

# WILDLIFE



## on the Bridger-Teton National Forest

Wyoming wildlife is worth the watching. While you're here it's possible to see a moose in a pond, a bald eagle soaring overhead, elk feeding in a high alpine meadow or pronghorn antelope cantering through sagebrush. Many visitors are eager to see deer, coyotes or red-tailed hawks. Others are more interested in elusive wildlife such as bighorn sheep, bear and the gray wolf—which has returned to its native habitat in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.

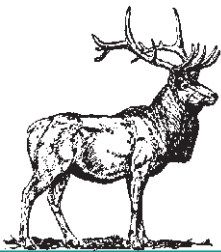
The Bridger-Teton National Forest supports six species of amphibians, six species of reptiles, 74 species of mammals, 355 species of birds, 25 species of fish and more than 1000 species of plants.

Each spring and summer endangered

whooping cranes might be observed feeding with their relatives—sandhill cranes—in the wet meadows and pastures east of the Wyoming Range. You may have the good fortune to see a peregrine falcon, the swiftest of birds.

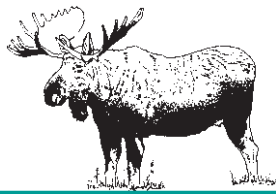
Wild animals survive because they have learned where and how to find food, where to rest and sleep in safety, and where to raise their families. Getting too close to wildlife can be dangerous. Observe animals from a distance without disturbing them.

**A fed animal is a dead animal.** Wild animals should never be fed human food; it is bad for their health. Animals dependent upon handouts can lose their ability to find their own natural food and often die when winter comes and no one feeds them.



### Elk

These large, tan members of the deer family are found in high elevations during summer. The entire Forest is elk habitat. During the fall mating season you may hear the bulls "bugle". During winter, thousands of elk can be found on Jackson's National Elk Refuge. Feedgrounds are provided because much of the elk's traditional winter habitat is now occupied by man.



### Moose

This largest member of the deer family is often found in wetlands browsing on willows. They are dark brown and can weigh 700 to 1,400 pounds. The bull moose has large palm-shaped antlers. **Caution: both bulls and cows are dangerous to approach.**



### Bison

Commonly referred to as buffalo, bison are a symbol of the West. Bulls can weigh more than a ton and stand six feet tall, whereas cows reach approximately 1,000 pounds and five feet in height. Both sexes have permanent horns. **While they may look safe to approach, they are not.**



### Beaver

These hard-working rodents with broad flat tails are famous for building dams and lodges. Look for chewed limbs and tree trunks along streams, and their lodges surrounded by water. Beaver trappers were the first Europeans to arrive in Jackson Hole.



### Deer

Most frequently seen at dawn or dusk, these light brown animals can be seen throughout the Forest. Mule deer, with large ears, are by far the most prevalent, but white-tailed deer may also be seen.



### Pika

A sharp chirp from a rocky mountain slope may come from this small "rock rabbit" with small round ears and no tail. The pika remains active all winter, surviving on piles of grass that it gathers during summer.



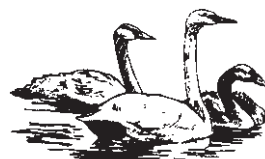
### Sandhill Crane

These large, gray birds have very long legs and are often found in marshy areas. Their raucous cries can be heard from dawn to dusk and their spring mating dance is unforgettable. As with the eagles, please view them from a distance.



### Pronghorn Antelope

Often seen along sagebrush flats bordering Wyoming highways, these small tan and white animals are the fastest mammals in North America. Both sexes have short, hooked horns.



### Trumpeter Swan

Majestic trumpeter swans are the largest of all North American waterfowl and inhabit the National Forest year round. Their nests are in wetlands. Binoculars or spotting scopes are important to avoid disturbing these protected birds. If you are fortunate you will hear their loud trumpeting call.



### Eagle

Both golden and bald eagles nest in the Bridger-Teton National Forest. The golden eagle has a deep tan chest and head, while the mature bald eagle has a white tail and head. Both birds take four years to mature and can be difficult to identify before maturation. If you see one, please enjoy from a distance.



### Bighorn Sheep

These sure-footed animals are found in mountainous rocky areas. Rams have thick curled horns, while ewes have short curved ones. These grayish animals are sometimes mistaken for mountain goats which are white with slender horns, and not commonly found here.



### Osprey

These large hawks feed exclusively on fish which they catch by diving into the water. Their call is a series of sharp "cheeps" or a frenzied "cheereek!" They use telephone poles and dead trees for nesting and perching. Please do not come within 200 yards of active nests or cut down snags within 100 yards of the shoreline.



### Dipper

The water ouzel, or dipper, may be seen on fast-moving mountain streams bobbing and bowing until it decides to plunge into the icy water for insects. This small bird uses its wings to propel itself underwater in search of food. Dippers have one of the most melodious songs and can be heard year round.

## YOU ARE TOO CLOSE TO WILDLIFE IF:

- The animal stops feeding or resting.
- The animal starts moving either toward or away from you.
- The animal starts panting, huffing or making unusual sounds.
- The animal begins pawing the ground or swinging its head.
- Neck hair or feathers stand up.
- The animal appears nervous, uneasy or stressed.

If you notice these signs you are disturbing the animal and it is time to slowly move away. The safest way to view wildlife is through binoculars or spotting scopes.