

## Western Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*)



Flora  
Fauna



### How to Identify:

- A slender bird with black-and-white 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.

Did you know...Grebe feet are set far back on their bodies, and because of this they can't walk on land easily like a duck can.

Explore Idaho  
with Scout the Fox!

Scout



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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.

**COLOR ME**





# Portals to Parks



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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?

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Watch a video of Western Grebes *dancing* during courtship. How would you describe the *dance*?

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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

# NOTES

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