



Wildlife Checklist



At first glance, Craters of the Moon seems a lifeless place. The young lava flows and cinder cones are indeed inhospitable. During summer as little as one inch of rain may fall. This moisture drains quickly into the porous rock and out of reach of animals. Air temperatures soar into the 90's and the lava surface may reach over 150° F. Drying winds of over 20 miles per hour are common in summer.

Despite the harsh conditions, many creatures eke out a living here. Animals escape the summer heat in different ways. Most, like the mountain lion, venture forth in search of food only at night. Others, like the pika, are active at dusk and dawn. Those that are out during the day often seek shelter in the hottest hours. Marmots take more extreme measures to escape heat. They enter a hibernation-like state called estivation, during which their metabolism and body temperature drop. They estivate until cooler, moister conditions return.

Since there are no streams and few water holes in the lava fields, animals must get the moisture they need directly from their food. Mule deer munch bitterbrush leaves. Violet-green swallows snatch insects from the air. Rattlesnakes inject their venom and swallow their prey, such as

chipmunks, whole. Each of these foods contains water essential to life.

The following list should assist you in identifying the animals you see during your visit. Even if you do not see animals, be alert to evidence of their presence: tracks, trails, nests, burrows, gnawed cones and twigs, fur, feathers, bones, droppings, calls, and smells.

All animals have been classified in one of two categories:

- C: Quite common at some time during the year and may include resident, migrant, or breeding animals.
- U: Has been observed within the monument only infrequently. Please report sightings of these animals at the visitor center.

Reptiles and Amphibians

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Gopher Snake – C | <input type="checkbox"/> | Desert Horned Lizard – U |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Rubber Boa – C | <input type="checkbox"/> | Short-Horned Lizard – U |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Western Rattlesnake – U | <input type="checkbox"/> | Western Skink – U |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Western Garter Snake – U | <input type="checkbox"/> | Western Toad - U |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Western Yellow-Bellied Racer – U | <input type="checkbox"/> | Pacific tree Frog – U |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Long-nosed Leopard Lizard – U | <input type="checkbox"/> | Boreal Chorus Frog – U |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Sagebrush Lizard – C | <input type="checkbox"/> | Great Basin Spadefoot Toad - U |

Mammals

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Dusky Shrew – U | <input type="checkbox"/> | Great Basin Pocket Mouse – C |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Vagrant Shrew – U | <input type="checkbox"/> | Ord's Kangaroo Rat – U |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Merriam's Shrew – U | <input type="checkbox"/> | Western Harvest Mouse – U |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Yuma Bat - U | <input type="checkbox"/> | Deer Mouse – C |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Little Brown Bat – C | <input type="checkbox"/> | Bushy-tailed Woodrat – C |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Long-eared Bat – U | <input type="checkbox"/> | Heather Vole -- U |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Long-legged Bat – U | <input type="checkbox"/> | Montane Vole – C |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Small-footed Bat – U | <input type="checkbox"/> | Long-tailed Vole – U |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Fringed Bat – U | <input type="checkbox"/> | Sagebrush Vole – U |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | California Bat s – U | <input type="checkbox"/> | Western Jumping Mouse – U |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Big Brown Bat – U | <input type="checkbox"/> | Muskrat – U |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Hoary Bat – U | <input type="checkbox"/> | Beaver – U |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Townsend's Big-eared Bat – U | <input type="checkbox"/> | Porcupine – U |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Pallid Bat – U | <input type="checkbox"/> | Coyote – C |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Pika – C | <input type="checkbox"/> | Red Fox – C |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Pygmy Rabbit – U | <input type="checkbox"/> | Kit Fox – U |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mountain Cottontail – U | <input type="checkbox"/> | Black Bear – U |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Snowshoe Hare – U | <input type="checkbox"/> | Raccoon – U |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | White-tailed Jackrabbit – U | <input type="checkbox"/> | Short-tailed Weasel – U |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Black-tailed Jackrabbit – U | <input type="checkbox"/> | Long-tailed Weasel – C |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Least Chipmunk – U | <input type="checkbox"/> | Badger – U |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Yellow-pine Chipmunk – C | <input type="checkbox"/> | Western Spotted Skunk – U |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Yellow-bellied Marmot – C | <input type="checkbox"/> | Striped Skunk – U |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Columbian Ground Squirrel – U | <input type="checkbox"/> | Mountain Lion – U |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Great Basin Ground Squirrel – U | <input type="checkbox"/> | Bobcat – U |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Golden-mantled Ground Squirrel – C | <input type="checkbox"/> | Elk – U |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Red Squirrel – C | <input type="checkbox"/> | Mule Deer – C |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Northern Pocket Gopher – U | <input type="checkbox"/> | Pronghorn – C |