State Amphibian  Pacific chorus frog

In 2007, the Pacific chorus frog, Pseudacris regilla, was designated as the official amphibian of the State of Washington. Because Pacific chorus frogs live in every county in the state and on both sides of the Cascades, they are an excellent choice as an emblem for the whole state. The Pacific chorus frog is charming and makes beautiful sounds. Less than two inches long, they swell their throat sacs to three times the ... tan, grey or green. A native amphibian, it is preyed upon by bullfrogs, snakes, raccoons, shorebirds, hawks and ducks.

State Bird  Willow Goldfinch

The goldfinch is a delicate little bird with a yellow body and black wings, and although it eventually became the official state bird, many other birds were considered for the title. In 1928, legislators let school children select the state bird and the meadowlark won hands-down. It was a nice choice but seven other states already had chosen the same bird. Another vote was taken in 1931 by the Washington Federation of Women’s Clubs. Many birds were nominated, but the goldfinch won handily over the tanager, song sparrow, junco and pileated woodpecker.

Now there were two state birds and the Legislature decided to leave the final choice to school children. In 1951, children voted for the goldfinch and the Legislature made it unanimous. The bird is now referred to as the American Goldfinch.

State Dance  Square Dance

On April 17, 1979, the square dance became the official Washington state dance. When the pioneers came west, they brought with them a dance called the quadrille, which means “a dance.” The quadrille was later simplified to the square dance by early settlers. The dance is known for its series of figures and footwork. Dancers are directed by a caller. It is easy to learn, a good form of exercise, and fun.

State Song  “Washington, My Home”

The state song, “Washington, My Home,” was written by Helen Davis, arranged by Stuart Churchill, and became the official state song in 1939. But, like the goldfinch, it had some stiff competition from another popular song. Back in 1909, “Washington Beloved” was adopted, sort of, by the Legislature. Professor Edmond Meany, the historian, wrote the words and Reginald de Koven wrote the music. But this song was never formally introduced as a bill and so was not part of the state’s code of law. When a state senator from South Bend introduced a bill in 1939 to make “Washington, My Home” our state song, it was approved unanimously.

State Tartan

A tartan is a design for the weaving of cloth consisting of perpendicular bands of contrasting colors on a solid background. The Washington State tartan was designed by Vancouver, USA Country Dancers to commemorate the Washington State Centennial celebration. The background color green represents the rich forests of Washington, the “Evergreen State.” The perpendicular bands of contrasting colors represent the following features: blue for the lakes, rivers and ocean; white for the snow-capped mountains; for the apple and cherry crops; yellow for the wheat and grain crops; and black for the eruption of Mt. St. Helens. The bill, designating a state tartan, was signed into law in 1991. The Council of the Scottish Tartans Society also affixed its seal to the official Certificate of Accreditation in 1991.

State Vegetable  Walla Walla sweet onion

In 2007, the Walla Walla sweet onion was designated as the official vegetable of the state of Washington. The Walla Walla Sweet is from Walla Walla and indeed, this sweet onion is only grown properly in the Walla Walla Valley. The Walla Walla Sweet finds its origins on the island of Corsica. Over a century ago, a retired French soldier named Peter Pieri found a sweet onion seed there and brought it to the Walla Walla Valley. The sweet onion had impressive winter hardiness well-suited for the climate of southeastern Washington. Soon Pieri and many Italian immigrants in the area began harvesting the seed. After several generations of careful hand selection, the sweet onion developed greater sweetness, size, and shape. Today, there are approximately 40 growers producing Walla Walla Sweet onions on 1,200 acres of farmland in the Walla Walla Valley. Sweet onion season is mid-June through September and, since 1984, Walla Walla has celebrated the Sweet Onion Festival every July.

The measure was a class project for a seventh-grade honors social-studies class at Eatonville Middle School. In prior years, the bill had also been a project of a Kirkland Junior high school.
State Fish  
**Steelhead Trout**

The steelhead trout is an anadromous fish, meaning it returns to fresh water rivers to spawn. The scales of the steelhead shine flecks of silver with a gray spotted back from head to tail and an intensely white belly; the two colors separated by a hint of opalescent pink. Steelhead trout is one of the most popular fish for recreational fishing, a major industry in Washington State. The steelhead trout *Salmo gairdnerii* was adopted by the Legislature as a state symbol in 1969.

State Fossil  
**Columbian Mammoth**

Following a four-year effort by students from Windsor Elementary School near Cheney to have this behemoth designated as our state fossil, the Legislature recognized in 1998 that the large, hairy prehistoric elephants of the extinct genus *Mammutthus* roamed the North American continent, including the Pacific Northwest, during the Pleistocene epoch (ice ages).

The first North American mammoths migrated across the Bering Strait from Asia down through Alaska about two million years ago. Nearly all mammoths died out about 10,000 years ago. From studies based on deposits of the Columbian mammoths *M. columbi* it is clear that grasses featured prominently in their diets. The maximum life expectancy of the mammoth would have been 60 to 65 years. The males grew to the size of modern adult elephants; females were about half that size. Several years ago, fossils of the Columbian mammoth were found on the Olympic Peninsula.

State Grass  
**Bluebunch Wheatgrass**

While many state symbols are readily identifiable with the western part of the state, bluebunch wheatgrass is a state symbol that is unique to eastern Washington. Bluebunch wheatgrass was a blessing to Washington’s pioneer farmers and continues to play a major role in our agriculture industry today. It was adopted by the 1989 Legislature as the official state grass. Its botanical name is *Agropyron spicatum*.

State Flag  
**Coast Rhododendron**

In 1892, before they had the right to vote, Washington women selected the coast rhododendron as the state flower. They wanted an official flower to enter in a floral exhibit at the 1893 World’s Fair in Chicago. Six flowers were considered, but the final decision was narrowed to clover and the “rhodie,” and voting booths were set up for ladies throughout the state. When the ballots were counted, the rhododendron had been chosen as the Washington state flower. In 1959, the Legislature designated the native species *Rhododendron macrophyllum* as the official flower of the state of Washington.

State Insect  
**Green Darner Dragonfly**

In 1997, the common green darner dragonfly, *Anax junius Drury*, became Washington’s official state insect after a group of students at Crestwood Elementary School in Kent brought the idea to the Legislature. Students from school districts statewide participated in the selection of the common green darner dragonfly. Also known as the “mosquito hawk,” this insect can be found throughout Washington and is a beneficial contributor to the ecosystem because it consumes a large number of insect pests. It is easily recognizable by its bright green head and thorax, it has a 4- to 6-inch wingspan and can fly 25 to 35 mph. There are over 400 different species of dragonflies. Dragonflies existed prior to the dinosaur age and some had up to a 3-foot wing span. “Darner” is one family of dragonflies and the common green *Anax junius* was first sighted and recorded by Drury in 1773.

State Flower  
**Columbian Mammoth**

Washington is the nation’s top apple-producing state, so it is appropriate that the apple was named a state symbol in 1989. The apple comes in many different colors, sizes and varieties. From the beautiful blossoms of spring, to the heavily laden branches in autumn, the apple trees of Washington state were about half that size. Several years ago, fossils of the Columbian mammoth were found on the Olympic Peninsula.

State Fruit  
**Petriﬁ ed Wood**

The geological history of our state has encompassed many great changes, one of them being the many lava flows from volcanic fissures. Centuries ago, the interior of Washington was swampy and mild with many trees such as cypress, oak, elm and gingko growing in wet areas. Layers of logs were preserved with each new lava flow, and as the layers grew deeper, many of the logs became waterlogged and lay protected in deep water. Over time, water continued to seep through the lava and permeate the wood with silica. Eventually, the wood fiber was completely replaced by silica thus petrifying many logs. The petrified wood is perfect in form and detail to the original wood. In 1975, petrified wood was adopted as the state gem. The best place to see petrified wood is the Gingko Petrified Forest State Park in Vantage.

State Gem  
**Orca**

As a result of 2-years of research and persuasion by second graders from the Crescent Harbor Elementary School in Oak Harbor, the legislature designated the orca, Orcinus orca, as the official marine mammal of the state of Washington in 2005. Many people visit Washington state to watch orcas; the orca is a significant symbol for the Native American culture; there are pods of orcas that migrate annually through Puget Sound; and the orca is easily recognizable because of its distinct markings. The designation is intended to promote orca awareness and to encourage protection of the natural marine habitat.

State Folk Song  
**“Roll On, Columbia, Roll On”**

In the early 1940s, the federal Bonneville Power Administration produced a movie encouraging rural residents in the Pacific Northwest to electrify their homes and farms with the power being generated by the newly-built Bonneville and Grand Coulee Dams on the Columbia River. As part of the project, BPA hired folk singer Woody Guthrie at $270 for 30 days to write songs for the movie. Guthrie wrote 26 songs, the most popular of which was “Roll On, Columbia, Roll On,” an ode to the harnessing of Washington’s mightiest river. It was approved as the official Washington state folk song by the Legislature in 1987.

State Seal  
**Bluebunch Wheatgrass**

In 1889, jeweler Charles Talcott designed our first state seal using an ink bottle, silver dollar and a postage stamp. Talcott’s brother, L. Grant Talcott, lettered the words, “The Seal of the State of Washington, 1889,” and another brother, G.N. Talcott, cut the printing die.