Collectible Creatures

Here are some fun facts about the animals that live in the Canfield Preserve:

Bat
Bats are the only true flying mammals!
Bats use **echolocation** to hunt insects. They send out rapid pulses of sound and listen for the returning echo. This lets them “see” a picture of what the space around them looks like and where insects are. There are 8 species of bats in Connecticut. The little brown and big brown bats are the most common.

Bear (Black Bear)
The Black Bear is the only bear that lives in Connecticut.
The black bear's fur can vary from black to brown with a light color muzzle. Although they are small compared to other bears, an adult black bear often weighs much more than an average person. Bears have an amazing sense of smell, are smart, excellent tree climbers and swimmers.

Bee
Connecticut is home to over 300 different species of bees!
Many people are familiar with bumble and honey bees, but most of the bees in our area are **solitary** bees. They live alone in small nests in the ground, in cavities of wood or hollow stems.
Birds
In Connecticut, about 440 species of birds have been recorded. This includes native birds and migrant birds.
The birds you see in the area will be determined by the habitat they live in. Some of the common song birds found in Canfield woods are the cardinal, blue jay and chickadee.

Chipmunk
Chipmunks have large cheek pouches that they use for carrying their food back to their burrow. The pouches can expand to three times the size of their head!

Coyote
Coyotes don't live in packs like wolves but stay in family units. Males and females usually stay together for life and both are responsible for taking care of their young. Scientist have found that the eastern coyotes in our area are larger than their western cousins due to interbreeding with wolves and dogs.

Deer (White-Tailed Deer)
If you see a baby fawn in the woods don't worry, the mother deer will leave them alone for long periods of time to keep them safe from predators. Her scent in the area could give away their location so she only goes back for brief periods of time to nurse them. A mother will also leave to look for food.
Male deer’s antlers will begin growing in April, reach full size late in the summer, and fall off late November to December after breeding season is over. Deer can run up to 30 miles an hour and jump as high as 12-15 feet!

**Dragonfly**
Dragonflies catch their prey by grabbing it with their feet while they are flying. In one day, a single dragonfly can eat hundreds of mosquitoes! When dragonflies are in their larval stage, they live in the water and will eat tadpoles, fish, mosquitos and each other.

**Firefly**
Fireflies are not insects or bugs but beetles. Each species has its own light patterns and not all species create light.

**Fisher**
Many people incorrectly refer to Fishers as Fisher Cats. Fishers are not cats but are members of the weasel family. Fishers live in hollow trees, logs, rock crevices and nests of other animals. When hunting, they will zig-zag through thick forests, but when traveling in an open area they go in a straight line, hardly changing directions.
Fox
There are two types of foxes in Connecticut; the gray and red fox. The Gray fox is usually only active at night or nocturnal, while the red fox will appear at any time during the day but mostly hunt at night. A gray fox does not have a white-tip on its tail like the red fox. Foxes make all kinds of sounds from barks, howls to whines. Red foxes are more vocal than the Gray fox.
The Gray Fox will climb trees while hunting or for protection, they even jump from branch to branch!

Frog
There are 9 different frog species that make their home in Connecticut. Each of the frog species has a very distinctive sound. A group of frogs is called an army!
When the cold temperatures of winter hit, the wood frog freezes and then thaws in the spring.

Mouse
The white-footed mouse is the most common mouse in Connecticut. Other mice found in the area are the deer mouse, which look like the white-footed, the house mouse, jumping mouse, meadow jumping mouse and the woodland jumping mouse.
Moth
Moths are great impersonators! Many can look like animals, insects, flowers, bark and even bird poop to outwit predators.
Moths outnumber butterflies by a ratio of 9 to 1. That means that for every one butterfly you see, there are nine moths!

Opossum
When threatened; opossums will hiss, show their teeth and pretend to be dead. They may look a bit scary if you run into one, but they are non-aggressive critters who just want to be left alone.

Opossums make our woods safer by eating about 5,000 ticks a season!
Opossums are the only marsupial (pouched animals) found in the US.
It’s very rare for opossums to get rabies due to their low body temperature.

Owl
Connecticut is home to seven types of owls. The most common is the Barred Owl and can be heard during the day and night making noises that sound like “who, who cooks for you.”
Many owls have one ear that is higher or lower than the other, this helps them hear better.
Owls have special feathers that absorb sound, this allows them to fly without making any noise so they can sneak up on prey.
Owls eat their prey (like mice or rabbits) whole and regurgitate the bones and fur in the form of a pellet.
Rabbit
There are two types of rabbits in our area: the native New England and the eastern cottontail. They look alike but half of the eastern cottontails have a white, star shape on their forehead. Rabbits will communicate by thumping their hind feet. Rabbits eat their own poop!! They produce a special poop once a day that they ingest to give them extra nutrients they missed the first time around.

Raccoon
Racoons rinse or rub their food before eating it. It's not clear why but some ideas are that they are cleaning it, adding moisture to make it easier to eat or they just like touching their food. Racoons are omnivores. They will eat almost ANYTHING, including fish, nuts, fruits, insects, worms, birds and your garbage! Racoons have paws like our hands, which allow them to grasp and control objects. They can open latches, doors, jars and many other things.

Salamander
Connecticut has 12 species of salamanders. The species in Connecticut fall into four families: mole salamanders, lungless salamanders, mudpuppies and newts.
The eastern newt or red-spotted newt, is the only one in Connecticut.

**Skunk**

If you see a skunk stomping its feet and arching its tail, beware!!! To defend themselves, skunks will usually give a warning by stomping their feet and arching their tail before they spray. Skunks can spray up to 10 feet or more and will aim mostly for the eyes. Skunks adapt to all different habitats but prefer open fields and backyards. Most likely if you were to see a skunk in the Canfield Preserve, it would be at the edge of the woods near the surrounding homes.

**Snake**

Connecticut is home to 14 species of snakes. Only two of the species, the Copperhead and Timber rattlesnake, are considered venomous – they are capable of injecting a poisonous substance by biting. The snakes in our area are not aggressive and will only bite when threatened. The Gartersnake is one of the most common snakes in the area. It is also one of the first snakes to become active in the spring and one of the last to become inactive in the fall. Snakes do not hibernate but brumate in the winter. When snakes brumate, they gather together in a group where they are awake but inactive for the season.

**Squirrel (Eastern Gray Squirrel)**

The squirrels that inhabit the Canfield Preserve are the gray squirrels which are the largest and most common in Connecticut. The amount of gray squirrels vary from year to year due to acorn production. When the oak trees produce lots of acorns, squirrel populations grow. If there is a low production of acorns, squirrel
The Eastern gray squirrel is one of few **mammals** that can climb down a tree head-first.

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**Toad**

There are two types of toads that live in Connecticut - the Fowler's Toad and the American Toad. The warts on a toad's body contain glands that produce a poisonous milky fluid that protect them from **predators**. The poison is only harmful if it's swallowed or if it gets into the eyes. Toads do not drink water but absorb moisture through their skin.

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**Turkey**

Wild turkeys make all kind of sounds, but three sounds are the easiest to hear: 1) They will "purr" when eating, 2) Make a "put" sound when giving a warning, and 3) Males "gobble" during mating season. Turkeys love to eat acorns! They also **consume** nuts, seeds, fruit and insects. Turkeys sleep in trees at night.

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**Turtle**

There are about 12 species of turtles found in Connecticut. Eight of the species are freshwater and **terrestrial** turtles and the other four are sea turtles. Seven of the turtles in Connecticut are listed on the **Endangered**, **Threatened** and Special Concern list. When animals appear on this list, it means that the species has a very small population left and is in danger of being **extinct**. The nesting season for many turtles is May through July.
**Woodpecker**

There are 7 species of woodpeckers that live in our state.

Woodpeckers are important part of the forest ecosystem since they control insect population and the holes they create in trees are used as nesting areas by other birds and mammals.

Woodpeckers long, sticky, barbed tongue helps them get insects out of the crevices and holes of trees.

If you would like more information on the creatures listed above - take out a book at your local library, look online or visit a nature center.

Here are two great websites for additional information on Connecticut wildlife:

**DEEP Website - Animal Fact Sheets**

**CT Wildlife**