UNIT 4
People and Wildlife

Who is Responsible for Wildlife?

By law, Iowa wildlife belongs to everyone. This means that even when lands or waters are privately owned, the free ranging wildlife living on them is not.

Wildlife is held in trust for everyone in the state. Everyone has a vested interest in wildlife. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) is the primary agency responsible for maintaining state parks and forests, protecting the environment, and managing energy, fish, wildlife, and land and water resources in the state. IDNR works with federal agencies, other state agencies, county government, and private organizations and individuals to manage wildlife resources for all Iowans.

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is the federal agency responsible for management of migratory birds, wildlife within National Parks and Refuges, and federally endangered or threatened species (in cooperation with states). Management responsibilities for migratory birds also are shared with Canada and Mexico under the terms of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918.

Other agencies may be involved with wildlife. State and county law enforcement officers work with IDNR conservation officers to enforce conservation laws. County conservation boards (CCB's), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE), municipalities, and others own and manage recreation areas that provide wildlife habitat and often are involved in wildlife issues. CCB's also provide quality outdoor recreation and education opportunities in their counties. Every Iowa county has a CCB with local citizen representatives.

Private organizations contribute to natural resource conservation. The Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation and the Iowa Chapter of The Nature Conservancy work with private landowners to insure protection of unique habitats. Prairies, wetlands, bottomland timbers, and oak-hickory forests have been set aside for wildlife and people to enjoy by the efforts of these and other private groups. Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited, the National Turkey Federation, and others provide funding for wildlife enhancements on private and public lands and for the public acquisition of important habitat areas.

Most Iowa land (92 percent) is privately owned. IDNR, CCB's, and private conservation groups work with landowners to help them farm, develop, and live in ways that allow areas for wildlife too. Ultimately, wildlife is everyone's responsibility.

The IDNR director works with a citizen board (Conservation Commission) appointed by the governor to form policy and plans of action. Agency professionals enact these through wildlife management, research, education, and law enforcement activities. Following is a table describing major responsibilities of some IDNR wildlife professionals:

Title	Activities
research biologist	monitor wildlife populations; conduct research; recommend harvest strategies, seasons, bag limits, & other laws regarding wildlife species
management biologist	manage & maintain Iowa's public wildlife land; assist landowners to improve & enhance wildlife or manage habitat
private lands biologist	work with landowners to enhance habitat on private land (through conservation programs)
damage management biologist	work with landowners, municipalities, & others to resolve issues stemming from damage by wildlife (mostly deer)
wildlife specialist	work with landowners to provide technical assistance & deliver federal conservation programs
conservation officer (CO)	enforce wildlife laws
recreation safety officer (RSO)	enforce wildlife laws; educate public about outdoor recreation (hunting, trapping, snowmobile, ATV, & boating safety)

Laws

Laws dealing with migratory birds are designed at the federal level. They can be complex because various states and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) are involved. They are introduced by a congressperson, begin in the House of Representatives or Senate as a bill, and are assigned to a committee. If the proposal is passed in one chamber, the other chamber must then pass it in the same form. If it is not passed in the same form, a conference committee must meet and agree on the changes. After approval from both the House and Senate, the bill goes to the President and if signed, becomes a law. These laws provide state guidelines. The USFWS also sets many guidelines for wildlife management involving federally endangered and threatened species.

State rules (hunting seasons, bag limits) cannot be less restrictive than federal guidelines, but states can add limitations. For example, mourning doves are considered migratory game birds and are hunted in some states, but Iowa does not allow a hunting season on mourning doves–Iowa's rules for harvest are more restrictive (no harvest) than guidelines set by the USFWS.

The state legislature follows procedures similar to Congress to enact laws pertaining to Iowa's wildlife. Species not covered under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act fall under state jurisdiction. IDNR is the principle agency responsible for the management and conservation of wildlife in Iowa. It has statutory authority and responsibility for protecting the environment and managing fish, wildlife, and land and water resources in the state (455A.2 Code of Iowa).

IDNR biologists make recommendations for wildlife laws based on population trends reflected in research and social factors, including landowner tolerance for certain species. All rules and regulations regarding wildlife must conform to many legislative and administrative guidelines.

Who Pays for Wildlife Programs?

Hunters and anglers historically have financed the greatest share of fish and wildlife management programs through purchase of licenses, tags, stamps, and habitat fees as well as excise taxes paid on equipment. These fund most IDNR wildlife programs. Sources of funding for wildlife agencies determine, to varying degrees, program priorities and objectives.

Licenses and Fees

Hunters must purchase a license and pay a wildlife habitat fee to hunt legally in Iowa. They also are required to purchase a Federal Migratory Waterfowl Stamp (duck stamp) and pay an Iowa Migratory Game Bird Fee, if they plan to hunt waterfowl (e.g., ducks, geese) or other migratory birds. These fees fund waterfowl habitat acquisition or enhancement. Hunters also must pay an additional fee for a tag to hunt certain species (e.g., deer, turkey).

In Iowa, an estimated 370,000 people buy hunting licenses each year. Hunters spend more than five million days afield and boost Iowa's economy by more than $444 million. The white-tailed deer is among the most popular game species in Iowa. More than $4 million is generated from the sale of deer tags each year. Millions more are spent in Iowa communities for fuel, lodging, clothing, and equipment.

Hunters and trappers must also pay a habitat fee. This fee generates money for habitat acquisition and improvement in Iowa. Half the money raised through habitat fees goes to county conservation boards for approved habitat projects.

Landowners and tenants (at least 10 acres) do not need to purchase a hunting license to hunt on their land. But, they must have a resident deer or turkey tag to hunt these animals. They also must buy a Federal Migratory Waterfowl Stamp and pay the Iowa Migratory Game Bird Fee to hunt waterfowl and other migratory game birds on their property.

Persons wishing to work with wild animals for research, educational, or rehabilitation purposes must apply for and purchase special permits. These special permits include: scientific collectors' permits, educational project permits, wildlife salvage permits, and wildlife rehabilitation permits.

IDNR publishes *Iowa Hunting Regulations* each year. Seasons, fees, and rules change year to year. Consult this booklet, check the IDNR web page (www.iowadnr.gov), or call your local conservation officer for more information.

Wildlife Restoration Act

The Pittman-Robertson Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act was enacted in 1937 to provide funds to benefit game animals. Funds from this program are derived from a manufacturers' excise tax (11%) on sporting rifles, shotguns, ammunition, and archery equipment used in hunting, and handguns (10%). Taxes are collected by the U.S. Treasury Department and allocated to state wildlife management departments through the USFWS. Nationally, this program generates $342 million each year. Funds must be used for wildlife restoration, conservation, management, enhancement of wild birds and mammals, and to enhance public use of and benefits from these resources. Funds also may be used to educate hunters and archers in the skill, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to be responsible hunters.

"After all these years of effort to find some formula of conservation which would work I am convinced that until a new generation is taught in the public schools man's utter dependence on natural resources, until the teachers of Botany, Chemistry, Biology, and Geology emphasize the functions rather than the terminology of their respective sciences; until in fact we have a majority of the American public schooled in the fundamental principles of conservation, criminal waste will continue to reduce our heritage of natural resources. If you will begin to work soon on the youth now in grade schools, it will not be too awfully late. To me, education has become the only pathway that can lead us out of the doldrums." ***-J.N. "Ding" Darling***

Stamps

The Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp Act was initiated in 1934. Iowan J. N. "Ding" Darling, a nationally known political cartoonist for the *Des Moines Register*, spearheaded this effort and designed the first Federal Duck Stamp. The Act required all waterfowl hunters to purchase a duck stamp in addition to their hunting license. Funds from these stamps help acquire wetlands and other areas for wildlife habitat. Nationally, over $406 million has been generated since the program began.

Iowa's Migratory Bird Game Fee (formerly the state duck stamp) generates between $150,000 and $200,000 annually. Hunters must pay this fee, in addition to purchasing a Federal Migratory Waterfowl Stamp, to hunt ducks, geese, and other migratory game birds in Iowa. Revenues are used to match Prairie Pothole Joint Venture (PPJV) funds from the USFWS to acquire areas used principally for waterfowl production.

IDNR has targeted the prairie pothole region of Iowa to create wetland and grassland complexes to benefit waterfowl and other wildlife species. Since 1987, IDNR has acquired approximately 50,000 acres of habitat using funds from PPJV, Iowa migratory game bird fees, and private conservation organizations such as Ducks Unlimited and Pheasants Forever.

Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) Act

The Iowa legislature passed landmark legislation in 1989–the REAP Act. It originally was designed to secure $30 million annually for ten years for conservation and natural resource projects in the state. Funding has never reached that level and currently ranges between seven to $10 million per year. Funds are allocated by the Iowa legislature each year.

Individuals also can support REAP by purchasing a REAP license plate. Introduced in 1995, these plates feature the Iowa state bird (goldfinch) and flower (wild rose). The additional $35 issuing fee goes directly to the REAP fund, as does the $10 renewal fee.

REAP provides funds for conservation education, IDNR open spaces land acquisition and development, county conservation boards, soil and water conservation districts, city park and recreation departments, state parks, historical resources, and Iowa roadsides.

REAP has had an important impact on all aspects of wildlife conservation in Iowa. REAP commonly is viewed as a land acquisition program, but most of the annual appropriation is used for developments, education, and conservation program support.

The following chart gives a brief overiew of different REAP programs.

REAP Program	Activities
Conservation education ($350,000 of each annual appropriation)	assistance to teachers & naturalists for continuing conservation education stipends; grants for preparing conservation education materials
Soil and Water Enhancement (20% of REAP funds)	available to landowners for soil & water conservation, enhancement projects & practices; directed toward reforestation, woodland protection & enhancement, wildlife habitat preservation & enhancement, protection of highly erodible soils, water quality protection
Open Space (28% of REAP funds)	allocated to DNR for state acquisition & development of lands and waters; 1/2 directed to land acquisition, 1/2 to facility developments
County Conservation (20% of REAP funds)	available to counties for land easements or acquisition, capital improvements, stabilization & protection of resources, repair & upgrading of facilities, environmental education, equipment
City Parks and Open Space (15% of REAP funds)	available to cities through competitive grants for parkland expansion & multi-purpose recreation developments; *not* available for single or multipurpose athletic fields, baseball or softball diamonds, tennis courts, golf courses, other organized sport facilities, swimming pools, playground equipment
DNR Land Management (9% of REAP fund)	available to DNR for development & management of state conservation lands; e.g., trail renovation, shower & rest room replacement, repairs to lodges, shelters, & cabins, minor repair of dams, spillways, parking lots, & beaches
Historical Resource Development Program (5% of REAP funds)	grants available to private individuals & businesses, non-profit organizations, agencies of Certified Local Governments; 3 categories: historic preservation, library & archives, museums
Roadside Vegetation (3% of REAP funds)	available through the Department of Transportation for state, county, & city management of roadside vegetation to introduce native prairie species in the right-of-ways; establishment of attractive gateways into cities

Nongame Funding

The Wildlife Diversity Program was formed in 1981. It was funded through the sale of Nongame Support Certificates (collectible photographs of Iowa's nongame wildlife) and voluntary contributions made through the "Chickadee Checkoff" on state income tax forms. These sources provided around $200,000 annually for several years, but the check-off funds began a steady decline as more and more organizations requested donations on the income tax form.

Stable, predictable funding was needed to keep the Wildlife Diversity Program afloat. Nationally, the Teaming With Wildlife (TWW) Coalition was formed with the help of the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (IAFWA). More than 3,000 conservation organizations signed on to this effort. TWW proposed a user fee or excise tax on equipment and other items used in nonconsumptive recreational activities (cameras, bird seed, hiking boots, camping equipment, etc.), similar to the tax on hunting and angling equipment. Even after years of lobbying, there was not enough congressional support to impose a "tax."

Alternative legislation, the Conservation and Reinvestment Act (CARA) proposes "reinvesting" revenue from oil and gas development leases in the outer continental shelf into wildlife conservation, education, and recreation in all 50 states. It would mean $4.7 million annually for Iowa's nongame wildlife and an additional $5.2 million for state and local parks.

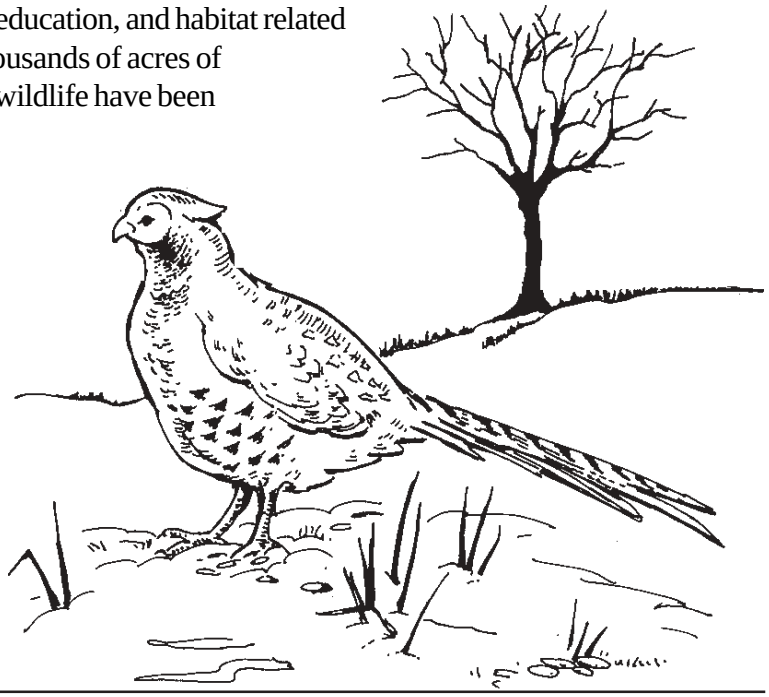
The Department of the Interior budgeted $80 million for state wildlife programs for 2002, but this was an one-year appropriation. Grant monies were available to states to reintroduce wildlife species, restore degraded habitat, enhance recreational opportunities, and create wildlife education projects.

The Wildlife Diversity Program is responsible for the research, education, monitoring, and management of Iowa's non-game wildlife (80 percent of all wildlife; more than 400 species). Its priorities are to 1) prevent species from becoming threatened or endangered; 2) maintain viable, self-sustaining populations of all native species; and 3) promote public education regarding Iowa's diverse wildlife resources. Bald eagles, bluebirds, peregrine falcons, river otters, bats, frogs, white pelicans, trumpeter swans, and others benefit from this program.

Conservation Groups

Private conservation organizations get most of their funding from membership fees, donations, grants, and sales of wildlife-featured items. Iowa groups include Pheasants Forever, Izaak Walton League, Iowa Wildlife Federation, Ducks Unlimited, National Wild Turkey Federation, White-tails Unlimited, Quail Unlimited, The Nature Conservancy, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, Trees Forever, Audubon Society, Iowa Association of Naturalists, Iowa Environmental Council, Iowa Ornithologist Union, Iowa Conservation Education Council, Iowa Prairie Network, Iowa Student Environmental Coalition, Iowa Wildlife Rehabilitators Association, Practical Farmers of America, Hawkeye Fly Fishing Association, Trout Unlimited, Basss Anglers Sportsman Society, and Iowa Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts. See the *Resource Guide* for more information.

These organizations are critical partners in wildlife conservation. For example, Pheasants Forever has more than18,000 members in Iowa. They raise several million dollars for habitat developments, land acquisitions, education, and habitat related equipment purchases in Iowa each year. Thousands of acres of winter food and cover and nesting cover for wildlife have been established.



Importance of Wildlife

People have utilized wildlife throughout the ages. Prehistoric people, Native Americans, and Euro-American settlers depended on wildlife for food, clothing, and even shelter. Wildlife is often a part of many Native American religious ceremonies.

Biodiversity

Biodiversity describes a variety of natural systems (ecosystem diversity), the number of different species in a given area (species diversity), or variety within individual living things (genetic diversity).

Iowa's biodiversity has declined over the past century due to intensive agriculture and urban development. Iowa has the unfortunate distinction as being perhaps the most ecologically altered state in the nation. We have lost over 99 percent of our native prairies, 95 percent of our wetlands, and 70 percent of our forests. Native ecosystems were reduced in size and diversity. Many species of wildlife declined in numbers or disappeared from the state.

Each plant and animal species may represent solutions to biological problems. Plants and animals provide medicines, food, and fibers. Most advances in biological and medical research have come through the studies of wild, or formerly wild, animals and plants. Individual animals and plants also contribute to the well-being of the ecosystems they inhabit. If even one, seemingly unimportant, species is removed this delicate balance may be disturbed. People have only begun to understand the intricate relationships among species. A species becoming extinct creates situations that cannot be reversed.

Maintaining biodiversity is an important goal of wildlife management. For example, the IDNR prairie seed harvest team grows their own plants to augment prairie plantings on both public and private lands. Adding established plants (especially forbes) to new prairie seedings increases their diversity. IDNR also is reintroducing species into suitable habitats to increase biodiversity. (See the earlier sections on habitat restoration and reintroductions.)

Recreation

People have always been dependent on wildlife. They used wildlife for food, clothing, shelter, utensils, medicines, and religious objects throughout history. In the United States, wildlife now is more important for recreation. Food and fur are still important products of hunting and trapping, but many value being outdoors and/or hunting with friends as much as, or more than, gathering food.

Non-consumptive uses of wildlife include bird watching, wildlife photography, feeding birds, landscaping for wildlife, hiking, bicycling, backpacking, camping, canoeing, etc. Recent state park visitor profiles show these forms of recreation are increasing. Eighty-one percent of Iowans say they participate in viewing wildlife. Nearly half travel away from their homes to view or photograph wildlife.

Aesthetic and Ethical Value

Other wildlife values are less tangible than maintaining stable ecosystems or providing recreation. If wildlife had no other value it would still be worth preserving for its sheer beauty and appeal to the human spirit. Aldo Leopold, an Iowan, author, and great conservationist, wrote of a "land ethic" in which plants and animals should have "at least in spots, their continued existence in a natural state." According to Leopold, humans must change from "conqueror of the land community to a plain member and citizen of it." His sentiments give definition to the aesthetic and ethical values of wildlife.

Values related to wildlife are expressed in many different cultures through legends, myths, religious teachings and writings, symbols, protocols, and ceremonies. To a citizen of the United States, the bald eagle is much more than a large bird of prey. It symbolizes many things–freedom, power, courage. It has values beyond that of its place in the natural world. These values vary from person to person and culture to culture.

What You Can Do To Help Wildlife

Think Habitat! Wildlife populations are limited by the availability of quality habitat. Anything that helps habitat, helps wildlife! Following are just a few ways individuals can get involved:

Learn About Wildlife and Make Some Connections

Educational seminars, programs, and workshops about wildlife are offered by numerous agencies. Visit your local county conservation board, state or county park, or nature center to learn how you can participate in such events.

Join a conservation organization. These organizations provide opportunities to participate in wildlife conservation through local wildlife projects, fund-raising events, or other activities.

These groups and conservation agencies have many volunteer opportunities. A local Pheasants Forever chapter may be looking for volunteers to assist with wildlife habitat planting. The Iowa Nature Conservancy enlists volunteers to assist with collection of prairie seeds, prairie burns, fencing newly acquired lands, and other projects. IDNR uses volunteers to construct and monitor nest boxes, conduct surveys of certain wildlife species, give educational programs, pick native eco-type (genetic) seeds for prairie re-establishment, help do maintenance work in parks, and monitor water quality. The opportunities are endless, pick your special interest and get involved.

See the *Resource Guide* for more information about specific agencies and organizations.

Private Land Management

The IDNR, CCB's, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), and private consulting businesses can help landowners with programs that protect and/or enhance wildlife habitat. Easements protect and restore certain habitats. The Wetland Reserve Program, for example, offers financial incentives for creating long-term easements on lands suitable for wetland restoration. See the *Resource Guide* for programs that benefit wildlife.

Suitable lands may be sold or donated to IDNR, CCB's, or private conservation organizations so more people may enjoy their recreational and aesthetic benefits. Hayden Prairie in northeast Iowa is such a donation. Ada Hayden donated this 240-acre native prairie to the State of Iowa in 1968. It is the largest black soil prairie in Iowa and is considered a National Natural Landmark. Ms. Hayden looked to the future and took initiative to preserve a valuable natural resource.

Political Advocacy

You can become active politically to support wildlife. Monitor wildlife legislation so you will be more informed about laws and actions. Citizens have great power to influence lawmakers at the local, state, and national levels. Elected lawmakers are your representatives. Supporting legislation that has positive effects on wildlife species and habitat conservation can have lasting and far-reaching impacts. A personal phone call, email, fax, or letter to your county supervisor, senator, representative, or congressperson can make a big difference to wildlife and wildlife habitat for the future.

Private organizations and web pages monitor environmental legislation. They can act as a clearing-house for this information, so it does not become too overwhelming. See the *Resource Guide* for more information.

Help Your Conservation Officer

of iowa, inc.

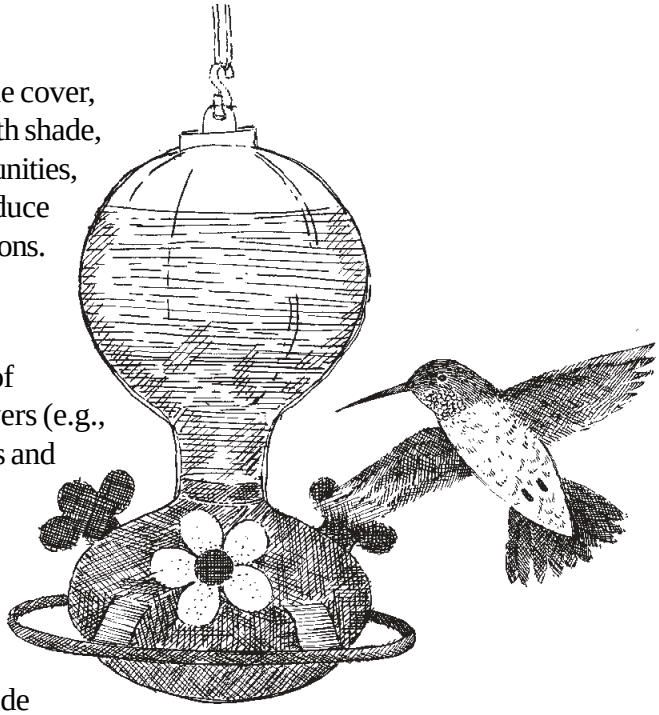
1-800-532-2020

Obey all wildlife laws. Use the Turn In Poachers (TIP) number (1-800-532-2020) to report a wildlife violation in Iowa. Give as much information as possible to the operator. Include the description of the violator, vehicle, time, place, and what happened. You can remain anonymous.

If you find an injured or definitely orphaned (adult not returning) animal, contact your local IDNR conservation officer. They are trained to handle and transport wildlife safely. Special permits are required to rehabilitate wild animals. Always remember that it is in wildlife's best interest to keep it wild.

Wildlife agencies use public education programs to help people better understand wildlife laws. Conservation and recreation safety officers coordinate Iowa's Hunter Education program. Volunteer instructors assist with the program. Thousands of students are certified each year. In Iowa, anyone born after January 1, 1967, who wishes to hunt must successfully complete a hunter education course before buying a hunting license. You are responsible for your actions. Know pertinent hunting and wildlife laws before taking any action regarding wildlife.

Landscape For Wildlife



Windbreaks, flower gardens, and food plots can provide cover, nesting sites, and food for wildlife. You will be rewarded with shade, shelter from the wind, autumn color, wildlife viewing opportunities, and natural pest control. Consider planting species that produce berries, nuts, and seeds to provide food throughout the seasons. Conifers, shrubs, and deciduous trees are especially good for providing shelter.

Butterflies and hummingbirds are attracted to a variety of flowers that produce nectar and a water source. Many flowers (e.g., sunflowers, zinnias, asters, daisies) produce seeds that birds and other animals eat. If you plant a garden, consider planting a row of sunflowers or leaving a row of corn.

You can erect bird and bat houses as alternatives to choosing your house as their home. Bats can consume up to 600 insects in one hour. Birds and other wildlife (e.g., squirrels, chipmunks) are attracted to feeders and can provide hours of recreational viewing. See the *Additional References* section for sources of information about landscaping for wildlife.

Careers

A career in wildlife is another way to help conserve our natural resources. Wildlife biologists and technicians, conservation officers, and naturalists must have a bachelor's degree, which involves the study of conservation, ecology, management techniques, birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, communication, and more. Law enforcement officers must obtain additional education and training at a law enforcement academy. Many biologists also have a master's degree in some wildlife-related field.

Many agencies employ people with wildlife degrees. Federal, state, and county governments provide career opportunities in research, management, education, and law enforcement. Universities and colleges, private and nonprofit wildlife oriented organizations, zoos, museums, private industry, and others employ people trained in a wildlife field. Other career opportunities involving wildlife include photographers, writers, and artists.

Whether you donate to the Chickadee Checkoff, raise funds for a local conservation organization, help paint picnic tables at a local park, write your lawmakers, or donate land for wildlife habitat, getting involved is the important part.

Other Materials

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www.nwf.org/schoolyardhabitats (National Wildlife Federation Schoolyard Habitats® program–planning guide, application for certification)

WILD Activities (grade level)

Back from the Brink (9-12)
Can Do! (9-12)
Changing Attitudes (5-8)
Changing the Land (6-8)
Checks and Balances (5-8)
Ethi-Reasoning (5-8)
First Impressions (K-4)
From Bison to Bread: The American Prairie (9-12)
Hazardous Links, Possible Solutions (7-8)
History of Wildlife Management (5-8)
Hunter, The (5-8)
Know Your Legislation: What's in It for Wildlife? (9-12)
Pay to Play (5-8)
Planning for People and Wildlife (5-8)
Prairie Memoirs (5-8)
Pro and Con: Consumptive and Nonconsumptive Uses of Wildlife (5-8)
Rare Bird Eggs For Sale (5-8)
What Did Your Lunch Cost Wildlife? (5-8)
Wild Bill's Fate (9-12)
Wildlife in National Symbols (5-8)
Wildwork (5-8)

** Supplemental information provided for italicized activities.*