



The Ontario Wildlife Foundation
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Conserve Natural Habitats • Promote and Participate in Conservation Education • Encourage Outdoor Recreation

BATS!

There are 8 different species of bats in Ontario. They are insectivores, and are prey to falcons, hawks, owls, snakes, cats, and raccoons. But of even greater concern are disease and habitat loss to the bat population.

The two most common bats in Ontario are the Little Brown Myotis and the Big Brown Bat.

The Little Brown Myotis eats mosquitoes, tipulid, moths and other flying insects. It begins its hibernation in September and its young are usually born between June and late July. They roost in colonies.

The Big Brown bats start hibernating in late November and emerge in early April. These bats eat mainly beetles but also some other flying insects.

They are both nocturnal bats and do use a sophisticated sonar for communicating and navigating. The study of bats has been extremely valuable in medical research due to their navigation abilities.

Why do we want bats around?

They eat mosquitoes, tipulid, moths, beetles and other flying insects.



What is threatening Ontario bats?

- Loss of habitat and disturbance of hibernation. This disturbance causes the bats to use up the stored fat supplies that they have for the winter and therefore they may not have enough to get them through to until their spring foraging time.
- White-nose syndrome: The white fungus grows around the muzzles and the wings of hibernating bats. The disease, which has a very high mortality rate, causes bats to awaken too frequently from their hibernation. This can cause the bats to exhaust their fat supplies in mid-winter, and starve to death through excessive activity.

Did you Celebrate National Tree Day on September 23?

National Tree Day serves as a celebration for all Canadians to appreciate the great benefits that trees provide us - clean air, wildlife habitat, reducing energy demand and connecting with nature.

Benefits of Trees:

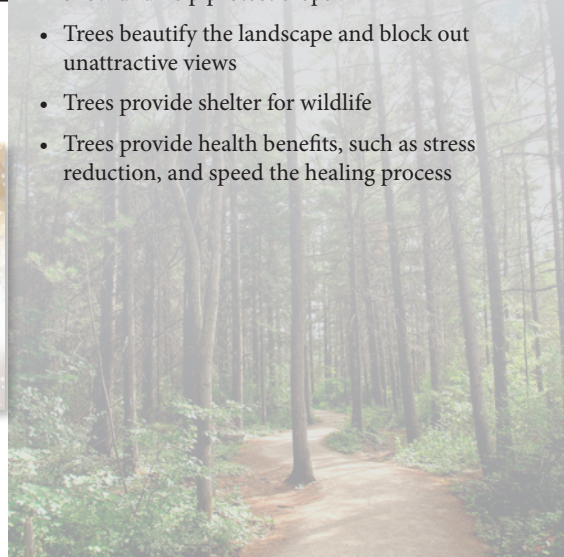
Trees provide many benefits, creating healthier, more sustainable, and more beautiful communities. Here are just a few of the benefits of trees:

- Trees provide food for people and animals (fruit, berries, and nuts)
- Trees capture carbon and become carbon 'sinks' which helps reduce the Greenhouse Effect
- Trees' root systems help prevent soil erosion, which prevents water pollution
- Properties with trees are generally valued higher in the real estate market
- Trees provide employment in the forestry field: foresters, arborists, lumber, research, tree workers, etc.
- Trees provide shade in the summer, which saves on air conditioning costs; conifers insulate homes in the winter, which reduces heating costs
- Trees shade asphalt, making streets and parking lots cooler and extending the life of the asphalt
- Trees planted in fields shield against wind and snow and help protect crops
- Trees beautify the landscape and block out unattractive views
- Trees provide shelter for wildlife
- Trees provide health benefits, such as stress reduction, and speed the healing process

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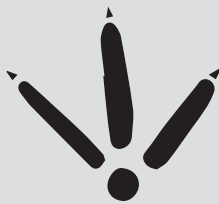
Tracking Quiz

How many of these animal tracks do you know?

1. Hint: This animal can make vertical leaps of over two and a half metres and horizontal leaps of nine metres – that's almost as long as a school bus. It can also reach speeds of up to 58 kilometres per hour.



2. Hint: These animals are omnivorous: plants, fruits, nuts, insects, honey, salmon, small mammals and carrion. In northern regions, they eat spawning salmon.



3. Hint: Females lay 4 to 17 eggs, and feed their chicks after they hatch—but only for a few days. The young quickly learn to fend for themselves as part of mother/child flocks that can include dozens of animals. Males take no role in the care of their young.



4. Hint: Breeding begins at one year, and these animals mate for life. Primarily carnivorous, they prey chiefly on rabbits and rodents, but they also consume insects, and fruits. They are a threat to such livestock as sheep, goats, calves, poultry, and to domestic dogs and cats.

5. Hint: Their name comes from the Algonquin word arukan, meaning "he who scratches with his hand." It is a strong swimmer, but only when forced to swim. It is known more for its climbing abilities. It is capable of making a variety of sounds, including whistling, shrieking, chattering, clicking its teeth, snarling and growling.



Answers: 1. White-tailed Deer
2. Black Bear
3. Wild Turkey
4. Coyote
5. Raccoon

Poisonous Plants to avoid in Ontario

Poison Ivy

How to Identify Poison Ivy

The following four characteristics are sufficient to identify poison ivy in most situations:

- Clusters of three leaflets.
- Alternate leaf arrangement.
- Lack of thorns.
- Each group of three leaflets grows on its own stem, which connects to the main vine.
- The appearance of poison ivy can vary greatly between environments, and even within a single area. Identification by experienced people is often made difficult by leaf damage, the plant's leafless condition during winter, and unusual growth forms due to environmental or genetic factors.
- Can cause a rash on skin if contact is made with the oil resin that is found on poison ivy.



"Poison Ivy in Perrot State Park" by SWMNPoliSciProject - Own work. Licensed under CC BY 3.0 via Wikimedia Commons

Giant Hogweed - INVASIVE SPECIES

Giant hogweed is a perennial plant and a member of the carrot family. It is a garden ornamental from southwest Asia that is naturalizing in North America and becoming more common in southern and central Ontario.

How to Identify Giant Hogweed

- Grows up to 5.5 metres tall under ideal conditions.
- The white flower clusters resemble those of Queen Anne's Lace, but tend to be more widely spaced and can form a flower-head almost one metre wide.
- Giant hogweed has a scattered distribution across southern and central Ontario, south of the line from Manitoulin Island to Ottawa.
- Remove with care; sap can blister skin.



"Herkulesstaude fg01" by Fritz Geller-Grimm - Own work. Licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0 via Wikimedia Commons

Wild Parsnip

Along with being poisonous, wild parsnip is an invasive plant native to Europe and Asia.

How to Identify Wild Parsnip

- Grows up to 1.5 metres tall.
- The single green stem is two to five centimetres thick and smooth with few hairs.
- Compound leaves are arranged in pairs, with sharply toothed leaflets that are shaped like a mitten.
- Yellowish green flowers form umbrella-shaped clusters 10 to 20 centimetres across.
- Seeds are flat and round.
- Sap can cause severe burns; remove with care.



Wild Parsnip

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