

Watsonville Wetlands Wildlife Bingo Game “Fun Facts”

Brown Garden Snail (*Helix aspersa*)

- Mainly nocturnal but will emerge after rain during the day.
- Garden snails hibernate through the winter under rocks and other structures.
- These snails are edible; they are actually the “escargot” snail that originates from France and has escaped into the local environment.
- The brown garden snail is a **hermaphrodite**, producing both male and female gametes.

Bullfrog (*Rana catesbeiana*)

- Is probably responsible in part for the decline of the native species of frogs, such as the red-legged frog
- Adult bullfrogs consume any animal that can be swallowed including snakes, birds, fish, crawfish and other frogs.
- Their calls can be heard up to ¼ of a mile away

Western Fence Lizard (*Sceloporus occidentalis*)

- Has a blue belly, which explains the sometimes used common name “blue-bellies”
- It is found up to the highest mountains about over 6,000 feet
- Can change its color if placed on a dark rock.

Brush Rabbit (*Sylvilagus bachmani*)

- This species usually has three litters a year.
- **Gestation period** of about 27 days.
- Brush rabbits can sit still for long periods of time and then if scared by predators will run in a zig-zag manner at about 20-25mph.

Muledeer (*Odocoileus hemionus*)

- Some common predators are pumas, bobcats, coyotes, golden eagles and black bears.
- It communicates through gland hormones that alert the group about danger, mutual recognition, and scent trails.

Red-haired Velvet Ant (*Dasymutilla coccinea*)

- They can lay their eggs inside the bodies of living insects.
- It is called a “cow-killer” because the female sting is so painful that it can kill a cow.

Honey Bee (*Apis mellifera*)

- The bees work until death. They usually spend 20 days in the hive and the rest of their lives (20 days) they get to go outside the hive.

- The bees are cold-blooded but they can maintain the hive at a temperature of 32 degrees Celsius.

Common Buckeye (*Junonia coenia*)

- Buckeyes like sunny areas with no vegetation and bare ground.
- The Buckeye flies throughout much of North America in the summer, but in the autumn it returns to the South. In autumn, the Southern emigration is impressive on the East Coast.

Monarch Butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*)

- Monarch butterflies migrate from the Sierra Madre in Mexico during the winter to Canada in the summer, a distance of over 1,000 miles. Scientists believe they find their way using the sun and the magnetic fields of the earth.
- Female monarch butterflies lay their eggs *only* on the milkweed plant, usually during the summer.
- After only two weeks, baby monarchs increase their weight by 3,000 times!

Coyote (*Canis latrans*)

- The scientific name for the coyote means “barking dog.”
- Coyotes are much smaller than wolves and do not eat very much.
- Coyotes are **omnivores**. They will eat insects and fruit, and help farmers by eating small mammals such as mice and voles.
- Coyotes are related to dogs. They will not attack people, they will run away! They can hear hunters coming from over a mile away.

Bobcat (*Felis rufus*)

- Bobcats are only about 2 feet tall and weigh about 20 pounds.
- Bobcats can run up to 30 miles per hour, but usually they walk.
- These animals are amazing hunters! They see and hear very well. Sometimes they will even hunt something as large as a deer. If they can't eat their whole meal at once, they will hide the leftovers and come back later.

Fiery Skipper (*Hylephila phyleus*)

- Fiery skippers look like butterflies, except that they have small knobs on their antennae.
- These insects are known as pests to lawns and gardens. They eat leaves of plants and grasses.

Gopher Snake (*Pituophis melanoleucus*)

- Gopher snakes are not poisonous, although many people think they are! Many people mistake them for rattlesnakes and kill them. Gopher snakes will imitate rattlesnakes by flattening their heads and shaking their tails when they are scared.
- These snakes are **constrictors**, which means they kill their prey by squeezing it to death.
- They eat mice, gophers, ground squirrels, birds and lizards. They are eaten by hawks, foxes and coyotes.
- Gopher snakes can grow to be very long! Sometimes they are up to 2 meters (6 feet) in length, which is longer than the height of a grown man.

Common Raccoon (*Procyon lotor*)

- Raccoons are **nocturnal**.
- Raccoons have adapted well to living near people, and can eat almost everything, including “people food!” They are **omnivores**.
- Raccoons are good climbers and can get into your bird boxes or bird feeders if you are not careful!

California Ground Squirrel (*Spermophilus beecheyi*)

- Ground squirrels live underground in **burrows**, or tunnels. They can create very long tunnels with many entrances.
- Most stay very close to their homes – they never go more than 100 to 150 meters from their holes.
- Ground squirrels **hibernate** – sometimes up to 8 months each year!
- The holes made by ground squirrels can also be homes to important animals such as salamanders, lizards, and owls.