

# Wildlife in Modoc County, California

## Overview

Modoc County, in the far northeast corner of California, is a vast high-desert region known for its open spaces, volcanic landscapes, and diverse ecosystems. With mountains, wetlands, forests, and grasslands, the county provides critical habitat for hundreds of wildlife species.

## Mammals

- Pronghorn Antelope – Wide-ranging across sagebrush plains.
- Rocky Mountain Elk – Reintroduced populations thrive in the Warner Mountains.
- Mule Deer – Common in forests and rangelands.
- Coyotes, Bobcats, and Mountain Lions – Predators found across habitats.
- American Black Bear – In forested areas of the Warner Mountains.
- Small mammals – Jackrabbits, ground squirrels, marmots, beavers, and muskrats.

## Birds

- Bald Eagles – Modoc is one of California's top wintering areas.
- Sandhill Cranes – Seen in wetlands during migration.
- Waterfowl – Ducks, geese, and swans fill the wetlands of the Modoc National Wildlife Refuge.
- Greater Sage-Grouse – Found in sagebrush habitat.
- Raptors – Hawks, owls, and falcons are abundant.

## Reptiles & Amphibians

- Western Rattlesnake – Common in rocky and sagebrush areas.
- Gopher Snake, Kingsnake, and Whipsnake – Non-venomous species.
- Frogs and Toads – Found in ponds, streams, and wetlands.

## Fish

- Rainbow Trout – Stocked in streams and lakes.
- Eagle Lake Trout – Unique species native to nearby Eagle Lake.
- Bass, Catfish, and Perch – In reservoirs and lakes.

## Key Wildlife Areas

- Modoc National Wildlife Refuge – Wetland habitat for waterfowl, cranes, and raptors.
- Lava Beds National Monument – Volcanic terrain with bats, reptiles, and birds of prey.
- South Warner Wilderness – Elk, deer, black bear, and high-mountain bird species.
- Modoc National Forest – Large, diverse habitat for most species listed above.

## Conservation Notes

- Modoc County is critical for migratory birds along the Pacific Flyway.
- Sage-grouse habitat is under conservation management due to declining populations.
- Seasonal hunting is allowed under California regulations for deer, antelope, upland birds, and waterfowl.