

Animals of The Turnagain Arm

INTRODUCTORY RESOURCES TO INSPIRE AWCC'S 5TH ANNUAL ART CONTEST PARTICIPANTS

Black Bear (*Ursus americanus*)

Of the three species of bears in North America, black bears are the most abundant and widely distributed. Black bears are omnivores, with grasses, insects, moose and caribou calves, carrion, and salmon making up their diet. As a highly adaptable species, it is important for people living within their range to understand their general ecology and how to avoid unnecessary conflict.



Moose (*Alces alces*)

Moose are the largest deer species in the world and can weigh up to 1,600 pounds. Throughout the year, the leaves and twigs of willows are a primary food source. In the warmer months, these large herbivores also consume fireweed, aspen and birch leaves, horsetail, sedges, and aquatic plants. In the winter, moose eat the bark of trees and shrubs. There are an estimated 175,000 to 200,000 moose in Alaska.



North American Porcupine (*Erethizon dorsatum*)

The average North American porcupine is covered by about 30,000 quills. Contrary to the common myth, quills cannot be shot or thrown. Porcupines are herbivores, and feed on the newly emerging leaves of various trees and shrubs, fireweed, roots, berries, and tree bark depending on the season. Their species is considered widespread and found throughout most forested areas of the state.



Coyote (*Canis latrans*)

As humans relentlessly expand into wildlife habitat, few species have been able to coexist and even expand their range as successfully as the coyote. Land clearing paired with the elimination or reduction of wolves from many parts of North America has contributed to their range expansion. Coyotes are opportunistic omnivores, eating snowshoe hares, small rodents, salmon, carrion, insects, berries, and more.



Beluga Whale (*Delphinapterus leucas*)

The specific population of beluga whales found in the Turnagain Arm are known as Cook Inlet beluga whales. Their diet includes a variety of fish, octopus, shrimp, sandworms, and many other species of marine life. This endangered population of belugas is restricted to the Cook Inlet and its adjacent waterways, such as the Turnagain Arm. The latest population estimate was 331 individuals.



Black-billed Magpie (*Pica hudsonia*)

Magpies are members of the Corvid family, with beautiful blue-green iridescent wing and tail feathers that shine to transform their typical black and white color in good lighting. These clever birds are opportunistic omnivores, eating a variety of things including small rodents, eggs of other birds, carrion, berries and seeds. These birds are common in many parts of western North America.



Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)

This long-lived and large bird of prey species is known to have a wingspan of up to 7.5 feet and can weigh up to 14 pounds. Bald eagles are carnivores, with fish making up a large part of their diet. They will scavenge dead animals, hunt ducks, gulls and other water birds. Today, bald eagles are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and there are an estimated 30,000 individuals in Alaska.

