

Bats Contrary to popular belief bats are interesting animals. They are the only mammals capable of prolonged flight. In the dark of night, bats, with their unique use of sonar, are capable of navigating to find and capture airborne prey.



Bat Facts

- There are 16 species of bats in B.C.
- 14 of which live in the Okanagan (8 are at risk).
- Bats feed nocturnally, mainly on flying insects.
- Some species of bats live to be 30 years of age.
- BC bats hibernate over winter preferably in damp caves.

Great Horned Owl

This is the largest and best known of the common owls. It preys on rabbits, rodents, birds and occasionally skunks. They lay 2 to 3 white eggs on a cliff, in a cave or on the ground.



Ring-Necked Pheasant

This popular game bird was introduced to North America from Asia and is established over much of the continent. The male is distinctive and colourful.



Mammals

Two of the larger inhabitants you may see in the area are the Black Bear and White-tailed Deer, the latter being far more common. Black Bears are solitary animals and most active at night. Deer are good swimmers and fast runners from a very early age. Coyotes and Yellow Bellied Marmots abound.

Coyote



Black Bear



Yellow-bellied Marmot



White-tailed Deer



California Quail

A common grassland bird, however not native to the Okanagan, quail are tolerant of people. Despite living in arid environments, the California Quail needs drinking water during hot spells. During cool weather it gets moisture from eating insects and succulent vegetation. Quail nest on the ground and typically have 6 to 8 chicks.



Bald Eagle

These birds of prey often make their nests near water where food is nearby. They mate for life and return to the same nest each year. They are keen hunters but prefer to dine on dead, washed up fish or will rob an Osprey of it's catch.



Magpie

A very clever bird, the magpie is the only non-mammal known to recognize it's own reflection in a mirror.



Western Rattlesnake

The shy Rattlesnake is found in the hot, dry grasslands, rock outcroppings and woodlands of the area. The greenish brown snakes will try to warn an approaching human with their distinctive rattle sound.

Bites are rare, and are usually caused when a human steps on the snake or attempts to pick it up. They are an endangered species.



Grasslands are home to many butterflies and moths as well as grasshoppers, crickets, ants, lady beetles, dragonflies, damselflies and a host of fly and beetle species.



White-line Sphinx Moth



Blue Darner Dragonfly



Monarch Butterfly

Monarchs fly south to winter in Mexico

Western Tiger Swallowtail

What's to see ?

Looking to the north, you will see Okanagan Mountain Provincial Park in the distance. Much of the park's forest and grassland burned in a massive 2003 wildfire. The fire also consumed more than 200 Kelowna area homes, the historic Myra Canyon trestles on the Kettle Valley Railway trail, and burned forest along Chute Lake Road, north of Naramata.

To the more immediate north, high above the vineyards and orchards of Naramata's northbench, is the KVR trail, a part of the Trans Canada Trail. Can you see the knob of rock through which Little Tunnel is blasted? It is one of the most scenic viewpoints of Naramata and the Okanagan.

Looking west toward the town of Summerland, notice the distinctive, almost sphynx-like shape of Giant's Head Mountain looking out over the area. Giant's Head, if viewed from the right angle, forms a definite facial profile.

The high silt banks on both sides of the lake in this region are perhaps our area's youngest geological formation. The distinctive cliffs and terraces seen in Naramata were formed by sand, silt and gravel deposition and shaped by meltwater from the receding ice sheet during the last continental glaciation, approximately 10,000 years ago. The sloping north face of Giant's Head and other local mountains was also caused by the scraping action of the massive ice sheet which reached a thickness of 2 kilometres.

Today, the silt banks are vulnerable to collapse by erosion, often caused by heavy rains or undetected leaks in farm irrigation pipes.

