

Wildlife

on your land



Attracting what you want.
Controlling what you don't.

Wildlife Trivia



You own the land, but many animals call it home. The purpose of this booklet is to answer some common questions and then guide you to who can provide answers for your specific needs. Match the colored leaves next to each topic with the same colored leaves next to the contacts on the back cover to know who to contact for more information.

WFAN supports and connects women landowners

WFAN exists so that women can give each other the information, connections and encouragement they need to be effective practitioners and supporters of sustainable agriculture and healthy localized food systems.



WFAN: Women, Food & Agriculture Network



Turkeys roost in trees, while pheasants sleep on the ground. That's one reason a lack of tall grasses or a hard winter can reduce pheasant numbers while turkeys seem fine.

Deer are not owned by the IDNR but are considered a shared resource for all. This North American model for wildlife differs from the European model where wildlife is owned by the government.



Bats, snakes and other small animals are often forgotten, but play a big role in controlling mosquito and rodent populations. Don't overlook the little guys.

The woodcock, also known as the timberdoodle, is a chunky ground bird that performs intricate breeding dances. They like young forest areas with a lot of brush.



IDNR: Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Supporting Wildlife

Building habitat



The fastest way to attract wildlife to your land is to provide the habitat it wants. Convert some of your land into prairie. Wait to mow your ditches until August when baby birds are stronger fliers.

Leave dead trees in your timber. Decide what animals you want to attract and ask a professional how to make your land look more like a home. There are also programs to help offset costs.

Bluebirds need tree cavities or nesting boxes that face open areas, and appreciate scattered berry or fruit trees nearby.

Pheasants like tall grasses to protect themselves from predators and the sting of winter.

Ponds



Fish thrive in ponds with underwater cover. Sink old Christmas trees or cedars to give them places to hide. Prairie buffers near the shore can protect the pond from run-off and excess algae growth.

Have a wet spot on your land? Consider a wetland. Wetlands attract more varied types of wildlife than ponds and help filter the water. They don't have to be big or constantly wet to do their job.

Friendly management



There are also simple management choices that are both friendly to your cash crops and to wildlife.

Buffer strips

stabilize stream banks and reduce runoff while providing food and shade for wildlife.



Windbreaks

reduce wind damage to crops and reduce erosion while providing homes and "roadways" for wildlife.



Cover crops

reduce erosion and improve soil quality while providing winter cover for wildlife.



Christina Henning uses cover crops and buffer strips to attract more wildlife to her land. "I have mink... I have beaver. And then the birds! The birds are just phenomenally different than they were."

For Chris, conservation practices go hand in hand with farming, and she wants anyone thinking about wildlife-friendly practices to go for it. "Do it. We need the diversity. We need refuges for the animals."

Controlling Wildlife

Hunting



Hunting is not the only way to control wildlife, but it often raises the most questions.

Permission?

If you want the right to control who hunts on your land, make sure it says so in your written lease. Otherwise, the right tends to default to your tenant.

Liability?

Charging hunters to hunt on your land may be tempting, but landowners are then liable for injuries. Even if you do not charge, you are still responsible for warning hunters about any dangerous conditions they may find. To clearly pass liability to hunters, always have a written agreement with them.

Signage?

IDNR officers can help you with the proper number and location of signs to help reduce your liability. Just posting "No Hunting" or "No Trespassing" signs does not guarantee that a hunter who gets hurt on your land won't sue.

Trespassing?

Trespassing is punishable as either a simple or serious misdemeanor. If trespassing occurs on your land, call your local law officers or the DNR immediately and follow through with giving statements and prosecuting the offenders.

Damage



If your crops or property have been damaged by wildlife, contact the IDNR. They can visit your land to offer advice, provide extra hunting licenses or put you in touch with hunters on the Deer Hunter Registry.

Non-hunting options



Deer and rabbits avoid salvia plants. Moles and voles hate red pepper. Pigeons can't roost on 45-degree slopes. Find out what bothers your problem animal and use it to your advantage.



Carol Graham uses hunting and trapping as two ways to control the wildlife on her land, pictured above. "Its always neat to see what wildlife will show up ... you never know what you will find."


Although she is not a hunter herself, she allows neighbors and friends to come and hunt on her land with permission. "Hunting and trapping help to keep some of the wildlife in check, especially the deer."

General Iowa hunting and trapping seasons:


	Deer	Sept – Jan
	Rabbit	Sept – Feb
Pheasant, Quail, Grouse		Oct – Jan
	Turkey	Oct – Jan & April - May
	Dove	Oct - March
	Crow	Oct – Nov & Jan – March
Raccoon, Opossum, Skunk, Bobcat		Nov – Jan
	Beaver	Nov – April
Groundhog, Coyote		Continuous open season


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