ATTENTION

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Enjoying Washington's Fragile Winter Wildlife

Winter Recreation and Washington Wildlife

Washington wildlife plays an integral part in our enjoyment of winter recreation. Through cross-country skiing, mountain climbing, snowshoeing, winter camping, dog sledding and snowmobiling we are able to enjoy the remote areas of our state. Viewing wild birds and animals can enhance this outdoor winter experience. In the winter, however, wildlife is particularly vulnerable to cold temperatures and often lacks adequate food. Native birds and mammals should not be disturbed. By viewing them from a distance we can help to keep the wildlife population safe.

Wildlife in Winter

Winter is demanding. The survival of animals is often precarious, and disturbance by humans can result in death.

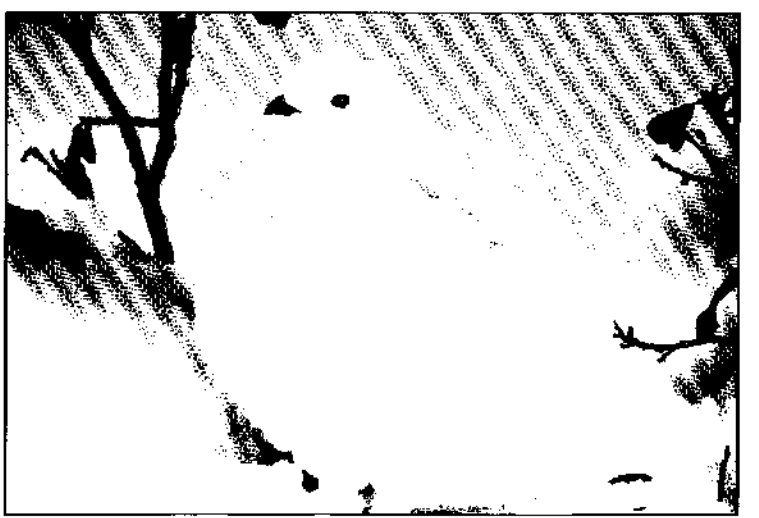
Wildlife maintains itself by creating fat reserves and limiting all unnecessary movement to conserve energy. Fat is needed to sustain body temperature in the extreme cold. Since plants are dormant and maintain low nutritional value during the winter, creation of sufficient energy reserves during the summer months is critical. Unnecessary movement caused by escape from a predator in the wintertime, or the fear generated by a human disturbance, speeds the loss of fat reserves and decreases the chance of an animal's survival.

Remember:

Be sensitive to the needs of animals. Stop and go around them or wait for them to move. Avoid close contact with wildlife. Minimize noise.

Help animals conserve their food supply. Avoid damaging brush, trees and grass. Little food is available in winter.

Respect wildlife's privacy. Stay on established routes or trails. Show your concern and view birds and animals from a distance.



Animals You May See

Various field guides to identification of birds and mammals can be obtained at your local bookstore. Specific wildlife fact sheets are available from the nearest Department of Wildlife office.

Birds

- ☐ *Cooper's hawk, redtailed hawk, goshawk, sharp-shinned hawk*
- ☐ *white-tailed ptarmigan, blue grouse, spruce grouse*
- ☐ *great horned owl, saw-whet owl*
- ☐ *flicker, pileated woodpecker, hairy woodpecker*
- ☐ *gray jay, Stellar's jay, common raven, common crow, Clark's nutcracker, mountain chickadee*
- ☐ *brown creeper, golden-crowned kinglet, evening grosbeak, pine grosbeak, red crossbill, dark-eyed junco*

Big Game

- ☐ *elk, deer, mountain goat, mountain sheep*

Small Mammals

- ☐ *long-tailed weasel, porcupine, varied hare, coyote, red fox, racoon, marten, mink, fisher, ermine, wolverine, skunk, lynx, bobcat*

For State Parks Snowmobile or Sno-Park program information, contact:

Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission
7150 Cleanwater Lane
Olympia 98504-5711
(206)586-1253

Winter Recreation Code Of Ethics

1. I will respect the rights of all winter recreationists to enjoy the beauty of the winter wonderland. I will respect public and private property.
2. I will park considerately, taking no more space than needed, without blocking other vehicles and without impeding access to trails.
3. I will keep to the right when meeting another winter recreationist. I will yield the right-of-way to traffic moving downhill.
4. I will slow down and use caution when approaching or overtaking another.
5. I will respect designated areas, trail use signs and established ski tracks.
6. When stopping, I will not block the trail.
7. I will not disturb wildlife. I will avoid areas posted for the protection or feeding of wildlife.
8. I will pack out everything I packed in and will not litter.
9. I realize that my destination objective and travel speed should be determined by my equipment, ability, the terrain, weather, and the traffic on the trail. In case of emergency, I will volunteer assistance.
10. I will not interfere with or harass others. I recognize that people judge all skiers or snowmobilers by my actions.

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Prepared By:

Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission

Washington State Department of Wildlife

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