peeled cedar
cottonwoods
douglas fir
douglas fir

Indian Ghost pipe
oceanspray

Oregon grape
red fir
red osier dogwood
snowberries
Solomon seal
thimbleberries
wild rose with rosehips
lookout over the marsh
black moss
usnea
wild strawberry
Solomon seal
horsetail
Great Blue Heron
Ardea herodias

Great Blue Herons... can live 15 years, Wingspan, 5.5 to 6.6 ft., and can fly up to 30 mph.

The great blue heron searches for food day and night. Though they are thought of as fishers, they also eat salamanders, lizards, snakes, crayfish, dragonflies, grasshoppers, aquatic insects, fledgling birds, and mice. A mouse diet makes up almost half of what herons feed to their nestlings.

Herons snare their prey by walking slowly, or standing still while waiting for an animal to come within range of their long necks and blade-like beaks. Their prey is gobbled up whole. A heron will choke to death trying to eat prey that is too large to swallow.
A recent Canada goose conservation program revived declining populations that began to fall early in the 20th century. Today, they are the most common goose in North America. Flocks have become permanent residents in Idaho’s city parks, waterways, lakes, golf courses, farmlands, and state parks. Meanwhile, other flocks continue to follow age-old migration paths, north and south. Noisy geese honk along routes to designated “rest stops,” like Heyburn State Park, and mingle with resident birds.

Listen, any time of year, for the deep musical “Ha-Honk” of the Canada goose!
Cattails...
A Place to Perch, Munch, Hide, Build...

A stand of cattails is like a supermarket in a marsh.
American Indians understood their value. Their tasty, nutritious stems were eaten both raw and boiled. The fuzzy flower cluster provided softness and absorbency for diaper material, lining cradles and padding inside moccasins. Jelly from between the young leaves was applied to wounds and sores to soothe pain. The hot dog looking flower heads made good torches, with smoke that drove away insects.

Ducks and Canada geese nest among cattails.

Muskrats use cattails to build their houses and they eat their stalks.

Frogs and salamanders will lay their eggs in the water on and between the cattails.

Red-winged blackbirds build their nests and perch in groups on cattail stalks.

White-tailed deer, raccoons, and turkeys use cattails as cover.
Red-winged Blackbird
A. phoeniceus

Red-winged blackbirds... can fly as fast as an Olympic sprinter can run, and are considered the most abundant bird in North America.

The male red-winged blackbird defends his territory during the spring with unrestrained intensity. He will attack anything red, including you, if you are wearing red clothing. He may spend up to four hours a day in territory defense. The red-winged blackbird is polygamous, with one male having up to 15 different females making nests in his territory.

In winter, red-winged blackbirds join noisy foraging flocks of 500 to over 5,000 birds of several species including: Brewer’s blackbirds, yellow-headed blackbirds, European starlings, and brown-headed cowbirds.

Look for male red-winged blackbirds in Plummer Creek Marsh clinging to cattail stalks. Notice that an equal distance separates the birds. Fierce combat happens when one bird ventures into another’s territory.
Ospreys... have a diet of 99% fish, and an occasional snake, inhabit every continent except Antarctica, and live up to 30 years.

Here, at Heyburn State Park, ospreys are sometimes confused with bald eagles, but can be identified by their white under-parts. Their white heads also have a distinctive black eye-stripe down the side of their faces.

Human surroundings aid ospreys. Look for large stick-and-sod nests that ospreys have made on telephone poles, channel markers, and bridge tops.

Ospreys have built more than 50 nests within Heyburn. Look for an osprey carrying a fish back to its nest. The osprey will orient the fish head-first to ease wind resistance, not to give the ill-fated fish a better view.
Supermarket of the Marsh

Cattails are one of the most recognizable marsh plants. Their brown, cigar-shaped flower spikes contain over 40,000 tiny flowers and release thousands of tiny, white fluffy seeds in the wind each fall. Not only are cattails very recognizable, they are also one of the most versatile marsh plants. Every part of the cattail plant is edible or useful in some way. The shoots of young cattails and the lower white portion of the stem can be eaten like celery; young flower spikes can be eaten like corn before they bloom. The pollen, which appears when the spike blooms, can be used as a nutrient-rich additive to flour for baking.

Other uses include ornamental decorations, making cord by twisting the root fibers and weaving baskets for mats from the leaves. The leaves also expand when wet and can be used to seal leaks in wooden barrels, caskets, and boats.

Humans are not the only ones who utilize the cattail plant. Many species of waterfowl and aquatic animals find cattail tubers to be tasty treats. Mosquitos use the stems and leaves to make their dens, and red-winged blackbirds attach their nests to the stems.
Four Principle Peaks of Interest

Lookout Place
Grizzly Mountain is 7,066 ft. Above, the geographic center of the Cascade Range, it offers a unique view of the terrain and the mountains surrounding it.

Huckleberry Harvest
Custer's famous Huckleberry Harvest was held in July. The event celebrated the local bounty of the huckleberry, which is the state fruit of Montana.

Hunting Ground
Field's Dairy Ranch, the home of Montana's favorite dairy products, was once a hunting ground for the indigenous people of the region.

Spiritual Spot
Mt. St. Joe's, the site of the St. Joe's Mission, is a spiritual retreat for those seeking peace and solitude.

From here you have a unique view of the distant mountains, framed by the low-lying hills in the foreground. Before you are four principle peaks, each significant to the tribal people who lived on these waters.
water potato leaves
MARSH INHABITANTS

- Wild Rice
- Red-winged Blackbird
- Caddis Fly Larvae
- Dragonfly
- Water Lily
- Water Boatman
- Frog
- Duck
- Muskrat
- Great Blue Heron

Artwork by Lakeside Elementary School 3rd & 4th Grade Students 19