

Watchable Wildlife



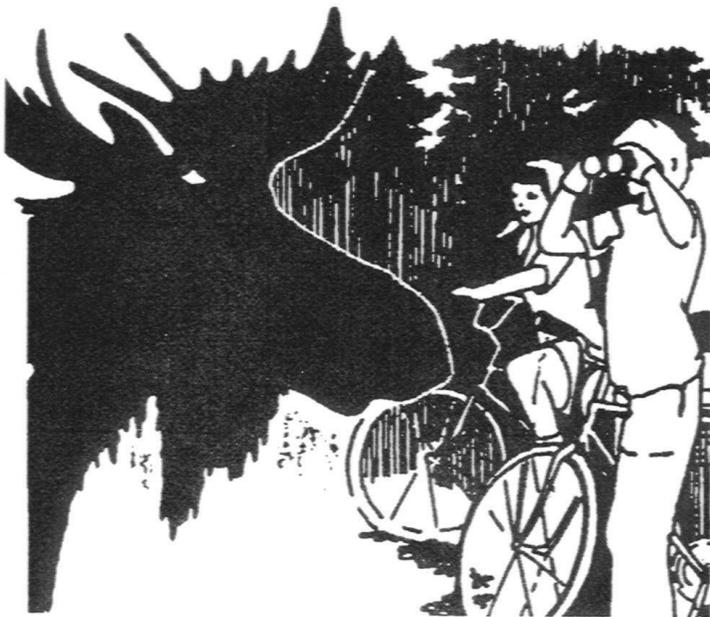
SUPERIOR NATIONAL FOREST

LACROIX RANGER DISTRICT

COOK, MINNESOTA

Where is the wildlife? It's all around you!

The Superior National Forest is home to unique and spectacular wildlife. While it would be rare to spot the elusive gray wolf during your visit, eagles, moose, loons, bear, beaver and a host of other species are within the realm of possibility. With a little patience and knowing where, when and how to look, you can dramatically increase your chances of seeing wildlife.



General Viewing Areas

- Pelican River
- Echo Trail (County Road 116)
- Moose Loop (Forest Road 464)
- Vermilion River
- Beaver ponds

Superior National Forest visitor maps are available at the LaCroix Ranger District & Visitor Information Center or at any Superior National Forest office.

What to bring

- Binoculars
- Field guide to wildlife, animal tracks, nature observing, animal behavior or habitats
- Insect repellent



Leave No Trace
on the web at LNT.org

Tips...

- Watch for all species, large and small, common and uncommon. You may be disappointed if you try to focus on only one species, because you could miss other fascinating animals.
- Begin to observe the more common and so-called lesser species. You may find dragonflies, chickadees and butterflies watchable.
- Watch near water. Wildlife and water have a natural affinity. Much of the north country is covered with thick brush. The open space across water allows us to observe wildlife at a distance.
- For your safety and theirs, never approach, follow or feed wildlife.

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By Automobile

- Beaver ponds are a good place to look. Pick one that is active and can be seen from the road. Fresh mud on a dam or freshly chewed sticks (showing white) are good indications of an active pond.
- Park your car where you will have a good view of the dam and pond. Your car can serve both as a blind and protection from biting insects.
- Best viewing times are at dawn and dusk.

Walking

- Slow down and take your time. Remember, your goal is not distance traveled but how much you see.
- Move quietly and pause from time to time.
- Watch for movement or a shape that doesn't fit in.
- Sit quietly in one spot for 15 minutes.

Canoeing

- Choose rivers, smaller lakes or small bays on large lakes.
- Paddle quietly near the shoreline and scan this wildlife-rich zone.
- You will have a very good chance of seeing one or more of the following species: otter, deer, moose, osprey, eagle, waterfowl, great blue heron or kingfisher.

Animal Behavior

Take the time to observe animal behavior. Each species has its own story to tell. Ask yourself: What is the animal doing? How is it doing it? Why is it here and not someplace else?



Animal Signs

You may not see a particular animal, but watch for evidence of its presence in the area. For example:

- Beaver leave unmistakable clues of their presence with their dams, lodge, gnawed stumps, canals and food piles.
- Pileated woodpeckers chisel large rectangular holes in trees when they search for insect larvae.
- Kingfishers and bank swallows burrow into sandy banks to nest.
- Otter leave scat (feces) containing fish bones and crayfish shells on rocks near lakes and rivers.
- Eagles construct huge nests.
- Moose leave their huge hoof prints along our trails and roads. Their scat looks like “tater tots.”

Look for these and other animal signs and learn to read them. Who passed this way? What was this animal doing? Why was it here?

Need more information?

on the web at:
www.fs.usda.gov/superior

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