

Exotic (Non-Native) Wildlife in the Upper Thames River Watershed

Many species of exotic (non-native) wildlife have been introduced to southwestern Ontario from other continents and eco-regions, either accidentally (e.g., forest pests arriving in wood imports) or intentionally (e.g., carp for food). Some of these exotic species have escaped into the wild and are able to survive and reproduce. They can become “invasive”, meaning they compete for food and space with locally indigenous species and may displace them. They may also prey on local species, and may not be impacted by local predators/diseases.

To reduce the population of non-native species, never release unwanted pets or live exotic animals into the environment.

This list is not comprehensive, but includes some exotic species that may be commonly encountered in natural areas within the Upper Thames River watershed, as well as species that have the potential to be found here as they have been confirmed in nearby regions.

(Pot) = species with potential to invade our area as it is present in nearby regions.

Vertebrates

Birds

- Eurasian Collared-Dove
- Rock Pigeon or Rock Dove
- House Sparrow
- European Starling
- House Finch
- Muscovy Duck
- Mute Swan
- Gray Partridge
- Ring-necked Pheasant
- Black-necked Pheasant (Pot)
- Eurasian Tree Sparrow (Pot)

Mammals

- Black Rat
- Norway or Brown Rat
- House Mouse
- European or Brown Hare
- Fox Squirrel (Pot)
- Wild Boar or Pig (Pot)

Mammals - Feral Domesticated

- House Cat
- Domestic Dog

Reptiles

- Red-eared or Pond Slider (turtle)

Fish

- Goldfish
- Coho Salmon
- Rainbow Trout
- Common Carp
- Asian Carp (Pot)
- Ruffe or Eurasian Ruffe (Pot)
- Round Goby (Pot)
- Sea Lamprey (Pot)



Mute Swan (Photo: Scott Gillingwater)



House Sparrow (Photo: Sharon Nethercott)



Red-eared Slider (Photo: Scott Gillingwater)



Goldfish

Invertebrates

Butterflies

Cabbage White
European Skipper

Moths

Gypsy Moth or LDD (forest pest)
European Corn Borer Moth
Indian-Meal Moth

Other Insects

Emerald Ash Borer (forest pest)
Honey Bee or European Honey Bee
European or Praying Mantis
Chinese Mantis
Asian Long-horned Beetle (Pot) (forest pest)
Spotted Lantern Fly (Pot)
Hemlock Woolly Adelgid

Mussels, Crayfish

Zebra + Quagga Mussel
Rusty Crayfish

Land & Aquatic Snails (Gastropods)

Brown-lipped or Banded Wood Snail
Common or Brown Garden Snail
Common Amber Snail
White-lipped Snail



Gypsy Moth or LDD caterpillar



Praying Mantis



Brown-lipped Snail



Zebra Mussels

Helpful Websites

- Ontario's Invading Species Awareness Program of OFAH, www.invadingspecies.com
- Invasive Species Centre, [invasive insects](#)
- Ontario Nature, [non-native species](#)
- Toronto Wildlife, [gastropods](#)

Additional Information at www.thamesriver.on.ca

- Invasive non-native plants; Buckthorn; Emerald Ash Borer; Giant Hogweed; Oak Wilt; Zebra Mussels
- Recommended native trees and shrubs; wildflowers and grasses; tallgrass prairie plants
- Nurseries that sell native plants

List compiled by Upper Thames River Conservation Authority staff, updated 2021.