



Western Red Bat

Great Horned Owl

Hoary Bat

Whip-poor-will

Flammulated Owl

Raccoon

Things That Go Bump in the Night

Respect Wildlife

- Observe wildlife from a distance. Use binoculars to get a closer look.
- Never offer food to a wild animal. Pack away all food at your campsite.
- Help care for wildlife habitat. Stay on designated trails, and do not remove or damage any plants.
- Always keep pets on a leash.

When the sun goes down, things get lively here in Oak Creek Canyon. At twilight, bats, such as the western red, silver-haired, and hoary, emerge from daytime roosts, fluttering through the air to catch insects using echolocation.

The **whip-poor-will** sings its namesake song at dusk, while its cousin, the nighthawk, zings through the air. **Great horned owls**, with their tufted ears and big, yellow eyes, hoot in the cadence of *who's awake? me, too*. You might also hear the single piping toot of the small flammulated owl.

Frogs and crickets serenade campers through the night. Don't be alarmed by the loud call of the **canyon treefrog**, which sounds like a ratcheting

rivet gun in a tin can. American physicist Amos Dolbear published a formula in the late 1800s to show the correlation between the rate of crickets' chirps and the temperature of the air. To estimate the temperature in Fahrenheit, count the number of chirps you hear in 15 seconds and add 40.

Have you ever caught a glimpse of animals' eyes illuminated by a light, such as car headlights, in the night? What you saw was eyeshine. Eyeshine results from a special layer of tissue in the eyeball, which contributes to excellent night vision for nocturnal hunters. The reflection is most visible when your light source, like a headlamp or flashlight, is held at eye level. The color of eyeshine, width between eyes, and height off the ground all provide clues to identify an

animal, even in the dark. Eyes close together and close to the ground signal a smaller animal. **Raccoon** eyes reflect green; some birds like poorwills and owls show red. Skunk eyes appear amber; and mountain lion and fox eyes reflect green. Tiny blue-green dots in the darkness might be spider eyes. Some mother spiders carry their babies on their backs, and when illuminated, the babies' eyes glitter like stardust.

Just as animals use their specialized senses at night, we can fine-tune our eyes and ears to learn what local wildlife is active after dark.

Canyon Treefrog

