

Culture & History

Many small mammals were used by the Salish, Pend d'Oreille, & Kootenai in a variety of ways. Animals with thick pelts, such as mink, river otters, bobcats, fox, and rabbits, were used to make blankets and clothing. River otter fur was also used as hair ties for men and women and is still used today. Beavers were prized for their fur but also for their scent glands, which the Salish and Pend d'Oreille used for perfume.

Weasels were highly prized for their soft, dense furs that changed color with the seasons. However, due to their spiritual nature, weasel furs were only used by spiritual people and were hunted sparingly.

Animals like skunk, fox, and chipmunk are also characters in Salish, Pend d'Oreille, & Kootenai animal stories. Fox is Coyotés brother and many stories show him taking care of Coyote. Skunk appears in creation stories as a powerful creature who's spray could kill it's victims. Coyote stories are traditionally only told during the winter.

Chipmunk also appears in several stories, most notably the story of *How Chipmunk got his Stripes*. The Salish version of this story, written by Christine Woodcock and printed by the Séliš-Ūlispé Culture Committee, can be found in at the Bison Range Gift Shop or the Salish Kootenai College bookstore. For more information, check out this article below:



Habitat Barriers

Have you ever been driving and smelled the scent of a skunk drifting across the road? Or seen a small furry shape lying on the side of the highway? Roadkill is an unfortunately common sight in the U.S., with an estimated one million animal deaths per day.

One of the reasons that collisions with vehicles is so common is due to habitat fragmentation. Roads create barriers to food, shelter, and mates and the more fragmented their habitat becomes, the harder it is for animals to move around safely.

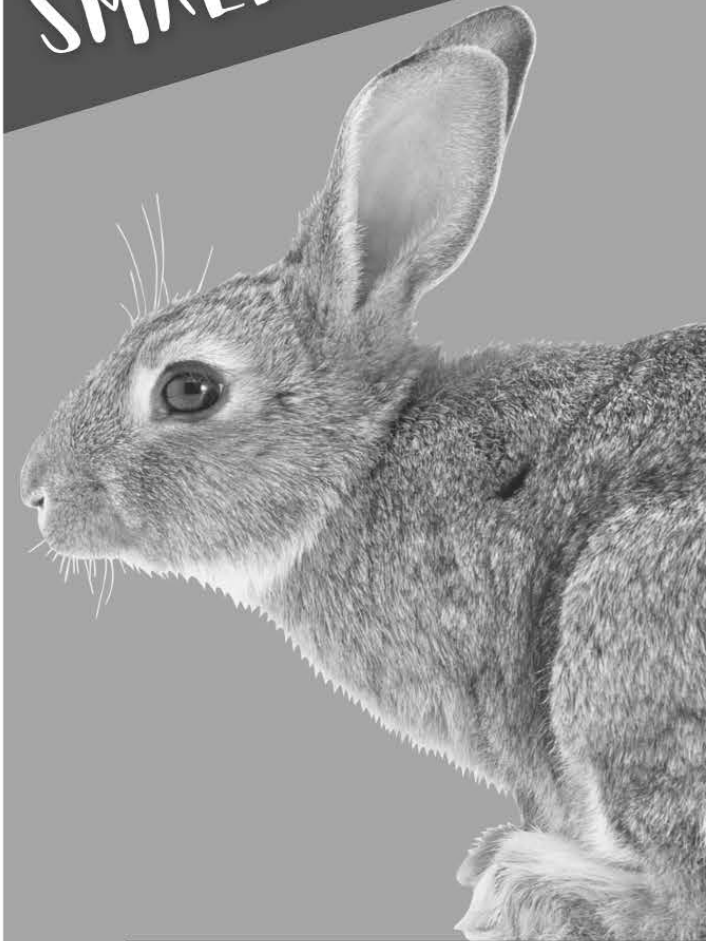
Cars move very fast and it can be difficult for many species to move out of the way quickly enough to avoid collisions. In addition, even larger species like deer or bears can be hard to spot in low light or bad weather conditions.

To prevent human fatalities, it is recommended that drivers do not swerve to avoid animals. Though this is good safety advice for people, it's not so good for the animals on the road.

The best way to prevent roadkill is to give animals an alternative solution to crossing roads or to block them from the roads altogether. In the Mission Valley, the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes have implemented several crossing structures throughout the Flathead Indian Reservation to allow animals to travel under or over major highways.

Though these pathways do not fully restore habitat connectivity, they do help alleviate some of the dangers to both humans and animals.

NATIVE SMALL MAMMALS



If you are interested in learning more about our wildlife, contact us at :

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Who Lives in the Bison Range?

Salish, Pend d'Oreille,
& Kootenai Names

Beaver
SqleW - Sina

American Badger
Sixwixwo

Townsend's Big-eared Bat
títel?wé 'A·ktum

Long-eared Myotis

Northern Flying Squirrel
Sxwupxwp

Columbian Ground Squirrel
Sisč

House Mouse
k'wékwtne? 'Injuk

Deer Mouse

Meadow Vole

Porcupine
Skwił - Nitsaq

River Otter
Łtkwú(tú) - 'Aqawat

Yellow-pine Chipmunk
Qwq'cwéyé?

Water Vole

Northern Water Shrew
Ntčmaqs

Mink
čxlé - 'Inuya

Short-tailed Weasel

Winter coat

Cottontail
Wiwslxščn

Red Fox
Xwax'waa - Na'kyu

Long-tailed Weasel

Summer:
tčim(qtcé) - 'l·katitał

Winter:
łpa(pqtcé) - Mayuk

Bobcat
Pičn - Kaŋxu pus

Raccoon
Mhúye - Namqatku

Skunk
Xstéyye - Xaxas

Animals not to scale

**EXPLORE.
DISCOVER.
LEARN.**



Native Small Mammals: A Visitor Guide