

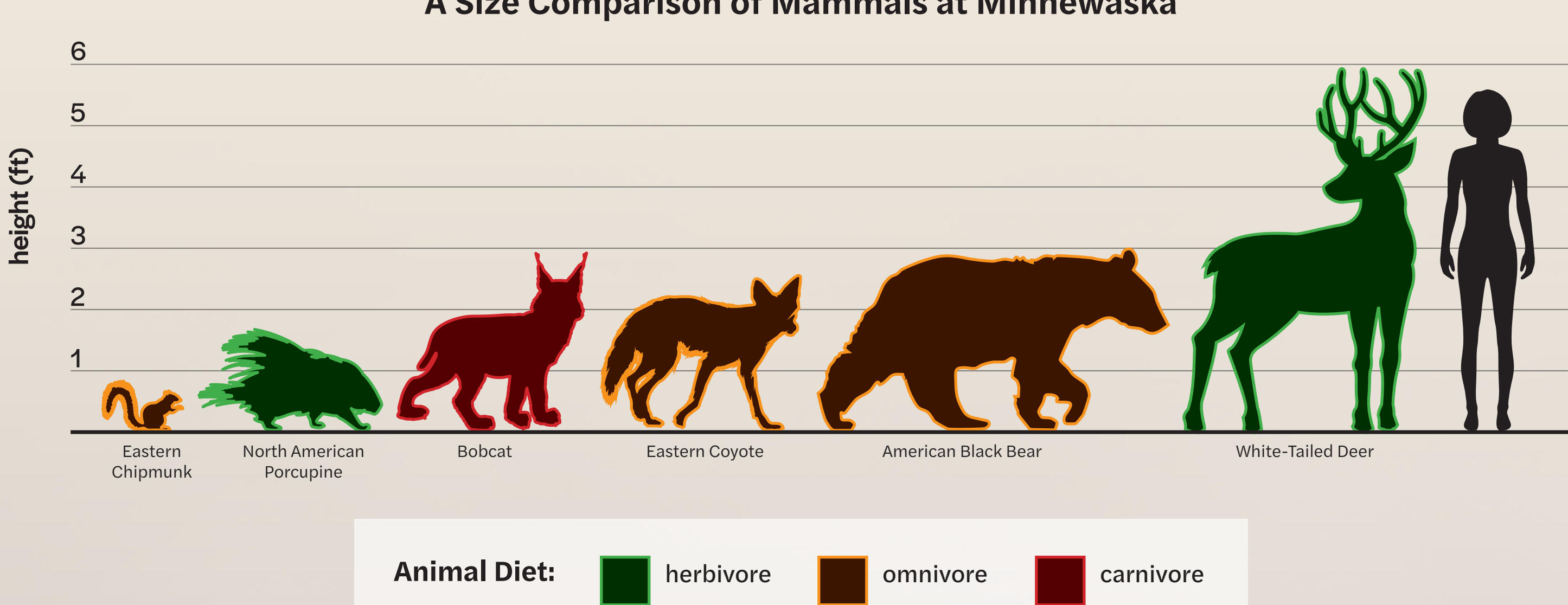
# WILDLIFE WONDERS: Mammals of Minnewaska State Park

Nestled within the breathtaking landscapes of Minnewaska State Park lies a realm teeming with life, where the rhythmic dance of nature unfolds in every corner. This ecological haven invites intrepid explorers to witness the wonders of the wild, where the diverse tapestry of habitats serves as a canvas for a rich array of mammalian residents. As the sun casts its golden glow upon the rugged terrains and lush meadows, a harmonious symphony of life emerges, unveiling the secrets of the park's remarkable inhabitants. From elusive predators to charismatic flyers, each species plays a pivotal role in shaping the delicate balance of this natural sanctuary.

Beyond the surface allure of Minnewaska's scenic beauty lies a hidden world of ecological intricacies. The park's woodlands, meadows, and rocky expanses create a mosaic of habitats, providing a diverse range of niches for mammals to thrive. It is within these niches that the Eastern Coyote, a master of adaptation, weaves through the underbrush, while the Eastern Red Bat takes to the skies in aerial acrobatics as dusk descends. The rugged terrain is home to the elusive bobcat, a symbol of stealth and agility, and the charming Eastern Chipmunk scurries amidst fallen leaves, leaving behind a trail of life. Together, these creatures contribute to the vibrancy of Minnewaska's ecosystems, each playing a unique role in the intricate web of life.

Every creature, great or small, plays a crucial role in maintaining the harmonious interdependence of the natural world.

## A Size Comparison of Mammals at Minnewaska



Let's now explore the captivating lives of Minnewaska's diverse mammalian residents.

### Eastern Chipmunk

*Tamias striatus*



**SIZE RANGE:** Approximately 5 to 6 inches in length, excluding the tail (3 to 4 inches).

**WEIGHT RANGE:** Typically around 2 to 5 ounces.

**DIET:** Omnivorous, feeding on a variety of seeds, nuts, fruits, insects, and occasionally fungi. They store food in cheek pouches to carry back to their burrows.

The Eastern Chipmunk, a small and charming resident of Minnewaska, scurries through the woodlands and meadows. Distinguished by its unique stripes and energetic movements, this omnivorous creature plays a vital role in seed dispersal, contributing to the park's ecological balance. With its cheek pouches brimming with foraged treasures, the Eastern Chipmunk embodies the lively spirit of Minnewaska's natural wonders.

### North American Porcupine

*Erethizon dorsatum*



**SIZE RANGE:** Typically 25 to 36 inches in length, excluding the tail (8 to 10 inches).

**WEIGHT RANGE:** Approximately 12 to 35 pounds.

**DIET:** Herbivorous, feeding on a variety of vegetation, including leaves, bark, twigs, and buds.

High in the branches of Minnewaska's trees, the North American Porcupine is a unique arboreal dweller adorned with quills for protection. With a herbivorous diet that includes a variety of vegetation, these quill-covered residents contribute to the delicate balance of the park's ecosystems. The porcupine's distinctive appearance and feeding habits make it a fascinating addition to the diverse array of mammals in the area.

### Bobcat

*Lynx rufus*



**SIZE RANGE:** Stands about 21 to 24 inches at the shoulder, with a body length of approximately 32 to 37 inches.

**WEIGHT RANGE:** Typically 15 to 35 pounds.

**DIET:** Carnivorous, with a diet that includes small mammals, birds, and occasionally deer.

Silent and elusive, the bobcat roams the rocky terrain of Minnewaska, embodying grace and agility. With tufted ears and a solitary lifestyle, these carnivores are skilled predators, playing a crucial role in controlling populations of smaller mammals and contributing to the park's overall ecological health.

### Eastern Coyote

*Canis latrans*



**SIZE RANGE:** Typically stands around 20 to 22 inches at the shoulder.

**WEIGHT RANGE:** Varies, with males generally larger than females; typically 35 to 45 pounds.

**DIET:** Omnivorous, with a diet that includes small mammals, birds, fruits, and vegetation.

The cunning Eastern Coyote, a master of adaptation, roams the woodlands and open spaces of Minnewaska. With a striking mix of wolf and coyote characteristics, these elusive canids play a crucial role in maintaining ecological balance. Their social structures and diverse diet contribute to the dynamic ecosystem of the park.

### American Black Bear

*Ursus americanus*



**SIZE RANGE:** Stands approximately 2.5 to 3 feet at the shoulder when on all fours.

**WEIGHT RANGE:** Varies, with males typically weighing 130 to 660 pounds.

**DIET:** Omnivorous, with a diet that includes berries, nuts, insects, small mammals, and vegetation.

Roaming the woodlands of Minnewaska, the American Black Bear, with its distinctive coat, is a symbol of strength and wilderness. Exploring the bear's habits, diet, and its role in the park's ecosystem reveals the importance of coexistence and conservation efforts to protect these magnificent mammals.

### White-tailed Deer

*Odocoileus virginianus*



**SIZE RANGE:** Stands around 3.5 to 4.5 feet at the shoulder.

**WEIGHT RANGE:** Varies, with males (bucks) typically weighing 150 to 300 pounds.

**DIET:** Herbivorous, feeding on a variety of vegetation, including leaves, twigs, fruits, and acorns.

Graceful and iconic, the white-tailed deer is a common sight in Minnewaska's meadows and forests. Exploring the life cycle of these elegant herbivores, their impact on vegetation, and the challenges they face provides insight into their role in balancing the park's dynamic ecosystem.

Plan your Minnewaska  
Adventure!

As you marvel at the richness of Minnewaska State Park's diverse mammalian inhabitants, consider turning inspiration into exploration. Plan your visit to witness firsthand these wonders firsthand. Whether hiking the trails, observing wildlife, or simply reveling in the breathtaking landscapes, you can find something to love in your time here. Join us in preserving and celebrating the beauty of Minnewaska—your adventure awaits!