



WILDLIFE ASSESSMENT

Habitat suitability for any given species is highly dependent on where your land is located and the quality, quantity and distribution of food, water, cover, and living space. Each species has a daily and seasonal home range within which it is willing to travel to fulfill its life cycle. All of an animal's life requirements for food, cover, water, and space must be available and safely accessible within their home range to maintain or increase its population size.

The following assessment is designed to help you identify the role your land may play in the life cycle of species in your area and to evaluate ways to make your land more attractive for wildlife.

STEP 1: Complete the Wildlife Assessment

Instructions: You can download or order Kansas pocket guides at <https://gpnc.org/gift-shop/publications/>. Ft.Hays State University has created a Kansas Mammal Atlas that is available online at <http://webapps.fhsu.edu/ksmammal/> they also have a Herpetofaunal (reptiles and amphibians) Atlas <http://webapps.fhsu.edu/ksherp/default.aspx>. Explore the information about each species in your area. Maintain a list of known wildlife with your plan. Create a supplementary list of wildlife you see on you land in the space below. List the date or season you see a particular species. Space is also provided for additional notes.

Species: _____	Notes: _____
Season _____	_____
Visible: _____	_____

Species: _____	Notes: _____
Season _____	_____
Visible: _____	_____

Species: _____	Notes: _____
Season _____	_____
Visible: _____	_____

Species: _____	Notes: _____
Season _____	_____
Visible: _____	_____

Species: _____	Notes: _____
Season _____	_____
Visible: _____	_____

Wildlife Assessment (cont.)

2. Are there any rare species known to occur on or near your land?

No Yes (*list below*)

3. Do you have particular wildlife you would like to encourage or discourage from using your land?

Encourage

No Yes (*list below*)

Discourage

No Yes (*list below*)

<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>

4. Are there areas of natural vegetation on your land?

No Yes (*list below*)

<input type="checkbox"/> Grassland	Describe Condition:	<hr/>
		<hr/>

<input type="checkbox"/> Shrubland	Describe Condition:	<hr/>
		<hr/>

<input type="checkbox"/> Woodland	Describe Condition:	<hr/>
		<hr/>

<input type="checkbox"/> Forestland	Describe Condition:	<hr/>
		<hr/>

<input type="checkbox"/> Wetland	Describe Condition:	<hr/>
		<hr/>

Wildlife Assessment (cont.)

5. Have you taken any special measures to provide for or protect wildlife on areas that are farmed or grazed?

No Yes (*list below*)

6. Are there water sources available and safely accessible to wildlife on or nearby your property?

No Yes (*list below*)

7. Do you allow your dogs and cats to roam the property freely?

No Yes

8. Are there activities that occur on a regular basis that may disturb wildlife, such as, off-highway vehicle (OHV) use, tillage, mowing or burning?

No Yes

9. Do you leave outside lights on at night?

No Yes

10. Do you spray pesticides on your property?

No Yes

11. Are there other activities that occur on your land that may disturb wildlife?

No Yes (*list below*)

STEP 2: Complete the Wildlife Enhancement Worksheet on the following page.

Refer to the guide below to complete each section of the Wildlife Enhancement Worksheet.

- Unit: Indicate each section of your property
- Deadline: Indicate a deadline for completing your goals
- Goal: List your goals for each section of your property
- Action: Describe methods for achieving your goals, and include a list of the resources and assistance you may need to achieve your goals

Unit: *SW field*

Deadline: *January 2018*

Goal: *Improve upland game bird population*

Action: *Reduce accidental mortality due to mowing by implementing wildlife-friendly harvesting techniques. Keep cats indoors.*

Unit: _____ **Deadline:** _____

Goal: _____

Action: _____

Unit: _____ **Deadline:** _____

Goal: _____

Action: _____

Unit: _____ **Deadline:** _____

Goal: _____

Action: _____

Unit: _____ **Deadline:** _____

Goal: _____

Action: _____

Unit: _____ **Deadline:** _____

Goal: _____

Action: _____

Unit: _____ **Deadline:** _____

Goal: _____

Action: _____

TIP: 1 Wildlife Regulations

- ✓ ***Migratory Bird Treaty Act*** – This federal law protects migratory birds, their eggs, feathers or nests from any means, manner, or attempt at hunting, pursuing, wounding, killing, possessing or transporting. Most birds are protected by this law. Consult your local U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service office for more information on which species are protected.
- ✓ ***Kansas State Laws and Administrative Rules*** – There are several state laws and administrative rules that protect, or regulate harvest of, various game and non-game species of wildlife. Consult your local Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism office for more information.
- ✓ ***Endangered Species Act*** – This federal law protects threatened and endangered plants and animals and the habitats in which they are found. Consult your local U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service office for more information on which species are protected.

TIP: 2 Reduce Human Impact on Wildlife Habitat

- ✓ ***Keep pets indoors or kenneled.*** Cats and dogs pose a serious risk to wildlife. For more information visit: www.abcbirds.org/abcprograms/policy/cats/
- ✓ ***Limit off-road recreation activities.*** This is particularly important during sensitive periods of the year when wildlife may be vulnerable, such as, bird nesting season and deer and elk fawning/calving or wintering season.
- ✓ ***Kill the lights at night.*** Many wildlife species are active at night and the presence of lights can inhibit their ability to utilize and move through your property.

TIP: 3 Improve Water Resources for Wildlife Use

- ✓ Establish vegetation buffers around water sources to allow wildlife to access water without being detected.
- ✓ Create water sources near natural habitat areas and away from houses, roads, and other areas of human activity.
- ✓ Provide well-designed access and escape ramps for all stock troughs. Wildlife that fall into troughs swim around the inside perimeter of the tank until they encounter something that allows them to get out. Simply placing a floating board in the trough generally will not be sufficient to prevent drowning. For more information, refer to *Water for Wildlife* at: www.batcon.org/pdfs/water/bciwaterforwildlife.pdf
- ✓ Place logs in ponds to provide basking and hiding cover.

TIP: 4 Improve Agricultural Land for Wildlife Use

- ✓ Leave plots of unharvested crop, pasture, or hayland adjacent to native habitats to provide food for wildlife close to their cover.
- ✓ Manage grazing utilization provides cover, as well as forage for wildlife.
- ✓ Provide nest and/or roost structures (such as bat boxes, nest boxes for western bluebirds, perches for raptors, etc.)
- ✓ Adjust the timing of harvest to avoid the primary nesting season for birds (approximately March 1 – July 15) if possible.
- ✓ Harvest crops in a manner that allows wildlife to escape the field (i.e., harvest fields from the inside-out or side-to-side instead of from the outside-in).
- ✓ Limit pesticide use as much as possible. Consider using Integrated Pest Management strategies to control pests. Many types of beneficial wildlife, such as bats, raptors, and owls, can be attracted to your land to assist in controlling pests. For more information, refer to the *Artificial Nesting Structures* <https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/references/public/PA/LeafletNo20ArtificialNestingStructures2008.pdf> and *Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and Wildlife* at: https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/nrcs143_010072.pdf
- ✓ Ensure that fences are designed to be safe for wildlife. Fences can be a major barrier to wildlife movement across the landscape. Wildlife frequently die from becoming entangled in poorly designed fences. For more information, refer to *How to Build a Fence with Wildlife in Mind* at https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/nrcs142p2_007658.pdf

Gather Additional Information and Assistance

- ✓ *Kansas Conservation Districts*
<https://kacdnet.org/>
- ✓ *Natural Resources Conservation Service*
www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov
- ✓ *Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT)*
<https://ksoutdoors.com/>
- ✓ KDWPT - Private Landowner Assistance - Wildlife Habitat Assistance
<https://www.ksoutdoors.com/Services/Private-Landowner-Assistance>
- ✓ *US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)*
<https://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/refuges/kansasPFW.php>

NOTES: _____
