

a quick guide to

Common Plants and Animals of the Columbia Slough



Red-osier Dogwood *Cornus sericea*

This understory tree is named for its twigs, which stand out bright red in winter. Look for the bold veins on its leaves and clusters of small white flowers & fruits. Several grow by the dock!



Oregon Ash *Fraxinus latifolia*

The water-loving ash loves the soggy banks of the Slough, which it helps stabilize with a mat of strong roots. Look for its long compound leaves & wing-like seeds, a favorite of squirrels.



Bigleaf Maple *Acer macrophyllum*

This northwest native tree is the largest maple on the continent! Look for its huge leaves and helicopter seeds (samaras) fluttering overhead.

Did you know? In Oregon rainforests, a single bigleaf maple can support over 2,000 lbs of moss!



Western Red Cedar *Thuja placata*

Redcedar has scale-like leaves and tiny cones. Indigenous peoples of the region use the trunks traditionally to make canoes and steam the leaves to help soothe coughs and congestion.



Oregon Grape *Mahonia aquifolium*

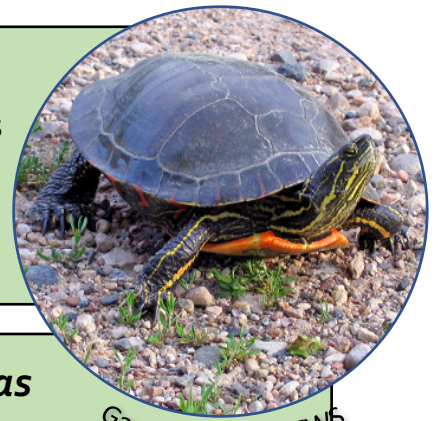
Oregon Grape has spiky, holly-like leaves and tart bluish berries. Its roots contain berberine, a compound used to treat various ailments in both indigenous and Western medicine.



See backside for animals ->

Western Painted Turtle *Chrysemys picta*

Keep an eye out for these small, colorful turtles on logs in the Slough. After sleeping on the Slough's muddy bottom, these ectotherms bask in the sun to warm up. They eat aquatic plants, insects, and crustaceans.



Gary Eslinger/USFWS

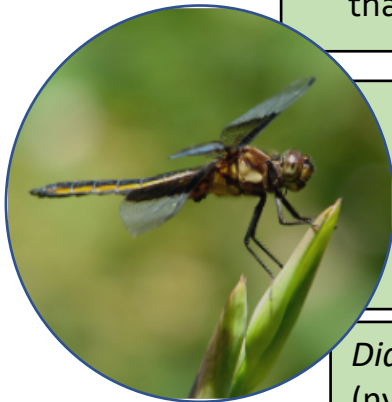


Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias*

It's always a special experience to see these Slough giants. Despite their size and prehistoric voices, Great Blue Herons are actually quite at home along small urban waterways, eating anything they can catch.

Belted Kingfisher *Alcedo alcyon*

Listen for the loud rattling call of these plunge-fishing specialists. Unlike many birds, female Belted kingfishers are more colorful than males; look for their orange belly-bands.



Dragonflies *Odonata* -> *Anisoptera*

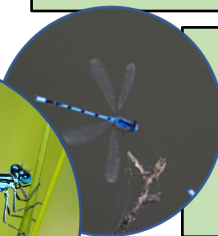
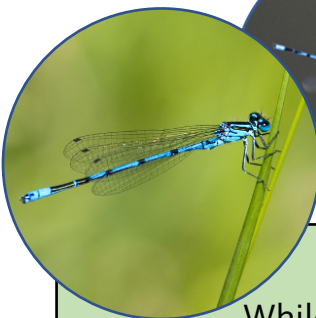
Many species of dragonflies, including the Widow Skimmer (left), Shadow Darter (right) and Flame Skimmer (lower right), live along the Slough.

Did you know? Dragonflies and their larvae (nymphs) are fierce Slough predators! The adults catch insects like mosquitoes with their spiny legs.



Damselflies *Odonata* -> *Zygoptera*

Damselflies, relatives of dragonflies, have very thin bodies and hold their helicopter-like wings over their backs when they land.



Nutria *Myocaster coypus*

While the species above are native to our region, nutria were introduced from South America. Nutria are smaller than our native, nocturnal beavers and have long whiskers and a rat-like tail.

