

Oregon honors lark, beaver among the 'official' species

The scissor-tailed flycatcher holds the title in Oklahoma. In Vermont it's the hermit thrush. All 50 states, in fact,

have chosen official state birds and many have also named official mammals, trees, and flowers. Eighteen

states have gone so far as to designate official state insects. The complete lists can be

found in a new publication available free from the National Wildlife Federation—“Official Birds, Mammals,

Trees, Flowers, Insects, and Fish of the U.S., Territories, and Possessions.” The NWF pamphlet reveals

that the most honored bird in the U.S. is the cardinal, which is the official bird in seven states (Illinois, Indiana, Ken-

ucky, North Carolina, Ohio, Virginia, and West Virginia), perhaps in gratitude for the bird's helpful habit of feeding

on the destructive boll weevil and codling moth. Two states chose endangered species for their state bird: Hawaii took the nene (Hawaiian goose), and Louisiana, the brown pelican.

Oregon's state bird is the western meadowlark, chosen in 1927 in a poll of school children conducted by the Oregon Audubon Society.

The most popular official mammal among the 23 states that have named one is the white-tailed deer, chosen by South Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Mississippi. Three states appointed endangered mammals as their mascots: Connecticut, the sperm whale; Florida, the manatee; and Hawaii, the humpback whale.

Virginia declined to name a state mammal, but chose instead to appoint an official state dog: the foxhound, of course, in honor of the state's renowned fox hunts. Maryland also named an official state dog—the Chesapeake Bay retriever, while Idaho calls the Appaloosa its official state horse.

Oregon's state animal is the American beaver, designated in 1969 by the State Legislature.

Every state has an official tree, and 18 chose a conifer—from the longleaf pine (Alabama) to the Black Hills spruce (South Dakota). Other popular species are the oak, elm, and maple, while Mississippi, naturally, chose the magnolia.

Mississippi also named the magnolia its official state flower, as did Louisiana. Five states and the District of Columbia decided that a rose, by any name, is sweet. So, D.C. went with the American Beauty rose; Georgia, the Cherokee rose; Iowa, the wild rose; North Dakota, the wild prairie rose; and New York, which isn't picky, just the rose.

Oregon's choice of flower is the Oregon grape, named by the Legislature in 1899.

Of the 18 states that decided to designate an official insect, nine chose the honeybee, that helpful pollinator. Connecticut honors the praying mantis, the gardener's delight, while California went with the yellow and black dogface butterfly. Oregon has no official insect.

As for official fish, 26 states were lured into naming one. Bass, both large and small-mouth, white, and striped, were chosen by ten states. Nine states named five varieties of trout—golden, rainbow, brook, steelhead, and the black spotted cutthroat, which is endangered in its sponsor state of Montana. Oregon's official fish is the chinook salmon, named by the 1961 Legislature.

For a copy of “Official Birds, Mammals, Trees, Flowers, Insects, and Fish of the U.S., Territories, and Possessions,” write the National Wildlife Federation, Dept. 10, 1412 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Single copies are free; additional copies are 5 cents each.

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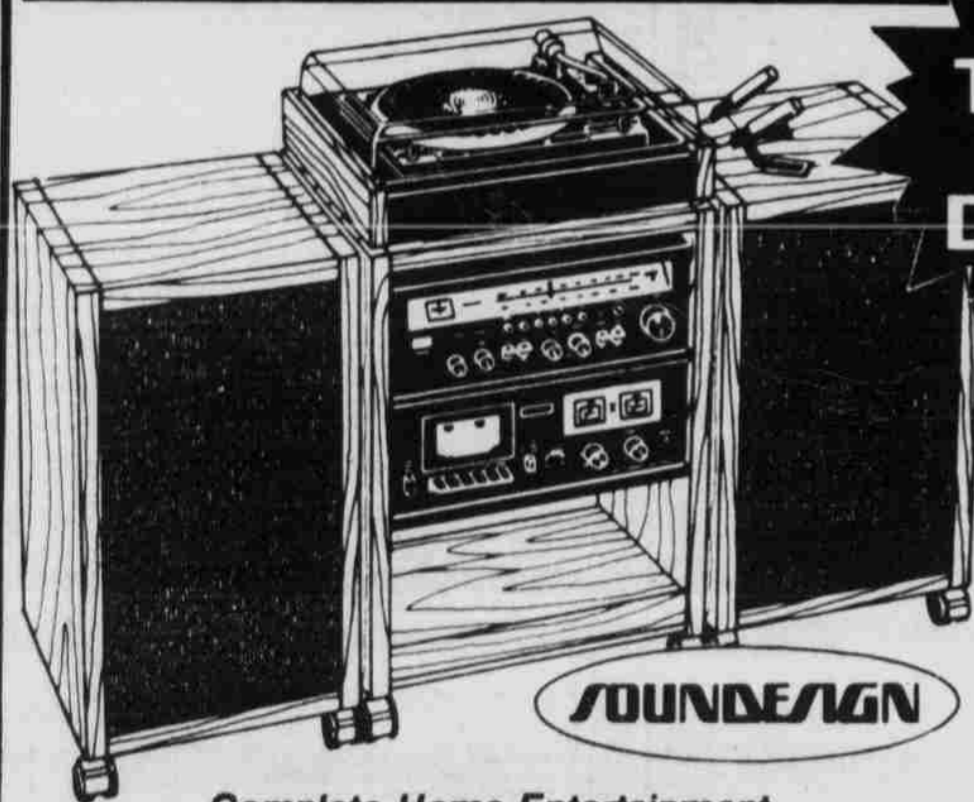
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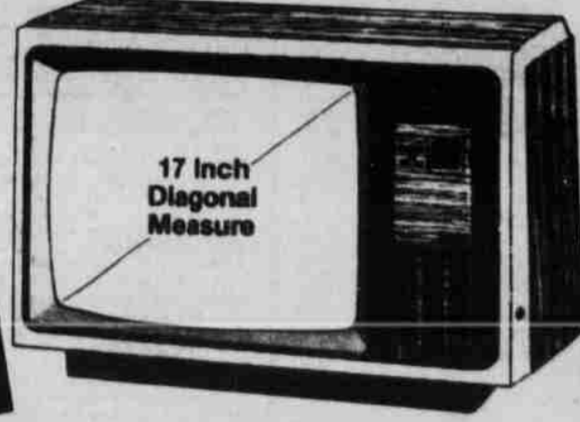
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