

# Wildlife of Unaweep Canyon

## Habitat

Lowland Riparian, Cliff Face, Pinyon-Juniper Forest, Pond, Wet Meadow, Stream

## Birds and Insects

1. **Ellis Dotted Blue Butterfly:** *Euphilotes ellisi* - Unaweep canyon is the only location this butterfly lives in Colorado, appear during Spring

Description: Males will have both small black and pink borders on outer wings; females will have brown with extensive blue bands on the outer wings; various black spots throughout the wing

Habitat: Dry, rocky/gravelly slopes or flats throughout the 4 corners: CO, UT, NM, AZ

Lifespan: Unsure

Size:  $\frac{3}{4}$ - $\frac{7}{8}$  wingspan

Diet: Flower nectar, cheatgrass



2. **Bald Eagle:** *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*

Description: Females larger than males;

Habitat: American wetland habitat and coniferous and hardwood forests in Canada and US (migratory birds)

Lifespan: 20 years

Size: 28-40 in, wingspan of 6-8ft; 9-12 lbs.

Diet: Fish, birds, mammals



3. **Black-chinned hummingbird:** *Archilochus alexandri*

Description: white to brown bodies with shiny green specks/accents; purple neck for males - black for females; black heads, long thin black bill

Habitat: Canyons along rivers in SW. Lowland deserts or mountainous forests; need tall trees and flowering shrubs/vines

Lifespan: ?

Size: 3.5 in, 4.3 wingspan, .1-.2 oz

Diet: Flower nectar, small insects and spiders,



4. **Black-headed grosbeak:** *Pheucticus melanocephalus*

Description: dark to light brown body with white feathers; yellow to orange underbelly and under wings, black head, large grayish oval beak

Habitat: Mixed woodlands and edges from mountain forests to desert streams; diverse understory with large trees

Lifespan: 5-6 years

Size: 7in, 1.2-1.7 oz, 13in wingspan

Diet: seeds, hard-bodied insects, snails, spiders, fruit, oats/wheat



5. **American dipper:** *Cinclus mexicanus*: indicator for a quality water sources

Description: greyish-brown round-bodies with somewhat thin short beak, short tail and neck

Habitat: Mountain, coastal or desert streams

Lifespan: 8 years

Size: 6.5 in long, 1.6 oz, 9in wingspan

Diet: aquatic insects and larvae, crayfish, tiny fish or tadpoles



6. **American goldfinch:** *Spinus tristis*

Description: bright yellow (breeding) to dull brown (nonbreeding) body; black and white wings; orange brown to gray small beak; yellow and black heads

Habitat: weedy to overgrown plain fields with sunflower and thistle plants

Lifespan: 11 years

Size: 4-5 in, .4-.7 oz, 7-9 in wingspan

Diet: flower and tree seeds



7. **Yellow-breasted Chat:** *Icteria virens*

Description: bright yellow breast, white belly, black wings, long white to grey tail, small black beak

Habitat: Shrubby habitats along streams and ponds in desert landscapes.

Lifespan: ?

Size: 7in, .8-1.1oz, 9in wingspan

Diet: spiders and insects



8. **Yellow Warbler:** *Setophaga petechia*

Description: full yellow bodies with some brown to black feathers, black eye with grey to black beak

Habitat: Willows and cottonwoods near shrubby wetlands (and aspens in Rockies)

Lifespan: 10 years

Size: 4-6 in, .3-.4 oz, 6-8in wingspan

Diet: insects



9. **Willow flycatcher:** *Empidonax traillii*

Description: brownish olive bodies, slight yellow belly, small dark grey to brown beaks

Habitat: shrubby areas with willows near streams

Lifespan: 3-4 years

Size: 5-7 in, .4-.6 oz., 7-10 in. wingspan

Diet: insects (bees, beetles, ants, flies)



10. **Magpie:** *Pica hudsonia*

Description: black and white body and head with flashes of blue on the wings, long black tails

Habitat: meadows, grasslands, sagebrush plains of the West

Lifespan: 5-6 years

Size: 17-24 in, 5-7.4 oz, 22-24 in wingspan

Diet: fruits, grains, insects, small mammals



11. **Clark's Nutcrackers:** *Nucifraga Columbiana*

Description: pale gray birds with black wings, black and white tail, black legs, medium size black bills

Habitat: coniferous (pine) forests in western US

Lifespan: max, 17 years

Size: 10-12 in, 3-6 oz

Diet: pine seeds



12. **Pinyon Jays:** *Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus*

Description: white to grey belly, bright blue head, blue tail, long legs, medium size black beak

Habitat: pinyon-juniper woodlands, sagebrush scrub oak, and ponderosa pine

Lifespan: 11-15 years

Size: 10-12 in, 3-4 oz, 18 in wingspan

Diet: pinyon-pine seeds and berries, acorns, grains, insect



## Fauna

### 1. **Desert Woodrat:** *Neotoma lepida* (descriptors)

Description: pale grey, to reddish brown to black color with relatively large ears, white bellows and feet, narrow snout, long whiskers,

Habitat: sagebrush shrubs, desert and rocky slope, cactus/pine/juniper areas

Lifespan: 6 years

Size: 11-15 in, 4-8 in tail

Diet: brushes, beans, juniper leaves seeds, fruits,

Fun Fact: can eat cacti without being injured



### 2. **Colorado Chipmunks:** *tamias quadrivittatus*

Description: red-brown to grey color with black and white to cream strips

Habitat: coniferous forests, woodlands, montane shrublands, and alpine tundra habitats

Lifespan: 8 years

Size: 2.2 oz,

Diet: seeds, berries, flowers, and insects

Fun Fact: Distinguishable from the ground squirrel due to the stripe going across the eyes



3. **Rock Squirrels:** *Spermophilus variegatus*

Description: grey to brown in color, small ears, bushy tails, pointy ears

Habitat: arid canyons, rocky cliff areas, and boulder piles

Lifespan: 1-5 years

Size: 1.5 lb

Diet: leaves, stems, seeds, nuts, and small invertebrates

Fun Fact: can be aggressive animals: can bite upon a person pointing at it



4. **Pinyon mice:** *Peromyscus truei*

Description: brown to gray to black coloring with long tail and big ears and eyes

Habitat: rocky slope and pinyon-juniper pine, riparian, sagebrush, canyon areas

Lifespan: 1 year

Size: 6-10 in, 3-5 in tail length

Diet: insects, berries, nuts, fungi, invertebrates

Fun Fact: Nocturnal, good climber creatures





5. **Gray Fox:** *Urocyon cinereoargenteus schreber*

Description: gray body, yellow to orange belly and tail, pointy ears, black stripe down the tail

Habitat: prefers desert, canyon and rocky slopes areas in CO

Lifespan: 4-6 years

Size: 30-40 in, 8-16 lb

Diet: smaller mammals, birds, voles, shrews, insects, leaves, fruits

Fun Fact: Only American canid that can climb trees



6. **Ringtail:** *Bassariscus astutus*

Description: black to dark brown in color with a long, bushy, black and white striped pattern tail with pale underside, big black eyes,

Habitat: rocky desert habitats near riparian canyons or mine/cave shafts

Lifespan: 7 years

Size: 12-17 in 1-4 lb

Diet: small invertebrates and mammals, fruits and insects

Fun Fact: Miner's use to keep ringtails as pets to prevent vermin in their own homes



7. **Mule deer:** *Odocoileus hemionus*

Description: orange/red/brown/grey body with pale underside, pointed face; male will have antlers at an adult stage, black tail

Habitat: shrubby/brush and riparian woodland areas

Lifespan: 8 (males)-11 (females) years

Size: 130-160 lbs

Diet: plants-shrubs, trees, grasses

Fun Fact: Generate \$115 mil annually for CO



8. **Elk:** *Cervus elaphus*

Description: reddish brown coloring with darker brown legs, adult males will have antlers, small tail

Habitat: open meadows, rocky, mountain, aspen, oakbrush, shrub areas

Lifespan: 10-13 years

Size: 500-800lb

Diet: grazers- grasses, bark, and tree sprouts

Fun Fact: antler can grow 1in per day



9. **Bighorn Sheep:** *Ovis Canadensis nelsoni*

Description: large curved horns for males, small points for females, light gray to brown in color, pale belly, usually move in herds

Habitat: arid, desert, rocky slopes ecosystems

Lifespan: 9-14 year (females)

Size: 315 lb

Diet: grasses and shrubs

Fun Fact: The horns are used to protect the brain by absorbing the impact of crashes



10. **Mountain Lion:** *Puma concolor*

Description: grey/tan/brown in color with pale underbelly, long tail, small ears

Habitat: steep rocky canyons or mountains, deserts, or forests

Lifespan: 8-13 years

Size: 2-3 ft in height 60-140 lb (females) 120-220 lb (males)

Diet: deer, elk, mammals

Fun Fact: Can run as fast 50mph



11. **Coyote:** *Canis latrans* Say

Description: pointed ears, slender muzzle, bushy tail, yellow eyes, grayish brown with reddish and black tinges

Habitat: open prairie or desert

Lifespan: 10-14 years

Size: 15-40 lbs

Diet: small mammals, rodents, rabbits, fruit, deer (scavengers)

Fun Fact: Surprisingly great swimmers



12. **American Black Bear:** *Ursus americanus*

Description: large, round body with circular ears, and black, dark, or reddish brown in color

Habitat: forested areas, deser, rocky slopes - pinyon-juniper areas

Lifespan: 18 years

Size: 126-551 lb (males) 90-375 lb (females)

Diet: berries, leaves, grasses, plants,

Fun Fact: Smallest, but largest distributed bear in the Americas



13. **Bobcats:** *Lynx rufus*

Description: pale tan to brown in color with black dots or undertones, long bushy tail

Habitat: semidesert, wooded areas, forest and urban edges

Lifespan: 7 years

Size: 32-37 in. long, 9-40 lbs

Diet: rabbits, hares, insects

Fun Fact: Excellent climbers



14. **Prairie Lizard:** *Sceloporus consobrinus* (subspecies of Eastern Fence Lizard)

Description: light brown with a gray stripe down the middle, with dark brown and white/tan striped pattern, bright blue and white scaly belly

Habitat: forest edges and rock piles, sandy soil, sagebrush areas

Lifespan: 4 years

Size: 4-8 in. length

Diet: insects

Fun Fact: subspecies of the eastern fence lizard



15. **Common Sagebrush Lizard:** *Sceloporus graciosus*

Description: gray to brown dorsal color, pale stripes on either side, bright blue patches on belly and throat for males, none for females

Habitat: pinyon-juniper, semidesert, mountain, shrubland, fine-grained soils

Lifespan:

Size: 2-5 in

Diet: insects

Fun Fact: Suffering from habitat loss and fragmentation



16. **Plateau Striped Whiptail:** *Cnemidophorus septemvittatus*

Description: dark brown or black with yellow stripes, blue colored tails of juveniles will fade with time

Habitat: lower riparian woodlands, grassland, scrub/shrub, semi-desert areas

Lifespan: 4-5 years

Size: 2-5 inches

Diet: insects

Fun Fact: Unisexual animals



17. **Collared Lizard** - *Crotaphytus collaris*

Description: Males are often bright green, yellow, orange or tan peppered with white spots, and females have a much more muted color scheme with black and white throat striped

Habitat: arid, rock desert, sagebrush, desert scrub and grassland, pinyon-juniper forests

Lifespan: 5-8 years

Size: 9-15 in

Diet: insects, spiders, and sometimes eat their young

Fun Fact: just look at 'em - also they use their tail to balance like a T-rex would



18. **Side blotched lizard** - *Uta* ssp.

Description: males- diffused blue spots on its back, throat can be blue, yellow or orange; females - no spots but retain a series of black and white lateral lines and chevrons developed in their youth.

Habitat: arid regions

Lifespan: 5 years

Size: 4-6 in

Diet: ants, flies, larvae, spiders, other insects

Fun Fact: Orange throated have the largest testosterone and territoriality; blue next; yellow last: each previous one beating the other in a fight



19. **Bullsnake / Gopher Snake** - *Pituophis catenifer sayi*

Description: yellow, with brown, white, black or reddish blotching in bands or sets of 3

Habitat: sandy, open soils or in pine barrens

Lifespan: 12-25 years

Size: 4-8ft, 2-10 lbs

Diet: rodents

Fun Fact: Not venomous, but will shake their tail, commonly having them mistaken for rattlesnakes - longest snake in North America





## Fish

### 1. **Colorado River Cutthroat Trout:** *Oncorhynchus clarki*

Description: bright red belly with brown to green coloring throughout the body, wide open mouth, speckled dark spots throughout the body, with centralized spots on the soft dorsal, anal, and tail fins

Habitat: WY, CO, UT, NM: high-elevation, rapidly-flowing, freshwater headwaters, rivers, lakes, and streams in mountain regions

Spawning/Lifespan: spring spawners (April-July) where pregnant mothers swim up tributaries, lay eggs, enter back into main river, temperature dependent (7-10 degrees) spawning 25-49 days incubation; 200-4000 eggs per clutch; 6-9 years

Size: 5-14in, 5-12lb

Diet: zooplankton, aquatic and terrestrial insects (ants, bees, grasshoppers, mayfly, caddisfly), small vertebrate

Fun Fact: 6 subspecies (some still alive today) of cutthroat trout, where all 6 are native to Colorado and can trace their genetic origins to each of CO's main 6 river basins. Fish is a special status fish and Colorado's state fish.



2. **Greenback Cutthroat Trout:** *Oncorhynchus clarkii stomias*

Description: (less red on the belly and usually slightly duller in color than the Colorado River cutthroat trout); large speckled dark spots throughout the dorsal, anal, and tail fins; black/brown/ red coloring throughout the body, with black coloring on the top of the fish; red coloring over the gill patch

Habitat: cold clear foothill and mountain waters of the Arkansas and South Platte Rivers in Eastern CO and SW WY

Spawning/Lifespan: 6-9 years, most colorful spawning eggs; spawn between Feb-July from coastal to high lakes; temp 43-46 F for spawning

Size: max: 18 inches and 10lb

Diet: insects and small invertebrates

Fun Fact: Colorado's state fish; largest spots of all the cutthroats



3. **Rainbow Trout:** *Oncorhynchus mykiss*

Description: uniformed dark spots speckled throughout the whole body, lightest body coloration of the trout, with a clear red coloring down the lateral line of the body; rose-color to silver gill plate

Habitat: Found in most streams and lakes throughout CO, native range is Pacific Ocean in Asia and North American; large, cold, well-oxygenated, shallow freshwater rivers with gravel bottoms

Spawning/Lifespan: Spawning Feb-May, 42-44 F, up tributaries to lay eggs and then leave

Size: 15-18"

Diet: flies, insects, zooplankton, small invertebrates

Fun Fact: Introduced in the 1880s: not native; very adaptable - can maintain a wide range of water quality measurements; the main stocked fish of Colorado



4. **Cutbow Trout:** *Oncorhynchus clarkii* x

Description: pale yellow/silver belly, thin, lightly colored red stripe down the lateral line. Speckled dots throughout the whole body, denser at the tail though, White-tipped fins are the biggest difference btw cutbow and rainbow trout. red/orange slash marks under the jaw

Habitat: cold, well-oxygenated, shallow freshwater rivers or lakes; can also survive in hatcheries

Spawning/Lifespan: 40-50 F, female cutthroat eggs are fertilized by larger male rainbow trout, resulting in cutbow; 4-8 years

Size: ~16 in

Diet: insects, flies, small invertebrates

Fun Fact: Immune to whirling disease; a disease that impacts almost every other population of trout and several other species of fish



5. **Brown trout:** *Salmo trutta*

Description: brown or golden body, white belly (belly turns yellow during spawning), uniformed speckled dark dots throughout the body with the occasionally red, with square tails

Habitat: freshwater ecosystems with lower gradients, elevation, and large stream/river/lake, 12-19C ideally temps,

Spawning/Lifespan: Spawn between Aug-Nov, females move into shallow, gravel and dig nests by fanning their tails, males posture themselves alongside the females to fertilize the eggs.

Size: 12-16in,

Diet: flies, insects, small invertebrates - more generalist of trout

Fun Fact: Not native to CO (native to Europe and Western Asia), but a self-sustaining population occurs in almost every river or large lake in CO.



6. **Colorado Pikeminnow:** *Ptychocheilus lucius*

Description: elongated body, cone-shaped and somewhat flattened head is elongated, forming nearly a quarter of the body length, color grades from bright olive green on the back to a paler yellowish shade on the flanks, to white underneath, large toothless mouth

Habitat: Colorado basin, warm, large, freshwater ecosystems

Spawning/Lifespan: up to 40 years, long-distance spawning (200 miles), start reproducing 5-7 years

Size: 2-3ft max, 3-9lb

Diet: small invertebrates, plankton, insects, small fish (suckers and minnows)

Fun Fact: Largest minnow in North America



7. **Bluehead Sucker:** *Catostomus discobolus yarrowi*

Description: short, broad head with a wide snout that overhangs a large mouth, body is elongate and tapers, dark olive to nearly black on the back and sides and yellowish on the belly, and in tur- young fish are dusky above and white below.

Range/Habitat: middle and upper Colorado Basin, cool, rocky or gravel bottoms with moderate to fast currents, riparian wetlands

Spawning/Lifespan: Spawn in spring and early summer btw 65-75 degrees, spawn in shallow gravelly areas with moderate currents; 20 year lifespan

Size: 11-18in

Diet: omnivore foragers, algae, insects, zooplankton

Fun Fact: Illegal to take these fish or use them for any purpose



8. **Roundtail Chub:** *Gila robusta*

Description: olive-gray in color with silver sides and a white belly; large tail

Range/Habitat: Colorado Basin, cool to warm waters over various elevations in rivers or streams, prefer deep pools or eddies close to boulders, overhanging cliffs, undercut banks or vegetation (WY/CO/UT)

Spawning/Lifespan: Spawn in late spring, females lay 2000 eggs in rocky to gravel bottoms where they hatch in 5 days; takes 2-3 years to reach reproduction age, 7-8 years lifespan

Size: 9-12 in

Diet: omnivores, insects, small invertebrates, small fish

Fun Fact: Also a non-native fish in the Grand Canyon





9. **Flannelmouth Sucker:** *Catostomus latipinnis*

Description: elongated, oval body; distinct, enlarged fleshy lips located under the snout; back is a dark brownish-green turning yellow to orange along the sides and whitish underside; belly turns yellow/orange for both genders during spawning

Habitat: large to medium lower elevation rivers, occasional lakes or reservoirs in Upper Colorado River Basin; warm moderate to large rivers; prefer pools, eddies, or deep runs  
Spawning/Lifespan: up to 30 years, spawn from April-June in 55-60F temps, eggs hatch in a week,

Size: 22-24in max, 3-4lb

Diet: algae, detritus, insect larvae, aquatic invertebrate, crustaceans

Fun Fact: bottom left photo



10. **Mottled Sculpin:** *Cottus bairdii*

Description: bars, speckles, and spots randomly distributed throughout the body, fins, and tail; yellow to orange in color, large mouth and eyes

Habitat: well-oxygenated, fast-moving, clear mountain gravel, streams, or spring water

Spawning/Lifespan: Spawning occurs in early winter to late spring, 8-150 eggs per clutch reach reproductive age at 2 years,

Size: 6in

Diet: aquatic insect larvae, small fish, fish eggs, plant material, crustaceans

Fun Fact: Male chooses and guards the nesting site; if not, female will eat eggs

