

I, Spy... ANIMAL HOMES!

Can you find any of these animal homes at Bluff Lake?



Put a check mark in the box when you spot one!

Black-Tailed Prairie Dog Burrow

Where to look: In the prairie habitat all along south edge of the site. Look on the ground for large colonies (*aka* towns) of entrance mounds, with holes surrounded by scat and tracks. Prairie dogs can often be seen and heard poking out of entrance holes and running between them.



Red-Tailed Hawk Nest

Where to look: In the tall trees along the southwest edge of the lake. Take the main path and look for large, flat nests of twigs high in the trees. Hawks can often be seen soaring high in the sky during the daytime as they look for prey.



Great Horned Owl Nest

Where to look: In the riparian habitat along Sand Creek. Take the fork off of the main trail to circle the northern loop. When you are almost to the wooden foot bridge, look south to spot a large nest of twigs. Owls are nocturnal, but you may see its feathered "horns" poking out.



Cottontail Rabbit Burrow or Form

Where to look: Anywhere with brush, especially where the main path climbs onto the bluffs (south edge of site). Rabbits take cover under bushes, hide in tall grass, or dive into underground burrows they find. They may shape grass into a shallow, nest-like "form" on the ground for concealment.



Fox Squirrel Nests

Where to look: In any forested area (e.g., trees near the teepee, along the north edge of Bluff Lake, or along Sand Creek). Look for a completely enclosed ball of leaves high in the tree. Squirrels can be seen during the day gathering food.



Beaver Zone

Where to look: At several points along Sand Creek. After going down the stairs or ramp, follow the path either east or west and look north toward the creek. Look for trees the beavers have chewed down (pointed tips, wood chips scattered around). The dam & lodge are off site.





Bat House

Where to look: Along the south path near the outfalls. Look for a pole topped by a human-made, narrow box with an open bottom (bats fly in and hang upside down during the day). Bats are nocturnal, but they help control mosquitoes by hunting them at night.



Bird House

Where to look: Along the south path, near the outfalls and in the prairie at the top of the bluffs. Look for a pole topped by a human-made, square box with a small entrance hole near the top. Small birds can nest, safe from hawks and other predators too large to enter.



Spider Web

Where to look: In any habitat, stretched across leaves, plants, grass, or branches. Spiders often build webs on human-made buildings or objects, especially near artificial light (which attracts their prey). Many species are nocturnal, & some rebuild their web each night.



Solitary Wasp Nest

Where to look: In sheltered areas, such as corners under a roof (for example, in the amphitheater). Solitary wasps build a nest just for one. They live and raise young alone.



Social Wasp Nest

Where to look: In sheltered areas, such as corners under a roof. Social wasps live together in a large colony. Wasps chew scraped wood fibers to create papery nests (unlike bees, who emit a waxy substance to build).



Insect Gall

Where to look: On stems or leaves of a variety of plants, (e.g, rabbitbrush, fallen leaves). Certain insects stimulate plants to produce these abnormal growths, then use them for shelter. Often, larvae spend the winter in the gall and then hatch out in the spring. Galls are not usually harmful to the plant.

