

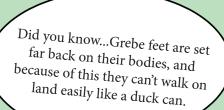


Western Grebe

(Aechmophorus occidentalis)









How to Identify:

- A slender bird with black-andwhite feathers, a yellow bill, and red eye.
- Western Grebes are Crow-sized.
- The head and most of the face are black, with white below the eye.

Habitat:

- Western Grebes nest on large freshwater lakes and marshes lined with reeds and rushes, and occasionally on rivers.
- Lake Cascade supports the largest number of nesting
 Western Grebes in the state.
- In 2017, 1,278 nest structures were counted in the colony at Lake Cascade.
- Floating nests are built in shallow water.





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More Fun Facts!

- They are famous for a ballet-like courtship display in which male and female "run" across the water together, their necks curved in an S-shape.
- Western Grebes swallow their own feathers as they preen. These feathers end up lining the stomach, where they may help protect against sharp fish bones.





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Help Protect the Western Grebe

- Western Grebes are a Species of Greatest Conservation Need in Idaho
- Help with recycling of fishing line to avoid birds being entangled
- When boating on lakes, stay 300 feet away from nest colonies and watch your wake to avoid swamping nests
- Minimize use of pesticides

ACTIVITY TIME

Look for information on the history of Western Grebe feathers being used in the past to make coats, capes, and hats. How did that impact their population?
Watch a video of Western Grebes <i>dancing</i> during courtship. How woul you describe the <i>dance</i> ?

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VOCABULARY

- Habitat: the natural environment in which an animal or plant usually lives
- Reeds and Rushes: wetland plants
- Conservation: careful preservation and protection of something
- Regurgitate: bring food back up from the stomach before it has been digested
- Pesticide: a chemical preparation for destroying plant, fungal, or animal pests

Thanks to the Idaho Department of Fish and Game for wildlife information.