

Blackwater

National Wildlife Refuge

Mammals

Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge
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U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
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Federal Relay Service
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Red Fox Kit
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Although the mammals of Blackwater are often overlooked in favor of the more abundant and conspicuous bird life, the refuge hosts a wide variety of mammals, from the opossum to the white-tailed deer.



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Gray Squirrel

Mammals

A mammal is a warm-blooded animal with hair. Female mammals have mammary glands that produce milk for their young.

Gray Squirrel

(*Sciurus carolinensis*), Common. Gray with buff underfur and a bushy flattened tail. Seen in the refuge woodlands. Prefers nut-producing hardwood trees. A tree-dweller, more so than the fox squirrel.

Delmarva Fox Squirrel

(*Sciurus niger cinereus*), Common. Seen in the woods bordering Wildlife Drive. Light gray fur and larger than the gray squirrel. Spends more time on the ground than the gray squirrel. Feeds in corn and soy bean fields. Formerly an endangered species, it was removed from the list in 2015. Forest management programs are oriented towards protecting this squirrel.

Southern Flying Squirrel

(*Glaucomys volans*), Uncommon. A nocturnal small squirrel with a silky gray-brown coat and a fold of skin between front and hind legs.

Rice Rat

(*Oryzomys palustris*), Common. Body and tail gray-brown above and white below. Found throughout the brackish marshes.

White-footed Mouse

(*Peromyscus leucopus*), Common. Body is rich reddish-brown above with a white belly and feet. Abundant in wooded and brushy areas.

Meadow Vole

(*Microtus pennsylvanicus*), Common. A “field mouse” with variable color, long tail and silver-tipped hair on belly. Abundant in the marsh, where it builds its nest in muskrat houses.

Delmarva Fox Squirrel

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Woodland Vole

(*Pitymys pinetorum*), Common. Commonly called a pine vole. Reddish-brown fur; buff underside and a short tail. Likes dry land habitats.

USFWS



Muskrat

Muskrat

(*Ondatra zibethicus*), Common. Dense dark brown fur, which is lighter on sides and white on throat. Long, naked tail that is higher than it is wide. One of the most abundant mammals at Blackwater. Their large dome-shaped houses may be seen throughout the marsh.

USFWS



Nutria

Nutria

(*Myocastor coypus*), Uncommon. An invasive, aquatic rodent with a brown body, rounded tail and long orange front teeth. Often mistaken for a beaver. The nutria compete with the native muskrat, waterfowl and other marsh residents for habitat resources. They caused considerable damage to the wetlands through their feeding activities. Nutria have been effectively eradicated from the refuge and most have been removed from surrounding counties.

USFWS



Opossum

Opossum

(*Didelphis virginiana*), Common. White-gray with a white head and throat. Seen in wooded areas and wood margins. Occasionally seen along roadsides at night. It is the only mammal with a pouch in the U.S.

Least Shrew

(*Cryptotis parva*), Common. Gray-brown body with a short tail. Seen in the marsh or grassy fields.

Masked Shrew

(*Sorex cinereus*), Uncommon. Resembles a mouse with a long pointed snout. Has a brown body, a silver-gray belly and a long brown tail. Likes moist habitats.

Short-tailed Shrew

(*Blarina brevicauda*), Common. The largest shrew in North America. Brown coloring all over and a short tail. Found in damp woodland soil habitats.

Starnose Mole

(*Condylura cristata*), Common. Has black fur, a long hairy tail and twenty two pink fleshy tentacles on nose. Lives in damp soil.

Eastern Mole

(*Scalopus aquaticus*), Common. Short, velvety fur ranges from gray to brownish-tan. Has no visible eyes and a very short, naked tail. Found in cultivated fields.

Little Brown Bat

(*Myotis lucifugus*), Common. Glossy fur of varying shades of brown and a hairless wing. Roosts in hollow trees.

Big Brown Bat

(*Eptesicus fuscus*), Uncommon. A large glossy brown bat with a paler belly and black wings. Varied habitat.

Eastern Red Bat

(*Lasiurus borealis*), Common. Bright red to chestnut with white on back, breast and shoulders. Seen in woodlands.

Evening Bat

(*Nycticeius humeralis*), Uncommon. Reddish brown body, paler below and hairless wings. Woodland habitat.

Eastern Cottontail Rabbit

(*Sylvilagus floridanus*), Very Common. A gray-brown rabbit with a white cottony tail. Seen in brushy thickets bordering roads and dikes. Frequently seen during spring and summer.

Black Rat

(*Rattus Rattus*), Uncommon. Brown or gray with a long, scaly sparsely haired tail.

Norway Rat

(*Rattus norvegicus*), Common. Brown-gray with a scaly tail shorter than the black rat.

House Mouse

(*Mus musculus*), Common. Gray-brown all over and seen around refuge buildings and in wild areas.

Woodchuck

(*Marmota monax*), Common. Woodchucks or groundhogs are grizzled brown all over with a bushy tail. Seen in fields and wooded areas.



Eastern Cottontail Rabbit



Woodchuck

Red Fox

(*Vulpes vulpes*), Very Common. Red with white underparts, chin and throat. Long, bushy tail with a white tip. Inhabits wooded and brushy areas where it feeds on rabbits, rodents, and birds.

Gray fox

(*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*), Uncommon. Grizzled gray with reddish accents and a black tipped tail. Prefers heavily wooded areas.



River Otter

River Otter

(*Lutra canadensis*), Uncommon. Aquatic with elongated body, broad flattened head and webbed feet. Seen along banks of Wildlife Drive.

Beaver

(*Castor canadensis*), Common, though rare to see on the refuge. A large rodent with soft, dark brown fur. Has a large, black tail that is horizontally flattened and paddle-shaped. Found in aquatic habitats.

Longtail Weasel

(*Mustela frenata*), Uncommon. Brown, long-bodied and short legged with a long tail. Common in brushland, fields and marsh.

Mink

(*Mustela vison*), Uncommon. Lustrous chocolate to black fur; long bushy tail and white spots on chin. May be found in all aquatic habitats.

Striped Skunk

(Mephitis mephitis), Common. Black with two broad white stripes on head and shoulders. Common in brushy areas of the refuge, mostly at night.

USFWS



Raccoon

Raccoon

(Procyon lotor), Very Common. Brown with black and gray below. Black face mask outlined in white and a ringed tail. Seen in wooded areas bordering water. Varied diet.

USFWS



Sika Deer

Sika "Deer" (or Sika Elk)

(Cervus nippon), Very Common. An elk species native to Asia introduced in the early 1900s. Medium sized with many white spots on back and sides and a large white rump patch. Prefers wetlands, and most often seen at night.

Mammals that may occur on the refuge:

Northern Long-eared Bat
(Myotis septentrionalis)

Silver-haired Bat
(Lasiurus noctivagans)
May be seen during migration (March- April, October- November).

Eastern Pipistrell
(Perimyotis subflavus)

Hoary Bat
(Lasiurus cinereus)
May be seen during migration.

Southern Bog Lemming
(Synaptomys cooperi)

Meadow Jumping Mouse
(Zapus hudsonius)

Coyote
(Canis latrans)



White-tailed Deer

White-tailed Deer

(Odocoileus virginianus), Very Common. Tan, red-brown or gray with brown tail edged in white. Often seen at dusk in tree-bordered fields.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Blackwater is one of more than 550 national wildlife refuges administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The National Wildlife Refuge System is a network of lands and waters managed specifically for the protection of wildlife and wildlife habitat, and represents the most comprehensive wildlife management program in the world. Units of the system stretch across the United States from northern Alaska to the Florida Keys and include small islands of the Caribbean and South Pacific. The character of refuges is as diverse as the nation itself.

The Service also manages national fish hatcheries, and provides federal leadership in habitat protection, fish and wildlife research, technical assistance and the conservation and protection of migratory birds, certain marine mammals, and threatened and endangered species.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.