

Birds of River, Shoreline

Columbia River Heritage Trail



Peregrine Falcon

Falco peregrinus

Description: A large robust falcon with a black hood and wide black "moustaches." Adults slate-gray above and pale below, with fine black bars and spots. Young birds brown or brownish slate above, heavily streaked below.

Voice: Rasping *kack-kack-kack-kack*, usually heard at nest; otherwise generally silent.

Habitat: Open country, especially along rivers.



Great Blue Heron

Ardea herodias

Description: A common large, mainly grayish heron with a pale or yellowish bill. Often mistaken for a Sandhill Crane, but flies with its neck folded, not extended like that of a crane.

Voice: A harsh squawk.

Habitat: Columbia River, ponds and marshes.

Over 190 bird species have been recorded in the area. Species of special interest include: Bald Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, Long-Billed Curlew, American White Pelican, Osprey, Burrowing Owl, Double Crested Cormorants, Great Blue and Black Crowned Night Herons. The water area, rocky islands and agricultural lands furnish resting, nesting, shelter and feeding opportunities for Pacific Flyway waterfowl: Blue Winged Teal, Cinnamon Teal; American Widgeons; Bufflehead and Northern Pintail Duck. Mallards, American Coots, Ring Billed Gulls and Canadian Geese are year round residents. In the Umatilla Refuge, over 400,000 ducks and 50,000 geese have been counted. Other migratory shore and water birds seen here include, California Gulls, Caspian Terns and Yellow-headed Blackbirds each spring in willows, cattails and rushes

Long-billed Curlew

Numenius americanus

Description: A large curlew, warm brown and buff below, with cinnamon wing linings, no head pattern and very long, sickle-shaped bill.

Voice: A clear *curlee*; a sharp *whit-whit, whit, whit, whit, whit*.

Habitat: Breed on plains and prairies; on migration frequents river shores, marshes, and sandy beaches. Females arrive in March to select nesting sites, males arrive later. Nest on seldom-disturbed farmland, grassland and refuges. Females return to Central America in June, males and chicks stay longer.

"I saw a great number of feathers floating down the river... they appeared in such quantities as to cover pretty generally sixty or seventy yards of the breadth of the river... We did not perceive from whence they came, at length we were surprised by the appearance of a flock of Pillican at rest on a large sand bar attached to a small Island the number of which would if estimated appear almost in credible."

Meriwether Lewis



American White Pelican

Pelecanus erythrorhynchos

Description: A huge white bird with a long flat bill and black wing tips. In breeding season, has short yellowish crest on back of head and horny plate on upper mandible. Young birds duskier than adults.

Voice: Usually silent; grunts or croaks on nesting grounds.

Habitat: Columbia River shallows and coves.

Mallard

Anas platyrhynchos

Description: Male has a green head, white neck ring, chestnut breast, and grayish body; inner feathers of wing are metallic purplish blue, bordered in front and back with white. Female mottled brown with white tail and purplish-brown speculum; mottled orange and brown bill.

Voice: Male utters soft, reedy notes; female, a loud quack.

Habitat: From large marshes to small river bends, bays, and even ditches and city ponds.



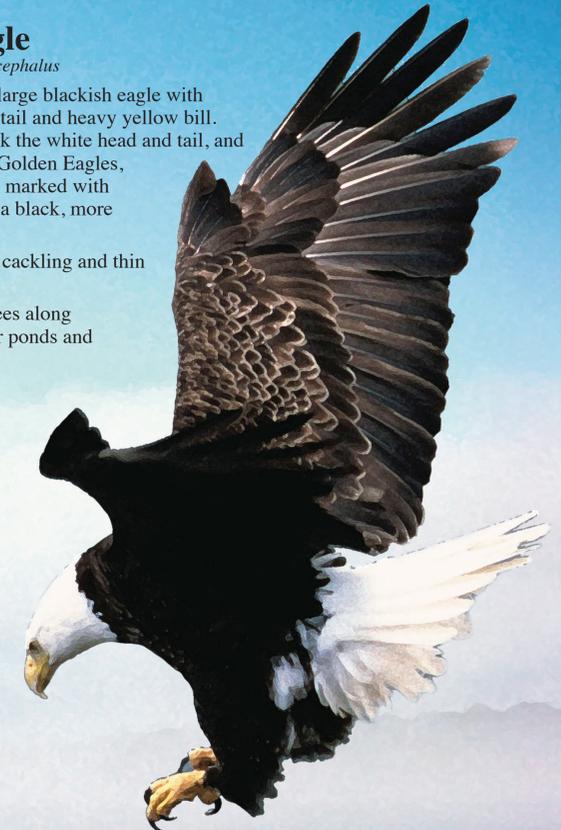
Bald Eagle

Haliaeetus leucocephalus

Description: A large blackish eagle with white head and tail and heavy yellow bill. Young birds lack the white head and tail, and resemble adult Golden Eagles, but are variably marked with white and have a black, more massive bill.

Voice: Squeaky cackling and thin squeals.

Habitat: Tall trees along Columbia River ponds and marshes.



Canada Goose

Branta canadensis

Description: Brownish body with black head, long black neck, conspicuous white cheek patch.

Voice: Rich musical honking.

Habitat: Lakes, bays, rivers, and marshes. Often feeds in open grasslands and stubble fields.

