

WILDLIFE

UTAH

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Red foxes in an alpine meadow, *Utah Division of Wildlife Resources**

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28

Desert tortoise, Red Cliffs Desert Reserve



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Desert bighorn sheep along the San Juan River



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Cougar at Scott's Basin, Deep Creek Range



12

Photographing a wild mountain goat and kid, Lone Peak Wilderness



7

American bison at Antelope Island State Park, *Steve Greenwood*

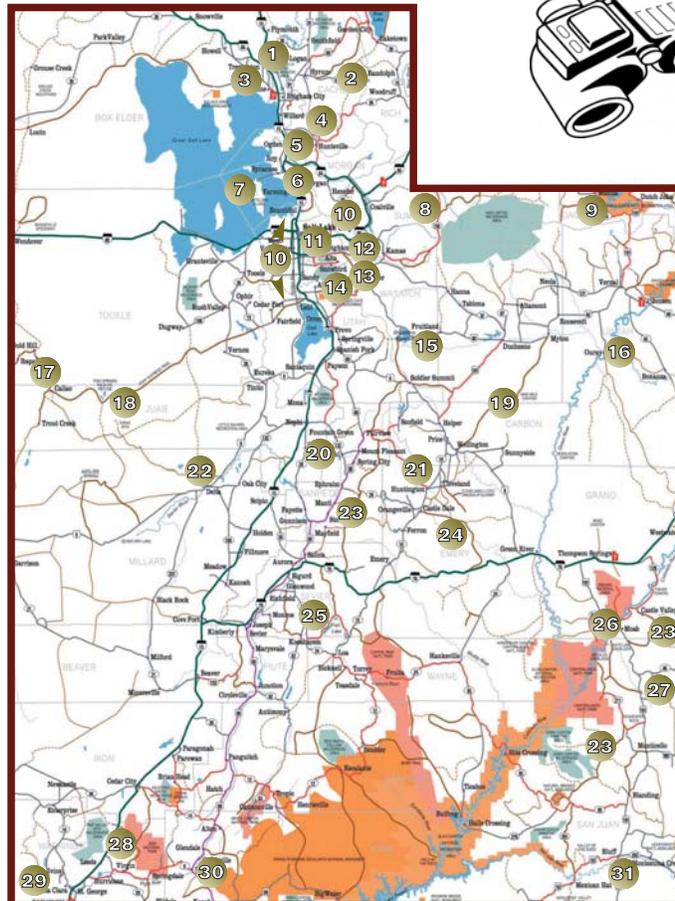
Over 600 species of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and fish reside among the extremes of Utah's varied landscapes and climates. Positioned on the Pacific Flyway, the state is home to Great Salt Lake birding areas considered among the top 10 in the world. Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, mountain goat, black bear, and cougar are examples of the diverse animal life that live at higher elevations; while desert tortoise, Gila monster, and California condor may be found in the low and hot desert valleys of southwestern Utah.

The state's wildlife viewing and recreation opportunities are many, which make Utah an exceptional and varied destination to experience the extremes of animal adaptation found in its mountain ranges, rivers, high basin-and-range deserts, redrock plateau canyonlands, and ancient-lake alluvial valleys. This guide provides but a sampling of locations and resources for wildlife enthusiasts of all ages and interests.

Utah Division of Wildlife Resources: Managing and Protecting Habitat and Species

An excellent place to start is the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR) website. The agency's responsibilities include serving the people by ensuring the future of diverse and sustainable wildlife populations and habitat through effective and proper management, protection, conservation, and education. For more information on Utah fishing licenses, wildlife viewing, hunting permits, and conservation efforts, contact Utah DWR through its website:

wildlife.utah.gov



Top Wildlife Viewing Areas

- 1 Cutler Marsh
- 2 Hardware Ranch
- 3 Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge
- 4 Pineview Reservoir North Arm Viewing Site
- 5 Ogden Nature Center
- 6 Great Salt Lake Shorelands Preserve
- 7 Antelope Island State Park
- 8 Mirror Lake Scenic Byway
- 9 Flaming Gorge Reservoir
- 10 Provo River/Jordan River/Legacy Pkwy trails
- 11 Red Butte Garden
- 12 Big & Little Cottonwood Canyons Trails
- 13 White Pine Lake
- 14 Cascade Springs
- 15 Strawberry Reservoir Valley
- 16 Ouray National Wildlife Refuge
- 17 Scott's Basin
- 18 Fish Springs National Wildlife Refuge
- 19 Nine Mile Canyon
- 20 Sanpete Valley
- 21 Energy Loop Scenic Byway
- 22 Clear Lake Wildlife Management Area
- 23 Manti-La Sal & Fishlake National Forests
- 24 San Rafael Swell
- 25 Fish Lake Basin
- 26 Scott M. Matheson Wetlands Preserve
- 27 La Sal Loop Road
- 28 Red Cliffs Desert Reserve
- 29 Lytle Ranch Preserve
- 30 Best Friends Animal Sanctuary/Angel Canyon
- 31 San Juan River

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Guided interpretive trail at the Ogden Nature Center



California condor at Kolob Reservoir - adjacent to RCDR, Dean Mitchell



Beaver sitting at the edge of a stream, Strawberry Reservoir Valley



Wagon ride through elk feeding grounds, Hardware Ranch



Moose grazing in a meadow, Uinta Mountains

Top Wildlife Viewing Areas, North to South (see front-side map)

- 1 Cutler Marsh** This classic wetland habitat is home to white pelicans, great blue herons, sandhill cranes, ducks, geese, and shorebirds. Wildlife may be viewed by roadways, or rent a canoe or kayak during spring, summer, and fall. www.bridgerlandaudubon.org/wetlandsmaze
- 2 Hardware Ranch** View hundreds of Rocky Mountain elk up close. Wagon and sleigh rides are offered seasonally. The visitor center offers interpretive info and telescopes. wildlife.utah.gov/hardware ranch
- 3 Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge** Located at the northern tip of Great Salt Lake, this 75,000 acre refuge is widely considered a top-ten birding site in the world. The Wildlife Education Center offers programs and refuge tours by request prior to your visit. www.fws.gov/bearriver
- 4 Pineview Reservoir North Arm Viewing Site** features a mile-long nature trail. This area hosts a wide variety of songbirds, shorebirds, and waterfowl species as well as birds of prey, including bald eagles and red-tailed hawks. www.fs.fed.us/wcnf/unit/ogden_n_arm.htm
- 5 Ogden Nature Center** This 152-acre nature preserve is open to the public year-round. Visitors enjoy 1.5 miles of walking trails, picnic areas, tree houses, bird blinds and an exhibit of live birds of prey. Classes, workshops, and a unique gift shop are located in the visitor center. www.ogdennaturecenter.org
- 6 Great Salt Lake Shorelands Preserve** Located along the eastern shore of Great Salt Lake between Farmington Bay and the Antelope Island causeway, the preserve is a unique system of salt and fresh water marshes, ponds, pools, sloughs, and mudflats - perfect for viewing tens of thousands of migrating birds. Site features an award-winning visitor center. www.nature.org/utah
- 7 Antelope Island State Park** The largest island in the Great Salt Lake is home to a roaming herd of 500 bison as well as mule deer, antelope, bighorn sheep, coyote, and a wide variety of birds; all accessible via seven-mile causeway. stateparks.utah.gov/parks/antelope-island
- 8 Mirror Lake Scenic Byway** (Hwy 150 from Kamas to UT-WY border) Along this popular mountain road, valley farmland gradually climbs to forested mountain terrain, grassy meadows, glacial lakes, and rugged 13,000' alpine peaks. Look for mule deer, elk, moose, black bear, mountain goat, bighorn sheep, river otter, raptors, and cougar. www.byways.org/explore/byways/2007
- 9 Flaming Gorge Reservoir** This national recreation area, located within Ashley National Forest, is well-known for the osprey that nest along the craggy outcroppings of the redrock gorge. Other wildlife include pronghorn antelope, mule deer, Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, wild turkey, black bear, moose, and elk. www.fs.fed.us/r4/ashley
- 10 Provo River/Jordan River/Legacy Pkwy Trails** Combined, these three paved trails traverse 65 miles, with the Jordan/Legacy complex connecting almost continually for 54 miles. Mule deer, fox, bobcat, beaver, and many water birds may be found among these urban oases of river, steppe, forests, and cattail-wetlands. www.provo.org/parks.trails.html, www.parks.slco.org/jordanriverparkway, www.legacypreserve.utah.gov
- 11 Red Butte Garden** Located at the mouth of Red Butte Canyon in the Foothill Cultural District of east Salt Lake City, over 100 acres of natural gardens are full of wildlife activity. Bullock's oriole, western tanager, downy woodpecker, and American gold finch are just some of the species you are likely to see. www.redbuttegardens.org
- 12 Big & Little Cottonwood Canyons Trails** Just southeast of Salt Lake City, various short hikes amongst 11,000' Wasatch Mountain peaks feature mule deer, elk, moose, mountain goat, mountain lion, black bear, fox, beaver, badger, snowshoe hare, marmot, raptors, and other high-mountain species. www.byways.org/explore/byways/2005
- 13 White Pine Lake** is a 4 1/2 mile hike up to a spectacular glacial lake. Pika, snowshoe hare, Uinta and golden-mantled ground squirrel, Clark's nutcracker, pine grosbeak, and other high mountain species are found here. www.climb-utah.com/WM/whitepine.htm
- 14 Cascade Springs**, just west of the Heber Valley, offers wildlife viewing from a boardwalk and trail system traversing mountain springs which discharge over seven million gallons daily. Brook trout can be seen darting from the cover of aquatic vegetation in the crystal clear pools. See otter, beaver, moose, wild turkey, hummingbirds, and songbirds. www.utahhikinginfo.com/2010/09/cascade-springs.html
- 15 Strawberry Valley** offers as much wildlife diversity as any place in the state. The surrounding woodland areas and small creeks offer prime riparian habitat for mule deer, elk, moose, black bear, red fox, turkey vulture, muskrat, beaver, porcupine, badger, Uinta ground squirrel, yellow-bellied marmot, cougar, raptors, and a vast array of waterfowl and shorebirds. Start at the Strawberry Bay visitor center. www.fs.fed.us/r4/maps/brochures/strawberry_valley_guide.pdf
- 16 Ouray National Wildlife Refuge** This 12,000 acre marshland includes 12 miles on the Green River, which supports waterfowl, songbirds, and other wildlife. A 12-mile self-guided auto tour winds through a variety of refuge habitats and wildlife viewing areas. www.fws.gov/ouray
- 17 Scott's Basin** The Deep Creeks form an island mountain ecosystem surrounded by a "sea" of desert in west-central Utah. The basin is a broad meadow at an elevation of 8,100 feet. Find Bonneville cutthroat trout, dusky grouse, mule deer, cougar, and coyote. www.nature.org/utah
- 18 Fish Springs National Wildlife Refuge** Skirting the southern salt flats of the Great Salt Lake Desert, this 17,992-acre marshland springs served as an oasis for migrating wetland birds. Mid-spring and late September are the peak times for viewing. www.fws.gov/fishsprings
- 19 Nine Mile Canyon** is actually 40 miles long and houses a myriad of Fremont Culture rock panels. There is an abundant variety of songbirds, as well as red fox and beaver. www.ninemilecanyoncoalition.org
- 20 Sanpete Valley** is the winter home of numerous bald eagles. The best viewing time is late winter, usually from late morning to 4 pm. The annual Fountain Green Bald Eagle Day is held in early February. www.utahoutdooractivities.com/baldeagleaday.html
- 21 Energy Loop Scenic Byway** rises to 10,000' in the Manti-La Sal National Forest. Enjoy alpine views, coal power sites, and an old mining town. Aspen groves are home to mule deer, black bear, raptors, and songbirds. www.byways.org/explore/byways/13831
- 22 Clear Lake Wildlife Management Area** Each February, a sign of winter's departure is the annual congregation of Lesser Snow Geese in the area around Delta. Thousands may be spotted in one place as they migrate north for spring. www.greatbasinheritage.org
- 23 Manti-La Sal & Fishlake National Forests** Large herds of elk are found all over these two forests, as well as mule deer, wild turkey, black bear, cougar, and mountain goats. fs.usda.gov/fishlake, fs.usda.gov/mantilasal
- 24 San Rafael Swell** Herds of antelope effortlessly race across the desert flats. The road to the Cleveland Lloyd Dinosaur Quarry presents choice deer, elk, and antelope viewing. Raptors can be seen in flight between the Desert Lake Waterfowl Management Area and the dinosaur quarry. www.sanrafaelsswell.org
- 25 Fish Lake Basin** is home to Utah prairie dog, waterfowl, shorebirds, mule deer, elk, snowshoe hare, red squirrel, yellow bellied marmot, raptors, and the occasional weasel. North Skyline Drive, a 30-mile stretch between the Great Basin and Colorado River drainage, is the scenic focal point for wildlife viewing. fs.usda.gov/fishlake
- 26 Scott M. Matheson Wetlands Preserve** This lush preserve, located along the banks of the Colorado River, is a stark contrast to the surrounding redrock cliffs and arid desert. It is home to over 200 species of birds, amphibians, and aquatic animals including the northern leopard frog, beaver, muskrat, and elusive river otter. www.nature.org/utah
- 27 La Sal Loop Road** This scenic, 37-mile road loops through mule deer and elk habitat. A variety of colorful lizards dart across the rocks at Brumley Creek. www.discovermoab.com/la_sal_mountain_loop_road.htm
- 28 Red Cliffs Desert Reserve** is located at the transition between three ecosystems: the Mojave Desert, Great Basin, and Colorado Plateau. This creates a unique mixture of plants and animals from all of these regions, including plants found nowhere else on earth. Created to protect the desert tortoise, it also provides habitat for other sensitive reptiles, birds, and mammals against a backdrop of spectacular scenery. www.redcliffsdesertreserve.com
- 29 Lytle Ranch Preserve** Springs in the Beaver Dam Wash create an oasis in the Mojave desert that sustained early pioneer families and supports numerous rare species today, including the great blue heron, desert tortoise, Gila monster, and night lizard. More than 20 species at Lytle Ranch are found nowhere else in Utah, residing at the state's lowest elevation of 2,350 ft. www.nature.org/utah
- 30 Best Friends Animal Sanctuary / Angel Canyon** The largest no-kill animal shelter in the U.S. sits on 33,000 acres in a majestic redrock canyon. Nearly 30,000 annual visitors tour the campus that is home to nearly 2,000 animal "residents" at any given time. Tours are available when scheduled ahead of time. The canyon is home to many animal species, including mule deer, coyote, roadrunner, desert bighorn, bobcat, red fox, and tarantula. www.bestfriends.org
- 31 San Juan River** Floating on the river offers a unique view of desert bighorn sheep perched on the cliff faces. Peregrine falcon and other raptors may be viewed soaring above the canyon walls. See mule deer, jackrabbit, coyote, and antelope on the sagebrush flats of Hatch Point. www.utah.com/raft/rivers/san_juan.htm

Web Resources

Utah DWR: wildlife.utah.gov
Utah.com: www.utah.com/wildlife
Nature Conservancy: www.nature.org/utah

Utah Birds: www.utahbirds.org
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service: www.fws.gov
USDA Forest Service: www.fs.fed.us

Bureau of Land Management: www.blm.gov/ut
Explore Utah: www.exploreutah.com/fun-wv.html