

**A** **American black bear**  
*Ursus americanus*



About 50-70 black bears call Whistler home. Their coats can be various shades of black and brown, often with a white chest blaze. Bears are highly evolved social animals with great intelligence. They have become an integral part of Whistler community life.

**A**

**2** **Grizzly bear**  
*Ursus arctos*



While there are no resident grizzlies in Whistler, they do pass through from time to time since they live just outside this area to the north, east and west. Bears are very strong, fast and powerful animals. They hear and see well, but depend mostly on their sense of smell.

**2**

**3** **Hoary marmot**  
*Marmota caligata*



These oversized ground squirrels are constantly on watch and whistle loudly at the first sign of danger to alert the rest of the colony. The prevalence of these "whistlers" led to London Mountain being renamed Whistler Mountain in the '60s.

**3**

**4** **Douglas' squirrel**  
*Tamiasciurus douglasii*



Douglas' squirrels feed mainly on conifer seeds, supplemented by mushrooms, buds, catkins and ferns. They do not hibernate, but in winter they spend less time in trees and more time in labyrinths of tunnels under the snow where the summer's harvest is cached.

**4**

**5** **Coyote**  
*Canis latrans*



Coyotes flourish over much of North America, in part because of their willingness to adapt as well as their keen hunting and foraging skills. Their howls echo through the mountains and serve to remind us that we must learn to coexist with all wildlife.

**5**

**6** **Bobcat**  
*Lynx rufus*



Generally elusive and nocturnal, bobcats live in mature, low elevation stands of fir and hemlock. There, much of the snowfall is intercepted by the forest canopy, which helps bobcats survive at the northern edge of their range in Whistler.

**6**

**7** **American beaver**  
*Castor canadensis*



Slow on land, beavers are good swimmers who can stay under water for 15 minutes. Their handwork is not hard to find in Whistler. Lodges and dams are found at many lakes and rivers. Also, look for felled willow trees or stumps chewed to a point.

**7**

**8** **Columbia black-tailed deer**  
*Odocoileus hemionus columbianus*



These majestic 45-90 kg animals shelter in old growth forests throughout summer and winter, but they can be spotted at the treeline and in open spaces that offer grassy areas for grazing. They live and browse side by side with resident black bears.

**8**

**9** **American pika**  
*Ochotona princeps*



Pikas tend to live above the tree line in the harshest of environments. On alpine walks, look for pikas sunning themselves on exposed rocks. Underneath those rocky outcrops are a series of tunnels and dens as well as areas for winter food storage.

**9**

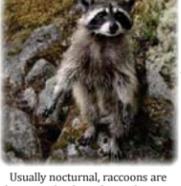
**10** **Snowshoe hare**  
*Lepus americanus*



Snowshoe hares have especially large, furry feet that help them move atop snow in the winter, bounding up to 3 metres at a time and travelling as fast as 45 km/h. They also have a snow-white winter coat that turns brown when the snow melts each spring.

**10**

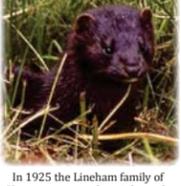
**J** **Raccoon**  
*Procyon lotor*



Usually nocturnal, raccoons are also active by day, taking advantage of food available in human-use areas. Using their dexterous and hypersensitive front paws, they dabble for underwater food near the shoreline, but they also eat bird eggs, amphibians and bugs.

**J**

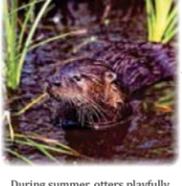
**Q** **American mink**  
*Neovision vison*



In 1925 the Lineham family of Vancouver opened a mink ranch at Green Lake. After the Great Depression hit, the farm was closed. It is not known whether any mink survived. Perhaps their descendants still scurry around Whistler's forests among their wild counterparts.

**Q**

**K** **North American river otter**  
*Lontra canadensis pacifica*



During summer, otters playfully slide down river banks and swim alongside paddlers on the River of Golden Dreams. They are regularly spotted in the fall feeding on spawning Kokanee salmon at Crabapple Creek.

**K**

**A** **Northern flicker (red-shafted)**  
*Colaptes auratus cafer*



While hiking in Whistler, don't be surprised if you flush a flicker up from the ground. That's not where you'd expect to find a woodpecker, but flickers mainly eat ants and beetles, digging for them with their unusual, slightly curved bill.

**A**

**2** **Rufous hummingbird**  
*Selasphorus rufus*



A popular backyard visitor in Whistler during their spring mating season, they migrate south around July. With excellent location memory, they return to the same feeders every year. They are also extremely territorial and males will aggressively defend feeding locations.

**2**

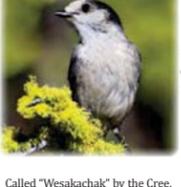
**3** **American dipper**  
*Cinclus mexicanus*



Also known as a water ouzel, this is North America's only truly aquatic songbird. It catches all of its food underwater in swiftly flowing streams by swimming and walking on the stream bottom.

**3**

**4** **Gray jay (Whiskey Jack)**  
*Perisoreus canadensis*



Called "Wesakachak" by the Cree, and hence "Whiskey Jack" by us, this smart and inquisitive bird often visits the ski line-up on sunny winter days, looking for anything edible.

**4**

**5** **Varied thrush**  
*Ixoreus naevius*



This relative of the robin lives in dark, wet, mature forests foraging for insects in summer and berries and seeds in winter. It is a sly species, but can easily be identified by its song - a penetrating and shrill single-pitched tone.

**5**

**6** **Pileated woodpecker**  
*Dryocopus pileatus*



Their distinctive call, reminiscent of laughter, along with their striking appearance likely inspired the famous cartoon character Woody Woodpecker. Look for the unique oblong holes in trees they have left behind in their search for ants.

**6**

**7** **Northern saw-whet owl**  
*Aegolius acadicus*



While this is one of the most common owls, saw-whets are nocturnal and seldom seen. They were likely named for a call that sounds like a saw being sharpened on a whetting stone. Mice are their main prey.

**7**

**8** **Pine siskin**  
*Spinus pinus*



This nomadic finch ranges widely and erratically across the continent each winter in response to seed crops. Flocks are constantly awither. They can store up to 10% of their body mass in their crop, enabling them to get through 5-6 hours of subzero temperatures.

**8**

**9** **Hooded merganser**  
*Lophodytes cucullatus*



This duck is fairly common on small ponds and rivers, where they find fish by sight. They can change the refractive properties of their eyes to improve their underwater vision. Their extra transparent eyelid helps protect the eye during swimming.

**9**

**10** **Dark-eyed (Oregon) junco**  
*Junco hyemalis oregonus*



This sparrow can be seen flitting about the ground year-round in Whistler, next to ski runs in winter and moving from valley bottom to timberline by late June and early July. They mainly eat insects and seeds and are a common backyard visitor.

**10**

**J** **Mountain chickadee**  
*Parus gambeli*



A constantly moving insect-gleaner of the mountain forest, this friendly bird is named for its call. Mountain chickadees are able to lower their metabolic rate to conserve energy on cold nights. Nesting females will actually hiss like a snake to discourage predators.

**J**

**Q** **Golden-crowned kinglet**  
*Regulus satrapa*



These tiny songbirds usually stay concealed high in dense spruce or fir foliage, revealing their presence with very high-pitched calls. Barely larger than hummingbirds, these frenetically active birds can survive -40°C nights, sometimes huddling together for warmth.

**Q**

**K** **Sooty grouse**  
*Dendragapus fuliginosus*



Grouse are often seen calmly foraging for food in the middle of ski runs during winter. The obliviousness of the birds to skiers whizzing past doesn't seem like a good long-term survival strategy but so far it hasn't noticeably reduced the abundance of grouse in Whistler.

**K**

**A** **Northern alligator lizard**  
*Elgaria coerulea*



Their first defence is to flee and hide, but if caught this lizard may release a smelly mix of feces and musk, bite, or even "release" its tail. The dropped tail acts as a decoy, distracting the predator. Over time, the lizard will regenerate a shorter, fatter tail.

**A**

**2** **Valley garter snake**  
*Thamnophis sirtalis fitchii*



You'll see this species in many habitats although it tends to prefer wetlands. These snakes can eat both the toxic rough-skinned newt and the poisonous western toad. However, the poison does seem to daze the snake, making it sluggish to the point of appearing inebriated!

**2**

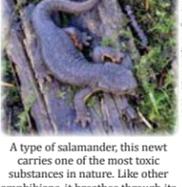
**3** **Western toad**  
*Anaxyrus boreas*



A species of concern, these tiny toadlets (smaller than a 25¢ coin) can be seen in August at Lost Lake Park during their annual migration upland into the forest to find a winter den. Of 45,000 tadpoles born, less than 1% survive to reproduce. So tread carefully.

**3**

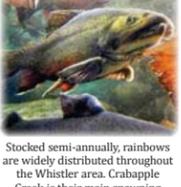
**4** **Rough-skinned newt**  
*Taricha granulosa*



A type of salamander, this newt carries one of the most toxic substances in nature. Like other amphibians, it breathes through its skin and is highly sensitive to the environment it is in. Thus a good rule of thumb is to never handle amphibians, especially toxic ones.

**4**

**5** **Rainbow trout**  
*Oncorhynchus mykiss*



Stocked semi-annually, rainbows are widely distributed throughout the Whistler area. Crabapple Creek is their main spawning area. Rainbows do not die after spawning and are thus able to spawn every year successively. The fry emerge from the gravel in July.

**5**

**6** **Milbert's tortoiseshell**  
*Aglais milberti*



Found in wet areas near woodlands, the female will lay her eggs in bunches on the underside of a host plant's leaves. There may be up to 900 eggs in a clutch. Unlike other hibernating butterflies, adults of this species avidly visit flowers but also feed on tree sap or rotting fruit.

**6**

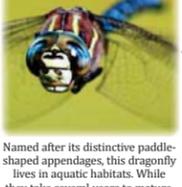
**7** **Pacific banana slug**  
*Ariolimax columbianus*



The Pacific banana slug is the second-largest terrestrial slug in the world, growing up to 25 cm long and weighing up to 115 g. These mollusks are "decomposers"; they process leaves, animal droppings, and dead plant material, recycling them into soil humus.

**7**

**8** **Paddle-tailed darter**  
*Aeshna palmata*



Named after its distinctive paddle-shaped appendages, this dragonfly lives in aquatic habitats. While they take several years to mature, naiads (immature dragonflies) are active predators and can swim by jet propulsion - squirting water out from the end of the abdomen.

**8**

**9** **Ramshorn snail**  
*Planorbella trivolvis*



Most active during dawn and dusk, the ramshorn is named for its helical-shaped exoskeleton. These snails can regulate their buoyancy by adjusting the amount of air in their pulmonary sac, or primitive "lung". They use this to sink, float or rise within the water.

**9**

**10** **Sitka bumble bee**  
*Bombus sitkensis*



Bumble bees are important for plant pollination. They live and work in colonies headed by a single queen who is the mother of all other nest residents. After mating, the males die. Worker bees are always female and are responsible for foraging, nest cleaning and brood care.

**10**

**J** **Wolf spider**  
*Arctosa alpigena*



One of the 35 spider species in Whistler, wolf spiders are larger in size and can be found in sphagnum bogs and lichen-covered alpine meadows. They are swift runners and agile, nocturnal hunters. Their eight eyes, arranged in three rows, provide them with keen eyesight.

**J**

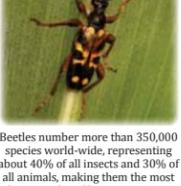
**Q** **Coastal tailed frog**  
*Ascophus truei*



These rare frogs live in clear, very fast-moving streams. The tail, which is only found on males, is actually a reproductive organ. They remain tadpoles for up to four years and don't reach sexual maturity until several years later. They can live up to 20 years.

**Q**

**K** **Flower longhorn beetle**  
*Xestoleptura crassipes*



Beetles number more than 350,000 species world-wide, representing about 40% of all insects and 30% of all animals, making them the most diverse order of living organisms. This beetle is characterized by extremely long antennae. It can be found from July through August.

**K**

**A** **Arctic lupine**  
*Lupinus arcticus*



This bushy herb and member of the pea family flourishes in sub-alpine meadows. Its purple flowers can be spotted along most mountain trails during June and July. It is poisonous when eaten, protecting itself from potential predators.

**A**

**2** **Fly agaric mushroom**  
*Amanita muscaria*



Found beneath pine trees, this quintessential - but poisonous - toadstool is noted for its hallucinogenic properties. While Alice in Wonderland did consume this mushroom to change her physical state, it is not generally recommended for consumption.

**2**

**3** **Oval-leaved blueberry**  
*Vaccinium ovalifolium*



Blueberries are one of B.C.'s most recognized and harvested berries, for both people and bears. The berries begin to ripen in July in the Whistler valley bottom and fruit into September at higher elevations. Blueberries are high in healthy antioxidants. They have also been used in making dyes.

**3**

**4** **Black cottonwood**  
*Populus balsamifera ssp. trichocarpa*



Cottonwood catkins, the tree's flowers, appear in early spring before the leaves. Black bears climb the trees to feed on them. When catkins mature in early summer, the white-haired seeds parachute down in thousands, blanketing the ground with cottony fluff.

**4**

**5** **Red columbine**  
*Aquilegia formosa*



This flower is found in damp meadows along Singing Pass, trailside by Cheakamus Lake, and at mid to high elevations on Blackcomb. It flowers mid-June at lower elevations and August higher up. The name comes from the Latin *columbina*, meaning a cluster of doves.

**5**

**6** **Labrador tea**  
*Rhododendron groenlandicum*



This plant is found growing in northern latitudes around the world. Many people brew the leaves to make herbal tea. The tea has been a favorite beverage among Dene and Inuit people for many years, and is still used today for a variety of medicinal purposes.

**6**

**7** **Sitka mountain ash**  
*Sorbus sitchensis*



Mountain ash berries are a popular bear food in fall. These plants are being removed from high human-bear conflict zones in urban Whistler, and are being planted at higher elevations away from human-use areas where bears can feed conflict-free.

**7**

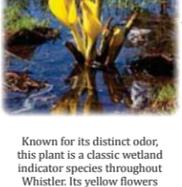
**8** **Western hemlock**  
*Tsuga heterophylla*



One coniferous tree may seem much like any other, but the hemlock can be easily distinguished since the top bows downward. From the chairlifts up Whistler or Blackcomb, watch for the transition midway up where western hemlock is replaced by the more stunted mountain hemlock.

**8**

**9** **Skunk cabbage**  
*Lysichiton americanus*



Known for its distinct odor, this plant is a classic wetland indicator species throughout Whistler. Its yellow flowers bloom early in spring, then give way to huge, vibrant green cabbage leaves.

**9**

**10** **Western anemone**  
*Anemone occidentalis*



This plant is a beautiful and welcome harbinger of spring in the Whistler alpine. Western anemones start to flower within days after snowmelt. The flowers are short-lived, and are soon replaced by its feathery, white seed head or mop top.

**10**

**J** **Western redcedar**  
*Thuja plicata*



Western redcedar is hugely important to B.C.'s history, as it has had many uses in the province's indigenous societies. The sinewy bark was used to create ropes, baskets and clothing. Redcedars can be found at Cougar Mountain, where some trees are over 600 years old.

**J**

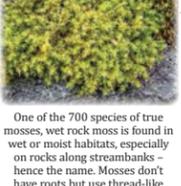
**Q** **Witch's hair**  
*Alectoria sarmentosa*



When there's no snow in the woods, you can see that the lichen growing on tree trunks normally starts 2 or 3 metres above the ground. This "lichen line" is a rough measure of the average depth of the snowpack; the higher the line, the more snow, and the better the tree skiing!

**Q**

**K** **Wet rock moss**  
*Dichondrium pellucidum*



One of the 700 species of true mosses, wet rock moss is found in wet or moist habitats, especially on rocks along streambanks - hence the name. Mosses don't have roots but use thread-like structures called rhizoids to anchor to rough surfaces.

**K**

**JOKER**



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**JOKER**



**REKOR**

**Wild WHISTLER**  
Playing Cards



52 amazing animals & plants