving arms to appear larger;
- backing away slowly with back turned;
- making noise; and
- throwing objects.



There has never been a documented case of a healthy, wild wolf killing a person in North America. Most wolves are not dangerous to humans. Injuries that have occurred by wolves have been caused by a few wolves that became fearless of humans due to habituation (wolves becoming too comfortable in human inhabited areas).

COYOTES

Unlike wolves, coyotes do not have a natural fear of human beings. In highly populated areas, they are often seen patrolling, looking for garbage or small animals. Coyotes that are being fed will often bite, sometimes seriously.

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Preventative actions include:

- Never feed coyotes or any other wildlife.
- Dispose of all garbage.
- Supervise children closely.
- Keep pets inside at night.
- Never approach a coyote.

According to the Government of Manitoba – Manitoba Conservation, if a person encounters a coyote actions that should be taken include:

- stopping immediately and remaining calm;
- raising and waving arms to appear larger;
- backing away slowly if it is not looking in the direction; and
- throwing stones or other objects.



Never turn away from a coyote or run since this will encourage a coyote to chase. If a coyote ever attacks, fight back.

COUGARS

Cougar attacks are unlikely among humans, partially because cougars do not perceive humans as prey. Cougar populations are growing throughout western Canada. Females with kittens and those that are cornered, surprised or feeding on a kill may act aggressively. Cougars often show curiosity toward human activities without behaving aggressively.

Cougars may display various behaviours as a warning before an attack, such as stalking, crouching, sweeping their tail, extending their eye contact, snarling, keeping their body low to the ground, and pumping their rear legs.

Some preventative actions include:

- Do not hike alone.
- If confronted, stay calm and do not run; it may stimulate the instinct to chase.
- Maintain eye contact and shout as calmly as possible.
- Try to appear larger by raising and waving arms.
- Arm yourself with a stick.
- Never turn your back.
- Do not “play dead”.
- Throw rocks.

In Tawrell, P., *Camping and Wilderness Survival*, Leonard Paul Tawrell states if a cougar attacks, fight back aggressively using any object nearby such as sticks or rocks.

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CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 2

QUESTIONS

Q1. What are some preventive actions to take against a bear attack?

Q2. What action should be taken if a wolf growls or snarls at you?

Q3. What steps should be taken if you encounter a cougar?

ANTICIPATED ANSWERS

A1. Some preventive actions include:

- making noise;
- hiking in groups and in daylight;
- staying on established trails;
- using extra caution when travelling near rushing water or into the wind;
- staying in open area as much as possible; and
- disposing of garbage frequently, in designated areas.

A2. If a wolf acts aggressively (growls or snarls) or fearlessly, the following actions should be taken, such as:

- raising and waving arms;
- backing away slowly with back turned;
- making noise; and
- throwing objects.

A3. Preventative actions for cougar encounters include:

- Do not hike alone.
- If confronted, stay calm and do not run; it may stimulate the instinct to chase.
- Maintain eye contact and shout as calmly as possible.
- Try to appear larger.
- Arm yourself with a stick.
- Never turn your back.
- Do not “play dead”.
- Throw rocks.

END OF LESSON CONFIRMATION

The cadets’ participation in the activity in TP1 will serve as the confirmation of this lesson.

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CONCLUSION

HOMEWORK/READING/PRACTICE

N/A.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

N/A.

CLOSING STATEMENT

Recognizing provincial/territorial wildlife is an important aspect of field training. Since cadets spend time training and hiking in the field, it is essential to recognize the wildlife that are present as well as to know how to coexist with them.

INSTRUCTOR NOTES/REMARKS

N/A.

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PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL WILDLIFE



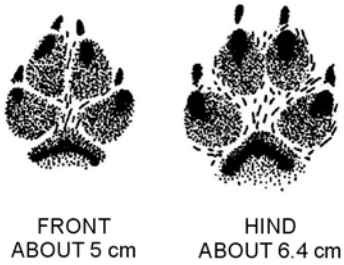
THE RED FOX

Bowers, N., Bowers, R., and Kaufman, K., Kaufman Focus Guides: Mammals of North America, Houghton Mifflin Company (p. 131)



RED FOX LOCATIONS

Bowers, N., Bowers, R., and Kaufman, K., Kaufman Focus Guides: Mammals of North America, Houghton Mifflin Company (p. 130)



RED FOX TRACKS

Canadian Wildlife Service & Canadian Wildlife Federation, 2003, Hinterland Who's Who - Mammal Fact Sheets. Retrieved 26 February 2007, from http://www.hww.ca/hww2p.asp?id=102&cid=0

The red fox is a small, dog-like mammal, with a sharp pointed face and ears. It has a lightly built body, a coat of lustrous long fur, and a large bushy tail. Generally, male foxes are bigger than females. Adult foxes weigh between 3.6 and 6.8 kg and are normally between 90 and 112 cm in length. Size varies between individuals and geographic locations—those in the north are normally bigger.

The colour of the coat of a red fox is normally a variation of reddish brown, but can be silver, black, or even have a black cross on the back. The lower legs and feet of the red fox are usually blackish, and the tail has a white tip.

Red foxes are Canada's most widespread mammal. They are found in all provinces and territories. Foxes are normally found in areas where there is a mix of open field and wooded or brushy country; however, they can also survive easily in a city.

A fox is both a hunter and a scavenger. Their diet consists of rodents, rabbits, birds, insects, fruit, earthworms, reptiles, and carrion (dead flesh). Wolves, coyotes, and dogs will chase and sometimes kill foxes when the opportunity presents itself.

Humans hunt foxes for their fur. Hunting and trapping are not authorized during the season when young are being raised. Hunting season occurs in early winter when the fur is good quality for trapping. Nuisance foxes are often destroyed on a local basis.

Rabies is a contagious and fatal viral disease that is transferred through the saliva of the affected animal to a human. It causes madness and convulsions. Foxes have occasionally become a menace to public health, especially in rural areas, when epidemics of rabies sweep through wild mammal populations. Once symptoms are confirmed, rabid foxes should be avoided. When rabid, the normally shy foxes show no fear of people and are often seen in daylight. In advanced stages of the disease, they may foam at the mouth.

Figure A-1 The Red Fox

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THE CARIBOU

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CARIBOU LOCATIONS

Bowers, N., Bowers, R., and Kaufman, K., Kaufman Focus Guides: Mammals of North America, Houghton Mifflin Company (p. 158)



CARIBOU TRACK

Bowers, N., Bowers, R., and Kaufman, K., Kaufman Focus Guides: Mammals of North America, Houghton Mifflin Company (p. 158)

The caribou is a member of the deer family. They are very tough and able to survive year-round in harsh climates. Their short, stocky bodies conserve heat, their long legs help them move through snow, and their long dense winter coats provide effective insulation, even during periods of low temperature and high wind.

Caribou normally have dark faces and noses, light cream-coloured necks, and blackish legs. Size and colour will vary with location. The Southern Woodland Caribou is the largest and darkest; Peary's Caribou of the high Arctic islands is the smallest and palest. Colour will also vary with season. Caribou will be dark and brown in summer, and pale and grey in the winter. Unlike other deer, both males and females have antlers. Their antlers shed annually. Bulls (males) lose theirs shortly after the fall and cows (females) keep theirs until calving in the spring. Female antlers have a fuzzy covering, called velvet, which contains blood vessels that carry nutrients for growth.

Caribou dwell in a variety of places such as forests, mountains, and tundra. In summer, caribou feed on a wide variety of plant material, including grasses, shrubs, sedges, twigs, and mushrooms. In winter, they feed mainly on lichens.

When the caribou is in danger, it rears up on its hind legs and deposits a scent that alerts other caribou to the threat.

It is believed that the caribou's name was derived from the Mi'kmaq word "xalibu" which means "the one who paws", mainly because they have very versatile hooves. In the winter, their hooves grow to an incredible length, giving them firm footing on crusty snow. In the summer, their hooves are worn away by travel over hard ground and rocks. They function as efficient scoops in the snow when trying to uncover lichens. Caribou are also excellent swimmers and their hooves function well as paddles.

There are four subspecies of caribou in Canada: woodland, Peary, barren-ground west of the Mackenzie River (also known as Grant's caribou), and barren-ground east of the Mackenzie River. The Mackenzie River is located in the Northwest Territories, and it flows into the Arctic Ocean.

Figure A-2 The Caribou

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THE WHITE-TAILED DEER

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WHITE-TAILED DEER LOCATIONS

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WHITE-TAILED DEER TRACK

Bowers, N., Bowers, R., and Kaufman, K., Kaufman Focus Guides: Mammals of North America, Houghton Mifflin Company (p. 150)

The white-tailed deer is very well known in Canada. It is recognized by its habit of flourishing its tails over its back, revealing a stark white underside and white buttocks. The tail has a broad base and is about 30 cm long. When lowered, it is brown with a white fringe. In summer, the white-tailed deer has reddish fur on the back and sides and is white beneath; in winter, the upper parts turn greyish. Full grown white-tailed deer typically exceed one metre at shoulder height and weight about 110 kg (245 lbs); however, those in northern regions can weigh up to 200 kg (440 lbs).

The antlers of a mature white-tailed deer curve forward and have single points that project upward and often slightly inward. Males grow new antlers each year. One of every 1000 females bear small, simple antlers. Occasionally, white-tailed deer will get their antlers hopelessly entangled with those of another male during a mating season battle, resulting in the slow death of both animals.

White-tailed deer can be found in open forests bordering fields and natural meadows. They are browsers and grazers, feeding on a wide variety of plant materials, from twigs and leaves to grasses, berries, acorns, and fungi. At times, white-tailed deer will eat row crops and garden plants.

When alarmed, the deer leaps (its hind feet hitting the ground before its front feet), flags its tail, and shows the bright white underside.

Deer reproduce quickly. A healthy herd is capable of almost doubling its numbers during one good year. Although a series of severe winters may tend to reduce the range of the white-tailed deer, a few positive years allow it to reoccupy the lost ground, rebuild populations, and even extend range further northward.

Deer in Canada are relatively free of serious diseases or parasites. Typically, their natural predators are the wolf, coyote, and bobcat. These predators have been greatly reduced in number and only occasionally exert significant pressure on the white-tailed deer. Free-roaming dogs sometimes take a heavy toll on deer of all ages; particularly in late winter when crusted snow aids dogs but hinders weakened deer. Deer may have difficulty surviving in the winter, especially if there are too many competing for food, or if the snow is deep.

Figure A-3 The White-tailed Deer

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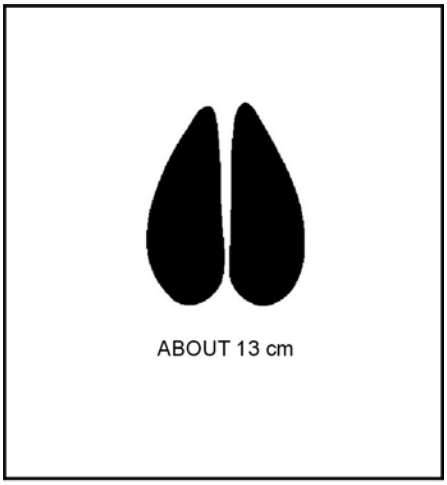
THE MOOSE

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MOOSE LOCATIONS

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MOOSE TRACK

Bowers, N., Bowers, R., and Kaufman, K., Kaufman Focus Guides: Mammals of North America, Houghton Mifflin Company (p. 154)

Moose have long, slim legs. Their bodies have massive muscles at the shoulders, giving them a humped appearance. The head is heavy and compact, and the nose extends in a long, mournful-looking arch. Most moose have a pendant of fur-covered skin that hangs about 30 cm long from the throat, commonly referred to as a bell. Their colour varies from dark brown, almost black, to reddish or greyish brown, with grey or white legs. Big bulls (males) weigh up to 600 kg (1320 lbs) in most of Canada; however, the subspecies found in the Yukon territory can weigh as much as 800 kg (1760 lbs). Moose have a great appetite and will consume up to 20 kg (45 lbs) of food per day. Their preferred food includes aquatic plants in the summer, twigs and woody stems in the winter, willow, and aspen leaves. The eyesight of the moose is extremely poor; however, they have great senses of smell and hearing.

Like other members of the deer family, moose normally shed their antlers. Most moose will lose them in November, but some younger bulls may carry them until April. Their antlers can span up to 150 cm. Moose antlers have a broad flattening throughout and are pale, sometimes white.

Moose can tolerate cold weather well, but suffer in the heat because they cannot perspire. During summer, moose can be found in marshy and watered areas, trying to cool off. Moose are excellent divers and swimmers, as are their young.

Despite their huge size, adult moose are sometimes taken by predators such as wolves, black bears, and grizzly bears. Wolves and bears try to catch calves, but the mother moose can often successfully defend by striking out powerfully with her hooves. People should always avoid females with calves.

Ticks are common on moose, especially in late winter. Moose are significantly weakened because the ticks suck blood which causes them to rub off their hair, and hence causes heat loss. When food is lacking, moose may develop a parasitic tapeworm called hydatid.

Moose have adapted well to human activities and are an important economic resource in Canada. Moose hunting generates over $500 million annually in economic activity. With continued management, they should always be part of Canadian culture.

Figure A-4 The Moose

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THE SKUNK

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SKUNK LOCATIONS

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SKUNK TRACK

Bowers, N., Bowers, R., and Kaufman, K., Kaufman Focus Guides: Mammals of North America, Houghton Mifflin Company (p. 104)

The striped skunk is about the size of a cat. It has a stout body, a small head, short legs, and a bushy tail. The thick, glossy fur is black, with a thin white stripe down the centre of its face and a broad white stripe beginning on the back of the head. The tail is mostly black, and the stripes may extend down it, usually to a clump of white at the tip.

The striped skunk has long, straight claws for digging out burrows of mice, ripping apart old logs for grubs and larvae, and digging in the sand for turtle eggs. It moves slowly and relies on its scent glands for safety.

The striped skunk is a useful small mammal that inhabits farmlands, grasslands, and forests. They generally live in the abandoned dens of woodchucks, foxes, or other mammals of similar or larger size and will occasionally make their own dens. Skunks can also be found in stumps, rock piles, or refuse heaps. If a skunk digs its own den, it will be simple. A skunk will gather leaves by placing them under its body and then shuffle along to the den with the leaves between its legs as it moves. They are normally seen late afternoon and through the night.

A striped skunk diet consists of insects, mice, shrews, ground squirrels, young rabbits, birds' eggs, and a variety of plants. They are an important predator on insect pests. It is preyed upon by bobcats and large birds. Motorists are also a great hazard to the skunk. Like porcupines, they are overly confident of their defence mechanism and often pay heavily for their manners when crossing highways.

Skunks belong to the weasel family, all of whose members have well-developed scent glands and a musky odour. The striped skunk will spray a bad smelling fluid to defend itself. This spray can travel as far as six metres, and the smell is strong enough to be carried almost one kilometre in the wind. The scent is produced by a thick, yellow, oily fluid, secreted by two glands located on each side of the anus. The glands are about the size of a grape and contain about a tablespoon of musk. They are connected by tubes to two small nipples that are hidden when the tail is down, and exposed when the tail is raised. The musk is normally discharged as a last measure after repeated warning signs. They will usually try to retreat from a human or large enemy. An angry skunk will growl or hiss, and stamp its front feet rapidly. They may even walk a short distance on its front feet with its tail high in the air. The striped skunk cannot spray from this position. To perform this defence, the skunk usually humps its back and turns in a U-shaped position so that both the head and the tail face the enemy.

Figure A-5 The Striped Skunk

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THE RACCOON

Bowers, N., Bowers, R., and Kaufman, K., Kaufman Focus Guides: Mammals of North America, Houghton Mifflin Company (p. 99)



RACCOON LOCATIONS

Bowers, N., Bowers, R., and Kaufman, K., Kaufman Focus Guides: Mammals of North America, Houghton Mifflin Company (p. 98)



RACCOON TRACKS

Bowers, N., Bowers, R., and Kaufman, K., Kaufman Focus Guides: Mammals of North America, Houghton Mifflin Company (p. 98)

Raccoons are well-known for their mischievous-looking black face mask. They are normally greyish in colour with a tail marked by five to ten alternating black and brown rings. Body colouration varies from albino (white), to black or brown. Raccoons begin to shed their fur in the spring, which lasts for about three months. Their head is broad, with a pointed snout. Their short rounded ears measure about four to six centimetres. Raccoons have black eyes. The body and tail length for adults averages about 80 cm; males are generally larger than females. Size varies with climate.

Raccoons are able to live in a wide range of habitats. They can be found in hardwood swamps, forests, marshes, farmlands, and even in cities. They always favour the vicinity of water and trees and are plentiful in wooded swamps.

Raccoons will consume practically any food item, plant or animal. They like corn, crayfish, nuts, and fruits, but there is a seasonal shift in diet depending on availability of food items. They are a familiar “masked bandit”, and have been long known to raid garbage cans and garden plots at night.

The name raccoon is derived from the Algonquian word arakun, meaning “he scratches with his hand“. They use their front feet like hands to manipulate food items and are famed for appearing to “wash” their food before eating it.

Since the raccoon can be easily tamed when young, many people have had their lives enriched by a close association with this intelligent, inquisitive animal. Males, however, may become aggressive as they mature and usually end up being returned to the wild. The raccoon is one of the few creatures that are capable of making the adjustment from family pet back to wild animal.

Figure A-6 The Raccoon

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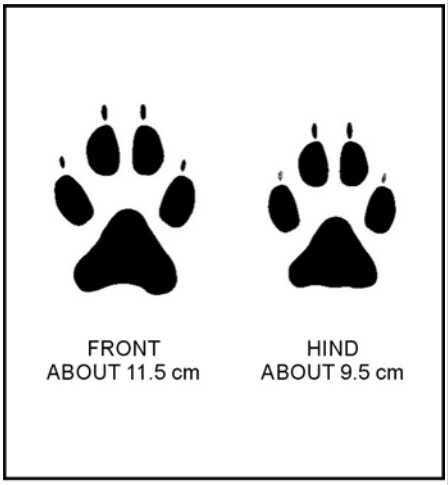
THE GRAY WOLF

Bowers, N., Bowers, R., and Kaufman, K., Kaufman Focus Guides: Mammals of North America, Houghton Mifflin Company (p. 127)



GRAY WOLF LOCATIONS

Bowers, N., Bowers, R., and Kaufman, K., Kaufman Focus Guides: Mammals of North America, Houghton Mifflin Company (p. 126)



GRAY WOLF TRACKS

Bowers, N., Bowers, R., and Kaufman, K., Kaufman Focus Guides: Mammals of North America, Houghton Mifflin Company (p. 126)

Wolves, also known as gray wolves, vary in colour. They are often grey-brown, but can also be black, white, or reddish. They have long bushy tails. Their colour variation is a good example of natural selection; since those found in the north are normally white and those found in forests will normally have greyish, greenish, and brownish coats. Wolves look a lot like a German Sheppard, but they have a narrower chest, longer legs, and bigger feet. When running, wolves carry their tails straight out behind them.

Wolves have a highly organized social structure that centres on a dominant male and a dominant female. A dominant wolf will hold its tail high and stand stiff-legged. They are very territorial.

Gray wolves live in packs of five to ten which normally consist of a breeding pair, their young from recent years, and sometimes unrelated wolves. All pack members cooperate in hunting and sharing kills. They travel great distances over home ranges. When hunting, they can put on bursts of speed up to 70 kilometres per hour. In addition to preying hoofed animals such as moose or bison, they take hares, beavers, and many smaller creatures. Wolves communicate, and maintain distance from other packs, by howling.

The main prey of wolves are large mammals such as deer, moose, caribou, and elk. Wolves also eat a variety of smaller mammals and birds, but these rarely make up more than a small part of their diet. Wolves work hard for their food. Studies show that they kill only about one large mammal for every 10 chased. In winter, they usually kill old and young animals. When prey numbers decline, the entire pack of wolves will prey on all age groups. In summer, much of the wolves' diet consists of young animals born that year, because they are the easiest to catch.

The wolf was once a much criticized animal. In popular children's tales like *Little Red Riding Hood* and *The Boy Who Cried Wolf*, the wolf is made out to be a raider and a killer of livestock and people. There are no records of wolves killing humans in Canada or the United States. Today, many people know that scientists studying wolves have lived very close to dens where there were pups without being attacked. In areas where wolves are hunted or trapped, they fear people and are very wary. However, in remote places, such as the Canadian Arctic, they show little fear and will often allow people to live near them.

Figure A-7 The Gray Wolf

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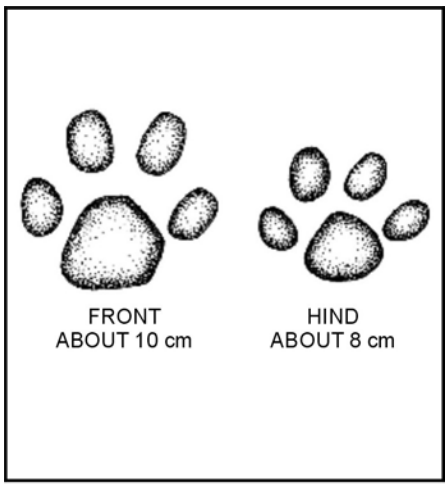
THE CANADIAN LYNX

Bowers, N., Bowers, R., and Kaufman, K., Kaufman Focus Guides: Mammals of North America, Houghton Mifflin Company (p. 139)



CANADIAN LYNX LOCATIONS

Bowers, N., Bowers, R., and Kaufman, K., Kaufman Focus Guides: Mammals of North America, Houghton Mifflin Company (p. 138)



CANADIAN LYNX TRACKS

Minnesota Trappers Association, Mike Stutz, 2007, Minnesota Trappers Association - Canadian Lynx. Retrieved 12 March 2007, from http://www.mntrappers.com/lynx.html

The Canadian lynx resembles a very large domestic cat. It has a short tail, long legs, large feet, and prominent ear tufts. Its winter coat is light grey and slightly speckled with long guard hairs; the under fur is brownish, and the ear tufts and the tip of the tail are black. The summer coat is much shorter than the winter coat and has a reddish brown cast.

Its large feet, which are covered during the winter by a dense growth of coarse hair, help the lynx travel over snow. The Canadian lynx can spread its toes in soft snow, expanding its “snowshoes”. The lynx has large eyes and ears and relies on its acute sight and hearing when hunting. The lynx’s claws, like those of most other cats, are retractable and used primarily for catching prey and fighting.

The lynx makes a variety of sounds, like those made by house cats, but louder.

The Canadian lynx generally lives in forested wilderness areas. It prefers old growth boreal forests with dense undercover of wood and windfalls. However, it will populate other types of habitat as long as they contain some forest cover and adequate numbers of prey, in particular snowshoe hares.

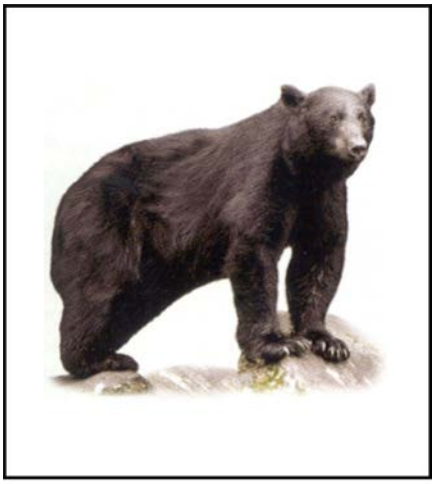
As long as they are not disturbed, lynx are remarkably tolerant of human settlement. Like the cougar and bobcat, the Canadian lynx tends to be secretive, active at night and rarely seen.

The lynx preys almost exclusively on the snowshoe hare. Since snowshoe hare populations follow a 10 year cycle, lynx numbers dramatically vary, building to a peak as hare populations increase, and then crashing. Their supplement diet consists of grouse, voles, mice, squirrels, and foxes. They may also supplement their diet with carrion or dead flesh from big game such as deer.

The Canadian lynx normally hunts alone and during the night. A lynx can jump as far as 6.5 m, which equals about four hops for a hare.

Figure A-8 The Canadian Lynx

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THE BLACK BEAR

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BLACK BEAR LOCATIONS

Bowers, N., Bowers, R., and Kaufman, K., Kaufman Focus Guides: Mammals of North America, Houghton Mifflin Company (p. 142)



BLACK BEAR TRACKS

Bowers, N., Bowers, R., and Kaufman, K., Kaufman Focus Guides: Mammals of North America, Houghton Mifflin Company (p. 142)

The black bear is a heavy, bulky, thickset mammal. It is normally about 150 cm long and varies in height from 100 to 120 cm. An adult bear has a moderate-sized head, a straight facial profile, and a tapered nose with long nostrils. The black bear has flexible lips, which are free from its gums, and a long tongue, which helps it gather tiny food items such as blueberries and ants. Their ears are rounded and their eyes are small. The tail is short and not easily seen. An average adult male weighs about 180 kg (400 lbs), whereas an average adult female weighs about 100 kg (220 lbs).

Despite its name, the black bear varies in colour. In eastern Canada, black bears are normally all black with a brown muzzle (front portion of the face). In western Canada, they can be seen as black, brown, cinnamon, or blond. Generally, cubs in a litter will be the same colour as their mother.

The black bear can be found in a variety of habitats, but it prefers heavily wooded areas and dense bush land. They are capable of travelling great distances and have been found 80 km or more from their homes.

The black bear will eat pretty much anything. Most of their food is plants, especially in the late summer and autumn when berries and nuts are available. In the spring, some bears may prey upon newborn moose calves, deer fawns, caribou calves, or elk calves. Bears drink frequently and are more often than not found near water.

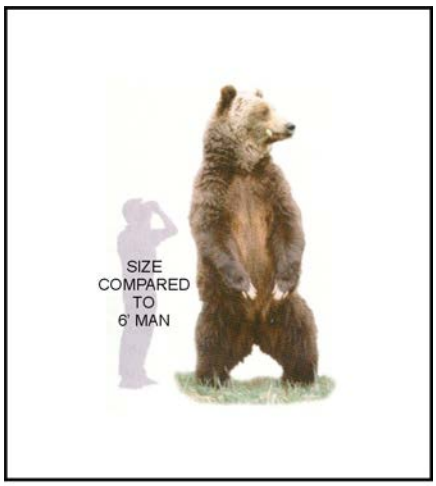
The activity pattern of black bears varies from area to area depending on a number of factors, including human interaction. They are generally active from dawn until dark. Bears have been known to have human contact.

Biologists believe that trees repeatedly clawed and marked by bears serve as a form of communication. Adult males use these trees frequently, presumably to announce their presence to potential mates or rivals. Black bears appear awkward as the shuffle along, but can run as fast as 50 kilometres per hour if necessary. They are good swimmers and frequently cross rivers and small lakes. They climb very well with a series of quick bounds, grasping the tree with their forepaws and pushing with their hind legs. They can fall from a tree of heights up to about 4.5 m and appear unshaken.

The black bear has poor eyesight, but its senses of hearing and smell are very well developed. Under good atmospheric conditions, bears can detect carrion, or flesh of dead animals, which they scavenge.

Figure A-9 The Black Bear

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THE GRIZZLY BEAR

Bowers, N., Bowers, R., and Kaufman, K., Kaufman Focus Guides: Mammals of North America, Houghton Mifflin Company (p. 145)



GRIZZLY BEAR LOCATIONS

Bowers, N., Bowers, R., and Kaufman, K., Kaufman Focus Guides: Mammals of North America, Houghton Mifflin Company (p. 144)



GRIZZLY BEAR TRACKS

Bowers, N., Bowers, R., and Kaufman, K., Kaufman Focus Guides: Mammals of North America, Houghton Mifflin Company (p. 144)

The grizzly bear (also known as the brown bear) is the second largest North American land carnivore, or meat-eater. It has a prominent hump over the shoulders, formed by the muscles of its massive forelegs. The grizzly has a curved-in face and extremely long front claws. Its colour ranges from nearly white or ivory to yellow or black. Generally, grizzlies have light or greyish fur on the head and shoulders, a dark body, and even darker feet and legs. An average adult male weighs between 270-360 kg (600-800 lbs) whereas an average adult female weighs about 135 kg (300 lbs).

The grizzly is a solitary animal. Its home range varies in size but is usually 200 to 600 km^2 for females and 900 to 1800 km^2 for males. Generally, the more plentiful the food supply, the smaller the home range. Scientific devices have shown that male grizzlies sometimes travel as far as 250 km, as the crow flies, over the course of a year. They have also shown that bears that have been relocated after becoming addicted to garbage will return from distances of more than 100 km to a dump where they have previously learned to feed.

Although they are considered to be meat-eaters, grizzlies are generally omnivores – they eat a wide range of foods. Plants make up 80 to 90 percent of its diet. Grizzlies prey on mammals and migrating salmon, where they are available, but on the whole rely on plants for food.

Unlike black bears, grizzly bears have not adapted well in the face of civilization. Their keen sense of personal space and their occasional depredation of crops and livestock have brought this proud animal into conflict with people, inevitably to the grizzlies' loss. Today, their total range in North America has shrunk by more than half, while the black bear has held its own.

A grizzly seldom looks for trouble. Its size allows it to avoid fights with other animals and, if at all possible, a grizzly will avoid contact with people. The grizzly is not as persistent around garbage dumps as the black bear, but occasionally its taste for garbage will give rise to trouble. If surprised at close range, a grizzly can ferociously defend itself, its young, and its territory.

The grizzly is a true wilderness animal and can only survive in relatively undisturbed areas. People are the biggest threat to the grizzly. It suffers the greatest impact not from hunting, but from the continual increase of our population and the resulting deterioration of grizzly habitat.

Figure A-10 The Grizzly Bear

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THE POLAR BEAR

Bowers, N., Bowers, R., and Kaufman, K., Kaufman Focus Guides: Mammals of North America, Houghton Mifflin Company (p. 147)



POLAR BEAR LOCATIONS

Bowers, N., Bowers, R., and Kaufman, K., Kaufman Focus Guides: Mammals of North America, Houghton Mifflin Company (p. 146)



POLAR BEAR TRACKS

National Wildlife Federation, 2005, eNature - Polar Bear. Retrieved 22 March 2007, from http://www.enature.com/fieldguides/detail.asp?shapeID=1026&curGroupID=5&lgfromWhere=&curPageNum=4&viewType=tracks

The polar bear is the largest land carnivore, or meat eater. The white coat of a polar bear will often appear cream or yellow against arctic ice. Adult males measure from 240 to 260 cm in total length and usually weigh from 400 to 600 kg (880 to 1320 lbs); however, they can weigh as much as 800 kg (1760 lbs) – about the weight of a small car. Adult females are about half the size of males. The polar bear has a long body, neck, and skull. They have large canine teeth and the grinding surfaces of their cheek teeth are jagged, which is an adaptation of a carnivorous diet. Polar bear claws are brownish in colour, short, fairly straight, sharply pointed, and non-retractable.

Polar bears prefer areas of ice, which they use for a hunting platform and protective cover, combined with snow drifts, refrozen cracks, and areas of open water surrounded by ice. This habitat preference is closely linked to the presence of their favourite food, ringed seals. They are superbly adapted to their arctic surroundings. Their thick winter coats, with glossy guard hairs and dense under fur, and the thick layer of fat beneath the skin protect them against the cold. Guard hairs shed water easily, so after a swim the polar bear can shake itself off like a dog to decrease chilling and speed the drying process. The white colour of the polar bear also serves as camouflage.

The bears' normal pace is a slow, lumbering walk of about 5 to 6 km per hour. They may gallop when chased, but they do not run for long periods of time. When hunting, polar bears rely mainly on their sense of smell. They can detect seal breathing holes covered by layers of ice and snow 90 cm or more thick and up to a kilometre away. Polar bears are excellent swimmers, using their large front paws as powerful oars, while their rear paws trail behind and act like rudders. Underwater, they keep their eyes open. A polar bear may remain below the surface for over a minute.

Polar bears will usually not attack humans except to protect their cubs or because they are starving.

Although polar bears are not in immediate danger of extinction, they face threats common to all large predators: human violation on their habitat, illegal hunting, and chemical contaminants in their prey. A new threat appears to be global warming or climate change, which is affecting the polar bear's habitat by reducing the total ice cover in the Arctic, thinning the permanent pack of ice of the central polar basin, and changing the timing of freeze-up and break-up in more southerly areas, such as Hudson Bay.

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The polar bear has been designated as a species of special concern in Canada because of characteristics that make it particularly sensitive to human activities and natural events.

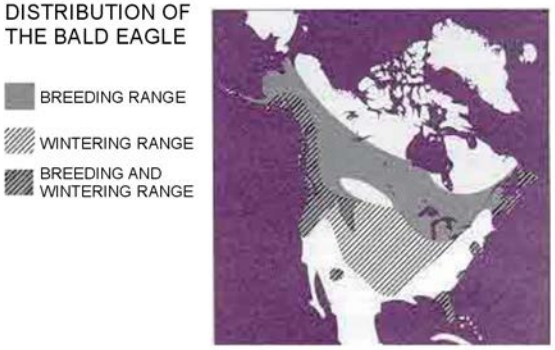
Figure A-11 The Polar Bear

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THE BALD EAGLE

Canadian Wildlife Service & Canadian Wildlife Federation, 2003, Hinterland Who's Who - Bird Fact Sheets. Retrieved 26 February 2007, from http://www.hww.ca/hww2p.asp?id=27&cid=0



BALD EAGLE LOCATIONS

Canadian Wildlife Service & Canadian Wildlife Federation, 2003, Hinterland Who's Who - Bird Fact Sheets. Retrieved 26 February 2007, from http://www.hww.ca/hww2p.asp?id=27&cid=0

The bald eagle is Canada's largest bird of prey. One of 59 species of eagles in the world, the bald eagle is one of two eagles in North America (the other is the Golden Eagle). It is the only eagle found exclusively in North America.

Bald eagles are enormous birds. They have a wing span of about two metres. When perched, a fully grown bald eagle measures about 76 cm tall. It is not uncommon for a bald eagle to weigh over seven kilograms. On average, females are larger than males and juveniles are larger but lighter in weight than adults of the same sex. Adults have a dark brown (almost black) body that contrasts sharply with the white feathers on the head and tail, and the yellow beak, eyes, and legs. It takes a young bald eagle four or five years to achieve this distinct colouration.

Bald eagles can see three or four times farther than most people, which is a huge advantage to a bird that hunts and scavenges. They have a sufficient sense of hearing but their senses of taste and smell are poorly developed.

Bald eagles feed primarily on fish, aquatic birds, and mammals, which they may take alive or find dead. The majority of live food consumed consists of the sick or those wounded by hunters. To kill and handle prey, bald eagles have massive beaks, large talons, and oversized feet equipped with small spikes, called spicules. They take food any way they can, stealing from other birds, scavenging on dead flesh, and hunting in flight, from a perch, on the ground, or in shallow water. They will sometimes feed in groups, but rarely cooperate when hunting. Generally, adults are likely to hunt and kill, whereas younger birds rely on scavenging and stealing.

Canadian bald eagle populations are currently relatively stable, although the situation varies regionally. Currently, populations in coastal British Columbia, the boreal forest, and the Atlantic provinces are doing well. Local populations in southern Ontario and New Brunswick, as well as the lower 48 states of the United States, are endangered.

If mortality rates continue to be high, population growth will be slow. However, if suitable habitats remain available and human disturbance is kept to a minimum, the magnificent soaring bird will be enjoyed for many years to come.

Figure A-12 The Bald Eagle

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THE COUGAR

Bowers, N., Bowers, R., and Kaufman, K., Kaufman Focus Guides: Mammals of North America, Houghton Mifflin Company (p. 137)



COUGAR LOCATIONS

Bowers, N., Bowers, R., and Kaufman, K., Kaufman Focus Guides: Mammals of North America, Houghton Mifflin Company (p. 136)



COUGAR TRACK

Bowers, N., Bowers, R., and Kaufman, K., Kaufman Focus Guides: Mammals of North America, Houghton Mifflin Company (p. 136)

In Canada, cougar, mountain lion, puma, and panther are all the same species. Like all cats, the cougar has a muscular, deep-chested body, with a round and short head. Its whiskers are well developed and its eyes are large. The most distinctive feature of the cougar is its long tail, which is useful for balance.

Cougars vary considerably in size and weight throughout their range. Adult cougars weigh about 1.4 times more than females. An average weight for a male cougar is about 70 kg (155 lbs); and about 40 kg (88 lbs) for a female. Colours range from reddish orange or orange grey to dark chocolate brown. Cougars have black on the tips of their ears and tails, and black markings on their faces. A kitten cougar will be spotted at birth, but the spots will disappear before their first birthday. Cougars have very strong necks and muscular jaws with long canine teeth.

Cougars live in a wide range of vegetation. Cover, in the form of vegetation and irregular landscape is important to cougars. Even where their home ranges overlap, cougars avoid each other. Adults of both sexes travel alone, except when mating or when females are accompanied by their kittens. Because cougars reside at the top of the food chain, healthy cougar populations are good indicators of healthy and balanced ecosystems.

Like all cats, cougars hunt more by sight and hearing than by scent. They stalk their prey to within two or three great leaps and then launch a lightening-fast charge that ends with the cougar striking the prey with full impact of the charge and bearing it to the ground. Cougars hunt deer, elk, and moose calves. They will also hunt small mammals such as porcupines, beavers, coyotes, snowshoe hares, ground squirrels, and birds. Cougars typically kill their own food. Scavenging or eating dead animals is rare.

In places where cougar hunting is allowed, it is the most common cause of death. Since cougars frequently kill prey larger than themselves, they are continually exposed to the risk of serious injuries, which eventually take their toll. The cougar has virtually disappeared in the east. Fortunately, sufficient wilderness remained in the west and enabled the cougar to survive.

Figure A-13 The Cougar

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THE BEAVER

Canadian Wildlife Service & Canadian Wildlife Federation, 2003, Hinterland Who's Who - Mammal Fact Sheets. Retrieved 25 April 2007, from http://www.hww.ca/hww2p.asp?id=102&cid=0

BEAVER LOCATIONS

Canadian Wildlife Service & Canadian Wildlife Federation, 2003, Hinterland Who's Who - Mammal Fact Sheets. Retrieved 25 April 2007, from http://www.hww.ca/hww2p.asp?id=102&cid=0

BEAVER TRACKS

Canadian Wildlife Service & Canadian Wildlife Federation, 2003, Hinterland Who's Who - Mammal Fact Sheets. Retrieved 25 April 2007, from http://www.hww.ca/hww2p.asp?id=102&cid=0

The beaver is the largest rodent in North America. An adult beaver has a tail that is approximately 30 cm long, will weigh 16 to 32 kg (35 to 70 lbs) and can measure up to 1.3 m long. The beaver is normally brown and very round and compact. It is very slow on land but an excellent swimmer. It can swim about 7 km per hour if it is alarmed. The beaver has very large hind feet, which help it swim. It can use its paws to carry sticks, stones and mud. Their paws are also a great help in construction.

The beaver is commonly found in forested areas where water is present or nearby. It spends the majority of its life logging. One beaver will cut down an average of 216 trees a year. It can cut a tree 40 cm in diameter! A single beaver will usually cut one tree, but sometimes two will work on a large one. In the winter, the beaver's main diet is sticks. It will shift from a wood to a herbivore diet when spring arrives and new growth appears. In the summer, the beaver will eat grasses, herbs, leaves of woody plants, fruits and aquatic plants.

The beaver is a superb builder. Its best-known structure, the dam, is only built by beavers that need to enlarge their underwater habitat that will be open to them in the winter. The dam creates a deep pond that will not freeze to the bottom, which provides storage for winter food and year-round underwater access secure from predators.

The beaver's tail has important uses both in the water and on land. It may be 30 cm long, up to 18 cm wide and 4 cm thick. It is covered with leathery scales and coarse hairs and is very muscular. The beaver uses its tail as a rudder in the water. It also serves as a counterbalance and support when it is walking on its hind legs while carrying building materials like mud, stones, or branches with its front paws.

The beaver falls prey to wolves, coyotes, bears, lynx and wolverines when looking for food on the shore or travelling over land.

The beaver has had a great influence on Canada's history. Canadians now celebrate the beaver as a national symbol on stamps, coins and emblems. There are also hundreds of Canadian lakes, towns, rivers and hill ranges that bear the name of this great rodent.

Figure A-14 The Beaver

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THE COYOTE

Bowers, N., Bowers, R., and Kaufman, K., Kaufman Focus Guides: Mammals of North America, Houghton Mifflin Company (p. 129)



COYOTE LOCATIONS

Bowers, N., Bowers, R., and Kaufman, K., Kaufman Focus Guides: Mammals of North America, Houghton Mifflin Company (p. 128)



COYOTE TRACK

Bowers, N., Bowers, R., and Kaufman, K., Kaufman Focus Guides: Mammals of North America, Houghton Mifflin Company (p. 128)

The coyote is slimmer and smaller than the wolf. The male usually weighs 20–50 lbs (9–23 kg), has an overall length of 120–150 cm (with a 30–40 cm tail), and stands 58–66 cm high at the shoulder. The female is usually slightly smaller. The coyote can vary in colour, from grey to reddish brown and their ears are wide, pointed, and erect. It has a tapering muzzle and a black nose. Unlike most dogs, the top of the muzzle on the coyote almost form a continuous line with the forehead. The coyote has yellow, slightly slanted eyes with black round pupils.

The coyote lives in a variety of habitats. It was originally only found in the prairie provinces, however has since expanded north to the boreal forest, west to the mountains and east to the Atlantic provinces. Coyotes have been recently discovered in western Newfoundland, apparently having crossed on ice from Nova Scotia. The coyote varies in social behaviour. It may live in pairs or in packs. The coyote is very adaptable and is equally comfortable living in city suburbs as in natural areas.

The coyote is primarily a flesh-eater but will eat just about anything available. A coyote will eat deer, sheep, rabbits, hares, rodents, insects, blueberries and other wild fruit. Where coyotes and wolves co-exist, coyotes scavenge from wolf kills. Small prey is usually hunted by one single coyote, but large prey are normally hunted in a group.

Like the wolf, the coyote's best known trait is its yelping and howling cry, which is a sequence of high-pitched, ear-piercing howls. Their howls are a form of communication. The coyote can also bark, growl, wail and squeal. The coyote is often silent in the daytime and can be heard any time from sunset to sunrise. The howling of one coyote will normally trigger the howling of others. Two howling in unison can create the illusion of a dozen or more.

The coyote has a fantastic sense of smell and hearing. A sudden noise or odour can make it change course in mid-step.

Coyotes are known to have interbred with wolves and with domestic dogs. These hybrid "coydogs" are sometimes seen, especially near cities.

Figure A-15 The Coyote

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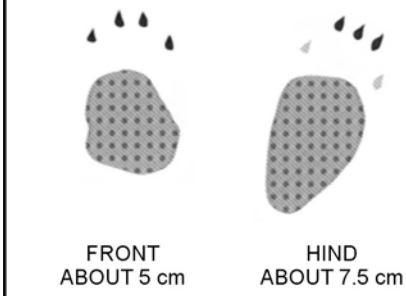
THE PORCUPINE

Bowers, N., Bowers, R., and Kaufman, K., Kaufman Focus Guides: Mammals of North America, Houghton Mifflin Company (p. 108)



PORCUPINE LOCATIONS

Canadian Wildlife Service & Canadian Wildlife Federation, 2003, Hinterland Who's Who - Mammal Fact Sheets. Retrieved 25 April 2007, from http://www.hww.ca/hww2p.asp?id=102&cid=0



PORCUPINE TRACKS

Bowers, N., Bowers, R., and Kaufman, K., Kaufman Focus Guides: Mammals of North America, Houghton Mifflin Company (p. 108)

The porcupine has a short, blunt-nosed face with small eyes. Its ears are small and round, almost concealed by its hair. The porcupine has humped shoulders and short legs. It is Canada's second largest rodent, next to the beaver. Adult males reach an average weight of 12 lbs (5.5 kg) after six years, whereas females will reach about 10 lbs (4.5 kg). The total length averages 68–100 cm and the height at the shoulders is about 30 cm. The porcupine has a coat comprised of a soft, brown, woolly undercoat and course, long guard hairs. At the base, each guard hair is brown, and becomes darker near the tip. The tip may be different colours in different places—white in eastern areas and yellow in western areas.

The porcupine can be found in most areas and spends the majority of winter in a den. The porcupine feeds largely on the inner back of trees in winter as well as a variety of plants. One of the best-known and least-liked eating habits is that of chewing wood and leather in and around camps. When human-made objects are not available, the porcupine will chew bones and cast-off antlers.

On the porcupine's face the quills are about 1.2 cm long; on the back they can be up to 12.5 cm in length. There are no quills on the muzzle, legs, or under parts of the body. These quills are hollow and are embedded in the skin. When alarmed, a small muscle that is attached to each quill pulls it upright in the fur. About 0.6 cm from the tip, the quill tapers to a fine point that is covered be several dozen small black barbs. These barbs feel slightly rough to the touch, but when they are moist (as they get when embedded in the flesh), they swell and work the quill further in. The porcupine has been estimated to have over 30 000 quills. When quills are lost, they are replaced by new quills, which are white and sharp and remain firmly anchored in the skin until they are fully grown. When in danger, the porcupine will first try to escape. When escape is not an option, the porcupine will hump its back and tuck its head between the shoulders. With all quills erect, it will pivot on its front feet, keeping its back to the enemy. As the back feet stomp around, the tail will be lashed around. The momentum of the tail detaches the loose quills, which fly through the air giving the impression that they were thrown.

Porcupine quills have been found embedded in several predators including the coyote, cougar, bobcat, red fox, lynx, bear and wolf. Some more experienced predators learn to avoid the quills and kill the porcupine by biting its head or by flipping it and exposing its unprotected belly. Being short-sighted and a slow mover, the porcupine is a frequent victim in forest fires and on roadways.

Figure A-16 The Porcupine
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PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL

WILDLIFE WORKSHEET

NAME OF WILDLIFE:

_____

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

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HABITAT:

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DIET:

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UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS:

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