



**Forest  
Animals,  
Insects  
& Plants**

**The largest Wisconsin resident mammal is the:**

- A. Black bear
- B. Elk
- C. White tail deer

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**B.** The black bear was Wisconsin's largest resident mammal until recently. In the last few years, elk have been reintroduced to the state, moving the bear out of the largest mammal category. Adult male black bears average 250 to 350 pounds and females average 120 to 180 pounds. Black bears can run over 30 miles per hour and climb a tree in a flash. An estimated 12,700 bears call Wisconsin home.

**The fox snake's name comes from:**

- A. How it smells
- B. It has been known to eat a fox whole
- C. Its slyness and speed

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**A.** The fox snake's name comes from the odor it emits when it is disturbed. It has a musky fox or skunk-like odor. The snake can be 36 to 56 inches long. And is covered with large dark blotches with smaller spots on the sides with a light gray to yellow background. The belly is yellow with square shaped dark blotches. It is not poisonous, is a great rodent eater, and generally lives in dens found in old tree stumps, in humus (leaf litter), or under logs.

**Porcupines defend themselves by:**

- A. Shooting their quills through the air.
- B. Injecting poisonous venom into the intruder by stabbing them with quills.
- C. Embedding their quills upon contact.

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**C.** Porcupines do not shoot their quills through the air. They turn and swing their barbed-quill tails at predators, thereby embedding the quills in the intruder on contact. Their main predator is the fisher. Quills are really modified hairs attached loosely to the porcupine so they come out easily.

**Bobcats mark their territory by:**

- A. Using chalk marks on trees
- B. Scratching trees to leave marks
- C. Their feces, urine and gland secretions

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**C.** Thick forested areas in northern Wisconsin house bobcats. They like alder thickets, coniferous swamps with black spruce, white cedar or balsam fir. In southern areas of their range, they prefer uplands. They mark their territories with feces, urine and gland secretions. Some may wander 100 miles to find an unoccupied territory. Historically, bobcats were abundant in Wisconsin. Today, bobcat populations are kept in check by management and regulated hunting.

**A pellet is a:**

- A. An owl's hairball
- B. Type of woodland flower
- C. Another name for bear droppings

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**A.** The barred owl is a woodland resident and its keen senses allow it to navigate through low branches and forest treetops to zero in on prey. If the prey is small enough, it gets eaten in a single gulp, bones and all. About every six hours, the owl will spit up a "pellet," a 1 to 2-inch hairball with bones and skulls that the bird's stomach cannot digest. Sometimes you will find them at the base of a nesting tree along with a few gray feathers.

**One of the following is not an insect that harms trees.**

- A. Emerald Ash Borer
- B. Forest Tent Caterpillar
- C. The Lampyridae beetle

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**C.** Also known as fireflies, most people are fascinated by how these insects, which are members of the beetle family *Lampyridae*, produce light. But we should also be aware that fireflies are beneficial insects that help to control pests. Although the adult stage is very familiar to most people, it is the larval stage which is most beneficial. The larvae are active at night and feed on things like snails, slugs and cutworms.

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### Luna moths live:

- A. Five years
  - B. One week
  - C. Six months
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- B.** If you see a fluorescent-green large moth in the moonlight, it is probably a Luna moth. The adult Luna moth only lives for a week. The Luna is a type of giant silk moth and its wings span from 3 to nearly 8 inches across. You'll find them in almost any area with deciduous trees, hanging out near lights at night.

### Timber wolf (*Canis lupus*) populations in Wisconsin are:

- A. Making a comeback
  - B. Decreasing
  - C. Unknown
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- A.** Making a comeback. Before Wisconsin was settled in the 1830s there was an estimated 3,000 to 5,000 wolves in the state. Explorers, trappers and settlers transformed Wisconsin's habitat into farmland, hunted elk and bison, and reduced deer populations. As their food source declined, wolves began to feed on livestock. In response, the Wisconsin Legislature passed a state bounty in 1865, offering \$5 for every wolf killed. In 1974, however, the value of timber wolves was recognized on the federal level and they were given protection under the Endangered Species Act. In 1975, the Wisconsin DNR declared timber wolves endangered. A wolf research program was initiated in 1979. About 327 wolves existed in Wisconsin in late winter 2002.

### The trillium gets its name from:

- A. From the name of the person who discovered it
  - B. The insect that pollinates it.
  - C. The Latin word for three
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- C.** The trillium has three large petals and three broad leaves. Trilliums are a wildflower and can be seen in the early spring covering the woodland floor. Look for a stalk 8 to 10-inches tall with three large oval-shaped leaves just below the three ruffled white petals at the top.

### Deer ticks, found sometimes during woodland hikes, can carry this serious illness:

- A. Pneumonia
  - B. Lyme disease
  - C. Malaria
- 
- B.** Lyme disease. Using repellents may help ward off ticks. But whichever repellent you choose, check yourself frequently while on the trail, paying close attention to your scalp and behind the ears. Deer ticks can be as small as a pinhead and resemble a speck of dirt. In most cases, a large, reddish rash about 2 inches in diameter appears and expands around or near the site of the bite. Ticks like to burrow between clothes and skin so check under your socks as well. It takes more than 36 hours for ticks to transmit disease, so if you find one, do not panic. A tick can be removed by gently pulling the head away from your skin. When in tick-infested habitat wear light-colored clothing (for easy tick discovery) and tuck pants into socks and shirt into pants.

### Woodpeckers tap on trees to:

- A. Find insects.
  - B. Let their parents know they are home.
  - C. Scare off predators.
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- A.** The woodpecker's strong, pointed peak acts as a chisel and crowbar to remove bark and find insects. It has a long tongue – up to four inches in some species – with a glue-like substance on the tip for catching insects. Some species drum on trees to communicate to other woodpeckers and as a part of their courtship behavior. Woodpeckers tap an estimated 8,000 to 12,000 times per day.

### Poison ivy has:

- A. Bunches of three leaves
  - B. Bunches of five leaves
  - C. 10 total leaves per plant
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- A.** "Leaves of three, let it be." Poison ivy can occur as a vine or as an upright shrub. Its glossy leaves are arranged as three leaflets that are often toothed or lobed. The arrangement of the leaflets is indicative of poison ivy: the middle leaflet extends from a long petiole, the base of which is flanked by the lateral leaflets. The foliage often hides a woody stem and flowers. The bunches of small, off-white flowers bloom from early to mid-summer and give way to yellowish-white berries in the fall. Poison ivy is common in open woodlands and grows well in river bottom forests.

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### Flying squirrels in Wisconsin move from tree to tree by:

- A. Flapping their arms to fly
  - B. Catching a ride on the back of a bird
  - C. Volplaning
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- C.** There are two species of flying squirrel in Wisconsin – the northern and southern flying squirrel. The northern flying squirrel is slightly larger but both “fly” with the help of a fold of skin that extends along the squirrel’s backside from the wrist to the hind foot or ankle. The northern flying squirrel lives in northern Wisconsin in heavily wooded areas of mixed conifers and deciduous trees. The flying squirrel is nocturnal – active at night. The flying squirrel doesn’t really fly. It gets around by “volplaning.” It climbs high in a tree, then leaps with legs extended and its patagium (the fold of skin that extends from wrist to ankle) outstretched, gliding in a descending curve towards another tree. At the end of its glide it swings upward and lands head up on a neighboring tree. It can glide anywhere from a few feet to 150 feet!

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### This type of duck has claws:

- A. Wood duck
  - B. Ring-neck
  - C. Canvas back
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- A.** The wood duck has bright, multi-colored feathers. Males have a red eye with a distinctive orange beak with a black tip; green, white and brown-streaked head with a white cheek patch. Their breast feathers are dark brown and spotted white with light brown feathers on the side and iridescent green-blue feathers on the back. The female has a camouflage pattern of brown with a white-striped pattern on the breast and a small spot of blue on the wing. They have a dark colored beak, a white throat patch, and a white tapering eye patch. The wood duck can be found in bottomland hardwood forests, hanging out on the branches of trees and making nests in tree cavities. Wood ducks have claws, unlike most ducks. These claws help them hang on to tree branches and navigate the woodlands. Wood ducks like wild rice, smartweed, pondweed, bulrush, and lotus seeds, but acorns are one of their favorites.

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### This is Wisconsin’s state flower:

- A. Tulip
  - B. Wood violet
  - C. Wild rose
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- B.** State flowers were first nominated in 1908. When the official tally was taken on Arbor Day 1909, school children selected the wood violet (*Viola papilionacea*) over the wild rose, trailing arbutus, and the white water lily. It was a close vote. The wood violet is a small flower commonly seen in wet woodland and meadow areas, and along roadsides. This purple violet is very popular in the eastern United States and blooms between March and June. Not only is it the state flower for Wisconsin, but it also holds this title in Illinois, New Jersey, and Rhode Island. The leaves are very tasty and can be used in salads, candies, and jellies.

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### This animal is the state wildlife animal:

- A. White-tailed deer
  - B. Bear
  - C. Elk
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- A.** White-tailed deer. Although badgers have been associated with our coat of arms, the state flag, the University of Wisconsin, the official seal and Cornish miners since the days of the Wisconsin Territory, it was four elementary school students from Jefferson County who discovered the animal had no official status in Wisconsin. You would think the badger was the only logical choice for state animal. Some northern legislators, however, wanted the white-tailed deer picked due to its strength, regal stature, and the economic value of deer hunting. In 1957 a compromise was reached, the American badger was named the state animal and the white-tailed deer was named the state “wildlife animal.”

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### A champion tree is:

- A. A tree that is more beautiful than any others in the woods
  - B. A tree that produces a lot of fruit
  - C. One of the state’s largest trees
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- C.** DNR keeps records of the largest trees in Wisconsin. These trees are called champion trees. Champion trees are measured by taking a circumference (distance around the trunk) measurement, a height measurement, and a crown (the upper part of a tree) spread measurement. These measurements make up the total points.

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### The snowshoe hare is an:

- A. Early eater
  - B. Mid-day diner
  - C. Late night muncher
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- C.** The snowshoe hare changes its coat two times a year – a thin brown summer coat and heavy white fluffy winter coat. These coats blend in with its surroundings. A snowshoe hare looks like a rabbit, but in general hares have longer ears, very large hind feet, and longer legs for jumping. Hares are also born with their fur and their eyes open, unlike the rabbit. Snowshoes are late eaters and chow down around 11:00 p.m. At night they may be stalked by coyotes, foxes, weasels, great horned owls, bobcats and large hawks.