

Wildlife Guide

a catalog of animals commonly seen at the Winnetka Golf Club

1300 Oak Street, Winnetka
(847) 501-2050 ext. 0
www.winnetkagolfclub.org
<http://wgcsuperintendent.blogspot.com>

Bluebirds

Description

Bluebirds are a group of medium-sized, birds in the thrush family. They have blue, or blue and red, plumage. Female birds are less brightly colored than males, although color patterns are similar and there is no noticeable difference in size between sexes.

Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

Bluebirds are territorial, prefer open grassland with scattered trees and are cavity nesters. They are seen all over the course in the open. They are usually seen on the course in May and June feeding on service berries. The service berries are located left of the 10th tee and around the 7th and 15th tees. The birdhouses seen on the course are bluebird houses and helps regulate the once small population.

Interesting fact

In the 1970s, bluebird numbers had declined by estimates ranging to 70% due to unsuccessful competition for nesting cavities, coupled with a decline in habitat. However, in late 2005 Cornell University's Laboratory of Ornithology reported bluebird sightings across the southern U.S. as part of its yearly Backyard Bird Count. This upsurge can largely be attributed to a movement of volunteers establishing and maintaining bluebird trails.



*If you look around the golf course, you will see tons of birdhouses. These are Bluebird houses. In an effort to restore the Bluebird population in the area, the golf course put up Bluebird houses and monitored their use. The population has grown significantly throughout the years.

Minks

Description

The mink is a member of the weasel family. It is approximately the size of a small house cat. It can grow to be 25 to 32 inches in length and may weigh from 2-5 pounds. The male is slightly larger than the female. The mink has a long slender body and short legs.



The five toes of each foot are partially webbed. Its small head is adorned with beady small eyes and short ears. The mink's coat is dark brown to black in color and has white patches on the chin, chest and belly. The mink is prized for its pelt.

Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

Minks live in burrows or dens near a body of water like streams, ponds or lakes. Minks burrow into the bank with an underwater entrance. These entrances are one foot wide but are kept closed by plugging them with vegetation which they replace every day. On the course they are seen at the 13th tee with the ponds on either side. There are also spotted near other ponds including the creek between the 5th and 6th holes and the pond at the 14th tee. Spotting minks is very sporadic especially because they are nocturnal.

Interesting fact

The most important thing that the mink needs to survive is water, or some kind of lake or pond.

Red Foxes

Description

Average weight of red fox varies between 8 to 15 pounds. Total length is 35 to 40 3/8 inches with a tail length between 13 3/4 to 17 inches. The Red fox is a small, dog-like animal. They have a reddish-brown coat above, with a white belly and a black tipped nose and lower legs. It also has a large, very noticeable, bushy tail that is white tipped.

Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

Red foxes live in grasslands and other open areas. They can be spotted all over the course, searching food, and possibly in the mound by the 15th tee. They normally feed on mice at the course. They are most active at night so spotting them is pretty tough unless you are out at dawn or dusk.

Interesting fact

Coyotes will not tolerate foxes within their territories. Several studies have found that red foxes only occur in the gaps between the larger territories of coyotes.



Chipmunks

Description

The chipmunk is a small rodent of the forest, measuring only 5.5-6.5 inches in length, with a 3-4 inch tail. It weighs between 2-4 ounces. The chipmunk is reddish brown in color with a white belly. It has dark brown stripes down its back, a set on each side, consisting of two dark stripes with a white stripe in the middle. It also has a white stripe that extends the length of its back to the tip of its tail. This coat coloration provides the chipmunk with effective camouflage for its woodland environment.



Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

Chipmunks normally live in tall grass, brush and burrows. A great area to spot them is around the 4th green. There is some tall grass on the right side and some forest on the left. They can also be seen

in the tall grass by the 14th tee and in the large bush by the 9th tee. They are more active and can also be seen in open area running around. They are most active between early spring and late fall.

Interesting fact

The chipmunk has inner cheek pouches, which are located on both sides of the mouth, and used for food storage and food transportation.

Opossums

Description

Opossums are between 20-26 inches long, including a 10 inch tail. The opossum has grey to black fur, black eyes, pink nose, feet and tail, black ears and pointed nose. It has a long, slender body with a pointed snout. Their bodies are grayish, white, or reddish fur with white tipped hairs. Sometimes they have 3 dark streaks: 1 over each eye and 1 along midline of crown. Their ears are large, leaf-like, and hairless. They have a long round tail. The base of tail has hair, remainder of tail is hairless.

Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

Opossums are usually solitary and nomadic, staying in one area as long as food and water are easily available. They are not seen on the course often, but when they are, they are near ponds or just walking through the course. As nocturnal animals, they favor dark, secure areas. These areas may be below ground or above. Dawn and dusk are best times to see Opossums. They do not hibernate, so they can be spotted throughout the year.

Interesting fact

It can sometime escape being killed by “playing opossum” or playing dead. It will simply lie on its side with its tongue hanging out of its mouth and its eyes shut. By doing this, it allows itself to be mauled about until the killer loses interest and leaves.



Northern Cardinal

Description

The Northern Cardinal is a mid-sized songbird with a body length of 8–9 inches and a wingspan of 10–12 inches). It weighs about 1.6 oz. The male is a brilliant crimson red with a black face mask over the eyes, extending to the upper chest. The color is dullest on the back and wings. The female is fawn, with mostly grayish-brown tones and a slight reddish tint on the wings, the crest, and the tail feathers. The face mask of the female is gray to black and is less defined than that of the male. Both sexes possess prominent raised crests and bright coral-colored beaks. The beak is cone-shaped and strong.



Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

Its natural habitat is woodlands, gardens, shrubs and swamps. This bird is a permanent resident throughout its range, although it may relocate to avoid extreme weather or if food is scarce. The cardinal is seen commonly throughout the course all year long.

Interesting fact

The Northern Cardinal is a territorial song bird. The male sings in a loud, clear whistle from the top of a tree or another high location to defend his territory. He will chase off other males entering his territory. He may mistake his image on various reflective surfaces as an invading male, and will fight his reflection relentlessly.

American Robin

Description

The American Robin is 10–11 inches long with a wingspan ranging from 12–16 inches, and averages about 2.7 oz. in weight. The head varies from jet black to gray, with white eye arcs. The throat is white with black streaks, and the belly and under tail is white. The Robin has a brown back and a reddish-orange breast, varying from a rich red maroon to peachy orange. The bill is yellow with a variably dark tip, the dusky area becoming more extensive in winter, and the legs and feet are brown. The sexes are similar, but the female tends to be duller than the male.

Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

The American Robin’s breeding habitat is woodland and more open land. It is a migratory songbird, among the earliest to breed upon returning to its spring home. On the course the robin is seen in trees and flying throughout the course or feeding on earthworms in the fairways. They migrate late in the fall.



Interesting fact

The Robin is frequently seen running across lawns, picking up earthworms by sight, and its *running and stopping* behavior is a distinguishing characteristic. It hunts visually, not by hearing.

Rails

Description

Rails are a little over a foot long and have a wingspan of about two feet. Rails have a long bill with a slight downward curve. They are dark brown on the back and top of the head with light brown on the face and breast. They also have a white throat and a light belly.

Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

Rails are not very common on the course, but can be found near the ponds mostly. Rails feed during the day. They will forage in open water, and if they catch food on land, they will dunk their meal in water before eating it. They will also migrate so the best time to see them is in the spring and summer.



Interesting fact

The rail is an endangered species.

Orioles

Description

The males are typically black and yellow or orange, with white markings; the plumage of females and immature birds is duller. They are generally slender with long tails and a pointed bill.

Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

Orioles can be seen in the willow trees by the 10th green and 15th tee. They have also been spotted in the large cottonwood tree by the 5th green. Species nesting in areas with cold winters are strongly migratory.

Interesting fact

New World Orioles are a group of birds in the blackbird family.



Coyotes

Description

Coyotes typically grow to 30–34 inches in length, not counting a tail of 12–16 inches. On average, they weigh from 15–46 lb. (6.8–21 kg). The color of the coyote's fur varies from grayish-brown to yellowish-gray on the upper parts. The throat and belly tend to be white. The forelegs, sides of the head, muzzle and paws are reddish-brown. Their tail is the same color as the body with a black-tip.



Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

Coyotes are more often seen in central and southern Illinois, but have been spotted on the course. They are primarily nocturnal, but can often be seen at dawn searching for food. On the course they can be seen near the edge of the Forest Preserve, or all around scavenging for food. They do not hibernate so they are around all year.

Interesting fact

Coyotes "sing" as a way to communicate with other coyote families and as a way to keep track of their own family members.

Squirrels

Description

Squirrels belong to the family of rodents. Squirrels are generally small animals, ranging in size. Commonly squirrels range from 16.6 to 21.8 inches long. Their tails range from 7.5 to 9.8 inches. Squirrels typically have slender bodies with bushy tails and large eyes. The color of squirrels can vary, but generally you will see grey and black on the course.



Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

Squirrels can be seen all over the course near bushes and tall grass. Near the Oak trees at the 2th, 15th, 16th, and 18th holes are great areas to spot them. They are also common just before the 14th tee on the walkway through many trees, in the forest area between the 3rd hole and 4th tee. They are very active throughout the year, but most active in the fall preparing for the winter.

Interesting fact

Squirrels can fall up to 100 feet without hurting themselves. They'll use their tail both for balance and as a parachute.

White-Tail Deer

Description

Deer range from 130 to 290 lbs. and 21-47 inches tall. Their coats are a reddish-brown in the spring and summer and turns to a grey-brown throughout the fall and winter. White-tail deer can be recognized by the white underside to its tail, which it shows as a signal of alarm by raising the tail during escape. Males re-grow their antlers every year and females do not have antlers.



Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

The White-Tail Deer is very commonly seen on the course at dawn and dusk. They are on the course throughout the year but less active in the winter. They can be spotted everywhere in the course but are especially common along the 14th, 17th and 18th fairways, and near the small mound next to the 15th tee.

Interesting fact

There is a population of white-tailed deer in the state of New York that is entirely white in color.

Muskrats

Description

An adult muskrat is about 16 to 24 inches long, almost half of that tail, and weighs from 1.5 to 4 lbs.. Muskrats are covered with short, thick fur which is medium to dark brown or black in color with the belly a bit lighter but as the age increases it turns a partly gray in color. Muskrats are most active at night or near dawn and dusk.

Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

Found in streams, ponds or lakes, muskrats burrow into the bank with an underwater entrance like minks. These entrances are smaller than the mink's entrance at 6 to 8 inches wide. These lodges are up to three feet in height. In snowy areas they keep the openings to their lodges closed by plugging them with vegetation which they replace every day. Muskrats are more commonly seen on the course than minks. They are most often seen swimming in the ponds, usually the 13th tee pond and the 14th fairway pond. There are also burrows between the two ponds near the 13th tee.



Interesting fact

Their fur has two layers, which helps protect them from the cold water. They have long tails which are covered with scales rather than hair.

Belted Kingfishers

Description

The Belted Kingfisher is a medium-sized, stocky bird. They are 11-14 inches long with a wingspan of 19-23 inches. They have a large, crested head, and a long, solid bill. The bird has a small white spot by each eye, at the base of the bill. Its back is an overall slate blue color. The white belly is transected by a slate blue band, topped with a white collar.



Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

The Belted Kingfisher will build their nests in trees near a body of water. On the course they are seen on shorelines and standing in shallow water searching for food. They are most commonly seen in the ponds by the 9th tee and the 16th tee, but also in other ponds on the course. They will also migrate so the best time to see them is from the spring to the fall.

Interesting fact

The Belted Kingfisher is one of the few bird species in which the female is more brightly colored than the male.

Egrets

Description

An Egret is a type of heron. Egrets are white, long-legged, tall birds. Fully grown they are 3 feet tall with a wing span of almost 5 feet.

Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

They are active during the day, coming together at night to roost in a group with other great egrets. They can be spotted wading and hanging around ponds or flying above from pond to pond. On the course they are most commonly spotted in the ponds at the 13th tee. They are a migrating bird so the best time to see them is in the spring and summer.



Interesting fact

Necks that can bend vertically but not laterally characterize these birds.

Barred Owls

Description

The Barred Owl is also known as the eight hooter, rain owl, wood owl, and striped owl, but is probably best known as the hoot owl. The adult is 16–25 inches long with a 38–49 inch wingspan. It has a pale face with dark rings around the eyes, a yellow beak and brown eyes; all other owls have yellow eyes. The head is round and the upper parts are mottled gray-brown. The belly is light with markings; the chest is barred horizontally while the belly is streaked lengthwise. The legs and feet are covered in feathers up to the talons.



Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

Barred owls live in tree cavities in dense woods. They

mostly live in the Forest Preserve, but are seen on the course when flying above and searching for food. Sometimes they will perch high on the trees on the edge of the course, but they are not often spotted, because they are nocturnal. They do not migrate or hibernate and can be seen throughout the year.

Interesting fact

The Barred Owl is a vocal bird and it can utter a wide variety of vocalizations from hoots to screams, and barks to laughter.

Great Blue Heron

Description

The Great Blue Heron is the largest North American heron, with a head-to-tail length of 36–55 inches and a wingspan of 66–79 inches. They have red-brown thighs, and have grey lower legs. There are red-brown and black paired stripes up its sides. Their neck is rusty-gray, with black and white streaking down the front; the head is paler, with a nearly white face. The feathers on the lower neck are long. The bill is dull and yellowish.

Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

The Great Blue Heron will build their nests in trees near a body of water. On the course they are seen on shorelines and standing in shallow water searching for food. The Great Blue Heron feeds during the day. They are most commonly seen in the ponds by the 13th tee and the 16th tee. They will also migrate so the best time to see them is in the spring and summer.



Interesting fact

They eat a wide variety of prey, other than fish, such as frogs, salamanders, turtles, snakes, insects, rodents, and small birds. The Great Blue Heron is capable of swallowing a fish many times wider than its narrow neck.

Rabbits/Hares

Description

A rabbit is a small mammal with large ears and a short tail. It is covered with fur. The main wild rabbit in North America is the cottontail. It grows from 14 to 18 inches and weighs from 2 to 3 pounds. They are brown with tan sides and white under parts. Rabbits and hares are often confused. The hare is larger and heavier than the rabbit and has longer ears. The hare has longer hind legs and larger hind feet. It can out jump any rabbit and does not tire as quickly. Many hares turn white in the winter. Rabbits keep the same color coat year-round.

Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

Rabbits and Hares can be seen all over the course, but tend to hang out near residential areas bordering the course. You may also see them near bushes, tall grass, and forest areas. A great place to spot them is around the 4th green. There is some tall grass on the right side and some forest on the left. They can also be seen in the tall grass by the 14th tee and in the bush by the 9th tee. They are most active during breeding season, which is the spring.



Interesting fact

Rabbits are highly sociable and live underground in community group. While a hare lives above ground and are solitary creatures.

Field Mice

Description

A full grown Field Mouse is between 3-6 inches long, including its tail. The tail is usually as long as the body and is completely hairless. The Field Mouse is a small rodent. They can be colored black, brown, and whites, but are more commonly more white or grey. Field Mice are different from rats because their front teeth and claws are much smaller. It has extremely small, though sharp claws attached to its stubby legs.

Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

Field mice normally live in tall grass and brush. A great area to spot them is around the 4th green. There is some tall grass on the right side and some forest on the left. They can also be seen in the tall grass by the 14th tee and in the large bush by the 9th tee. They are most active during breeding season, which is the spring.



Interesting fact

Some famous mice are Mickey and Minnie Mouse, Jerry, Sneezzer, Stuart Little, Herman the Great, Martin the Warrior and other Redwall mice, Mighty Mouse, and Pinky and the Brain.

Skunks

Description

Skunk species vary in size from about 15.6 to 37 inches long and in weight from about 1.1-18 pounds. They have a moderately elongated body with relatively short, well-muscled legs, and long front claws for digging. Although the most common fur color is black and white, some skunks are brown or grey. All skunks are striped, even from birth. They may have a single thick stripe across back and tail, or two thinner stripes. Some also have stripes on their legs.



Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

Skunks live near a source of water. Skunks may be found near woodlands, along fence rows, in agricultural areas, and in urban environments such as lawns. They use abandoned woodchuck, muskrat, fox, or badger burrows, but often rest above ground during the warmer months. They also will use stumps, buildings, or rock or brush piles as den sites. On the course they can be found throughout the golf course as they wander far from their homes in search for food. A possible den may be under the large bush near the 9th tee. They have also been spotted near the 9th green.

Interesting fact

A skunk has two anal glands that carry the spray material. These glands carry limited amount, enough to spray 5 to 8 times. Afterward, the skunk needs sometimes over a week to reload the glands. Skunks spray sparingly.

Raccoons

Description

Raccoons are 26-36 inches long and have a body weight of 8 to 20 lb. The most characteristic physical feature of the raccoon is the area of black fur around the eyes, which contrasts sharply with the surrounding white face coloring. The slightly rounded ears are also bordered by white fur. Raccoons have a grey body and an alternating light and dark ringed tail.



Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

Raccoons are found everywhere, but in nature are common in farmland and woodland with hardwood trees. They also like to be near streams, rivers, and ponds, where they can find food. On the course they can be seen near ponds and in trees, but are mostly nocturnal so dawn and dusk are best times to see raccoons. They are most active

in the fall.

Interesting fact

The raccoon is usually nocturnal.

Red-Shouldered Hawk

Description

Males are 17 to 23 inches long, weigh about 1.2 lbs. and have a wingspan of 38 inches. Females are slightly larger. Adults have brownish heads, reddish chests, and pale bellies with reddish bars. Their tails are marked with narrow white bars. Red “shoulders” are visible when the birds are perched. These hawks’ upper parts are dark with pale spots and they have long yellow legs.



Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

Red-Shouldered Hawks live in both forests and open areas. While in forested areas, these birds typically wait on a perch and swoop down on prey. When in clearings, they sometimes fly low to surprise prey. On the course they can be seen perched in a tree on the edge of the course in the Forest Preserve, or flying through the course in search

for prey. At the course, red shouldered hawks migrate for the winter but for most of the year they are residential in one area. Only red shouldered hawks from Canada and the Northern Plains migrate and even this is only for the winter.

Interesting fact

During winters, they sometimes prey on birds commonly found at bird feeders.

Green Heron

Description

The Green Heron is relatively small with a length of about 17 inches. Green Herons have a greenish back and wings that are grey-black grading into green or blue. They have a dark brown neck with a white line down the front, a grey belly and short yellow legs. The bill is dark with a long, sharp point.

Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

Green Herons are very common on the course, but can be found near the ponds mostly. Green Herons feed during the day. They will wade through the water in search for food. They are most commonly seen in the ponds by the 13th tee and the 16th tee. They will also migrate so the best time to see them is in the spring and summer.

Interesting fact

Green Herons fish like humans. They sometimes drop live insects in water to use as bait.



Blue-Winged Teals

Description

The Blue-winged Teal is 16 inches long, with a wingspan of 23 inches, and a weight 13 oz. The adult male has a greyish blue head with a white facial crescent, a light brown body with a white patch near the rear and a black tail. The adult female is mottled brown, and has a whitish area at base of bill. Both sexes have sky-blue wing coverts, a green speculum, and yellow legs. They have two molts per year and a third molt in their first year.



Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

Blue-Winged Teals are seen mostly near shallow ponds and wetlands all over North America. They are common on the course near the ponds, most commonly the ponds by the 13th tee. Blue-winged Teal are long distance migrants, with some birds heading all the way to South America for the winter. Therefore, they take off early on spring and fall migration, leaving their breeding grounds in the United States and Canada well before other species in the fall.

Interesting fact

They are more vocal than most ducks—their high-pitched peeping and nasal quacking is commonly heard in spring and to a lesser extent in fall.

Red-Tailed Hawk

Description

A male Red-Tailed Hawk weighs from 1.5 to 2.9 pounds and measure 18 to 22 inches long. A female can weigh between 2 and 4.4 pounds and measure 19 to 26 inches long. Red tailed hawks have a wingspan between 45 to 52 inches. The underbelly is a light brown and the back is a dark brownish black with a dark brown band across the belly. The red tail is very distinct and short, broad. Their wings match the back and are very thick. The bill is short and dark, in a hooked shape. The legs, and the feet are all yellow.



Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

The red tailed hawk is seen flying over the course stalking its prey most of the time, but if you're really looking they can be seen perching high in trees. They are seen on the edge of the course by the Forest Preserve. A good spot to watch for the red tailed hawk is along the 14th 17th and 18th fairway, looking toward the edge of the course. You may hear their shrieking call throughout the Golf

Course if they are near.

Interesting fact

Hawk's vision is much better than humans. They can see spiders and beetles from afar. Hawks can see a mouse from a height of one mile.

Bats

Description

Bats are the only flying mammal. Bats range in body size from as small as 1-inch long Kitti's hog-nosed bat (also called the bumblebee bat), to as large as the 16-inches long Malayan flying fox, which has a wingspan of 5.6-ft. Body weights of bats range from about 0.07-oz to more than 2.9-lbs. Besides the difference in size, there is a great variation in the extent and details of the wings. The wings are formed by a membrane of skin that extends from the neck to the wrist and between the fingers, and finally to the tail. Bats are very agile even on land, scuttling quickly over objects and squeezing themselves through small openings.



Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

Bats live in caves, trees, and buildings. They normally live in colonies of over 100. On the course you will see them at dusk and throughout the night. They come out of the Forest Preserve on the edge of the 18th fairway in search of food. They also live in the lights on the driving rang and are seen frequently near ponds. They hibernate through the winter and are very active in the summer.

Interesting fact

Bats are the only flying mammals. Flying squirrels only glide.

Bullfrogs

Description

They grow on average to be about 3.6 to 6 inches in body length. Legs add another 7 to 10 inches to the length. Bullfrogs are usually green to greenish-brown. Their eyes are gold or brown and they have a broad flat head and body.

Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

Bullfrogs live in ponds lakes and streams and are often seen sitting near the edge of the ponds on the golf course. If you get too close, you may not see them but you will hear them diving into the water to escape. At the course they are found around all the ponds in late spring and summer, but hibernate for fall and winter. They are most active at night and you can hear them croaking at dusk and into the night in the summer.

Interesting fact

Females have eardrums (tympana) the same size as their eyes. Males' eardrums are larger.



Spring Peepers

Description

The Northern Spring Peeper is only 3/4 to 1 1/4 inches long. The defining characteristic of this frog is the dark “X” on its back. Sometimes this pattern is unclear. The skin is smooth and the ground color of the Northern Spring Peeper is some combination of yellow, brown, tan, reddish, or olive. Small discs are present on each toe. A faint line extends across the crown between the eyes. Males have a midline vocal sac to create a loud calling noise.



Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

Spring Peepers live under logs near ponds lakes and streams and are often seen sitting near the edge of the ponds on the golf course. At the course they are found around all the ponds in late spring and summer, but hibernate for fall and winter. They are most active at during the day and have been spotted by most of the ponds, but mostly near the pond near the 9th tee and the pond by the 14th fairway.

Interesting fact

Once winter rolls around they will take shelter under a log or behind some loose bark. At this point they basically let their bodies freeze as they hibernate throughout the winter months.

Toads

Description

Toads have stubby bodies with short hind legs, warty and dry skin. Toads are often brownish or grayish in color with bright, jewel-like eyes; and slightly webbed toes. Toads are often stouter than frogs and cannot leap as far. The tongue of the toad is attached to the front of its mouth. The tongue is flicked forward from the mouth, and the sticky tip grasps the prey and carries it back to the mouth. Unlike most frogs, most toads do not have teeth. Many confused toads and frogs because physical distinctions between them can easily get blurred because sometimes the features appear mixed or less obvious. Certain species even legitimately fall into both categories.



Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

Toads usually prefer dryer climates, but can also live in ponds lakes, streams, and anywhere with insects. They are often seen sitting near the edge of the ponds on the golf course. If you get too close, like the bullfrog, you may not see them but you will hear them diving into the water to escape. At the course they are found around all the ponds in late spring and summer, but hibernate for fall and winter. They are nocturnal and most active at night. During the summer, before the sun comes up, they can be on the cart path and the 13th tee, absorbing the heat.

Interesting fact

The toad's stubby bodies with short hind legs are made for walking instead of hopping.

Red Breasted Mergansers

Description

The Red-breasted Merganser is a duck that is 20–24 inches long, with a 28–34 inch wingspan and a long thin red bill. The male has a dark greenish head, a white neck with a brown breast, a black back, and white belly. Adult females have a brown head and a grey body.



Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

Red Breasted Mergansers can be seen in or near any of the ponds on the course. They are most popular during their spring migration in late March, but are sometimes seen throughout the summer.

Interesting fact

It has been claimed to be the fastest bird in level flight, reaching speeds of 100 mph, but is disputed whether the White-throated Needle-tail is faster, reportedly flying at 105 mph.

Cooper's Hawk

Description

The average size of the male Cooper's Hawk ranges from 7.7-14.5 oz., with a length between 14-18 inches, and a wingspan ranges from 25-36 inches. The adult male is significantly smaller than the average female. They have short rounded wings and a very long tail with dark bands, round-ended at the tip. They have red eyes and have a black cap, with blue-gray backs and white bellies with fine, thin, reddish bars. Their tail is blue gray on top and pale underneath, barred with black bands. They have hooked bills that are well adapted for tearing flesh of prey. The Cooper's Hawk appears long-necked in flight and has been described by birdwatchers as looking like a “flying cross”.

Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

The Cooper's hawk is found in dense forest and lives in trees. They are seen on the course flying above and stalking prey. They eat mid sized song birds such as American Robins, jays, woodpeckers and doves, which are plentiful on the course. Normally they hunt in dense vegetation, but will also search through open areas. They are sometimes seen on the course perched in trees, scouting out their food. The Cooper's Hawk migrates and will only be seen on the course in the spring and summer.



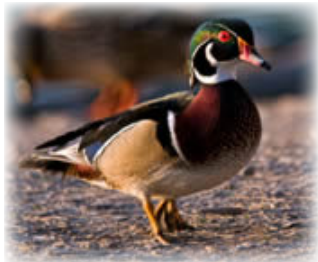
Interesting fact

These birds capture prey from cover or while flying quickly through dense vegetation, relying almost totally on surprise. One study showed that this is a quite dangerous hunting style. More than 300 Cooper's Hawk skeletons were investigated and 23% revealed healed fractures in the bones of the chest.

Wood Ducks

Description

The Wood Duck is a medium-sized perching duck. A typical adult is from 19 to 21 inches in length with a wingspan between 26 to 29 inches. This is about three-quarters of the length of an adult Mallard duck. The adult male has distinctive multicolored iridescent plumage and red eyes, with a distinctive white flare down the neck. The female, less colorful, has a white eye-ring and a whitish throat. Both adults have crested heads. When swimming, Wood Ducks bob their head back and forth in a jerking motion, which makes them easy to spot.



Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

Wood ducks thrive in wooded swamps, shallow lakes, marshes or ponds, and creeks. They usually nest in

cavities in trees close to water. On the golf course wood ducks can be spotted in or near any of the ponds on the course. They are seen migrating in the spring and fall or early in the day.

Interesting fact

Unlike most other ducks, the Wood Duck has sharp claws for perching in trees.

Buffleheads

Description

The Bufflehead ranges from 12–16 inches long and weigh 0.6–1.2 lbs., with the males larger than the females. Adult males are striking black and white, with green and purple heads and a large white patch behind the eye. Females are grey-toned with a smaller white patch behind the eye and a light belly.

Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

Buffleheads are seen mostly near ponds and lakes but can sometimes be seen in forests. They are common on the course near the ponds, most commonly the pond on the left side of the 14th fairway. Buffleheads migrate so they can only be spotted during spring and summer months.

Interesting fact

The name Bufflehead is a combination of buffalo and head, referring to the oddly bulbous head shape of the species.



Tadpoles

Description

Tadpoles are young amphibians that live in the water during the initial stage of the amphibian life cycle. They do not usually have arms or legs until the transition to adulthood, and typically have dorsal or fin-like appendages and a tail with which they swim with.

Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

Because tadpoles are young amphibians they are only for about 10-12 weeks in the late spring. They are only in ponds, but they can be found in all the ponds at the course.



Interesting fact

Tadpoles develop more quickly in warm water. This is why they tend to congregate at the edge of a pond in the warmer water.

Snapping Turtles

Description

Snapping turtles have rugged, muscular builds with ridged shells. The upper shell length in adulthood may be nearly 20 inches, though 10–19 inches, is more common. The turtle generally weighs 10–35 lbs.. Common snappers are noted for their belligerent disposition when out of the water, their powerful beak-like jaws, and their highly mobile head and neck. These turtles have lived for up to 47 years in captivity, while the lifespan of wild individuals is estimated to be around 30 years.

Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

Common habitats are shallow ponds, shallow lakes, or streams. Common Snapping



Turtles sometimes bask by floating on the top of the water, but more often, they will readily bask on fallen logs in early spring. In shallow waters, Snappers may lie beneath a muddy bottom with only the head exposed, stretching their long necks to the surface for an occasional breath. On the course they are in and around ponds. If they are seen on land, it is under wet conditions or when nesting and laying eggs. In the winter snapping turtles hibernate in mud that does not freeze.

They do not move or breathe during hibernation. They are only seen in the summer.

Interesting fact

It is a common misconception that common snapping turtles may be safely picked up by the tail with no harm to the animal; in fact, this has a high chance of injuring the turtle.

****Lifting the turtle with the hands is difficult and dangerous. Snappers can stretch their necks back across their own carapace and to their hind feet on either side to bite. Also, their claws are sharp and capable of inflicting significant lacerations.****

Painted Turtles

Description

The adult painted turtle female is 4–10 inches long; the male is smaller. The turtle's top shell is smooth and oval without a ridge on the top. Its skin is dark green to black with red, orange, or yellow stripes on its extremities.

Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

The painted turtle lives near streams, ponds and shallow water. They are most active during the spring and they bury themselves in the ground for winter. They can often be seen on the course in the ponds by the 13th tee, around the 16th tee, and many of the other ponds. They are often sunning on platforms or areas in the middle of ponds. Occasionally their heads will pop up in the water as they search for fish to eat.



Interesting fact

The painted turtle's shell acts as protection, but since the ribs are fused to the shell, the turtle cannot expand its chest to breathe but must force air in and out of the lungs by alternately contracting the flank and shoulder muscles.

Garter Snakes

Description

The Garter snake, also known as a garden snake, is the most common in North America.

The Chicago garter snake has side stripes that break to vertical bars and is found in Illinois, Wisconsin, and Indiana. The snake hibernates in large groups to maintain body temperature. When captured, it will expel a musk odor or bite but tempers quickly.



Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

Garter snakes live in wet meadows, marshes, prairie lands, drainage ditches and woodland near water. Active during the day, it hides in vegetation. On the course, garter snakes

have been spotted in the dike around the golf course boundary. They are present in the spring and summer months

Interesting fact

Garter snakes do not release enough venom to be harmful to humans.

Mallard Ducks

Description

The Mallard is 20–26 inches long and a wingspan of 32–39 inches. The male has a bright bottle-green head, black rear end and a yellowish orange bill tipped with black. It has a white collar, grey brown wings, and a pale grey belly. The dark tail has white borders. The female Mallard is light brown and neck with a darker brown neck and body.



Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

Mallards are seen mostly near ponds and lakes. They are common on the course near the ponds, more often in the smaller long ponds like the one next to the fairway on the 1st hole. Mallards are one of the latest fall migrants. They also have the most extended migration period, which lasts from late summer to early winter. You can expect to still see them on the course in mid November.

Interesting fact

Ducks are comfortable walking on ice and swimming in icy water because their feet have no nerves or blood vessels making the duck unable to feel cold.

Canada Geese

Description

The black head and neck with white “chinstrap” distinguish the Canada Goose from all other goose species. This species ranges from 30 to 43 inches in length and has a 50–73 inch wingspan. The male usually weighs 7–14 lbs.) and can be very aggressive in defending territory. The female looks virtually identical but is slightly lighter; generally 10% smaller than its male counterpart, and has a different honk.

Where it can be found at the Winnetka Golf Club

Canada Geese live around ponds, river and lake shores. They've become quite a common sight in city parks. The geese typically nest on the ground on islands and shorelines. After the goslings have hatched, the family moves away from the nesting site on foot toward more favorable feeding areas. During this time, the adults are unable to fly because of molting feathers on their wings. The adults re-grow their flight feathers and are ready to fly at about the same time as the goslings are able to learn. In autumn, as soon as the young are strong enough for the trip, they begin their migration south. Geese are seen all over the course in the fall months before migration.



Interesting fact

Geese have a tendency to attack humans when they feel themselves or their goslings to be threatened. First the geese will stand erect, spread their wings and produce a hissing sound. Next, the geese will charge. They may then bite or attack with their wings.