

# Resort Roads and Trails - A View of Nature

## *Roadside Wildlife Viewing*

Some wild animals coexist close to human settlements by suppressing their innate fear of people. In a sense, wildlife become habituated to human environments, golf courses and road shoulders, to seek basic needs of food, water and shelter. Squirrels and deer have become accustomed to the presence of people and vehicles on roadways. The risk of wildlife predation on “urban” wildlife is lessened, however the risk of death from cars is increased.



*Black-Tailed Deer*

*Black-tailed deer* often emerge from plant cover at dusk to feed on leafy plants and grasses along roadsides. Deer can be seen walking casually along roads, but if startled they flee by strutting “bounding off”. Black-tailed deer numbers are high, so drive carefully.



*Turkey Vulture*

*Turkey Vultures* soar over roadways on warm summer breezes searching for road-killed carrion – like California ground squirrels, perhaps. California ground squirrels, a long-tailed rodent, are abundant anywhere there is open woodland habitat. Don't confuse them with Belding's ground squirrels, a short-tailed rodent that lives in huge colonies in open fields across from the golf shop.



*California Ground Squirrel*

## *Four Wildlife Habitats Near the Golf Course*

**Ponderosa pine** woodlands are found between 4,000 and 5,000 feet in elevation where summers are dry and winters are snowy. *Brewer's blackbird* is one of many kinds of birds that roost in ponderosa pine to enjoy an insect meal.



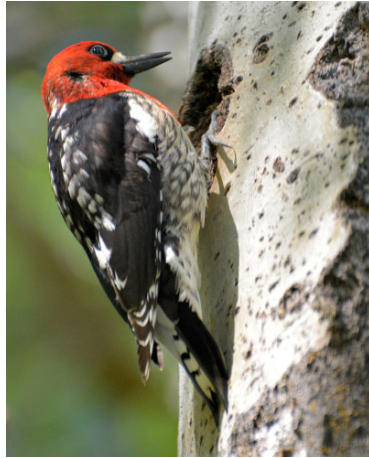
*Brewer's Blackbird in a Ponderosa Pine*

**Grassy fields** occur on old ranchlands where native grasses and forbs compete for space as they colonize new sites. Grassy fields are breeding grounds for *colonial squirrels* (shown). When *Belding's Ground Squirrels* are out of their burrow, they keep a watchful eye for predators.



*Belding's Ground Squirrel*

**Aspen groves** exist as clones growing from one parent tree. Aspen shoots usually grow from root suckers, since reproduction from seeds rarely happens. *Red-breasted Sapsucker* (shown) and American Kestrels live in hollowed out cavities in older trees.



*Red-Breasted Sapsucker*

**Ponds**, known as water hazards, attract a great deal of aquatic plant and insect life, in addition to small fish, frogs and turtles. *Canada Geese* depend on aquatic habitat to raise their goslings. Along the edge of ponds, *Great Blue Herons* and *Great Egrets* wade and wait patiently for a chance to spear a fish.



*Canada Geese*

## *Birds to Know on the Golf Course*

Running Y's Arnold Palmer Signature Golf Course has been designated a bird sanctuary – a bird friendly natural place. The golf course is surrounded by a variety of habitats providing an open window for wildlife viewing.



*Bald Eagle Packing a Lunch*

Golfers often encounter a variety of birds on the golf cart trail. It quickly becomes apparent that many birds live on or near the golf course. *Bald Eagles* often roost on trees near the golf course. Large numbers of eagles migrate south in fall following migrating geese and ducks to Klamath Basin where they are all overwinter. *Canada Geese* breed in wetlands alongside the golf course, with goslings hatching in April-May. Mallard ducklings hatch later with only the female “hen” incubating and raising her young – the male “drake” is long gone.



*Canada Goose Flyby*





*Forster's Terns Passby*

*Forster's Terns* fly from one pond to the next in a perpetual searching mode. They dive in headfirst into pond waters catching small fish or aquatic invertebrate animals. *Ring-billed Gulls* visit these ponds from time to time, seeking to scavenge food – what they do best. *Yellow-headed Blackbirds* spend a lot of time among bulrush sedges, locally referred to as a “Tule Marsh”. *Red-winged Blackbirds* defend nesting territories in freshwater cattails – another large wetland plant. *Brewer's Blackbirds* often walk on golf course greens searching for whatever grubs or bugs they can find.



*Yellow-Headed Blackbird*



*Northern Flicker in the Rough*

*Northern Flickers*, a type of woodpecker, feed mostly on the ground often searching for carpenter ants – a favorite food. Red-breasted Sapsucker drill holes in tree trunks returning to feed on sap containing trapped bugs. Several kinds of jays frequent the open forest around the golf course. The most common is the *Western Scrub Jay* – a bird that likes shrublands. *Steller's Jays* are prevalent in ponderosa pine stands and at neighborhood birdfeeders.



*Western Scrub Jay out on a limb*

*Cooper's Hawks* perch near birdfeeders waiting for a chance to snatch a small forest bird. Many species of small birds are attracted to bird feeders and native plant gardens in the backyards of neighborhood homes. *Acorn Woodpeckers*, a prized sighting for birdwatchers, dominate over woodpeckers with their strong pointed-bill. But, they shy away from the *Cooper's Hawk*.



*Cooper's Hawk*



*Acorn Woodpecker*

*Red-tailed Hawks*, a bird of prey, capture small mammals (such as voles) with their strong, curved talons. Voles, a small mouse-like rodent, are abundant in grassy-rough edges of the golf course.



*Red-Tailed Hawk Snatching a Rodent*



## *Birds at Backyard Feeders*

Red-winged Blackbird  
House Finch  
Brewer's Blackbird  
White-breasted Nuthatch  
Lesser Goldfinch  
Hairy Woodpecker  
Black-headed Grosbeak  
Steller's Jay  
Eurasian Collared-dove  
Mountain Chickadee

Acorn Woodpecker  
Yellow-headed Blackbird  
Pine Siskin  
Oak Titmouse  
Red-breasted Sapsucker  
Northern Flicker  
Dark-eyed Junco  
California Scrub Jay  
Mourning Dove  
California Quail

## **Paved Walkways for Viewing Nature**



*Pet-Friendly Bike Path*

Several walking and biking trails have been designated within the Running Y Ranch Resort. The resort has twenty miles of paved roads, six miles of paved bike paths and five miles of hiking trails (dirt and gravel). Running Y residential roads, bike paths and golf cart paths (for golf carts only) were designed with curves to accentuate the landscape. The golf shop looks out over Payne Canyon, a broad valley between two high ridges. The first three holes are bordered on the west by organic farmland of the Caledonia Marsh – flooded during wintertime. The fourth and fifth holes are bordered by marshlands and ponds that attract wetland birds. Large flocks of geese and ducks fly over the wetlands and agriculture fields during seasonal waterfowl migrations - some stop to rest and feed.

A popular half-mile paved trail travels from the lodge to the golf shop. This section of the bike path travels past aspen groves, grasslands and several ponds. This short trail offers a chance to begin exploring the flora and fauna typical of the east side of the Cascade Mountains. This bike path continues from the golf shop, encircling the “Back 9”. This three-mile loop trail is steep and curvy as it ascends the rocky ridge on its circular route back to the Lodge. It is a challenge for even hardened bike riders.



*Western Fence Lizard*

Another good option for walkers starts from a trailhead off the “Cinnamon Teal extension”. To get there, drive west from the lodge on Cooper’s Hawk Road over the ridgetop past its first junction with Cinnamon Teal Drive. Continue 1/4th mile on Cooper’s Hawk Road to a second Cinnamon Teal Drive, immediately turn right to the bike path entrance. This paved spur trail travels half-a-mile connecting with the “Back 9” Bike Path. It travels up a broad draw past oak groves and ponderosa pine woodlands with standing dead snags providing roosting sites and cavity nesting places for birds. Douglas-firs and incense cedars occur on the right side of the trail on shaded, east-facing slopes. The rocky ridgetop (southwestern exposure) contains western junipers and drought-resistant grasses. Flowering plants bloom two weeks later on this ridge that rises 300 feet about the lake. This rocky habitat is home to a healthy population of *Western fence lizards*.

*Two short drives provide excellent  
birdwatching opportunities:*

**Link River Trail at Moore Park** is five miles east of Running Y via Lakeshore Drive. Putnam Point, located on the southern tip of Upper Klamath Lake, offers the best place in North America to watch the spectacular courtship behaviors of Western and Clark's Grebes (late April to early June). Young grebes can be seen riding their parents backs from late June to late July. Other summer water birds, such as pelicans and egrets can be viewed here, as well.



*Western Grebes Paired in  
Courtship Dance*



*White Pelicans on Open Water*

**Howard Bay County Boat Ramp** is five miles west on Highway 140 from the intersection with Running Y Road. Highway 140 travels along the shore of Upper Klamath Lake offering several pullouts that provide excellent viewing sites. Look for white pelicans, terns and all kinds of ducks. On overhead bluffs, Bald Eagles are frequently sighted, as are soaring Turkey Vultures. The "Klamath Basin Birding Trail Guide" describes dozens of other birdwatching sites in Klamath County. This pamphlet is for sale at the Running Y Sports and Fitness Center.