

Northern Red-legged Frog
Rana aurora

This golden-eyed coastal frog, recognisable by the red undersides of its legs and belly, is most active during rain in its late-winter breeding season. It can be seen in and around shallow ponds in forests, e.g. Delta Nature Reserve.



American Bullfrog
Lithobates catesbeianus

The loud booming of bullfrogs is a familiar sound in Delta's marshes. Native to eastern North America, bullfrogs can grow to nearly 1kg and live up to 9 years. Great Blue Herons are one of the few predators of bullfrogs in Delta.



Green Frog
Lithobates clamitans

This is another common, introduced frog, native to eastern North America. Look for ridges along its back and its smaller size to distinguish it from the bullfrog. Its call is a loud banjo twang, heard in mid-summer from freshwater ditches and marshes.



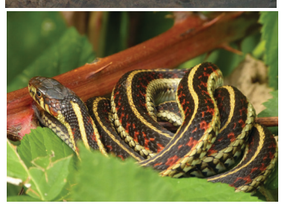
Red-eared Slider Turtle
Trachemys scripta elegans

Releases of this invasive "pet" have led to hundreds of slider turtles in Delta's ponds, to the detriment of other species. Sliders bury in mud for the winter and live in freshwater from spring to fall. Look for the red facial stripe and yellow lower shell.



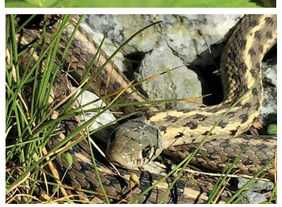
Western Painted Turtle
Chrysemys picta bellii

A native turtle, found in lakes, streams, and wetlands, the Western is now very uncommon in Delta. This reptile can live 30+ years, and can be distinguished from the slider turtle by its red-and-black sides and lack of red facial stripe.



Common Garter Snake
Thamnophis sirtalis

This large snake is black with bright, clean-edged yellow stripes and often vertical red bands. It lives near water, eating frogs, fish, and small mammals, and will usually emit a foul-smelling musk if handled.



Terrestrial Garter Snake
Thamnophis elegans vagrans

Grey or brown with prominent dark blotches, this native is the only garter snake that constricts its prey as well as biting it. Despite its name, it is rarely far from water, and can be seen in fresh and salt water hunting small aquatic animals.



Northwestern Garter Snake
Thamnophis ordinoides

The Northwestern is noticeably smaller than the Common Garter Snake and comes in a wide variety of colours and patterns, usually including 3 narrow stripes down its sides and back. It lives in grasslands, around dykes, and in forests.



Signal Crayfish
Pacifastacus leniusculus

BC's only native crayfish, this crustacean grows to 15cm, living on leaf litter and small fish. Look for it in Delta's ponds and creeks, hiding under rocks and plants. Females carry 200-400 eggs under their tails all winter; they hatch in spring.



Grey Whale
Eschrichtius robustus

Grey Whales regularly visit Boundary Bay in spring and summer and can be seen from shore, although only their backs show above the surface. Their "blow" (released air) is a heart-shaped spray rising 3-4m high. They winter in Mexican waters.



Humpback Whale
Megaptera novaeangliae

These large whales were locally extinct 100 years ago but have made a dramatic comeback in the past two decades. They can be seen in summer feeding in deep water and sometimes breaching, throwing themselves right out of the water.



Orca (Killer Whale)
Orcinus orca

Orcas visit the waters off Delta in summer and can sometimes be seen from shore. Easily identified by their tall dorsal fins, these large dolphins have distinct populations, including fish-eating residents and mammal-eating transients.



Harbour Porpoise
Phocoena phocoena

Identify Harbour Porpoises by their small, dark dorsal fin when they curve their backs out of the water. These porpoises sometimes come into the Fraser River, and are often seen in groups of two or three.

When looking for wildlife, walk slowly, watch carefully, and listen for movements. You may be surprised by what you find.

Use the iNaturalist app or inaturalist.org to identify animals that you see and to record their locations.

Please always maintain control of your dog, so it does not chase wildlife.

Steller Sea Lion
Eumetopias jubatus

Many Steller Sea Lions spend fall and winter in the Salish Sea, where they feast on fish and marine mammals. The largest of the world's sea lions, Stellers have thick necks and bear-like heads. Males are much bigger than females and sometimes roar.



California Sea Lion
Zalophus californianus

Large groups of male California Sea Lions visit the Salish Sea and Fraser estuary from March to May, often hanging out around wharfs. Dark-coloured and smaller than Steller sea lions, they are best identified by their dog-like faces and noisy barks. The females stay with their pups, in breeding grounds off the coast of California and Mexico.



Pacific Harbour Seal
Phoca vitulina

Round-headed and pale grey, Harbour Seals feed on fish and are never far from shore. When not swimming, they laze on sandbars, rocks, and docks. Seals can be bold and curious, and are the most frequently seen marine mammal in Delta.



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Delta
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Animals in Delta

Delta's position in the Fraser estuary gives it a great diversity of animal life. This brochure shows a selection of mammals, reptiles, and amphibians, plus a marsupial and a freshwater crayfish, that you might spot in this area. Some animals are common and easily seen or heard; others are uncommon, nocturnal, or well-hidden in their habitat.

Many small animals occur in large numbers and are food for larger species, making them an important part of the ecosystem. Larger animals, such as deer and coyotes, can be found in quieter, natural areas of the municipality. A few species, such as rats, have been accidentally introduced and may be viewed as pests. Some marine mammals can be seen from shore, though you are more likely to see whales during a ferry ride.



Coyote
Canis latrans

Though coyotes are usually unobtrusive, being well-camouflaged in long grass and active at dawn and dusk, they become more conspicuous in late winter, the breeding season. These canines eat rodents, insects, fruit, and garbage.



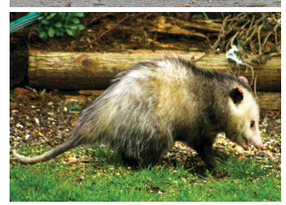
Black-tailed Deer
Odocoileus hemionus

A coastal form of Mule Deer, the Black-tailed is the only deer living in Delta. It is found locally around woodland and bogs and is most often seen at dawn or dusk, browsing at the forest edge on twigs, leaves, and grass.



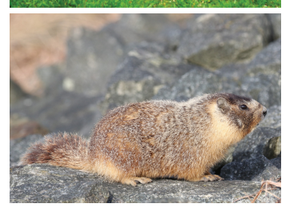
Raccoon
Procyon lotor

This masked raider thrives in Delta, visiting garden ponds and fruit trees and denning in large conifers. It is most active early and late in the day and at night. Raccoons are fun to watch but should not be closely approached or fed.



Virginia Opossum
Didelphus virginiana

The only marsupials found in North America, opossums eat small animals and plants of all kinds. They can be unpopular for making winter dens under houses and in basements. Many are killed on roads.



Yellow-bellied Marmot
Marmota flaviventris

These photogenic animals likely arrived as "hitchhikers" on freight trains or trucks from the BC interior and now have colonies along the Tsawwassen ferry jetty and the dykes near the Tsawwassen First Nation boardwalk. They feed on plant material and insects.



American Mink
Neovison vison

This sleek brown member of the weasel family is regularly seen in wetland areas such as Brunswick Point and Reifel Bird Sanctuary. It eats small animals and birds. The Delta population seems to have increased recently.



North American River Otter
Lontra canadensis

Another member of the weasel family, the River Otter is at home on land and in both fresh and salt water. Its carnivorous diet includes fish and amphibians. Family groups are fun to watch as they play, hunt, and swim.



Striped Skunk
Mephitis mephitis

Notorious for spraying foul-smelling musk (up to 6m) when attacked, skunks can be seen digging for grubs in many Delta lawns. They live in grassland with trees and old buildings, and den in stumps and cellars over winter.



Townsend's Chipmunk
Neotamias townsendii

Delta is the westernmost limit for these lively, striped, squirrel-like animals. Townsend's Chipmunks live in coniferous forests, eating berries, seeds, and fungi. They play an important role in spreading fungi essential to the forest's growth.



Douglas Squirrel
Tamiasciurus douglasii

This BC native can be distinguished from its cousin, the introduced Grey Squirrel, by its smaller size and brown-orange colouring. It stores its food in a larder, creating cone-scale piles, called middens, at the site.



Eastern Grey Squirrel
Sciurus carolinensis

Introduced to Stanley Park from Ontario in 1909, Grey Squirrels had made their way to Delta by 1993. Their ability to adapt to urban forests has led them to displace the Douglas Squirrel. The black form is a "colour morph" of the grey.



Humboldt's Flying Squirrel
Glaucomys oregonensis

Found to be a distinct species in 2017, the Humboldt's Flying Squirrel lives in coniferous forests, gliding from tree to tree to eat seeds, mosses, and fungi. Young begin to "fly" at 8 weeks old; adults can glide up to 73m in one "flight".



North American Beaver
Castor canadensis

These large rodents are active in Delta's marshes and rivers. One beaver can chew down over 200 trees a year, using the branches for dams, lodges, and food. Its closeable nostrils and ears make the beaver a supreme swimmer and diver.



Muskrat
Ondatra zibethicus

A beaver "mini-me", the Muskrat also builds lodges and eats aquatic plants, but it is much smaller than the beaver and has a thin, hairless tail. Its high reproductive rate makes it a key food source for coyotes, mink, and raptors.



Pacific (Coast) Mole
Scapanus orarius

Pacific (or Coast) Moles are widespread and live almost entirely below ground, hunting earthworms and other small invertebrates. A single mole can displace 6kg of dirt in 20 minutes and create 400-800 molehills (exit tunnels) each year.



Townsend's Vole
Microtus townsendii

This large, prolific vole lives in wet grassland and marshes and is a strong swimmer. It is a key prey species for Delta's raptors, herons, and coyotes. The voles' extensive burrows are passed from mothers to their female offspring.



Southern Red-backed Vole
Myodes gapperi

The Southern Red-backed Vole lives in cool forests, nesting under brush piles and in tree cavities. It plays a crucial role in keeping forests healthy by dispersing the spores of fungi, a major part of its diet.



Pacific Water Shrew
Sorex bendirii

The largest shrew in North America, at 13cm, this endangered species can be found in Burns Bog. Though at ease in water, it nests and forages on land, paralyzing invertebrates with its bites and "live-caching" some for future meals.



Trowbridge's Shrew
Sorex trowbridgii

Trowbridge's Shrew is rare in BC, found only in mature forest. With its heart rate of 800-1,000 beats per minute, it must eat 1.5 times its own weight every day in invertebrates and tree seeds. Like all shrews, it uses echolocation to navigate.



Vagrant Shrew
Sorex vagrans

Only 10cm long, this is Delta's smallest mammal. It lives in moist forests and wet grassland, feeding nonstop on worms and insects. Shrews' musky odor repels most predators, but they are eaten by raptors.



Black Rat
Rattus rattus

Also called the Roof Rat and Ship Rat, the Black Rat is small and dark, with a tail longer than its head and body combined. It is an excellent climber and often lives in attics and house walls. The Black Rat's sensitivity to cold limits its spread.



Norway (Brown) Rat
Rattus norvegicus

The Norway (or Brown) Rat, which can be identified by its small ears and relatively short tail, lives wherever humans do and eats almost anything. Its many extraordinary attributes may include the "human" ability to think about thinking (metacognition).



House Mouse
Mus musculus

By taking advantage of human dwellings and food, the House Mouse has become the most widely distributed mammal in the world beside humans. With females producing up to 150 young per year, this species is a key food source for predators.



North American Deermouse
Peromyscus maniculatus

This widespread rodent prefers meadows and coniferous forests but will live in almost any ecosystem, feeding on insects, seeds, and fungi. Deermice can be distinguished from House Mice by their white underbellies and large ears.



Eastern Cottontail
Sylvilagus floridanus

Eastern Cottontails are commonly seen in Delta feeding on grasses and twigs near brambles or other cover. With females having several litters of up to 8 kits a year, cottontails provide food for raptors, feral cats, raccoons, and crows.



Little Brown/Yuma Myotis
Myotis lucifugus, M. yumanensis

Little Brown and Yuma bats, which are difficult to tell apart, have a huge maternal colony in a building in Deas Island. These bats hunt over water at dusk for aquatic insects, and can catch their daily quota in just 10 minutes.



Hoary Bat
Lasiurus cinereus

The most widespread of all bats in the Americas, the Hoary Bat is also BC's largest, with a wingspan of nearly 40cm. Hoary Bats spend the night foraging at tree-top level for large insects. Little is known about this bat, except that it is solitary.



Silver-haired Bat
Lasionycteris noctivagans

Named for the silver tips on their dark fur, these tree bats fly slowly and agilely, using echolocation to hunt insects above the surface of water and in treetops. They are thought to stay in BC all year, but this may be true only of the males.



Big Brown Bat
Eptesicus fuscus

Big Brown Bats are often seen flying above water and fields on summer evenings. Their bite force allows them to eat hard-bodied insects, and they can catch an insect every three seconds. They live in trees, rock crevices, and eaves.



Rough-skinned Newt
Taricha granulosa

This colourful newt lives in woodland ponds, in leaf piles, and under logs. Some live up to 30 years. Larval newts are aquatic, but adults roam on land. Do not handle these newts or their eggs: they produce a lethal toxin.



Northwestern Salamander
Ambystoma gracile

Look for these forest amphibians under logs, in soil, or in leaf litter. After starting life in fresh water as eggs and hatching into larvae with external gills, most grow lungs and move onto land, but some retain their gills and remain aquatic.



Western Toad
Anaxyrus boreas

Western Toads are distinguished by their "warty" skin. Toad eggs change into tadpoles and then toadlets, which disperse in large groups to find new habitats. Toads live in ponds, bogs, and marshes, and hibernate in winter.



Northern Pacific Tree Frog
Pseudacris regilla

Male Tree Frogs call loudly during the winter and spring mating season. These residents of woodlands, freshwater wetlands, and ditches may be green, grey, or brown, and can change colour to match their surroundings.