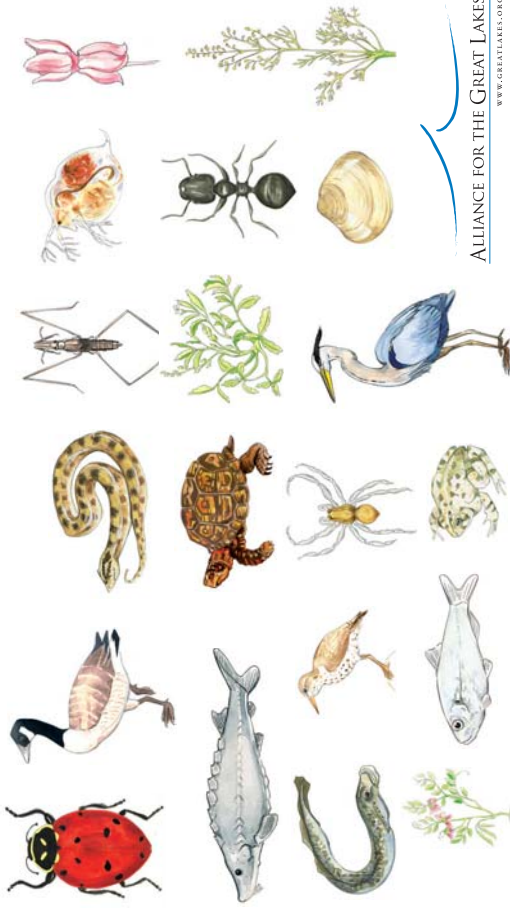


# Great Lakes in My World Creature Cards

Over 60 illustrated information cards featuring Great Lakes plants and animals



ALLIANCE FOR THE GREAT LAKES  
WWW.GREATLAKES.ORG

**Name:** Species' common and scientific names are provided.  
\*: Indicates that this card can be used in the activities Tangled Web and Web of Life.

**who?**  
description

A description of the species that includes type, physical characteristics and species status (endangered, invasive, etc.)

**Scale:** A scale conveys the relative size of the species. A darkened column indicates the species place in the size range. The sizes for each column are as follows:

- #1: less than .6 cm / .25 in
- #2: .6 cm / 25 in – 6.3 cm / 2.5 in
- #3: 6.6 cm / 2.6 in – 30 cm / 12 in
- #4: 31 cm / 12.1 in – 61 cm / 24 in
- #5: 63.5 cm / 25 in – 122 cm / 48 in
- #6: 123 cm / 48.5 in – 183 cm / 72 in
- #7: more than 183 cm / 72 in

**Size:**

**where?**  
environment

An explanation of the species' general environment and specific habitat

**Interesting Fact \***

Characteristics that make this plant or animal unique

**what?**  
characteristics

Facts about the species role in the food web, reproduction and other distinguishing habits

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## Creature Card Definitions

- Carnivore:** a flesh-eating animal
- Colony:** a population of plants or animals in a particular place that belong to one species
- Consumer:** a plant or animal that preys on other living things or eating particles of organic matter
- Crustacean:** any of a large class of mostly water-dwelling arthropods (as shrimps, wood lice, water fleas, and barnacles) having an exoskeleton of chitin
- Decomposer:** an organism that lives on and breaks down dead organisms
- Detritus:** particles of decaying organic material
- Diurnal:** active in the daytime
- Endangered species:** a species in immediate danger of extinction
- Flock:** a group of birds or mammals assembled together

- Forage fish:** fish that primarily eat phytoplankton and zooplankton (especially diporeia); they are prey for larger predators such as lake trout and whitefish; they include smaller fish such as herring, alewives, chubs, and smelt.
- Herbivore:** an animal that eats only plants
- Introduced species:** a plant or animal that is intentionally brought into an ecosystem by human beings either to diversify or to control a population within that ecosystem
- Invasive species:** a plant or animal that enters an ecosystem to which it is not native and competes with one or more species for food, shelter, and/or reproductive opportunities.
- Larva:** a young wingless, often wormlike, form (grub or caterpillar) that hatches from the egg of many insects
- Migrate:** to pass from one region or climate to another usually on a regular schedule for feeding or breeding

## Creature Card Definitions

- Mollusk:** any of the category (phylum: mollusca) of invertebrate animals (as snails, clams, and mussels) with a soft body lacking segments and usually enclosed in a shell
- Nocturnal:** active in the night
- Omnivore:** feeds on both animal and plant matter
- Phytoplankton:** very small, freely floating plant that drifts with water currents
- Plankton:** small water organisms that exist in a drifting, floating state; is the base of freshwater ecosystems, provides food for larger animals and indirectly for humans, whose fisheries depend on phytoplankton and zooplankton
- Predator:** an animal that lives by killing and eating other animals
- Prey:** an animal hunted or killed by another animal for food

- School:** group of fish that swim together; generally of the same species for protection, feeding and other reasons
- Sepals:** petal-like leaves of flowering plants that lie under and protect the petals, often green in color or share the same coloring as the petals
- Solitary:** growing or living alone; not forming part of a group or cluster
- Spawn:** to produce or deposit eggs
- Species of concern:** a plant or animal that may become threatened
- Threatened species:** a plant or animal needing special action to protect it from becoming endangered
- Toxin:** a substance produced by a living organism that is very poisonous
- Zooplankton:** very small floating or swimming animals that drift with water currents

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# Alewife\*

Scientific Name:  
*Alosa pseudoharengus*

## who? description

**Type:** fish  
**Length:** 15 cm / 6 in  
**Weight:** 113 g / .25 lbs  
**Coloring:** silver with blue or blue green luster on back  
❖ **Invasive Species**

## where? environment

**Habitat:** lakes and oceans  
**Origin:** Atlantic Ocean

## what? characteristics

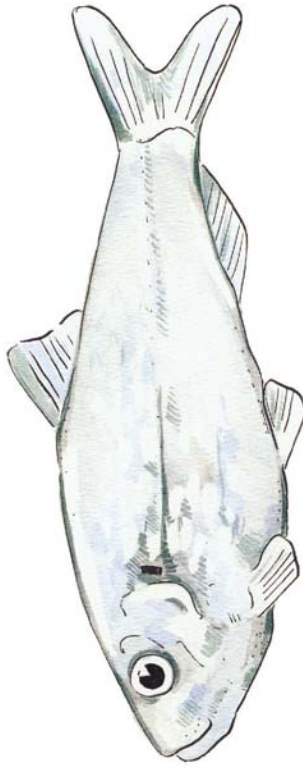
**Feeding:**  
↳ **Who eats me?** lake trout, salmon  
↳ **What do I eat?** phytoplankton, zooplankton and small crustaceans

## Interesting Fact \*



Alewives are usually a salt-water fish, but they spawn in freshwater. After laying their eggs, many die and wash up along the lake shoreline in the spring and summer.

## Size:



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# American Beech

Scientific Name:  
*Fagus grandifolia*

## who? description

**Type:** tree  
**Height:** 26.6 m / 80 ft maximum  
**Leaves:** alternate, coarsely serrated, wavy edges  
**Flowers:** separate male / female flowers, early spring  
**Other:** deciduous, holds the dead leaves all winter

## where? environment

**Sunlight:** partial sunlight  
**Habitat:** forested backdune, woodlands, moist, well-drained soils

## what? characteristics

**Feeding:**  
↳ **Who eats me?** mammals and birds eat the nuts in autumn  
↳ **What do I use to make food?** sunlight  
**Role:** producer  
**Reproduction:** female flowers become nuts after 50 years

## Interesting Fact \*

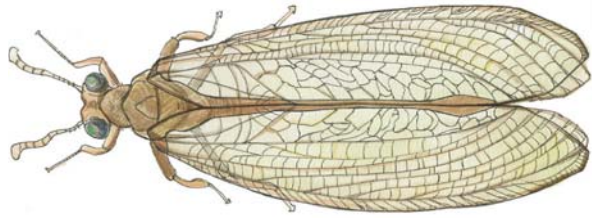


The American beech holds onto its dead leaves all winter. Beeches keep their smooth bark as they get older.

## Size:



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# Antlion

Scientific Name:  
Myrmeleon immaculatus

**who?**  
description

**Type:** insect  
**Length:** 4 cm / 1.5 in  
**Coloring:** brown body  
**Body Features:** 4 clear wings with a netlike pattern



**where?**  
environment

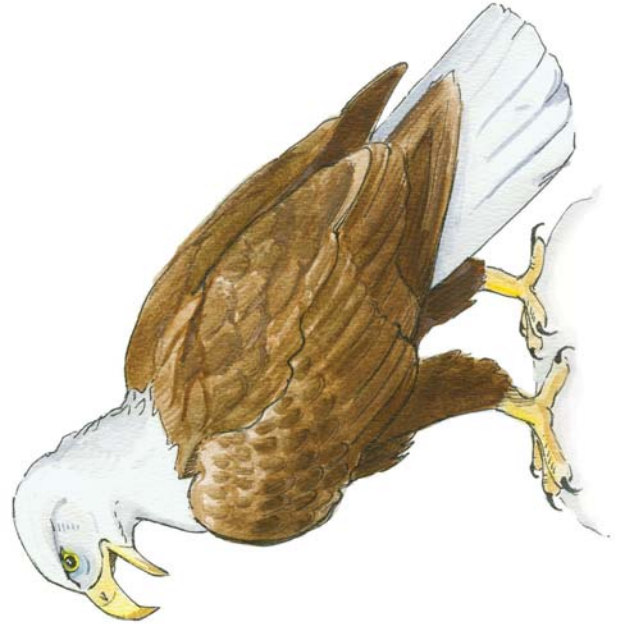
**Habitat:** foredune, sandy areas with shelter, such as a wooded dune

**Interesting Fact \***

Antlions dig cone-shaped pits in which they trap ants to eat. When they create the pits, they make spiral shapes in the sand, which is why they are also called "doodlebugs."

**what?**  
characteristics

**Feeding:**  
↳ **Who eats me?** birds and spiders  
↳ **What do I eat?** ants and other insects  
**Role:** consumer, carnivore  
**Reproduction:** lays eggs  
**Grouping:** solitary



# Bald Eagle\*

Scientific Name:  
Haliaeetus leucocephalus

**who?**  
description

**Type:** bird  
**Length:** 76-94 cm / 30-37 in  
**Weight:** 7 kg / 15 lbs  
**Coloring:** dark brown body, white head and tail  
**Body Features:** yellow eyes, beak, and feet



**where?**  
environment

**Habitat:** forested backdune, lakeshore and seacoast, nests in trees (especially conifers) or on cliffs near water; nests are 182 cm / 6 ft wide and 91 cm / 3 ft high

**Interesting Fact \***

Bald eagles can see 3 or 4 times as far as humans and eat one pound of fish in four minutes. They have a 182 cm / 6 ft wingspan!

**what?**  
characteristics

**Feeding:**  
↳ **Who eats me?** scavengers eat dead eagles  
↳ **What do I eat?** dead or wounded fish, aquatic birds, and mammals  
**Role:** consumer, carnivore  
**Reproduction:** 2 eggs in spring  
**Grouping:** solitary or in pairs, live in groups in winter  
**Activity:** diurnal

# Beach Pea

Scientific Name:  
*Lathyrus japonicus*

## who? description

**Type:** plant  
**Height:** 30-60 cm / 1-2 ft  
**Leaves:** green, in pairs  
**Flowers:** purple or pink in clusters at the end of the stem  
**Other:** a vine that can climb or lay on the ground, seed pods are like pea pods

## Size:



## where? environment

**Sunlight:** full sun  
**Habitat:** beaches along lakes and oceans

## what? characteristics

**Feeding:**  
↳ **Who eats me?** deer and mice  
↳ **What do I use to make food?** sunlight  
**Role:** producer  
**Reproduction:** peas are seeds



## Interesting Fact \*

The beach pea can be poisonous to some animals. It has tough roots and adds nitrogen to the sand.



# Beach Wormwood

Scientific Name:  
*Artemisia campestris*

## who? description

**Type:** shrub  
**Height:** 1-1.5 m / 5 ft  
**Leaves:** grayish green  
**Flowers:** yellow

## Size:



## where? environment

**Sunlight:** full sunlight  
**Habitat:** foredune, dry or rich soil

## what? characteristics

**Feeding:**  
↳ **What do I use to make food?** sunlight  
**Role:** producer  
**Reproduction:** perennial



## Interesting Fact \*

The oil and flowers from wormwood have been used as a medicine as well as an insect repellent. When used incorrectly, it can also be a poison.





# Bighead Carp\*

Scientific Name:  
*Hypophthalmichthys nobilis*

## who? description

**Type:** fish  
**Length:** 76 – 102 cm / 30-40 in (as big as 4 ft)  
**Weight:** up to 50 kg / 110 lbs  
**Coloring:** silvery white abdomen, black dorsal and upper lateral sections, black spots on the side of their bodies, fins are a shade of grey

## ⌘ Invasive Species

## Size:



## where? environment

**Habitat:** lakes, rivers and reservoirs  
**Origin:** China



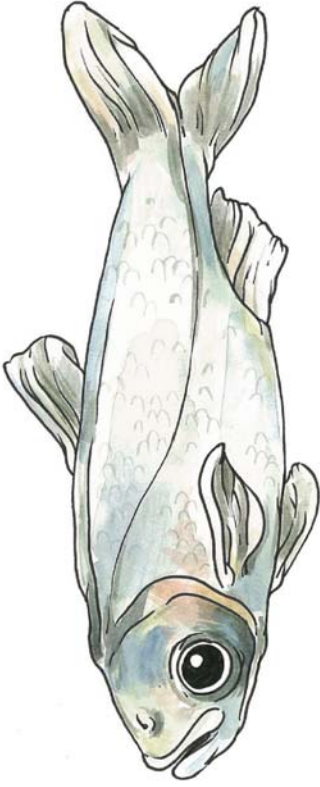
## Interesting Fact \*

Bighead carp eat up to 20% of their body weight per day. Carp are currently in waterways connected to the Great Lakes and humans are trying to ensure that the fish do not establish a permanent presence in this ecosystem.

## what? characteristics

**Feeding:**  
↳ **Who eats me?** humans  
↳ **What do I eat?** zooplankton, algae  
**Role:** consumer, omnivore  
**Reproduction:** lay semi-buoyant eggs in warm, current-driven water during the summer  
**Grouping:** travel alone or in small groups  
**Activity:** more active in warmer waters

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# Black Oak

Scientific Name:  
*Quercus velutina*

## who? description

**Type:** tree  
**Height:** 46 m / 150 ft  
**Leaves:** deeply lobed  
**Flowers:** separate male / female flowers are single or in multi-flowered spikes  
**Other:** deciduous

## Size:



## where? environment

**Sunlight:** bright sunlight  
**Habitat:** forested backdune, woodlands, rich, moist, well-drained soil to poor, sandy soil



## Interesting Fact \*

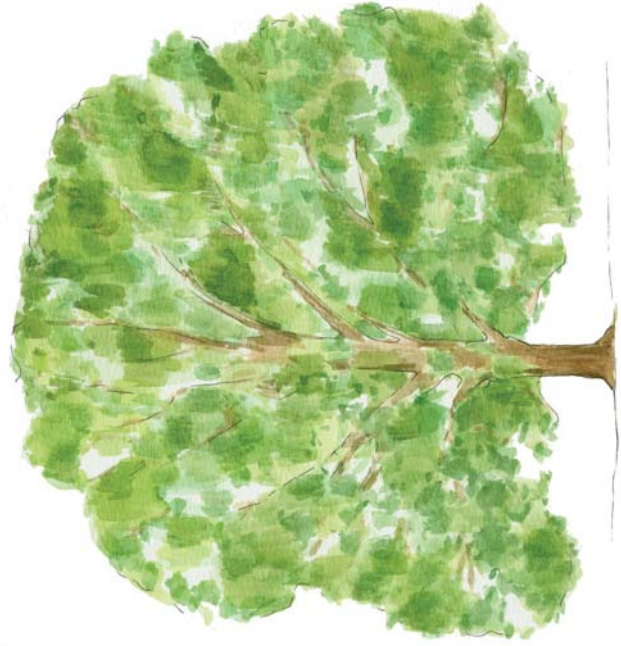
The underside of the leaves are covered with tiny hairs. Native Americans used parts of the black oak as medicine for many things including: fever, chills, and sore eyes.

## what? characteristics

**Feeding:**  
↳ **Who eats me?** mammals, insects, and birds eat the nuts in autumn  
↳ **What do I use to make food?** sunlight  
**Role:** producer  
**Reproduction:** nuts (acorns) mature in 2-3 years after tree is 20 years old



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# Bloodworm\*

Scientific Name:  
Family: Chromiidae

## who? description

**Type:** insect (in larval stage)  
**Length:** 2.5-3.8 cm / 1-1.5 in  
**Coloring:** red  
**Body Features:** distinct head, segmented abdomen, prolegs (leg-like projections), and gills

**Size:**



## where? environment

**Habitat:** muddy, bottom areas of ponds, lakes and rivers; the worms build tubes of mud around themselves that are attached to objects in the water



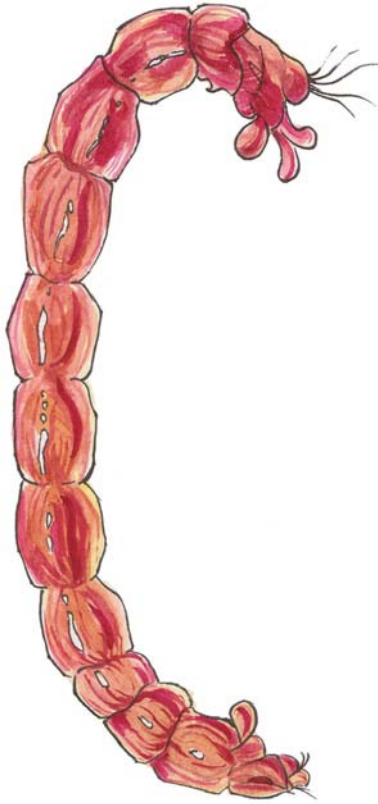
### Interesting Fact \*

A bloodworm is in the larval stage of its lifecycle. When it becomes an adult, it turns into a midge, an insect that looks like a mosquito. Freshwater bloodworms and humans both have hemoglobin which allows red blood cells to carry oxygen.

## what? characteristics

**Feeding:**  
↳ **Who eats me?** fish, aquatic insects  
↳ **What do I eat?** phytoplankton, detritus  
**Role:** consumer, omnivore  
**Reproduction:** lay eggs as adults  
**Grouping:** often found in groups  
**Activity:** mainly nocturnal

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# Blue-Green Algae (cyanobacteria)\*

Scientific Name:  
Anabaena, Microcystis

## who? description

**Type:** bacteria  
**Size:** microscopic  
**Color:** some, but not all are blue-green; can be yellow-green, green, grey-green, grey-black, and even red  
**Other:** microcystis colonies look like tiny grey-green clumps

ANABAENA



MICROCYSTIS

**Size:**



## where? environment

**Sunlight:** varies - direct and dim sunlight  
**Habitat:** water; attach to surface of rocks, stones and plants in water, or on the bottom sediment of lakes



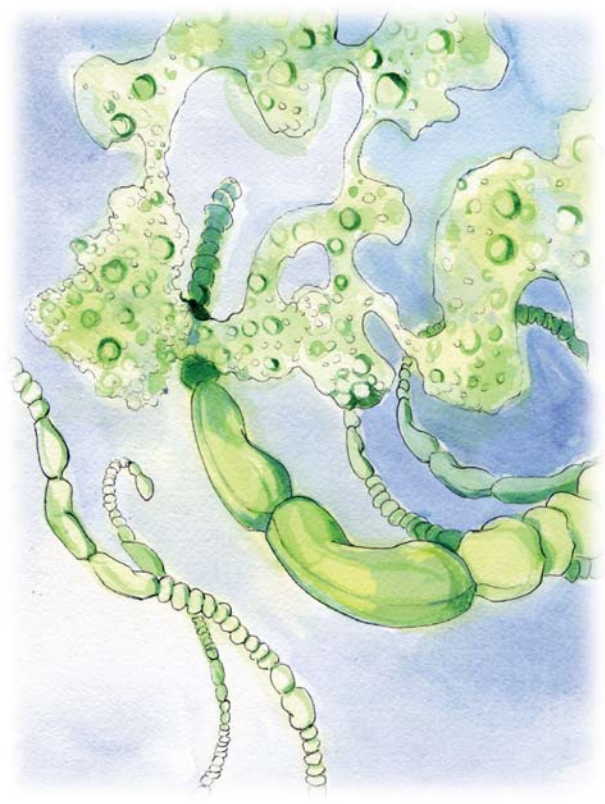
### Interesting Fact \*

Blue-green algae movements can be seen under a microscope as they glide, rotate and jerk. Their fossils have been identified as over three billion years old!

## what? characteristics

**Feeding:**  
↳ **Who eats me?** daphnia, copepod  
↳ **What do I use to make food?** sunlight  
**Role:** producer  
**Reproduction:** can grow individually as single cells or in colonies; when algae reproduces quickly it is called a "bloom"

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# Bronze Tiger Beetle

Scientific Name:  
Cicindela repanda

## who? description

**Type:** insect  
**Length:** 10-13 mm / .4-.5 in  
**Coloring:** brown with copper and red; other types can be black or green  
**Body Features:** long legs and antennae

## Size:



## where? environment

**Habitat:** beaches, foredune, sand dunes, open woods, near water; live in burrows



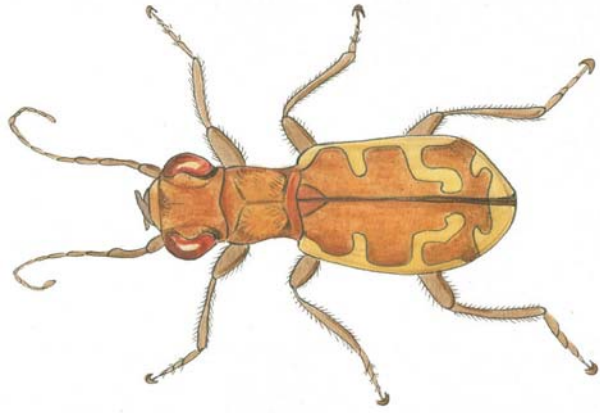
## Interesting Fact \*

Larvae build tunnels in the ground and wait on top for passing insects to eat. The bronze tiger beetle is frequently found on beaches.

## what? characteristics

**Feeding:**  
 ↳ **Who eats me?** birds, spiders, wasps  
 ↳ **What do I eat?** insects, including ants  
**Role:** consumer, carnivore  
**Reproduction:** life cycle is egg, larva, pupa and adult, has 2 year life  
**Activity:** diurnal

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# Canada Goose\*

Scientific Name:  
Branta canadensis

## who? description

**Type:** bird  
**Length:** 63.5-114 cm / 25-45 in  
**Weight:** 1-8 kg / 2-17 lbs  
**Coloring:** black head and neck, white cheek patches, mottled grey-brown body  
**Body Features:** brown webbed feet

## Size:



## where? environment

**Habitat:** interdunal pond, freshwater lakes, wetlands, ponds; builds a nest on the ground, near water



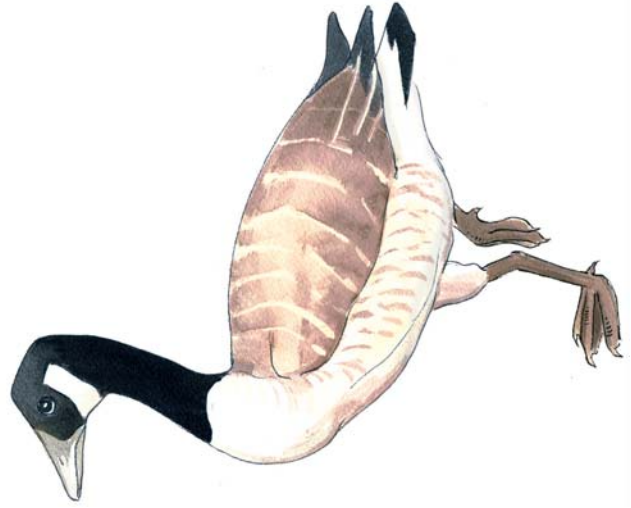
## Interesting Fact \*

Canada geese fly in a "Y" formation during migration. They use their large, strong wings as weapons when protecting their young.

## what? characteristics

**Feeding:**  
 ↳ **Who eats me?** coyotes eat geese; eggs are eaten by fox, raccoons and coyotes  
 ↳ **What do I eat?** Plants and insects  
**Role:** consumer, omnivore  
**Reproduction:** lays 5-7 eggs  
**Grouping:** pairs and flocks  
**Activity:** diurnal, migrate south in the winter

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# Chinook Salmon\*

Scientific Name:  
Oncorhynchus tshawytscha

**who?**  
description

**Type:** fish  
**Length:** 50 – 90 cm / 20-35 in  
**Weight:** 6.8 – 13.6 kg / 15-30 lbs  
**Coloring:** green/blue-green on back, silver sides and white/silver underneath; reddish color during spawning

♂ **Introduced Species**



MALE



FEMALE

**Size:**



**where?**  
environment

**Habitat:** lakes, rivers, oceans and estuaries  
**Origin:** Pacific Ocean – from Asia to North America and the Arctic

**what?**  
characteristics

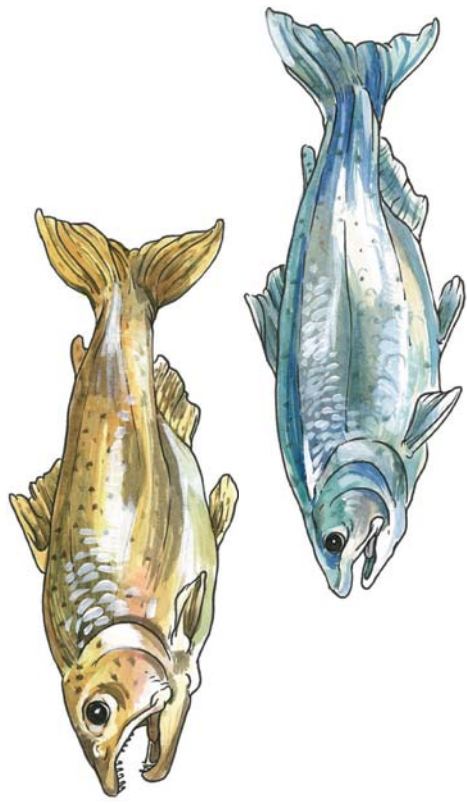
**Feeding:**  
 ↳ **Who eats me?** humans and sea lamprey  
 ↳ **What do I eat?** alewives, smelt, bloaters

**Role:** consumer

**Interesting Fact \***

Chinook Salmon were introduced into Lake Michigan on purpose, to control alewife populations and to be part of the sport fishing economy.

**Reproduction:** spawn eggs once in a lifetime in freshwater during summer/fall in a nest called a redd, usually located on a rocky bottom  
**Grouping:** solitary




# Common Loon\*

Scientific Name:  
Gavia immer


**who?**  
description

**Type:** bird  
**Length:** 91 cm / 3 ft  
**Weight:** 3-6 kg / 6-13 lbs  
**Coloring:** black and white checkered body, black head, white belly and underwing, white collar

**Body Features:** large webbed feet




WINTER



SUMMER

**Size:**



**where?**  
environment

**Habitat:** freshwater lakes, sleep on deep water areas away from land, nest on small islands

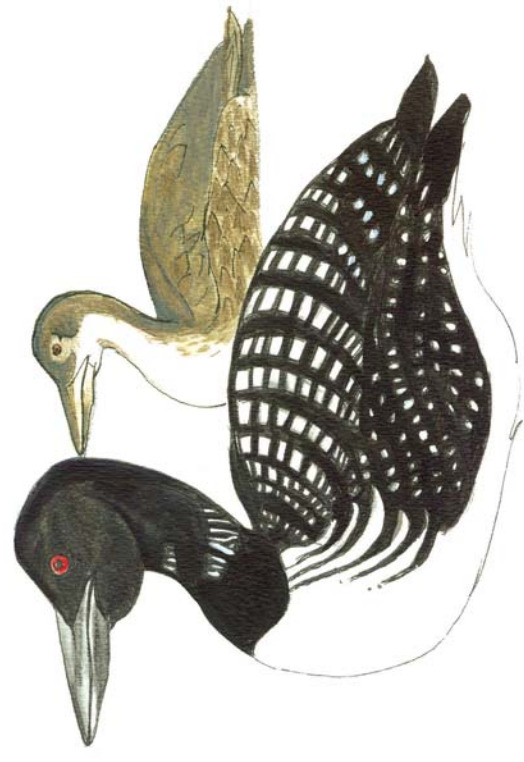
**what?**  
characteristics

**Feeding:**  
 ↳ **Who eats me?** large fish, snapping turtles, gulls, eagles, crows  
 ↳ **What do I eat?** fish, crayfish, frogs, snails, salamanders, leeches

**Role:** consumer, carnivore  
**Reproduction:** 2 eggs in summer  
**Grouping:** pairs  
**Activity:** diurnal

**Interesting Fact \***

Many bones of the loon's body are solid, rather than hollow like those of other birds. These heavy bones help loons dive for food.





# Common Milkweed

Scientific Name:  
*Asclepias syriaca*

## who? description

**Type:** plant  
**Height:** 60-80 cm / 2-6 ft  
**Leaves:** opposite, oval shaped, hairy  
**Flowers:** pink to lavender, clusters at top of stems

## Size:



## where? environment

**Sunlight:** full sun to light shade  
**Habitat:** foredune, grasslands and open areas in rich sandy or gravelly soil



## Interesting Fact \*

The milkweed has poisonous sap. When the caterpillar that becomes the monarch butterfly eats the sap, it is unharmed but becomes poisonous to other animals. It remains poisonous as a butterfly.

## what? characteristics

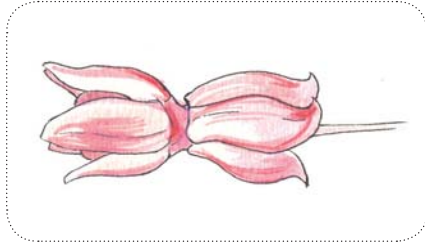
### Feeding:

↳ **Who eats me?**  
monarch butterflies and caterpillars

↳ **What do I use to make food?**  
sunlight

### Role: producer

**Reproduction:** flowers in summer, seeds in fall, warty seed pods that burst in fall are filled with seeds with downy parachutes; spread by wind



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# Copepod (cyclops)\*

Scientific Name:  
*Cyclops strenuus*

## who? description

**Type:** zooplankton, crustacean  
**Length:** 2-3 mm / .08-.1 in  
**Coloring:** clear, tan  
**Body Features:** single eyespot and curved body

## Size:



## where? environment

**Habitat:** quiet waters of ponds, lakes, and rivers



## Interesting Fact \*

Copepods are difficult for scientists to catch to study because they dart so quickly! It is sometimes called a cyclops because the single eyespot reminds people of the one-eyed monster in Greek mythology.

## what? characteristics

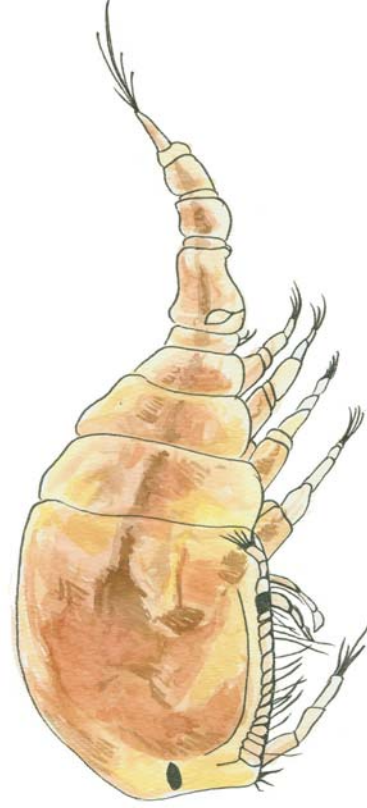
### Feeding:

↳ **Who eats me?**  
insects and small fish

↳ **What do I eat?**  
algae, bacteria, dead plant and animal matter

### Role: consumer, omnivore

**Reproduction:** females carry twin egg sacs



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# Daphnia\*

Scientific Name:  
Daphnia pulex

## who? description

**Type:** zooplankton, crustacean  
**Length:** less than 3 mm / .1 in  
**Coloring:** clear body tissue shows organs inside  
**Body Features:** 5 pairs of legs used to capture food, large antennae are pushed downward for swimming

**Size:**



## where? environment

**Habitat:** near the surface of lakes, ponds, and quiet streams



### Interesting Fact \*

Dozens of daphnia can fit on a single fingernail.

## what? characteristics

### Feeding:

↳ **Who eats me?**  
fish

↳ **What do I eat?**  
phytoplankton

**Role:** consumer, herbivore

**Reproduction:** lays eggs in lake bottom sand, young hatch in spring

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# Diatoms\*

Scientific Name:  
Asterionella, Cyclotella, Fragilaria, Synedra

## who? description

**Type:** phytoplankton  
**Height:** microscopic – less than 1 mm / .04 in  
**Color:** golden brown  
**Other:** no leaves or flowers; single-celled organism



FRAGILARIA



CYCLOTELLA



SYNEDRA



ASTERIONELLA

**Size:**



## where? environment

**Sunlight:** direct sunlight

**Habitat:** freshwater lakes and pond, and on the surface of oceans



### Interesting Fact \*

More than 8000 kinds of diatoms exist. They are a major food source for fish. Diatoms have a shell or cell wall that has a pattern that lets scientists know what type of diatom it is.

## what? characteristics

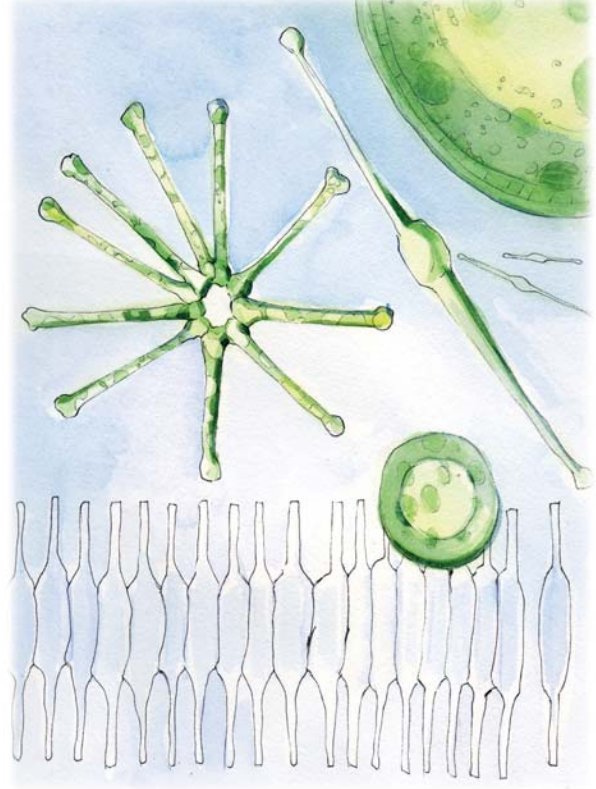
### Feeding:

↳ **Who eats me?**  
zooplankton, water fleas, copepods, snails, mollusks, fish

↳ **What do I use to make food?**  
sunlight

**Role:** producer

**Reproduction:** divide in half (cell division)



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# Diporeia\*

Scientific Name:  
*Diporeia hoyi*

## who? description

**Type:** crustacean  
**Length:** 1.27 cm / .5 in  
**Weight:** .1 oz / 2.8 g  
**Coloring:** clear, yellow  
**Body Features:** 5 pairs of legs

## where? environment

**Habitat:** freshwater lakes, spends time in the water column, lives in mud on lake bottom

## what? characteristics

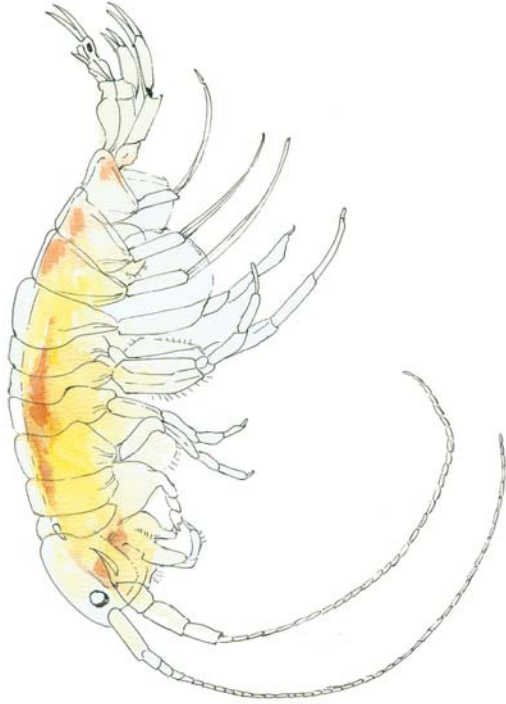
**Feeding:**  
↳ **Who eats me?** whitefish, chub, sculpin  
↳ **What do I eat?** algae and bacteria  
**Role:** consumer, herbivore  
**Reproduction:** lay eggs  
**Grouping:** colonies  
**Activity:** nocturnal



### Interesting Fact \*

*Diporeia* is a very important food source for forage fish. Even though they are small, they are high in fat and calories when eaten by fish.

### Size:



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# Dragonfly (blue damer)\*

Scientific Name:  
*Aeschna constricta*

## who? description

**Type:** insect  
**Length:** 5-8 cm / 2-3 in wing-span  
**Coloring:** primarily blue and green  
**Body Features:** four wings operate independently

## where? environment

**Habitat:** interdunal pond, in and around wetlands; under water for first stage of life

## what? characteristics

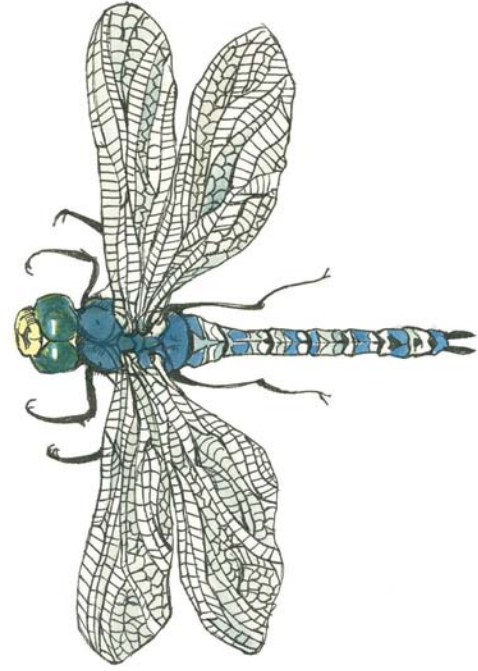
**Feeding:**  
↳ **Who eats me?** fish  
↳ **What do I eat?** mosquitoes, midges and other small, flying insects  
**Role:** consumer, carnivore  
**Reproduction:** lay eggs in water; first stage of life under water; adult stage on land and in flight  
**Grouping:** solitary  
**Activity:** diurnal



### Interesting Fact \*

Dragonflies are a living fossil; they have not changed for over 300 million years. They can hover, fly backwards, loop, and speed up to 56 km / 35 mi per hour.

### Size:



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# Eastern Box Turtle

Scientific Name:  
*Terrapene carolina*

## who? description

**Type:** reptile  
**Length:** 12-15 cm / 5-6 in  
**Coloring:** black with yellow and orange spots and stripes  
**Body Features:** high, domed shell with hinged bottom

**Size:**



## where? environment

**Habitat:** interdunal pond, wooded dunes and moist fields and forests; lives in mud and leaves



### Interesting Fact \*

When box turtles are 4-5 years old, they can pull in their legs and head to completely close their shell for protection. Some box turtles grow to be over 100 years old.

## what? characteristics

**Feeding:**  
 ↳ **Who eats me?** raccoons, foxes  
 ↳ **What do I eat?** berries, mushrooms, earthworms, slugs, snails, and insects  
**Role:** consumer, omnivore  
**Reproduction:** eggs; 3-6 in the summer, laid on land and covered in dirt  
**Grouping:** solitary  
**Activity:** diurnal; spring and summer

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# Eastern Gray Squirrel

Scientific Name:  
*Sciurus carolinensis*

## who? description

**Type:** mammal  
**Length:** 38-52.5 cm / 16-20 in, tail length ranges from 15-25 cm / 6-10 in  
**Weight:** 340-630 g / .75-1.5 lbs.  
**Coloring:** dark to pale gray, may have red or brown tones, tail is light gray  
**Body Features:** belly is white or light grayish, white ring around eye and hair on tail is tipped with white

**Size:**



## where? environment

**Habitat:** forested backdune, areas with trees; live in trees (mainly oak), have 2 types of homes, a hole in tree trunk and a nest of leaves and twigs on a tree branch above the ground



### Interesting Fact \*

Eastern gray squirrels can swim. They bury food during the winter, and then relocate these hiding places using their sense of smell.

## what? characteristics

**Feeding:**  
 ↳ **Who eats me?** mink, weasel, red fox, fisher, lynx, bobcat, and wolf; young eaten by raccoons, snakes, hawks, red squirrels  
 ↳ **What do I eat?** nuts, seeds, fungi, plants, insects, bird eggs  
**Role:** consumer, omnivore  
**Reproduction:** 2-4 young born in the spring, may have 2 litters each year  
**Grouping:** may share tree dens  
**Activity:** when warm: active after sunrise and before sunset, when cold: active mid-day

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# Eastern Hognose Snake

Scientific Name:  
Heterodon platirhinos

**who?**  
description

**Type:** reptile  
**Length:** 51-84 cm / 20-33 in  
**Coloring:** Can be tan, yellow, brown, and olive. Large dark blotches behind the head.  
**Body Features:** uses upturned nose a shovel for burrowing and foraging for food



**where?**  
environment

**Habitat:** foredune, in sand dunes, lives in burrows in sandy areas

**Interesting Fact \***  
 This harmless snake defends itself by flattening its head and neck, then hissing and striking with a closed mouth. If this does not repel the threat, the snake goes into convulsions, opens its mouth, rolls over and "plays dead."

**what?**  
characteristics

**Feeding:**  
 ↳ **Who eats me?** raccoons, hawks  
 ↳ **What do I eat?** toads, frogs, mice, and insects  
**Role:** consumer, carnivore  
**Reproduction:** female lays eggs in burrow, and they hatch in August and September  
**Grouping:** solitary  
**Activity:** diurnal, most active in spring and summer

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# Eurasian Milfoil\*

Scientific Name:  
Myriophyllum spicatum

**who?**  
description

**Type:** plant  
**Height:** up to 91 cm / 3 ft  
**Leaves:** 1.5-4 cm / 0.6-1.5 in long, have a feather-like outline, in groups of 4; stem is leafless towards the base, but branches out, the top often turns red  
**Flowers:** lower ones are female, upper ones are male  
 ⚠ **Invasive Species**



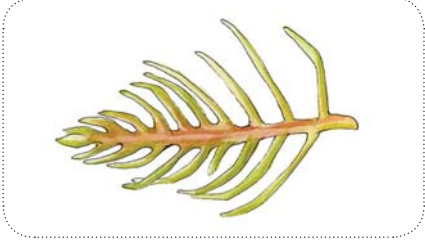
**where?**  
environment

**Sunlight:** moderate  
**Habitat:** lives in water from 1-3 m / 3-9 ft deep

**Interesting Fact \***  
 Eurasian milfoil is an invasive species brought to North America from Europe in the 1940's. It competes with native plants and can impair water quality.

**what?**  
habits

**Feeding:**  
 ↳ **Who eats me?** water birds  
 ↳ **What do I use to make food?** sunlight  
**Role:** producer  
**Reproduction:** stems release fragments that develop roots, new stems and leaves, then sink and grow from the bottom; can also be pollinated



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# Fingernail Clam\*

Scientific Name:  
Sphaeriidae

**who?**  
description

**Type:** mollusk  
**Length:** 1.3 cm / .5 in  
**Coloring:** cream, orange, white  
**Body Features:** fine rows of concentric, raised lines

**where?**  
environment

**Habitat:** sandy bottom of freshwater lakes and streams

**what?**  
characteristics

**Feeding:**  
↳ **Who eats me?**  
bottom feeding fish  
↳ **What do I eat?**  
plankton, bacteria  
**Role:** consumer, omnivore  
**Reproduction:** young emerge from parents in adult form  
**Activity:** year-round

**Interesting Fact \***

Fingernail clams do not have eyes, a nose, or antennae, but they do have a foot they push out of the shell to help them to move.

**Size:**



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# Fowler's Toad

Scientific Name:  
Bufo fowleri

**who?**  
description

**Type:** amphibian  
**Length:** 4-7 cm / 2-3 in  
**Coloring:** cream colored front; green-grey back with dark brown spots; males have dark vocal pouches during breeding season  
**Body Features:** each dark spot contains 3-4 warts

**where?**  
environment

**Habitat:** foredune, lives in sand dunes and lakeshore; uses shallow water for breeding, burrows in sand, debris, or leaf litter

**what?**  
characteristics

**Feeding:**  
↳ **Who eats me ?**  
eastern hognose snake, raccoons, skunks.  
↳ **What do I eat?**  
insects  
**Role:** consumer, carnivore  
**Reproduction:** female lays 7000 eggs in shallow water; tadpole-frog life cycle takes 1-2 months  
**Grouping:** gathers in April-June for breeding, otherwise solitary  
**Activity:** juveniles are diurnal; adults are nocturnal

**Interesting Fact \***

This toad secretes a toxin from the glands on the sides of the neck to protect itself from predators.

**Size:**



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# Great Blue Heron

Scientific Name:  
Ardea herodias

## who? description

**Type:** bird  
**Length:** 1.2 m / 4 ft tall, wing-span is 2.4 m / 7 ft  
**Coloring:** head white with black stripe, back grey-blue, breast white  
**Body Features:** long, yellow bill



## where? environment

**Habitat:** interlunal pond, wetlands and lakes, nests in tree-tops made of dry branches, nests are 30 cm / 1 ft deep and 91 cm / 3 ft wide

## Interesting Fact \*

The great blue heron is the largest heron, and the second largest bird (by height) in the Great Lakes. The largest bird by height is the sandhill crane.

## what? characteristics

**Feeding:**  
 ↳ **Who eats me?** eggs eaten by crows, ravens, gulls, raccoons  
 ↳ **What do I eat?** small fish, shell fish, frogs, rodents, reptiles, small birds  
**Role:** consumer, carnivore  
**Reproduction:** 3-5 eggs; nest in woodlands in spring  
**Grouping:** colonies  
**Activity:** female is diurnal, male is nocturnal; migrate south for winter

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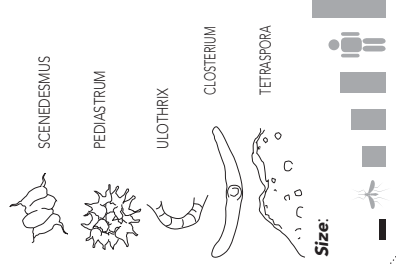


# Green Algae\*

Scientific Name:  
Closterium, Pediastrum, Scenedesmus, Tetraspora, Ulothrix

## who? description

**Type:** phytoplankton  
**Size:** microscopic - 1000 could fit on the head of a pin



## where? environment

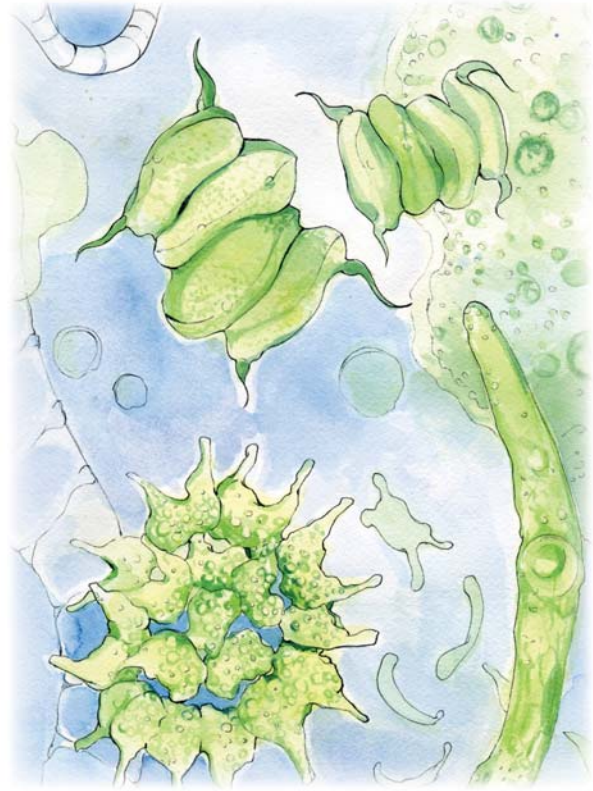
**Sunlight:** direct sunlight  
**Habitat:** mostly freshwater, found in all 5 Great Lakes

## Interesting Fact \*

Algae is the base of the lake food web. It produces more oxygen than all of the plants on Earth combined. Of the more than 7,000 types of green algae in the world, cladophora is one type found in clumps along Great Lakes beaches.

## what? characteristics

**Feeding:**  
 ↳ **Who eats me?** water fleas, copepods, snails, mollusks, fish  
 ↳ **What do I use to make food?** sunlight  
**Role:** producer  
**Reproduction:** can grow individually as single cells or in colonies; some have spores; when algae reproduce quickly, this is called a "bloom"



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# Hairy Puccoon

Scientific Name:  
Lithospermum carolinense

## who? description

**Type:** plant  
**Height:** 45 cm / 18 in  
**Leaves:** alternate, narrow, hairy with smooth edges  
**Flowers:** 5 parts, orange and yellow  
**Stem:** multiple, hairy stems

**Size:**



## where? environment

**Sunlight:** moderate  
**Habitat:** foredune, dry open woods, thickets, dry grasslands, rocky soils

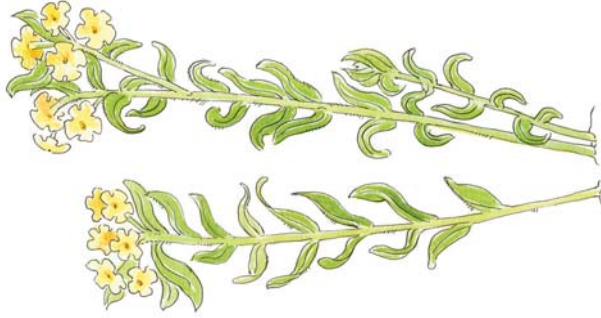


### Interesting Fact \*

'Puccoon' is a Native American term applied to plants used to make red pigment.

## what? characteristics

**Feeding:**  
 ↳ **Who eats me?** deer, butterflies eat nectar  
 ↳ **What do I use to make food?** sunlight  
**Role:** producer  
**Reproduction:** perennial, 4 nutlets from each flower



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# Herring Gull\*

Scientific Name:  
Larus argentatus

## who? description

**Type:** bird  
**Length:** up to 61 cm / 24 in  
**Weight:** 1.1 kg / 2.5 lb average  
**Coloring:** white, grey wing backs, yellow bill with red spot  
**Body Features:** pink legs  
**Note:** The ring-billed gull is also commonly found in the Great Lakes region. It has a black line around its beak and has similar characteristics to the herring gull.

**Size:**



## where? environment

**Habitat:** beach, lakeshore and seacoast, grass nests on flat ground

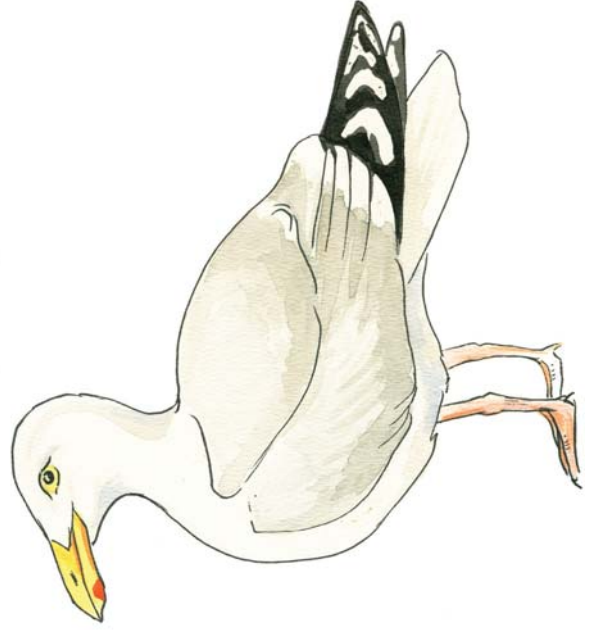


### Interesting Fact \*

Herring gulls will travel up to 40 miles from home for food.

## what? characteristics

**Feeding:**  
 ↳ **Who eats me?** other gulls, eagles eat young  
 ↳ **What do I eat?** clams, small fish, small mammals, garbage, birds, dead animals  
**Role:** consumer, omnivore, scavenger  
**Reproduction:** 3 eggs in spring  
**Grouping:** colonies  
**Activity:** diurnal



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# Human\*

Scientific Name:  
Homo sapien

## who? description

**Type:** mammal  
**Length:** adults average 152-182 cm / 5-6 ft  
**Weight:** adults average 50-91 kg / 110-200 lbs  
**Coloring:** skin shades range including, white, pink, beige, tan, light-dark brown  
**Body Features:** 2 arms, 2 legs, 10 digits on hands and feet  
**Note:** rely on sense organs (eyes, ears, mouth, nose) and opposable thumb  
**Size:**



## where? environment

**Habitat:** homes in a variety of ecosystems, rural-urban; homes vary in shape, size, and material depending on culture and location

## Interesting Fact \*

Humans do not have natural predators and are able to live in many different types of environments.

## what? characteristics

**Feeding:**  
 ↳ **Who eats me?** not a primary food source for animals, but may be eaten by large carnivores  
 ↳ **What do I eat?** depends on culture - various vegetables, fruits, nuts, fish (including lake trout and yellow perch), cows, pigs, chickens  
**Role:** consumer, omnivore  
**Reproduction:** live young which is generally raised by both parents

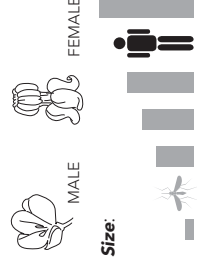


# Hydrilla\*

Scientific Name:  
Hydrilla verticillata

## who? description

**Type:** plant  
**Height:** up to 8 m / 25 ft  
**Leaves:** green with red ribbing, saw-toothed, four to eight around the stem  
**Flowers:** transparent or white (female) or green (male), with three petals and three sepals  
 ✘ **Invasive Species**



## where? environment

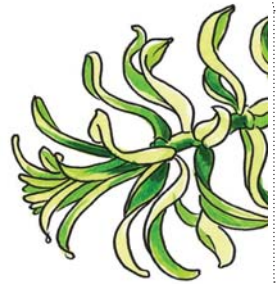
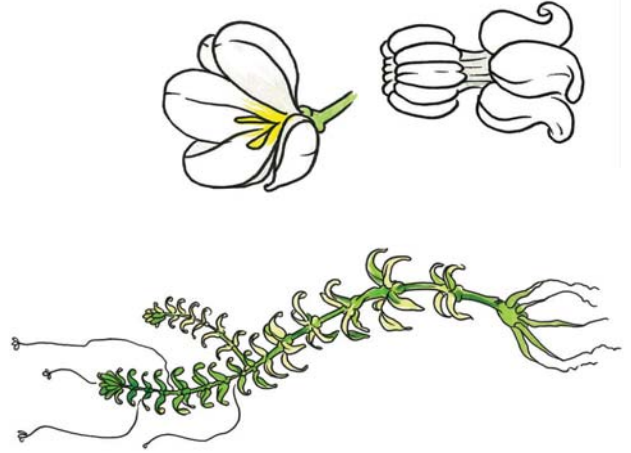
**Sunlight:** require less than 1% of full sunlight or less  
**Habitat:** any partially submerged body of water with a salinity level of less than 7%  
**Origin:** Africa

## Interesting Fact \*

Hydrilla, not yet in the Great Lakes, is anticipated to "invade" the system due to its presence in nearby aquatic ecosystems. It is made up of nearly 95% water, which allows for rapid growth.

## what? characteristics

**Feeding:**  
 ↳ **Who eats me?** coots and other bird species  
 ↳ **What do I use to make food?** oxygen and sunlight  
**Role:** producer  
**Reproduction:** re-growth of stem fragments and by auxiliary buds (tubers) that can each produce up to 6,000 new plants in 4 years  
**Other:** male and female flowers produced separately on a single plant







## Ladybug (convergent ladybird beetle)

Scientific Name:  
Hippodamia convergens

**who?**  
description

**Type:** insect  
**Length:** 4-8 mm / .15-.30 in  
**Weight:** 68 g / .15 lbs  
**Coloring:** bright red with black spots

**Body Features:** round body shaped like a half pea, 6 pairs of jointed legs

**Note:** Asian lady beetles are an invasive species that look just like ladybugs, but are more orange in color. They are often found along shorelines.

**Size:**

**where?**  
environment

**Habitat:** beach, fields, sand dunes, forests, grasslands, and gardens

**Interesting Fact \***  
A ladybug beats its wings 85 times per second when flying. There are nearly 5,000 kinds of ladybugs in the world.

**what?**  
characteristics

**Feeding:**  
 ↳ **Who eats me?** birds  
 ↳ **What do I eat?** small insects, including aphids

**Role:** consumer, carnivore

**Reproduction:** lays a group of small yellow eggs

**Grouping:** alone or in a group

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## Lake Huron Locust

Scientific Name:  
Trimerotropis huroniana

**who?**  
description

**Type:** insect  
**Length:** 2-4 cm / 1-1.6 in  
**Coloring:** silver to ash gray with darker brown and white markings

**Body Features:** males have noisier flight and smaller body size than females

⚠ **Endangered species in Wisconsin**

**Size:**

**where?**  
environment

**Habitat:** foredune, Great Lakes sand dunes, will not live near human developed areas

**Interesting Fact \***  
Lake Huron locust is a member of the grasshopper family. During courtship dances, males try to get the female's attention with the cracking noise made when they snap their wings together.

**what?**  
characteristics

**Feeding:**  
 ↳ **Who eats me?** birds  
 ↳ **What do I eat?** marram grass, Pitcher's thistle, wormwood, dead insects

**Role:** consumer, herbivore

**Reproduction:** mid-summer females lay their eggs in sand, where they remain over winter; nymphs hatch in late spring.

**Activity:** diurnal

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# Lake Sturgeon\*

Scientific Name:  
*Acipenser fulvescens*

## who? description

**Type:** fish  
**Length:** 91-183 cm / 3-6 ft  
**Weight:** 4-91 kg / 10-200 lbs  
**Coloring:** olive brown to grey, white belly  
**Body Features:** long, pointed snout with four barbels, or feelers, under the front of the snout

⚠ **Endangered in Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan**

## Size:



## where? environment

**Habitat:** freshwater lakes, lives on lake bottom



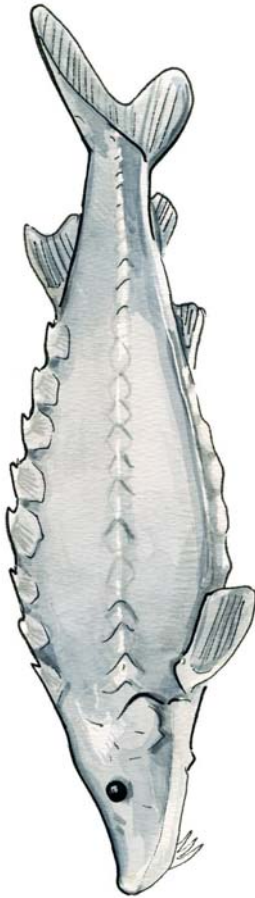
### Interesting Fact \*

The female sturgeon takes 20 years to mature and can live for 100 years. The sturgeon uses its barbels to find food on the lake bottom.

## what? characteristics

**Feeding:**  
 ↳ **Who eats me?** humans and other fish eat eggs  
 ↳ **What do I eat?** crustaceans, mollusks, insects  
**Role:** consumer, omnivore  
**Reproduction:** eggs; spawns every 4-6 years in swift water  
**Grouping:** solitary  
**Activity:** diurnal

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# Lake Trout\*

Scientific Name:  
*Salvelinus namaycush*

## who? description

**Type:** fish  
**Length:** 43-69 cm / 17-27 in  
**Weight:** 1344-4032 g / 3-9 lbs  
**Coloring:** light spots on dark background, color can vary greatly from fish to fish

## Size:



## where? environment

**Habitat:** freshwater lakes, in cold, clear, deep water



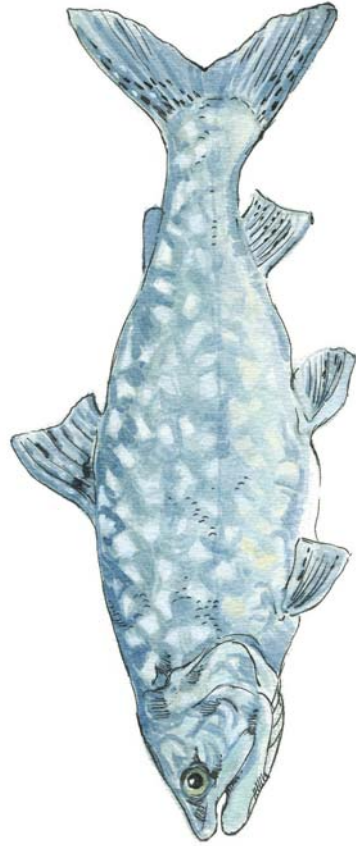
### Interesting Fact \*

Lake trout are a popular food for humans and the invasive sea lamprey. This has caused overfishing and reduced fish population. The United States and Canada worked together to reduce lamprey numbers. Namaycush is a Native American word that means "dweller of the deep."

## what? characteristics

**Feeding:**  
 ↳ **Who eats me?** sea lamprey, humans  
 ↳ **What do I eat?** chub, sculpin, smelt, alewives  
**Role:** consumer, carnivore  
**Reproduction:** female lays up to 15,000 eggs; spawns in shallow areas  
**Activity:** year-round

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# Lake Whitefish\*

Scientific Name:  
Coregonus clupeaformis

## who? description

**Type:** fish  
**Length:** 43-56 cm / 17-22 in  
**Coloring:** silver sides, greenish brown back  
**Body Features:** two clear fins on the back and a blunt nose

**Size:**



## where? environment

**Habitat:** found in all five Great Lakes; prefer deep waters of up to 61 m / 200 ft, deeper in hot weather



### Interesting Fact \*

The whitefish population seems to be making a comeback after years of over-fishing and bad environmental conditions had reduced their population.

## what? characteristics

### Feeding:

↳ **Who eats me?** lake trout, walleye, pike, humans; eggs eaten by other fish

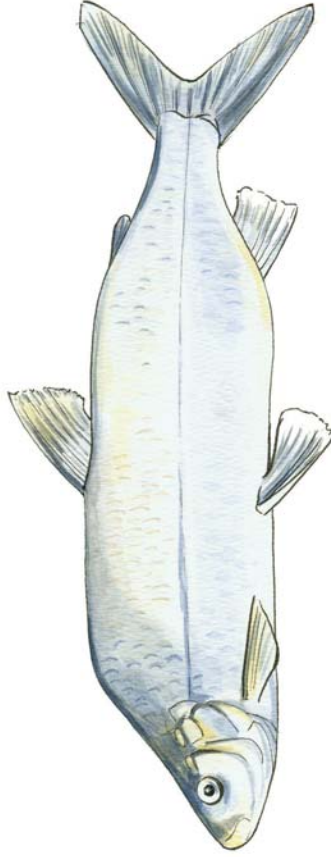
### ↳ What do I eat?

diporeia, insects, freshwater shrimp, small fish, fish eggs

**Role:** consumer, carnivore

**Reproduction:** eggs laid in early winter in shallow sandy or rocky water 7 m / 25 ft deep; young hatch in spring

**Grouping:** swims in schools



# Little Black Ant

Scientific Name:  
Monomorium minimum

## who? description

**Type:** insect  
**Length:** 2 mm / .25 in; the queen is twice as long  
**Coloring:** black, queen is dark brown or black  
**Body Features:** large jaw, bent antennae, queen and fertile ants have 4 wings

**Size:**



## where? environment

**Habitat:** foredune, underground in most North American terrestrial habitats



### Interesting Fact \*

The little black ant is the most abundant life form in the ecosystems surrounding the Great Lakes

## what? characteristics

### Feeding:

↳ **Who eats me?** birds, spiders, raccoons, woodchucks

### ↳ What do I eat?

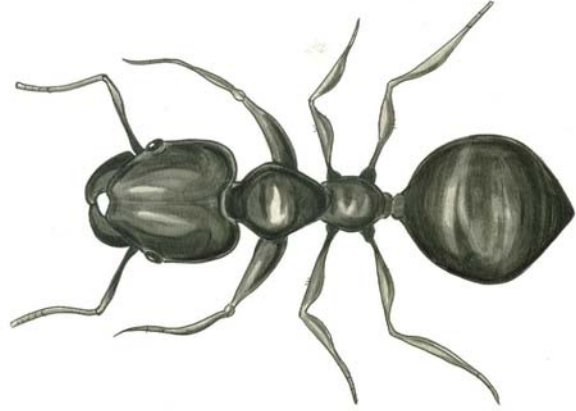
flower nectar, sap, small insects

**Role:** consumer, omnivore

**Reproduction:** queen ants mate once, then produce eggs for the rest of their life

**Grouping:** colonies

**Activity:** diurnal, spring and summer





# Mallard Duck\*

Scientific Name:  
Anas platyrhynchos

## who? description

**Type:** bird  
**Length:** 50-60 cm / 19-23 in  
**Weight:** 1.24 kg / 3 lbs  
**Coloring:** male-green head, white neck ring, brown breast, yellow bill; female-all brown/white mottled, greenish bill, white patch around wing  
**Body Features:** orange webbed feet



## where? environment

**Habitat:** interlunal pond, freshwater lakes, ponds, swamps, grass nest on the ground



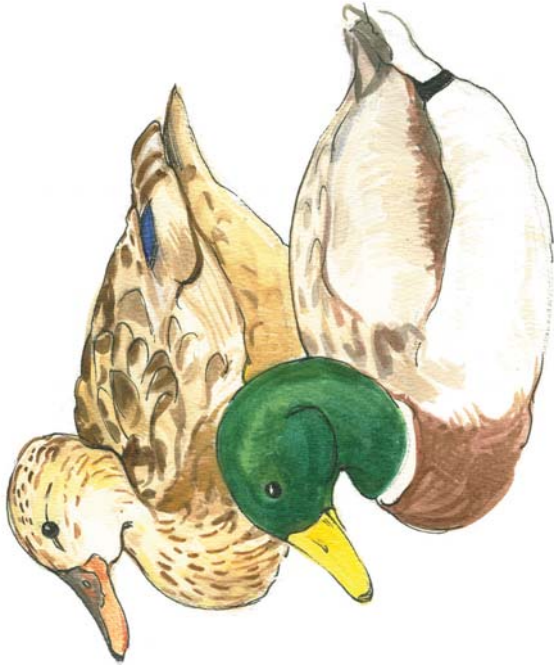
### Interesting Fact \*

The mallard is the most commonly recognized wild duck in the world.

## what? characteristics

**Feeding:**  
 ↳ **Who eats me?** muskellunge, humans, coyotes, snapping turtle  
 ↳ **What do I eat?** emergent weeds, small invertebrates, larval insects, grains  
**Role:** consumer, omnivore  
**Reproduction:** 8-12 eggs in spring  
**Grouping:** pairs or flocks  
**Activity:** diurnal

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# Marram Grass

Scientific Name:  
Ammophila breviligulata

## who? description

**Type:** plant  
**Height:** up to 1 m / 3 ft  
**Leaves:** narrow, spike-like  
**Other:** scaly underground stems extend 10-12 m / 30-45 ft, forms an underground web with its roots



## where? environment

**Sunlight:** full sun  
**Habitat:** foredune, in sand dunes

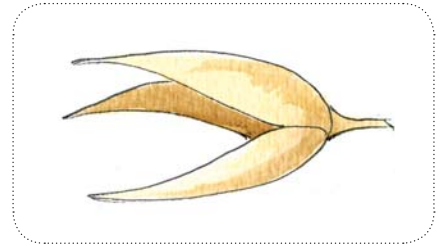


### Interesting Fact \*

Marram grass uses its roots to stabilize the soil for its own survival. This also enables other vegetation to take hold in the dunes.

## what? characteristics

**Feeding:**  
 ↳ **Who eats me?** fungi and nematodes  
 ↳ **What do I use to make food?** sunlight  
**Role:** producer  
**Reproduction:** perennial, new shoots grow from spreading roots



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# Monarch Butterfly

Scientific Name:  
Danaus plexippus

**who?**  
description

**Type:** insect  
**Length:** wingspan is 8.6 - 12.4 cm / 3.5- 4.9 in; caterpillars are 5 cm / 2 in long  
**Coloring:** orange wings with black veins and black margin with small white spots on each wing  
**Body Features:** 6 legs and 4 wings  
**Note:** Females have larger veins and males have a dark spot on the hindwing.  
**Size:**



**where?**  
environment

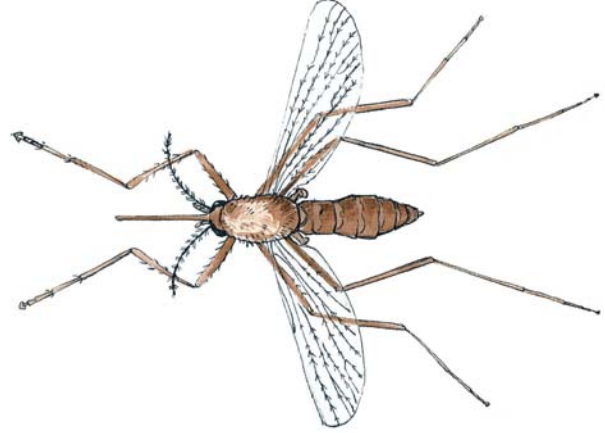
**Habitat:** foredune, fields where common milkweed grows

**what?**  
characteristics

**Feeding:**  
↳ **Who eats me?**  
eggs eaten by insects, spiders, birds, mice; some insects eat adults  
↵ **What do I eat?**  
caterpillars eat common milkweed, adults eat nectar of milkweed and other plants  
**Role:** consumer, herbivore  
**Reproduction:** life cycle is: caterpillar, cocoon, butterfly; lay eggs on the bottom of milkweed leaves.  
**Grouping:** migrate in groups  
**Activity:** migrate to Mexico each year


**Interesting Fact** ★

! A monarch butterfly is a poisonous snack. The toxins from the monarch's milkweed diet make the caterpillar and butterfly stages poisonous to predators.



**who?**  
description

**Type:** insect  
**Length:** 6.4-12.7 mm / .125-.5 in  
**Coloring:** brown  
**Body Features:** 6 long legs  
**Size:**



**where?**  
environment

**Habitat:** interdunal pond, lake or pond, anywhere with standing water

**what?**  
characteristics

**Feeding:**  
↳ **Who eats me?**  
fish, birds, frogs, other insects  
↵ **What do I eat?**  
organic matter in water, human and animal blood  
**Role:** consumer, omnivore, parasite  
**Reproduction:** females lay 50-500 eggs  
**Grouping:** singly or in swarms  
**Activity:** most active at dawn and dusk

**Interesting Fact** ★

! Mosquitoes can travel up to one mile from their breeding spot to find a meal. The adult female (only!) seeks a blood meal so she can produce a new patch of eggs.

# Muskellunge\*

Scientific Name:  
*Esox masquinongy*

## who? description

**Type:** fish  
**Length:** up to 152 cm / 5 ft  
**Weight:** 18-31 kg / 40-70 lbs  
**Coloring:** silver green to light brown with dark bars, cream belly with small brown spots  
**Body Features:** long head and snout, and a large mouth

**Size:**



## where? environment

**Habitat:** freshwater lakes, near weed beds and shore

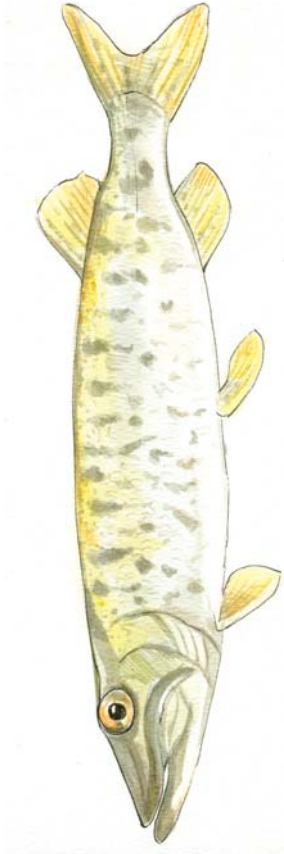
## Interesting Fact \*

Muskies were often caught by fishermen as prize fish, but now fishing of muskies is regulated to protect the population.

## what? characteristics

**Feeding:**  
↳ **Who eats me?** humans  
↳ **What do I eat?** other fish, ducklings, frogs, rodents  
**Role:** consumer, carnivore  
**Reproduction:** lay eggs in shallow water  
**Grouping:** solitary  
**Activity:** most active in warm weather

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# Opossum Shrimp\*

Scientific Name:  
*Mysis relicta*

## who? description

**Type:** crustacean  
**Length:** 2-3 cm / .8-1 in  
**Coloring:** clear, beige  
**Body Features:** 10 pairs of jointed legs

**Size:**



## where? environment

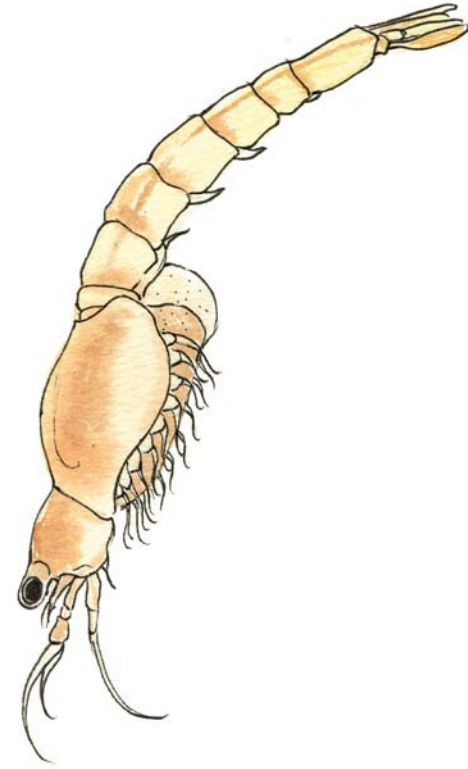
**Habitat:** freshwater lakes, deep cold water

## Interesting Fact \*

Opossum shrimp look like a miniature crayfish. They are not actually shrimp.

## what? characteristics

**Feeding:**  
↳ **Who eats me?** lake trout, alewife  
↳ **What do I eat?** Phytoplankton, zooplankton, copepods, detritus  
**Role:** consumer, omnivore  
**Reproduction:** female carries eggs in a pouch  
**Activity:** diurnal movement and nocturnal feeding



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# Pileated Woodpecker

Scientific Name:  
*Dryocopus pileatus*

## who? description

**Type:** bird  
**Length:** 40-48 cm / 16-19 in  
**Coloring:** black body with white neck stripes, white wing lining  
**Body Features:** red crest on top of the head, chisel-shaped bill, male has red mustache



**Size:**

## where? environment

**Habitat:** forested backdune, mature forests; create holes in already hollow trees

### Interesting Fact \*

The pileated woodpecker uses its long, pointed, sticky tongue to eat ants from their tunnels. This woodpecker has a loud, ringing call. They will make up to 16 holes in a tree which allow them to escape from predators.

## what? characteristics

**Feeding:**  
↳ **Who eats me?** snakes eat eggs, hawks  
↳ **What do I eat?** ants and other insects living in wood, berries, and nuts  
**Role:** consumer, omnivore  
**Reproduction:** 3-8 white eggs in a tree cavity. Both parents incubate eggs  
**Grouping:** can live in groups  
**Activity:** diurnal, strong flyer, climbs on trees; hops on the ground, sleeps in tree at night

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# Piping Plover

Scientific Name:  
*Charadrius melodus*

## who? description

**Type:** bird  
**Height:** 14 cm / 5.5 in  
**Coloring:** sandy grey with dark bands across head and breast, orange legs  
**Body Features:** short bill

⚠ **Endangered species in the Great Lakes**



**Size:**

## where? environment

**Habitat:** beach, sand and gravel shores of rivers and lakes, sand bars

### Interesting Fact \*

The piping plover is a threatened species in the United States and an endangered species in Canada, which means it is protected because there are not many left.

## what? characteristics

**Feeding:**  
↳ **Who eats me?** coyotes and crows  
↳ **What do I eat?** insects, crustaceans, mollusks  
**Role:** carnivore  
**Reproduction:** 2-4 eggs laid in sand in May, both parents care for young  
**Grouping:** pairs and groups  
**Activity:** migrate yearly to Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean

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# Pitcher's Thistle

Scientific Name:  
Cirsium pitcheri

## who? description

**Type:** plant  
**Height:** up to 91 cm / 3 ft  
**Leaves:** finely and deeply lobed and can be up to 30 cm / 1 ft long  
**Flowers:** cream or pink flowers - when not in flower, it is a cluster of silvery leaves  
**Other:** stem and leaves covered with fine white hairs

⊗ **Threatened species in the Great Lakes**

## Size:



## where? environment

**Sunlight:** full sunlight  
**Habitat:** foredune, open sand dunes and low beach ridges and often found near shore

## Interesting Fact \*

The fine white hairs on the thistle help the plant retain water and reflect the sun's strong rays. The taproot can be 6 feet long. Shoreline development destroys this plant and its habitat.

## what? characteristics

**Feeding:**  
 ↳ **Who eats me?** butterflies and bees eat nectar  
 ↳ **What do I use to make food?** sunlight  
**Role:** producer  
**Reproduction:** grows 5-8 years before flowering; pollinated by insects, mainly bees, seeds are spread by wind



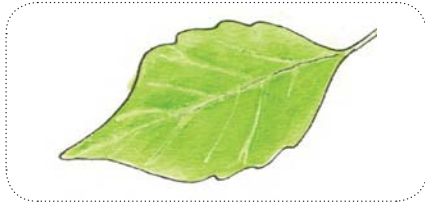
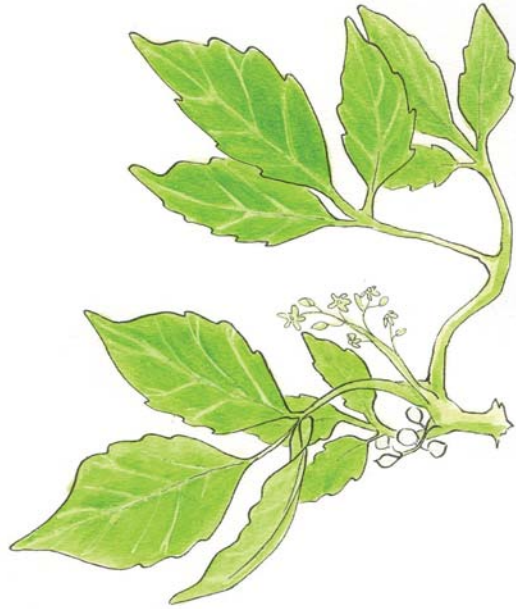
# Poison Ivy

Scientific Name:  
Toxicodendron radicans

## who? description

**Type:** plant  
**Height:** can grow to 3 m / 10 ft or more  
**Leaves:** clusters of 3 asymmetrical leaves  
**Flowers:** greenish-white  
**Other:** yellowish-white berries; plant can be a small shrub or a vine

## Size:



## where? environment

**Sunlight:** partial sun  
**Habitat:** forested backdune, forest floor, climbing on trees

## Interesting Fact \*

Poison ivy can cause an itchy allergic reaction on the skin if it comes in contact with the plant. If there is contact, as quickly as possible, wash with cold water and soap.

## what? characteristics

**Feeding:**  
 ↳ **Who eats me?** birds eat the berries  
 ↳ **What do I use to make food?** sunlight  
**Role:** producer  
**Reproduction:** seeds in berries



# Quagga Mussel\*

Scientific Name:  
*Dreissena rostriformis bugensis*

**who?**  
description

**Type:** mollusk  
**Length:** 28 mm / 1+ in  
**Coloring:** tan and blackish pattern to all black depending on location

**Body Features:** a connecting tissue holds the two shell halves together, often with the animal in between, this tissue helps connect to hard surfaces and other mussels

☞ **Invasive Species**



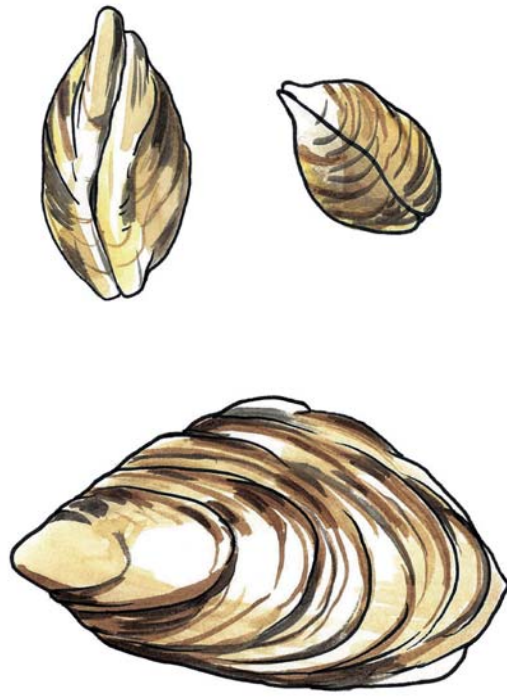
**where?**  
environment

**Habitat:** freshwater  
**Origin:** Eastern Europe

**Interesting Fact \***  
The quagga mussel can live at any depth as long as oxygen is present, while the zebra mussel, a relative, can only survive at depths less than 12 meters.

**what?**  
characteristics

**Feeding:**  
↳ **Who eats me?** ducks, crayfish and lake whitefish, gobies, sculpins  
↳ **What do I eat?** phytoplankton, diatoms  
**Role:** consumer, omnivore  
**Reproduction:** up to one million eggs per year expelled by females and fertilized outside of the body by males in spring / summer  
**Grouping:** singly or in colonies



# Red Fox

Scientific Name:  
*Vulpes vulpes*

**who?**  
description

**Type:** mammal  
**Length:** 94-97 cm / 37-38 in  
**Weight:** 4-5 kg / 10-15 lbs  
**Coloring:** usually red / yellow or red / brown yellow, white underside, tail has white or black tip

**Body Features:** feet and legs are black



**where?**  
environment

**Habitat:** forested backdune, forest, prairie, farmland, and sometimes in suburbs, live in dens in the ground

**Interesting Fact \***  
The red fox usually has two entrances to a den and other dens nearby. This allows them to move to safety when needed. A red fox can jump as high as 2 meters / 6.5 feet.

**what?**  
characteristics

**Feeding:**  
↳ **Who eats me?** bobcats, eagles eat pups  
↳ **What do I eat?** rodents, rabbits, insects, birds, turtles, berries, fruit, and dead animals  
**Role:** consumer, omnivore  
**Reproduction:** one litter per year, 4-9 young born in a den, usually in the ground  
**Grouping:** solitary, except when raising a litter and mating  
**Activity:** nocturnal, active at dusk





# Riverbank Grape

Scientific Name:  
*Vitis riparia*

## who? description

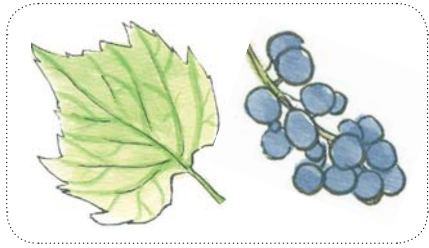
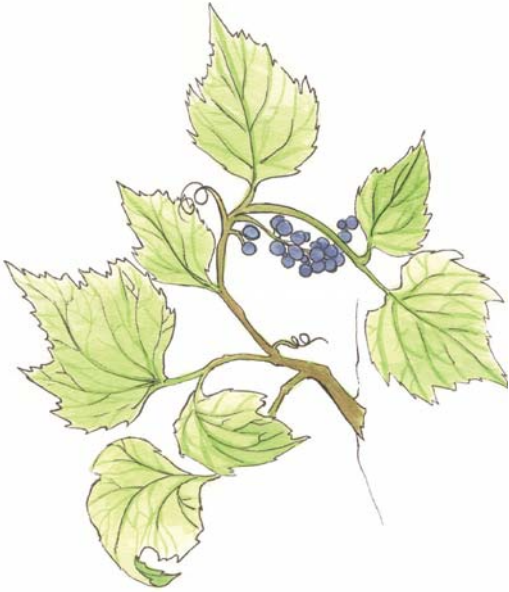
**Type:** plant

**Height:** rises up to 61 cm / 2 ft off the ground, but can have vines up to 15 m / 50 ft long

**Leaves:** green

**Flowers:** green

**Other:** produces grapes



## where? environment

**Sunlight:** full sun

**Habitat:** foredune, along lakeshores, in sand forests, sand dunes

### Interesting Fact \*

Birds use the bark of the riverbank grape to make nests.



## what? characteristics

### Feeding:

↳ **Who eats me?**  
pileated woodpecker and other birds, deer, fox, squirrel eat fruit, insects seek pollen

↳ **What do I use to make food?**  
sunlight

**Role:** producer

**Reproduction:** seeds in grapes

**Size:**



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# Round Goby\*

Scientific Name:  
*Neogobius melanostomus*

## who? description

**Type:** fish

**Length:** under 18 cm / 7 in

**Coloring:** slate gray or black body with black or brown spots

**Body Features:** raised, frog-like eyes; have thick lips, front fin has a black spot, body is covered with fine scales

### ⊗ Invasive Species



MALE

FEMALE

**Size:**



## where? environment

**Habitat:** lake bottom, found in all the Great Lakes and some nearby lakes

**Origin:** Black and Caspian Sea regions of Eurasia

### Interesting Fact \*

The round goby has a very active sensory system which allows it to find prey and also avoid becoming prey. They have become too numerous to bring under control.



## what? characteristics

### Feeding:

↳ **Who eats me?**  
bass, pike, walleye

↳ **What do I eat?**  
small fish, zebra mussels, and fish eggs

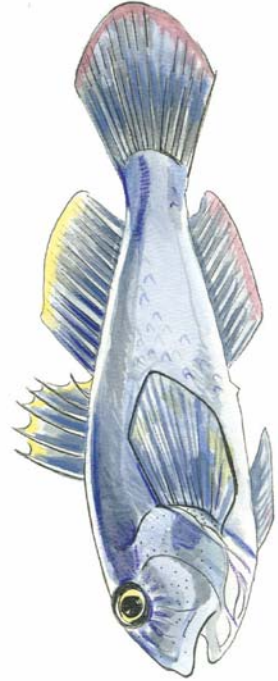
**Role:** consumer, carnivore

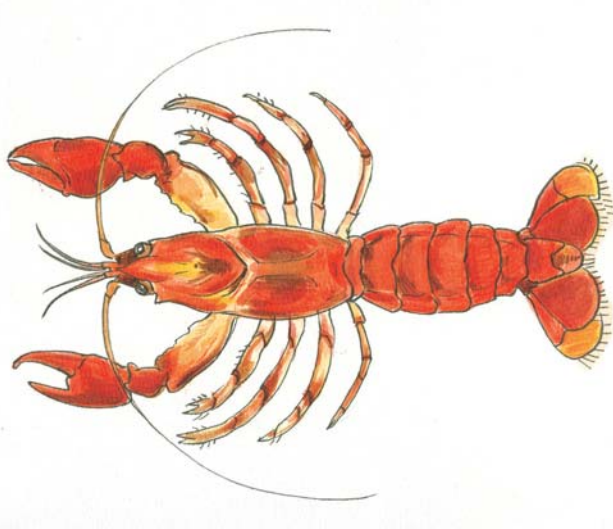
**Reproduction:** spawns up to five times per mating season; builds nests in rocky areas for eggs

**Grouping:** found in dense populations

**Activity:** diurnal

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## Rusty Crayfish\*

Scientific Name:  
*Orconectes rusticus*

### who? description

**Type:** crustacean  
**Height:** 8-10 cm / 3-4 in  
**Coloring:** red / brown color  
**Body Features:** large claws and rusty colored spots on each side of the main body section

### ⚠ Invasive Species

### Size:



### where? environment

**Habitat:** lakes, ponds, and streams in areas where there is debris on the bottom  
**Origin:** Ohio River basin

### ! Interesting Fact \*

Rusty crayfish are an invasive species that have been spread when used for bait by fishermen. They have also been spread by science classes who have released them after being classroom pets.

### what? characteristics

**Feeding:**  
 ↳ **Who eats me?** predator fish, birds, raccoons  
 ↳ **What do I eat?** aquatic plants and insects, fish eggs and small fish

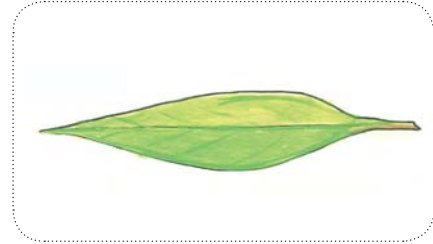
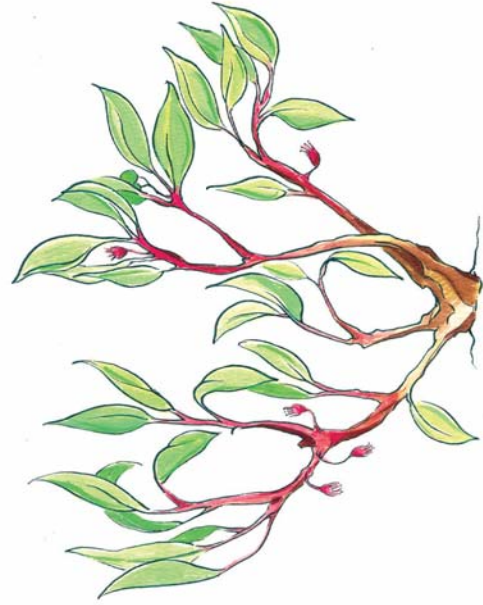
**Role:** consumer, omnivore and scavenger

**Reproduction:** eggs are usually laid in the spring by the female

**Grouping:** young crayfish stay with their mother for several weeks. After they tend to live independently

**Activity:** nocturnal

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## Sand Cherry

Scientific Name:  
*Prunus pumila*

### who? description

**Type:** shrub  
**Height:** 1.8 m / 6 ft  
**Leaves:** silvery green  
**Flowers:** white flowers and purple – black fruits

### Size:



### where? environment

**Sunlight:** full sun  
**Habitat:** beach, coastal dunes, typically in the foredune

### ! Interesting Fact \*

The sand cherry helps to stabilize sand dunes with its root system.

### what? characteristics

**Feeding:**  
 ↳ **Who eats me?** birds  
 ↳ **What do I use to make food?** sunlight

**Role:** producer

**Reproduction:** seeds in cherries

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## Scud\*

Scientific Name:  
Gammarus

### who? description

**Type:** crustacean  
**Length:** 2.54 cm / 1 in  
**Coloring:** most are gray and tan; some are shades of green, blue, orange, and purple  
**Body Features:** shrimp-like with an arched, flat body; two pair of antennae and nineteen paired legs

**Size:**



### where? environment

**Habitat:** shallow water in lakes, ponds, and slow moving rivers with abundant vegetation and debris on the bottom



#### Interesting Fact \*

Scud populations may be declining because of competition with the zebra mussel for phytoplankton.

### what? characteristics

#### Feeding:

↳ **Who eats me?** insects, amphibians, shore birds and fish like sculpin, smelt and chub

#### ↳ What do I eat?

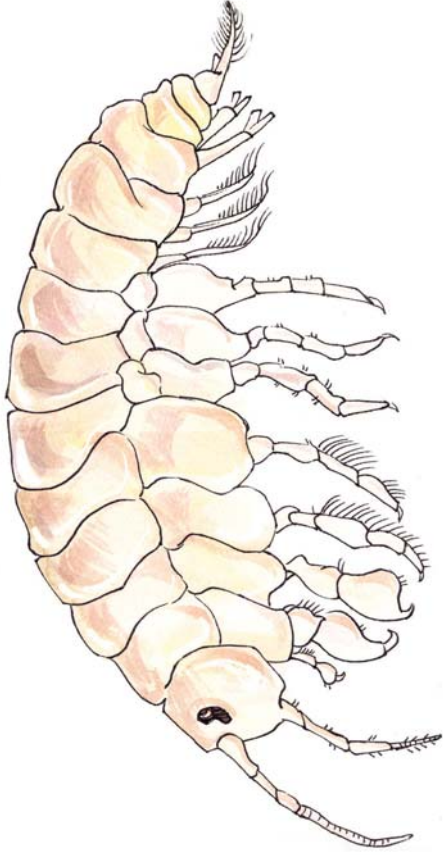
algae, dead plants and animals

**Role:** consumer, omnivore

**Reproduction:** reproduces after 5-8 years

**Grouping:** colonies

**Activity:** mainly nocturnal



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## Sea Lamprey\*

Scientific Name:  
Petromyzon marinus

### who? description

**Type:** fish  
**Length:** 30-50 cm / 12-20 in  
**Weight:** 226-363 g / .5-.8 lbs  
**Coloring:** grey-blue, metallic purple, and silver  
**Body Features:** long, slender body, mouth with sharp teeth enables it to suck out the fluid and tissue of fish, especially the lake trout

✘ **Invasive Species**

**Size:**



### where? environment

**Habitat:** freshwater lakes and oceans  
**Origin:** Atlantic Ocean - Europe and North America



#### Interesting Fact \*

Sea lampreys naturally live in saltwater, but came into the Great Lakes through canals. There are efforts to control the lamprey population because they do not have natural predators in the Great Lakes.

### what? characteristics

#### Feeding:

↳ **Who eats me?** none in Great Lakes

#### ↳ What do I eat?

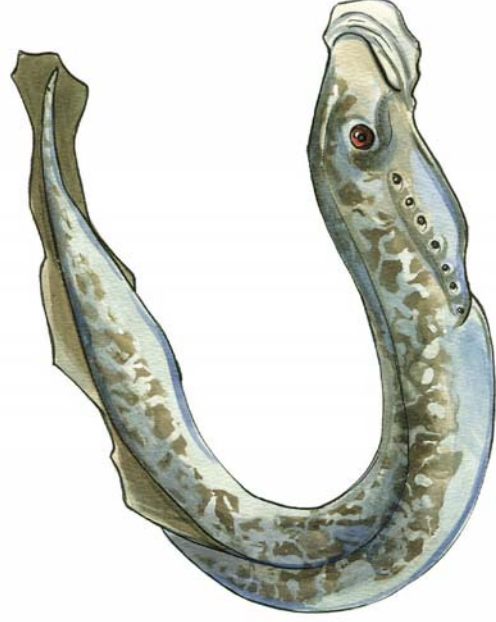
fish, including lake trout

**Role:** consumer, carnivore

**Reproduction:** lay eggs

**Grouping:** solitary

**Activity:** year-round



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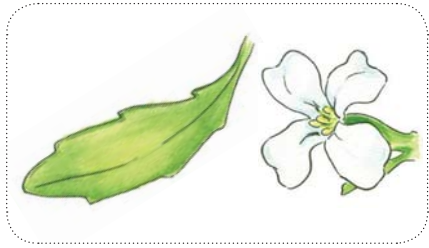
# Sea Rocket

Scientific Name:  
Cakile edentula

## who? description

**Type:** plant  
**Height:** 15-50 cm / 6-20 in  
**Leaves:** thick and fleshy  
**Flowers:** white - lavender

**Size:**



## where? environment

**Sunlight:** full sun  
**Habitat:** foredune, sandy beaches, above the water line

## what? characteristics

**Feeding:**  
↳ **Who eats me?** deer and mice  
↳ **What do I use to make food?** sunlight  
**Role:** producer  
**Reproduction:** flowers are pollinated



### Interesting Fact \*

Sea rocket lives in areas of bare sand where other plants cannot survive. It has a long taproot to hold it in place and fleshy leaves which help it hold in moisture.

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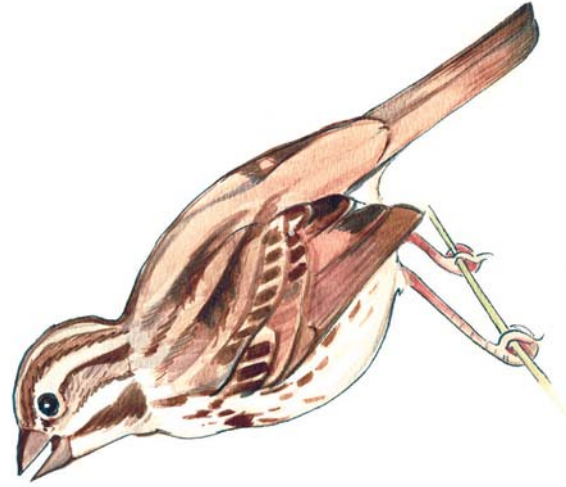
# Song Sparrow

Scientific Name:  
Melospiza melodia

## who? description

**Type:** bird  
**Length:** 12-18 cm / 5-7 in  
**Coloring:** brown streaked, under parts are whitish with dark streaks, spot in the center of the breast  
**Body Features:** long tail that is pumped up and down to help with flying

**Size:**



## where? environment

**Habitat:** forested backdune, thickets, pastures, undergrowth in gardens, city parks, make nests on the ground, a later nest is made in a tree or shrub, nests are used more than once

## what? characteristics

**Feeding:**  
↳ **Who eats me?** hawks, owls, snakes, cats, some turtles  
↳ **What do I eat?** beetles, flies, caterpillars, seeds, grains, berries  
**Role:** consumer, omnivore  
**Reproduction:** Nests in a cup of grass, 3 broods per season  
**Grouping:** pairs remain mates through years, both parents feed young  
**Activity:** most migrate in winter



### Interesting Fact \*

Song sparrows sing throughout the year, although much less in winter. Each male sings between 6 and 24 different songs. Some song sparrows do not migrate during the winter.

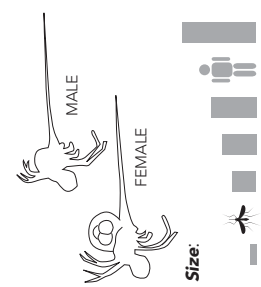
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# Spiny Water Flea\*

Scientific Name:  
Bythotrephes cederstroemi

**who?**  
description

**Type:** zooplankton, crustacean  
**Length:** less than 1.3 cm / .5 in  
**Coloring:** clear  
**Body Features:** crustacean with long, sharp, barbed tail spine  
 ✂ **Invasive Species**



**where?**  
environment

**Habitat:** throughout the Great Lakes and some inland lakes  
**Origin:** Eurasia

**Interesting Fact \***  
 This creature is not a flea, but a crustacean. Only some larger fish can eat it because the sharp tail spine is hard for smaller fish to swallow. It competes with fish for plankton.

**what?**  
characteristics

**Feeding:**  
 ↳ **Who eats me?** some large fish  
 ↳ **What do I eat?** plankton  
**Role:** consumer, omnivore  
**Reproduction:** reproduce rapidly; during warm summer temperatures each female produces 10 offspring every 2 wks  
**Grouping:** form clusters with each other

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# Spotted Sandpiper

Scientific Name:  
Actitis macularia

**who?**  
description

**Type:** bird  
**Length:** 15 cm / 6 in  
**Coloring:** brown-olive on top, white belly (sometimes with black spots), yellow or pink legs



**where?**  
environment

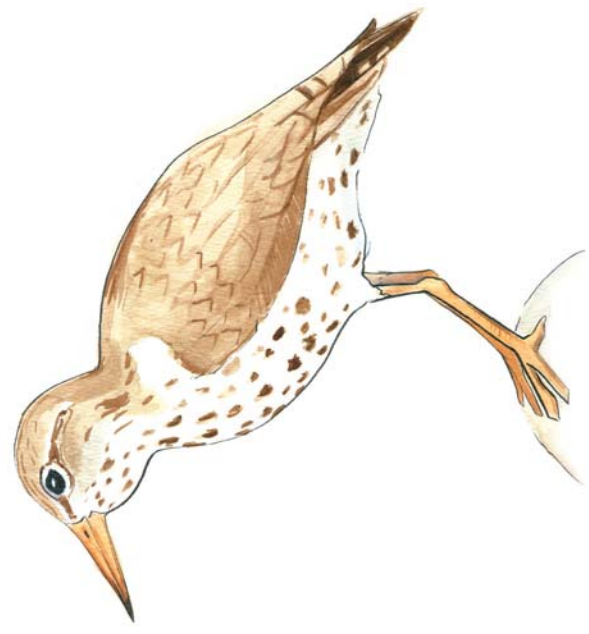
**Habitat:** beach, shorelines, grasslands, forests, near water

**Interesting Fact \***  
 The spotted sandpiper is aggressive about protecting their young and their territory. Males do most of the egg incubation.

**what?**  
characteristics

**Feeding:**  
 ↳ **Who eats me?** mice, blackbirds, otters, minks  
 ↳ **What do I eat?** insects, worms, small fish, mollusks, crustaceans, spiders  
**Role:** consumer, carnivore  
**Reproduction:** 4 eggs in grass or moss nest, male cares for eggs and young, females mate with multiple males and defend territory  
**Grouping:** family groups  
**Activity:** migrates to Pacific coast in winter

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# Walleye\*

Scientific Name:  
*Stizostedion vitreum*

## who? description

**Type:** fish  
**Length:** 33-63 cm / 13-25 in  
**Weight:** 4-2 kg / 1-5 lbs  
**Coloring:** brown to yellow  
**Body Features:** The young usually have dark blotches across their backs and down their sides

**Size:**



## where? environment

**Habitat:** freshwater lakes, lives in deep water, near the bottom of the lake in weeds or rocks

### Interesting Fact \*



Walleyes have large, marble-like eyes that help them see well in dim light.

## what? characteristics

### Feeding:

↳ **Who eats me?**  
humans, muskellunge, largemouth bass

### ↳ What do I eat?

yellow perch, aquatic insects, crayfish

**Role:** consumer, carnivore

**Reproduction:** occurs in spring/early summer, females release up to 612,000 eggs

**Grouping:** loose but distinct schools

**Activity:** feeds at dusk



# Water Strider\*

Scientific Name:  
*Gerris remigis*

## who? description

**Type:** insect  
**Length:** 1.2 cm / .5 in  
**Coloring:** dark brown to black  
**Body Features:** long legs, two legs can fold under front of body

**Size:**



## where? environment

**Habitat:** intertidal pond, freshwater lakes and wetlands, live under leaves, spend time on surface of water

### Interesting Fact \*



Water striders communicate with each other through ripples on the surface of the water.

## what? characteristics

### Feeding:

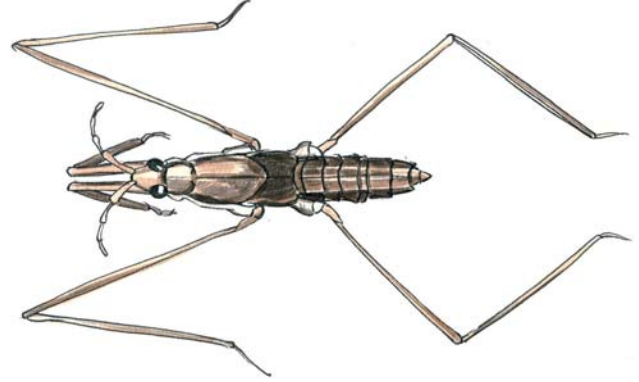
↳ **Who eats me?**  
birds, fish, dragonflies

### ↳ What do I eat?

Insects from water and land, plants

**Role:** consumer, omnivore

**Reproduction:** lay eggs at water's edge







## White-Tailed Deer

Scientific Name:  
*Odocoileus virginianus*

### who? description

**Type:** mammal  
**Height:** 1 m / 3-3.5 ft tall at shoulder  
**Coloring:** red-brown in summer, gray-brown in winter  
**Body Features:** "white-tailed deer" refers to the white underside of the tail, which is held up like a flag when deer is alarmed or running, male (buck) has antlers

### Size:



### where? environment

**Habitat:** forested backdune, open woodland, edges of a forest



### Interesting Fact ★

Deer are able to run up to 64 km / 40 mi per hour, jump 3 m / 9 ft fences, and can swim well. Their fur has air spaces in the core which insulates them against the cold. Males lose their antlers and re-grow them each year.

### what? characteristics

#### Feeding:

- ↳ **Who eats me?** coyotes, humans
- ↳ **What do I eat?** grass, herbs, leaves, bark, trees, shrubs, fungi and acorns

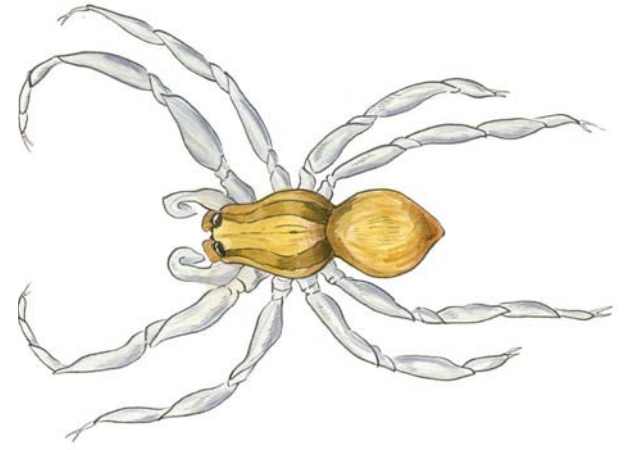
**Role:** consumer, herbivore

**Reproduction:** in May or June, 1-2 fawns born

**Grouping:** may travel in small herds

**Activity:** feed in early morning and again in early evening

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## Wolf Spider

Scientific Name:  
*Pisaura mirabilis*

### who? description

**Type:** arachnid  
**Length:** 1-8 cm / .4-3 in  
**Coloring:** brown, grey, white, black  
**Body Features:** eight eyes

### Size:



### where? environment

**Habitat:** foredune, wooded sand dunes and woodlands; lives in tunnels, under rocks, or in leaf litter



### Interesting Fact ★

Wolf spiders can float on water. They often hunt their prey rather than spin webs to catch food.

### what? characteristics

#### Feeding:

- ↳ **Who eats me?** birds, small reptiles, toads
- ↳ **What do I eat?** flies, crickets, beetles, ants

**Role:** consumer, carnivore

**Reproduction:** 50-200 eggs; female carries egg sac on her back in summer; 40 offspring carried on back; 2-4 egg sacs in lifetime

**Grouping:** solitary hunters

**Activity:** diurnal

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# Yellow Perch\*

Scientific Name:  
*Perca flavescens*

## who? description

**Type:** fish  
**Length:** 15-25 cm / 6-10 in  
**Weight:** 168-448 g / 6-16 oz  
**Coloring:** back is bright to olive green or golden brown, sides are yellow-green; grey to milk-white belly

**Size:**



## where? environment

**Habitat:** lake bottom, less than 30 feet depth, feeds near the shore and rests on the bottom

## Interesting Fact \*

Yellow perch are a popular food for humans, but have been overfished and the population has decreased. They lay their eggs in long, jelly-like ribbons.

## what? characteristics

### Feeding:

↳ **Who eats me?** alewife (feed on larva), humans  
↳ **What do I eat?** minnows, insect larvae, plankton, worms

### Role:

consumer, carnivore

### Reproduction:

lay eggs April-May

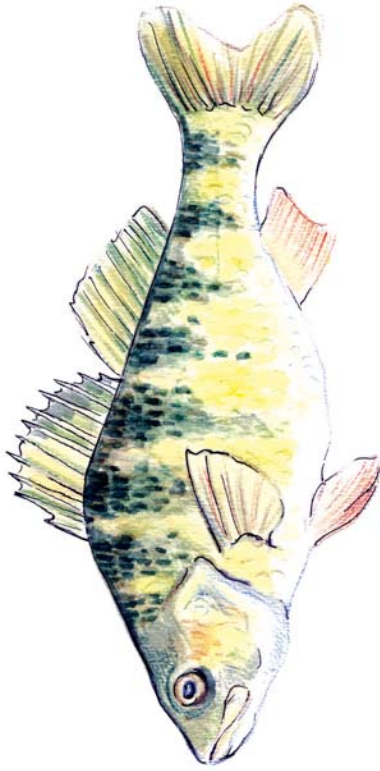
### Grouping:

swims in schools

### Activity:

diurnal, year-round

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# Zebra Mussel\*

Scientific Name:  
*Dreissena polymorpha*

## who? description

**Type:** mollusk  
**Length:** up to 5 cm / .75 in  
**Coloring:** tan and blackish stripes (like a zebra)  
**Body Features:** two connected shells hold a small mussel between them, they attach to hard surfaces with byssal threads

⊗ **Invasive Species**

**Size:**



## where? environment

**Habitat:** freshwater; depths of 2-7 m / 6-23 ft  
**Origin:** Eastern Europe and Western Russia; Caspian and Black Sea

## Interesting Fact \*

Zebra mussels in some parts of the Great Lake region have been outnumbered by the quagga mussel, a close relative of theirs. Zebra mussels are in all Great Lakes and some inland lakes.

## what? characteristics

### Feeding:

↳ **Who eats me?** round goby  
↳ **What do I eat?** algae

### Role:

consumer, omnivore

### Reproduction:

eggs expelled by females and fertilized outside of the body by males in spring / summer

### Grouping:

singly or in colonies



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