


OYSTER MUSHROOM

Pleurotus ostreatus

DESCRIPTION: This fungus grows on decaying wood and produces large clusters of 2-6 in. white- or gray-colored mushrooms with gills. They can be seen growing during any season of the year.

HABITAT: Deciduous forest, grows on decaying wood

EATEN BY: Various animals including squirrels, white-tailed deer, and even humans

 **CAUTION!** Because some mushrooms can be very poisonous, do not eat wild mushrooms. Oyster mushrooms grown on farms can be purchased in grocery stores and safely eaten.

WILD FACTS!

- It gets its name from the shape of the mushroom, which is similar to a clam or oyster.
- Sometimes this mushroom will even grow in the winter!

Photo: Larry West



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BUNCHBERRY

Cornus canadensis

DESCRIPTION: This wildflower grows to a height of 8-10 in., blooming in the late spring or early summer. It can be identified by its leaves, which form a whorl (or circle) of six near the knot of the plant. The plant produces a cluster of shiny red berries.

HABITAT: Forests and swamps, often in large colonies

EATEN BY:

- Nectar from the flowers is eaten by various insects (like bees).
- Berries are eaten by various animals such as rodents, bears, birds, and even people.

OTHER USES: Native Americans have used this plant for medicine. The Ojibwe have used the root of this plant to treat infant colic.

WILD FACT! The four white "petals" on this flower are actually leaves.

Photo: Dave Powell, USDA Forest Service, www.forestryimages.org



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RED RASPBERRY

Rubus idaeus

DESCRIPTION: This thorny plant grows to a height of 2-10 ft., often forming thick colonies. Flowers blossom between May and August and are followed by red, edible berries, which ripen between July and September.

HABITAT: Forests, wetland areas, roadsides, and old fields

EATEN BY:

- Leaves and stems of this plant may be eaten by herbivores such as rabbits and deer.
- Nectar from the flowers is eaten by various insects (such as bees).
- Berries are eaten by both wildlife and humans.

OTHER USES:

- The thorny plant forms thickets that provide protective cover for smaller animals such as rabbits and birds.
- Native Americans have used this plant for medicine. The Ojibwe have used the roots to treat stomach pain and sore eyes.

WILD FACT! These biennial plants do not flower or fruit until their second year.

Photos: Pam Schmidt, Western U.P. Center for Science, Mathematics & Environmental Education



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EASTERN WHITE PINE

Pinus strobus

DESCRIPTION: This tree is the largest conifer in the Great Lakes region, growing to a height of 100 ft. or more, with a trunk diameter of 3-4 ft. Needles are blue-green, 2½-5 in. long, in bundles of 5. The 4-8 in. cones are yellow-brown.

HABITAT: Well-drained sandy soils

EATEN BY:

- Needles and branches are eaten by white-tailed deer.
- Bark may be eaten by porcupines.
- Seeds are eaten by small animals such as mice, squirrels, and birds.

OTHER USES:

- Trees provide habitat for many different kinds of wildlife.
- People have many uses (such as building) for lumber provided by this tree.

WILD FACT! White pine has long been valued for its lumber. Between 1834 and 1897, an estimated 160 billion board feet of pine were cut in Michigan. The wood was worth a billion dollars more than all of the gold extracted during the California Gold Rush!

Photo: Pam Schmidt, Western U.P. Center for Science, Mathematics & Environmental Education



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SUGAR MAPLE

Acer saccharum

DESCRIPTION: This deciduous tree grows to a height of 60-100 ft., with a trunk diameter of 24-48 in. Leaves are yellowish-green and 2-5 in. long and wide. The tree flowers in April-May, producing "helicopter" seed packets in September-October.

HABITAT: Deciduous forest

EATEN BY:

- Leaves and branches are eaten by white-tailed deer.
- Bark may be eaten by porcupines.
- Seeds are eaten by small animals like mice, squirrels, and birds.

OTHER USES:

- Trees provide habitat for many different kinds of wildlife.
- People have many uses (such as building) for lumber provided by this tree.
- Maple syrup is made from the sap of this tree.

WILD FACT! The leaves of this tree turn bright red-orange colors in the fall, making it one of the showiest trees.

Photo: Pam Schmidt, Western U.P. Center for Science, Mathematics & Environmental Education



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AMERICAN BEECH

Fagus grandifolia

DESCRIPTION: This large deciduous tree grows to a height of 60-85 ft., with a trunk diameter of 20-40 in. The bark is thin, smooth, and gray. Leaves are 3-5 in. long. The tree flowers in April-May, producing a bristle-covered burr in the fall containing two triangle-shaped nuts.

HABITAT: Deciduous forest

EATEN BY:

- Leaves and branches are eaten by white-tailed deer.
- Seeds are eaten by black bear, squirrels, chipmunks, seed-eating birds, and even humans.

OTHER USES:

- Trees provide habitat for many different kinds of wildlife.
- People use wood from this tree for furniture and flooring.

WILD FACT! If cut down, this tree will sprout back from the stump!

Photo: Pam Schmidt, Western U.P. Center for Science, Mathematics & Environmental Education



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WHITE BIRCH

Betula papyrifera

DESCRIPTION: This medium-sized deciduous tree grows to a height of 40-65 ft., with a trunk diameter of 12-20 in. The bark is white and paper-like. The tree flowers in April-May, producing seed packets in August-September.

HABITAT: Deciduous forest and burned or cutover areas

EATEN BY:

- Leaves and branches are eaten by white-tailed deer and rabbits.
- Bark and wood may be eaten by porcupine and beaver.
- Seeds are eaten by small animals such as chipmunks and birds.

OTHER USES:

- Trees provide habitat for many different kinds of wildlife.
- People have many uses for wood from this tree including toothpicks, clothespins, pulpwood, and firewood.
- Native Americans have used the bark of this tree to make canoes.

WILD FACT! This tree is also known as "paper birch" because its bark is as thin as paper! While the bark can really be written on, never peel bark off of a living tree, as it can injure or kill the tree.

Main Photo: Pam Schmidt, Western U.P. Center for Science, Mathematics & Environmental Education **Inset:** Paul Wray, Iowa State University, www.forestryimages.org



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WHITE-TAILED DEER

Odocoileus virginianus

DESCRIPTION: This large mammal is 5-7 ft. long, weighing 100-300 lb. Its coat is reddish-brown in the summer, becoming more grayish in the winter. Male deer (called "bucks") grow a set of antlers each year, shedding them in the winter. Females are called "does."

HABITAT: Open forests with meadows and woodland clearings or farmland

DIET: Grasses, herbs, leaves, acorns, mushrooms, buds and twigs of maple, and cedar

BEHAVIOR:

- Activity: most active at sunrise and sunset
- Grouping: social, usually seen in small groups (does group with their young, bucks group with other males)
- Winter: active (males and females gather in large herds of up to 50)

REPRODUCTION: Females give birth to one or two young in spring and then care for them for up to 6 months (200-day gestation).

PREDATORS: Humans, coyote, gray wolf, bobcat, black bear, and unleashed dogs

WILD FACT! Watch out for deer on Michigan roads! Every year, over 65,000 car-deer crashes are reported.

Photo: Larry West



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EASTERN CHIPMUNK

Tamias striatus

DESCRIPTION: This mammal is 9-11 in. long, with a 2½-4 in. tail and weighs 2¼-4 oz. Its coat is gray or reddish brown with five dark stripes down its back and a white underbelly.

HABITAT: Open deciduous forests with stumps, logs, or rock outcrops for cover (It lives in an underground burrow, sometimes as long as 30 ft.)

DIET: Mainly fruits, seeds, nuts, mushrooms, and insects (also bird eggs and small vertebrates such as young mice)

BEHAVIOR:

- Activity: busiest during mid-morning and mid-afternoon
- Grouping: solitary
- Winter: spends majority of time sleeping in underground burrows, waking often to eat stored food

REPRODUCTION: Females give birth to two litters, one in early spring and one in midsummer. Each litter contains two to five young (31-day gestation).

PREDATORS: Bobcat, coyote, fox, hawks, snakes, weasels, lynx, domestic dogs, and domestic cats

WILD FACT! It has a large, pouched mouth. When full, each pouch can be as large as the chipmunk's entire head!

Photo: Dave Kenyon, Michigan Department of Natural Resources



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PORCUPINE

Erethizon dorsatum

DESCRIPTION: This prickly mammal ranges from 24-35 in. in length and may weigh between 11 and 35 lb. Its chunky body is covered by up to 30,000 quills, which are actually hairs.

HABITAT: Prefers woods containing pine and hemlock (with dens in caves, decaying logs, and hollow trees)

DIET: Conifer needles, bark of white pine, hemlock, sugar maple, and leaves of basswood

BEHAVIOR:

- Activity: nocturnal
- Grouping: usually solitary
- Winter: active (may use dens during very cold weather)

REPRODUCTION: Females give birth to a single newborn in spring (210-day gestation).

PREDATORS: Fisher, great horned owl, bobcat, coyote, and humans

WILD FACT! When threatened, it will warn its enemy by clattering its teeth and then release an unpleasant scent. As a last resort, the porcupine may defend itself with its quills by lashing out its tail. Unfortunate attackers may be stuck with numerous quills!

Photo: Joseph O'Brien, USDA Forest Service, www.forestryimages.com



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MOURNING CLOAK

Nymphalis antiopa

DESCRIPTION: This insect is 3½ in. long. The wing coloring is purple-brown with yellow borders and brown-gray underneath. The larva (caterpillar) grows up to 2 in. long and is blue-black with white and red markings.

HABITAT: Deciduous and mixed forests, meadows, along streams, and in parks and gardens

DIET:

- Adults: tree sap and rotting fruit, rarely on flower nectar
- Larvae: leaves of willows, elms, and poplars

BEHAVIOR:

- Activity: active during day (diurnal)
- Grouping: solitary
- Winter: adults hibernate under bark or in crevices

REPRODUCTION: Butterflies go through complete metamorphosis, which means that their life cycle includes egg, larva, and chrysalis before becoming an adult butterfly. Mating and egg laying takes place in the spring.

PREDATORS: Insect-eating animals, especially birds

WILD FACT! The mourning cloak is sometimes seen flying on warmer winter days!

Photo: Larry West



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AMERICAN COMMON BUMBLE BEE

Megabombus pennsylvanicus

DESCRIPTION: This large, fuzzy insect is ½-1 in. long. The face and head are mostly black, while the body is more yellow, and the wings are smoke-colored.

HABITAT: Grassy open areas, in forest clearings, along roadsides, and in other open areas (Nests may be above or below ground, often in abandoned mouse or bird nests.)

DIET: Nectar and pollen from flowers

BEHAVIOR:

- Activity: most active during day (diurnal)
- Grouping: social, live in colonies containing queen, workers, and drones
- Winter: workers and drones die before winter, queens overwinter by hibernating

REPRODUCTION: Bees go through complete metamorphosis, which means that their life cycle includes egg, larva, and cocoon before becoming an adult. Only the queen lays eggs.

PREDATORS: Insect-eating animals

WILD FACT! Bees communicate with one another through special dances that can tell the location of food or warn other bees of a nearby danger.

Photo: Larry West



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GRAY SQUIRREL

Sciurus carolinensis

DESCRIPTION: This small mammal is 17-20 in. long and weighs 12-25 oz. Its long, bushy tail (measuring 7-10 in.) helps it keep its balance as it moves from branch to branch in the treetops. Its fur is usually gray-colored but is sometimes black.

HABITAT: Forested areas and residential areas with numerous deciduous trees (It builds nests in tree cavities, but may use a leafy nest in warmer months.)

DIET: Acorns, nuts, seeds, mushrooms, and fruits

BEHAVIOR:

- Activity: most active at dawn and dusk (except in winter, when it is more active at mid-day)
- Grouping: solitary
- Winter: active

REPRODUCTION: Females give birth to two litters, one in early spring and one in midsummer. Each litter contains two to four young (44-day gestation).

PREDATORS: Hawks, bobcats, owls, dogs, snakes, weasels, and humans

WILD FACT! It stores food for the winter by burying nuts and seeds in shallow holes and then later uses its memory and sense of smell to find the food.

Photo: Dave Kenyon, Michigan Department of Natural Resources



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RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD

Archilochus colubris

DESCRIPTION: This tiny bird, with a long, needle-like beak, is approximately 3-3½ in. long and weighs about 1/3 oz. Its coloring is iridescent green, with white underparts. Males have a bright red throat.

HABITAT: Deciduous or mixed forest, open areas with scattered trees, gardens, orchards, and parks (Nests are built 10-20 ft. high in trees using plant material, often bound together with spider silk and covered in lichen.)

DIET: Nectar, spiders, and tree sap (from woodpecker drilling)

BEHAVIOR:

- Activity: diurnal
- Grouping: solitary
- Winter: migrates to southern Mexico, Central America, and the West Indies

REPRODUCTION: Females lay one to three eggs per brood, up to three times a year. Females provide all parental care, incubating the eggs and caring for the young.

PREDATORS: Adults may be eaten by house cats and hawks. Baby birds and eggs may be eaten by crows, squirrels, jays, and hawks.

WILD FACT! The birds consume twice their body weight in food each day! A male weighs about as much as 2½ paperclips!

Photo: Larry West



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EASTERN BOX TURTLE

Terrapene carolina carolina

DESCRIPTION: This reptile is a small land turtle, with the shell measuring 4½-7½ in. The coloring is usually brown-black with yellow or orange markings.

HABITAT: Deciduous or mixed woodland, old fields, pastures, dunes, and often near ponds and streams

DIET: Earthworms, snails, slugs, insects, mushrooms, various leafy greens, and fruits

BEHAVIOR:

- Activity: diurnal, most active in spring and fall
- Grouping: solitary
- Winter: hibernates in underground burrows

REPRODUCTION: Females lay a set of 3-11 eggs, usually once per year.

PREDATORS: Adults are rarely preyed upon due to their protective shell. Eggs and baby turtles may be eaten by skunks, raccoons, foxes, shrews, birds, and snakes

❖ **SPECIAL STATUS:** Listed as *special concern* species in Michigan

WILD FACT! Some are believed to live over 100 years!

Photo: Larry West



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CARPENTER ANT

Camponatus pennsylvanicus

DESCRIPTION: This insect is usually ¼-½ in. long. Its coloring is usually black, but may be brown or reddish. It has well-developed eyes and bent antennae.

HABITAT: Rotting, decaying wood, usually inside living or dead trees

DIET: Other insects, honey dew (from insects), fruit juices, and flower nectar

BEHAVIOR:

- Activity: most active during night (nocturnal)
- Grouping: social, live in colonies containing queen and workers
- Winter: hibernate

REPRODUCTION: Ants go through complete metamorphosis, which means that their life cycle includes egg, larva, and cocoon before becoming an adult. Only the queen lays eggs.

PREDATORS: Insect-eating animals

WILD FACT! It does not eat wood, but gets its "carpenter" name from its habit of living in and excavating wood.

Photo: Larry West



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MOSQUITO

DESCRIPTION: This small insect measuring ¼ in. or less is brown with white markings on the legs and mouthparts. It has large eyes and a needle-like mouth used for sucking blood and flower nectar.

HABITAT: Adults live almost anywhere. Larvae are found in stagnant water, including water that is polluted.

DIET: Adults feed on nectar and plant juices (females also feed on blood from birds and mammals). Larvae feed on algae, decaying plant matter, and microscopic animals called protozoa.

BEHAVIOR:

- Activity: nocturnal
- Grouping: solitary, sometimes found in swarms
- Winter: late season adult females survive the winter by hibernating in sheltered areas

REPRODUCTION: Mosquitoes go through complete metamorphosis, which means that their life cycle includes egg, larva, and pupa before becoming an adult. Eggs, larva, and pupa stages all take place in an aquatic habitat, usually standing water.

PREDATORS: Many insect-eating animals (especially bats and birds)

WILD FACT! At least 60 species of mosquitoes inhabit the Great Lakes region.

Photo: Larry West



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BLACK BEAR

Ursus americanus

DESCRIPTION: This large mammal ranges from 49-71 in. in length and between 240 and 500 lb. in weight. It has short ears and black-brown fur.

HABITAT: Dense conifer or deciduous forests with thick undergrowth and little human disturbance

DIET: Invertebrates (beetles, bees), fish, rabbit, mice, fruit, beechnuts, and acorns

BEHAVIOR:

- Activity: usually most active at dawn and dusk
- Grouping: usually solitary
- Winter: inactive, remains in den, relying on stored body fat (not a true hibernator)

REPRODUCTION: Females give birth to two cubs in early winter, which are cared for until their second spring (210-day gestation).

PREDATOR: Humans

WILD FACT! It has an excellent sense of smell and hearing, but poor eyesight.

Photo: Dave Kenyon, Michigan Department of Natural Resources



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STRIPED SKUNK

Mephitis mephitis

DESCRIPTION: This mammal is 22-27 in. long and weighs between 2 and 11 lb. It has short legs, a small head, and a long bushy tail. It is mostly black and usually, but not always, has a white stripe running down its back.

HABITAT: Forests, fields, suburban areas, and cultivated fields

DIET: Mostly insects (beetles, crickets, grasshoppers), but also feeds on fruits, worms, small mammals, bird eggs, and crayfish (In winter, it feeds mostly on small mammals.)

BEHAVIOR:

- Activity: nocturnal
- Grouping: adults are usually solitary
- Winter: do not hibernate, but remain inactive in underground dens for much of the winter, occasionally venturing out for food (Female skunks and their young often share winter dens.)

REPRODUCTION: Females give birth to one litter of four to six young in early summer. Each litter contains two to four young (59-77 day gestation).

PREDATORS: Great-horned owls and red-tailed hawks

WILD FACT! When threatened by predators and curious animals, the skunk may spray a smelly, oily liquid up to 10 ft. away. This spray may cause nausea and even temporary blindness in animals.

Photo: Dave Kenyon, Michigan Department of Natural Resources



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RACCOON

Procyon lotor

DESCRIPTION: This mammal ranges from 28-36 in. in length and weighs 13-44 lb. It also has a long tail, measuring 9-10 in. It is easily recognized by the "black mask" around its eyes, as well as its bushy tail marked with black rings.

HABITAT: In or near wooded areas, often near water, also found in urban areas, suburbs, and on farmland

DIET: Berries, acorns, crayfish, insects, earthworms, rodents, rabbits, birds, snakes, turtles, frogs, fish, eggs of other animals, and farm crops

BEHAVIOR:

- Activity: nocturnal
- Grouping: solitary, except for females with young
- Winter: inactive, remains in den, relying on stored body fat (not a true hibernator)

REPRODUCTION: Females give birth to one litter of three to seven young per year (63-65 day gestation).

PREDATORS: Large owls, gray wolf, coyote, red fox, bobcat, and humans

WILD FACT! Raccoons have been introduced to Europe and parts of Asia, where they are considered invasive pests!

Photo: Dave Kenyon, Michigan Department of Natural Resources



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EASTERN FOREST SNAIL

Anguispira alternata

DESCRIPTION: This small animal has a shell that is an average diameter of $\frac{3}{4}$ -1 in. The shell may be a white or yellowish color, which protects the soft-bodied creature from predators and from drying out.

HABITAT: Moist, deciduous forest (it lives in the leaf litter, sometimes under decaying logs), also in suburban parks and backyards

DIET: Living and dead plant material

BEHAVIOR:

- Activity: nocturnal
- Grouping: solitary
- Winter: hibernates

REPRODUCTION: The snails are both male and female. After mating with another snail, they deposit small eggs into the moist soil.

PREDATORS: Birds, reptiles, and other snails

WILD FACT! Snails require moisture to be active. When threatened with dry conditions, the snail goes into its shell and seals the entrance to keep its body from drying out.

Photo: Larry West



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RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER

Melanerpes carolinus

DESCRIPTION: This medium-sized bird has an average length of 10 in., and average weight of 2-3/5 oz. It has a black and white back. Males have red caps, while females do not. Both sexes have a red-colored patch on their abdomen.

HABITAT: Forests (especially mature hardwoods), swamps, parks, and towns

DIET: Insects, fruits, nuts, seeds, berries, tree sap, and small vertebrates (including small fish, tree frogs, baby birds, and bird eggs)

BEHAVIOR:

- Activity: diurnal (active during day)
- Grouping: solitary except when raising young
- Winter: active, do not migrate

REPRODUCTION: Both male and female share parenting responsibilities. They work together to excavate the nest, incubate the eggs, and care for the young. Usually, one brood of four or five young is raised each summer.

PREDATORS: Adults may be eaten by housecats and hawks. Baby birds and eggs may be eaten by other woodpeckers and squirrels.

WILD FACT! It has a sticky, long tongue, good for preying on insects hidden away in cracks or crevices.

Photo: Larry West



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EASTERN RED-BACKED SALAMANDER

Plethodon cinereus

DESCRIPTION: This amphibian is generally 2-1/3 to 5 in. long. It can be seen in one of two color phases. The "redback" phase has a reddish or orange stripe down the back and tail, bordered by darker sides. The "leadback" phase has no stripe, but has a dark colored back, sometimes with light spots. Both phases have a white and gray colored belly.

HABITAT: Deciduous, coniferous, and mixed woodlands (under logs, fallen bark, leaf litter, and rocks)

DIET: Insects and their larvae, spiders, mites, pillbugs, centipedes, snails, slugs, and earthworms

BEHAVIOR:

- Activity: primarily nocturnal, but can be diurnal
- Grouping: solitary
- Winter: hibernate in underground burrows, often with other salamanders

REPRODUCTION: Every two years females lay 3-14 eggs, which are guarded by the female and hatch directly into small salamanders.

PREDATORS: Birds, snakes, larger salamanders, and mammals (such as raccoons, skunks, and black bear)

WILD FACTS!

- It has no lungs. Instead, it breathes through its skin!
- If it loses its tail to a predator, it can grow back a new one!

Photo: Pam Schmidt, Western U.P. Center for Science, Mathematics & Environmental Education



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WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH

Sitta carolinensis

DESCRIPTION: This small bird has an average length of 6 in. and average weight of 7/10 oz. It has a long bill and a black-crowned head with white cheeks and a blue-gray back.

HABITAT: Any forested area (Females build nests in tree cavities 10-60 ft. off the ground.)

DIET: Seeds, nuts, and insects

BEHAVIOR:

- Activity: diurnal
- Grouping: pairs (male-female)
- Winter: active (do not migrate)

REPRODUCTION: Males and females form life-long partnerships, usually raising one brood of 6-8 young per year. Males and females share parenting.

PREDATORS: Adults may be eaten by housecats, owls, and hawks. Baby birds and eggs may be eaten by woodpeckers, squirrels, and climbing snakes.

WILD FACT! This bird is often seen climbing down tree trunks-upside down!

Photo: Larry West



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GRAY WOLF

Canis lupus

DESCRIPTION: This mammal is 53-67 in. long, weighing between 77 and 143 lb. Sides and back are usually gray, brown, or black with lighter undersides and a long bushy tail. It is the largest wild living relative of the domestic dog.

HABITAT: Tundra, mountains, prairies, forests with abundance of large game and minimal human impact

DIET: White-tailed deer, moose, beavers, rabbits, squirrels, and mice

BEHAVIOR:

- Activity: diurnal and nocturnal
- Grouping: form social packs of five to nine adults
- Winter: active

REPRODUCTION: Females give birth to one litter of five to seven young per year (63-day gestation).

PREDATOR: humans

❖ **SPECIAL STATUS:** Listed as threatened species in Michigan and the United States.

WILD FACT! It may eat 20 lb. of meat in one meal!

Photo: Dave Kenyon, Michigan Department of Natural Resources



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GRAY TREE FROG

Hyla versicolor

DESCRIPTION: This 1-1½ in. frog has large sticky toe pads. Its color can change between gray, green, and brown according to environment or activity.

HABITAT:

- Adults: woods, swamps, old fields, and some backyards
- Tadpoles: ponds and other wetland areas

DIET:

- Adults: insects and their larvae, spiders, mites, and snails
- Tadpoles: algae and other aquatic plants

BEHAVIOR:

- Activity: mainly nocturnal
- Grouping: solitary
- Winter: hibernate under logs and leaf litter

REPRODUCTION: In the spring, each female lays 1000-2000 eggs in water, which hatch after three to seven days. The tadpoles grow into tiny tree frogs within six to eight weeks.

PREDATORS: Snakes, other frogs, birds, and small mammals

WILD FACT! It may climb 30 ft. or higher into trees in search of food.

Photo: Larry West



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RED-SHOULDERED HAWK

Buteo lineatus

DESCRIPTION: This bird has an average wingspan of 39 in. and length of 17-24 in. Females average 1½ lb., whereas males average 1¼ lb. Adults are brown except for reddish underparts streaked with brown.

HABITAT: Deciduous or mixed forests and swamps (Nests are built 20-60 ft. off the ground, usually in swampy areas.)

DIET: Small mammals, amphibians, reptiles, birds, insects, and occasionally snails

BEHAVIOR:

- Activity: diurnal
- Grouping: male-female pairs
- Winter: do not migrate (stay active, in same territory year-round)

REPRODUCTION: Males and females form life-long partnerships, usually raising one brood of two to four young per year. Males and females share parenting.

PREDATORS: Baby birds and eggs may be eaten by great horned owls and raccoons. (Adults have no predators.)

❖ **SPECIAL STATUS:** Listed as threatened in Michigan

WILD FACT! Like other birds of prey, it has excellent eyesight.

Photo: Larry West



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RING-NECKED SNAKE

Diadophis punctatus

DESCRIPTION: This reptile is 10-28 in. long, making it one of the smallest snakes in the Great Lakes region. Its coloring is black, brown, or gray with a yellow or yellow-orange belly and an orange ring around its neck.

HABITAT: Moist, shady woodlands, also use clear-cuts, old fields, grassy dunes and beaches, and trash dumps

DIET: Smaller snakes, frogs, salamanders, earthworms, slugs, and insect larvae

BEHAVIOR:

- Activity: mostly nocturnal
- Grouping: solitary
- Winter: hibernates underground, in burrows made by other animals

REPRODUCTION: Females lay three to four eggs in early summer.

PREDATORS: Owls, hawks, foxes, domestic cats, other snakes, shrews, weasels, and skunks

WILD FACT! These snakes do not bite and are harmless to people.

Photo: Larry West



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FOREST WOLF SPIDER

Lycosa gulosa

DESCRIPTION: This spider varies in size from 3/8 in. (males) to 1/2 in. (females). It is hairy and dark-brown, with some yellow-brown markings. This spider does not make a nest or spin webs.

HABITAT: Forest floor, amongst leaf litter

DIET: Insects and other spiders

BEHAVIOR:

- Activity: nocturnal
- Grouping: solitary
- Winter: generally inactive

REPRODUCTION: The female carries a sac of eggs with her until they hatch. The mother spider then carries her young on her back until they are ready to be on their own.

PREDATORS: Other spiders and birds

WILD FACT! This spider can be found by shining a flashlight along a forest floor at night (during warm weather). The spider's reflective eyes appear to glow with the help of the flashlight!

Photo: Larry West



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NIGHTCRAWLER

Lumbricus terrestris

DESCRIPTION: With a length of 3½-12 in., this type of earthworm is the largest in the Great Lakes region. It has segmented smooth, reddish skin with bristle-like hairs that help it move.

HABITAT: A wide variety of places including gardens, farmland, lawns, fields, forests, roadsides, and along streams and rivers (It lives in deep vertical burrows in the soil, climbing to the surface at night to feed.)

DIET: Leaf litter

BEHAVIOR:

- Activity: nocturnal
- Grouping: solitary
- Winter: burrows deeper into soil to escape freezing

REPRODUCTION: Earthworms are both male and female. After mating with another worm, they produce cocoons containing 2-20 eggs, which are deposited into the moist soil. They hatch about three weeks later.

PREDATORS: Many animals, including birds, foxes, skunks, moles, snakes, frogs, toads, salamanders, ants, and crayfish

WILD FACT! Earthworms help gardeners and farmers by aerating the soil and breaking down dead plant material. Surprisingly, the nightcrawler is not native to the Great Lakes region, but was likely introduced by early European settlers.

Photo: Larry West



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SIX-SPOTTED TIGER BEETLE

Cicindela sexguttata

DESCRIPTION: This insect is a beetle, measuring 1/2-5/8 in. It is a bright, metallic green with six to ten small white spots.

HABITAT: Forest floor, especially in clearings and along paths or forest edges

DIET: Adults feed on other insects, spiders, and other arthropods. Larvae feed on ants, spiders, and other small prey.

BEHAVIOR:

- Activity: diurnal, adults are mainly seen in spring and early summer
- Grouping: solitary
- Winter: adults hibernate in underground burrows

REPRODUCTION: Life cycle includes egg, larva, pupa, and adult. Eggs laid in early summer hatch into grub-like larvae. The larvae spend the winter burrowed underground, before changing to a pupae and finally adults the following year.

PREDATORS: Adults are eaten by birds, dragonflies, frogs, salamanders, and other insect-eating animals. Larvae are eaten by insect-eating animals like moles, opossum, raccoons, skunks, ants, and birds.

WILD FACT! When threatened, this beetle will defend itself by releasing an unpleasant odor!

Photo: Larry West



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PILLBUG

DESCRIPTION: Also known as a sowbug or roly-poly, this ¼-½ in. animal is not an insect. It is actually a crustacean and is more closely related to crayfish and lobster. It is covered by hard, armor-like plates that are usually gray-colored. It has seven pairs of legs, two pairs of antennae, and breathes through gills located on its abdomen.

HABITAT: Damp, dark areas such as under leaves, rocks, and logs

DIET: Decaying vegetable matter and fungus

BEHAVIOR:

- Activity: mostly nocturnal
- Grouping: solitary
- Winter: hibernate

REPRODUCTION: Females carry 30-40 eggs in a pouch located on their underside. Once hatched, the young remain in the pouch until they can live on their own.

PREDATORS: Invertebrate-eating animals such as spiders, ants, centipedes, beetles, and frogs

WILD FACT! As it grows, the pillbug molts or sheds its skin. Because the skin is rich in calcium, the pillbug eats its discarded skin!

Photo: Larry West



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