

Ruffed grouse

General information

The ruffed grouse is a relatively large gamebird that occurs across southern Canada, the more northern latitudes of North America, and down the Appalachian range. Ruffed grouse are found in a variety of deciduous forest types as well as mixed deciduous-conifer forest, but are particularly closely associated with aspen, especially young stands with relatively dense structure. Male ruffed grouse attract females during the mating season in spring by standing on downed logs, usually in dense cover, and flapping their wings to their breast, which causes a low drumming sound. This activity is called drumming. Ruffed grouse populations are decreasing across their range where forest management has been limited.

Habitat requirements

Diet: buds, hard and soft mast, insects and other invertebrates, and leaves of forbs

Water: necessary water obtained from diet

Cover: 6- to 20-year-old stands are required for cover provided by the dense stems; mature forest in close proximity to young stands may be used for feeding on acorns and other hard mast; a variety of forest types and age classes are used for nesting

Wildlife management practices

Control Nonnative Invasive Vegetation: when nonnative vegetation reduces habitat quality for ruffed grouse; Japanese stiltgrass can be especially problematic in many forests, and tall fescue and orchardgrass are problematic in forest openings and along woods roads

Edge Feathering: to enhance cover and food resources around fields

Forest Management: *Forest Regeneration (Clearcut, Shelterwood, Group Selection)* within mature forest will stimulate regeneration that will provide optimum cover within 6 years; *Forest Stand Improvement* practices can be used to stimulate desirable structure and stem density and enable crowns of desirable trees to grow and produce additional mast; where drumming logs are limiting, non-mast-producing trees >18" in diameter can be felled to provide drumming logs

Livestock Management: livestock should be excluded from areas managed for ruffed grouse

Plant Shrubs: where additional soft mast is needed and to develop thickets and shrub cover in openings

Plant Trees: in relatively large openings where planting is



Bill Marchel



necessary and where mast-producing trees are limiting
Set-back Succession: *Prescribed Fire* can be used to maintain and rejuvenate dense stem cover and enhance herbaceous cover important for brooding cover, particularly in aspen stands; *Chainsawing* can be used to remove trees and increase stem density in the forest understory

Decrease Harvest: may be necessary if populations are declining in areas where habitat quality is good and data suggest mortality from hunting is additive or limiting population growth

Wildlife or Fish Survey: drumming counts are most often used to estimate population trends; autonomous recording units (ARUs) may be used to detect species occurrence

Sage thrasher

General information

Sage thrashers are found mostly in shrub-dominated valleys and plains of the western U.S. They prefer sagebrush and generally are dependent on large patches and expanses of sagebrush during the breeding season. Sage thrashers usually nest within sagebrush or other shrubs close to the ground. Nests are constructed of twigs and lined with fine grasses and hair. Clutch size is 1-5 eggs. Sage thrashers forage for insects on the ground and usually run on the ground when disturbed, rather than flying.

Habitat requirements:

Diet: spiders, crickets, caterpillars, beetles, and grasshoppers; some soft mast from deciduous shrubs also are eaten

Water: necessary water is obtained from the diet

Cover: sagebrush required for nesting and escape cover; nest constructed of twigs and grass

Wildlife management practices

Control Nonnative Invasive Vegetation: when nonnative invasive vegetation begins to reduce habitat quality for sage thrashers

Plant Shrubs: where shrub cover is less than 60 percent

Set-back Succession: *Chaining, Drum-chopping, Chainsawing, and Herbicide Applications* can be used to maintain low shrub growth

Wildlife or Fish Survey: point counts and autonomous recording units (ARUs) may be used to detect species occurrence and monitor population trends



Dave Menke



Scaled quail

General information

Scaled quail are found in arid grasslands with a shrub, cactus, and yucca component in the southwestern U.S. Sparse herbaceous cover characterizes the arid environment in most years. However, areas with abundant cover have higher scaled quail densities. A variety of shrub species provide important escape and loafing cover, though scaled quail will avoid areas where shrubs exist in high densities. Proper grazing management is an important component in maintaining habitat for scaled quail. They nest on the ground, usually under relatively dense, low-growing shrub or grass cover



Greg Lavaty

Habitat requirements

Diet: various seeds of forbs and shrubs are major components of diet; insects are readily consumed and are critical for chick survival; green herbaceous material and soft mast of various native plants also are consumed
Water: necessary water may be obtained from diet; however, free-standing water from ponds, tanks, and streams may increase survival during drought years
Cover: brushy cover (shrubs or cacti) overhead with an open structure at ground level is critical, particularly for nesting; scattered patches of shrub and cactus with a good cover of native warm-season grasses and forbs provide excellent cover



Wildlife management practices

Control Nonnative Invasive Vegetation: when nonnative invasive vegetation begins to reduce habitat quality for scaled quail; cheat grass and other bromes, weeping and Lehman lovegrass, and Old World bluestems are various plants that may be problematic
Field Borders: to increase usable space around crop fields
Leave Crop Unharvested: to provide additional food source through winter
Livestock Management: should not allow overgrazing to limit herbaceous cover
Plant Native Grasses and Forbs: where nesting and brood cover is lacking and planting is necessary
Plant Shrubs: where there is less than 60 percent shrub cover
Set-back Succession: *Prescribed Fire* may increase herbaceous cover needed for food and cover; *Chaining*, *Drum-chopping*, and *Disking* can be used to reduce or thin shrub cover if needed and if increased herbaceous groundcover is needed
Soil Conservation Agriculture: to provide waste grain
Water Developments for Wildlife: guzzlers and dugouts can provide supplemental water, especially in drought years

Decrease Harvest: may be necessary if populations are declining and data suggest mortality from hunting is additive or limiting population growth
Wildlife or Fish Survey: aerial or ground transects are used to estimate population trends

Sharp-tailed grouse

General information

Sharp-tailed grouse are gamebirds of the northern Great Plains. Ideal habitat contains about two-thirds native grassland interspersed with shrubs, cropland, and scattered trees. Sharp-tailed grouse require bare or grassy ridges and natural rises that offer good visibility for breeding displays. Sharp-tailed grouse gather on these sites in the spring where males dance in front of the females to attract a mate. These areas are called “dancing grounds.” It is important to maintain areas of thick grass and shrub cover within several miles of dancing grounds.

Habitat requirements

Diet: young grouse eat insects and small seeds; adults eat a variety of leaves, buds, seeds, and grains; buds of shrubs and small trees are most important during winter

Water: necessary water is obtained from diet

Cover: nests are on the ground in grass or sparse shrub cover; thick shrubs and tall herbaceous vegetation is required for winter cover; tall dense vegetation associated with wetland edges also is used for winter cover

Wildlife management practices

Control Nonnative Invasive Vegetation: when nonnative invasive vegetation begins to reduce habitat quality for sharp-tailed grouse

Field Borders: to increase usable space around crop fields

Leave Crop Unharvested: to provide additional food source through winter; alfalfa, sunflowers, and grain sorghum are often used

Livestock Management: should maintain a diverse structure throughout the grassland; some dense grassland areas should be maintained to provide nesting cover; more sparse areas containing forbs and insects should be adjacent to nesting areas for brood cover; on sandy soils, both of these conditions may be present together; proper stocking rate is critical; delay grazing on portions of grasslands to provide tall undisturbed cover during the primary nesting season (May-June)

Plant Food Plots: food plots containing alfalfa or sunflowers may be planted where winter foods may be limiting or to enhance hunting opportunities

Plant Native Grasses and Forbs: where high-quality native grassland habitat does not comprise at least 60 percent of the area; should be recommended only on sites where planting is necessary to establish native grass cover

Plant Shrubs: small groups of shrubs may be planted in natural draws and idle land areas where cover and winter



Richard Baetsen



food may be limiting; woody cover should not be planted on upland sites that historically did not support woody cover

Set-back Succession: *Prescribed Fire* is recommended to increase grassland vigor, which will increase availability of insects and seeds; *Chainsawing* and *Herbicide Applications* can be used to remove trees

Soil Conservation Agriculture: grain stubble should be left through winter to provide a food source; stubble height of 6 inches or more is preferred

Decrease Harvest: may be necessary if populations are declining and data suggest mortality from hunting is additive or limiting population growth

Wildlife or Fish Survey: observational surveys, especially on dancing grounds in the spring, are used to estimate population trends

Song sparrow

General information

Song sparrows are familiar and relatively common and inhabit all of the U.S., but will migrate from extreme northern areas during the colder months of the year. Song sparrows typically use shrubby areas interspersed with herbaceous openings and forest, especially along riparian areas. Song sparrows often nest along forest edges. The nest is made of grass and leaves and in the shape of a cup. Nests are often placed on the ground under a shrub or in thick herbaceous cover. Song sparrows primarily feed on the ground and eat seed, insects, and fruit.

Habitat requirements

Diet: weed seeds, insects, soft mast

Water: freestanding water is required frequently during the warm seasons

Cover: thick shrubs and herbaceous cover for nesting, loafing, and escape

Wildlife management practices

Control Nonnative Invasive Vegetation: when nonnative invasive vegetation begins to compete with native vegetation and degrade habitat for song sparrows

Forest Management: *Forest Stand Improvement* practices can stimulate increased brushy cover where lacking

Plant Native Grasses and Forbs: where lacking and necessary to provide cover for nesting

Plant Shrubs: to provide soft mast where there is little soft mast available

Set-back Succession: *Chainsawing* can create additional brushy cover; *Prescribed Fire* can be used to maintain shrubby cover; *Mowing* may be used to maintain foraging and loafing cover for song sparrows in **Urban** areas

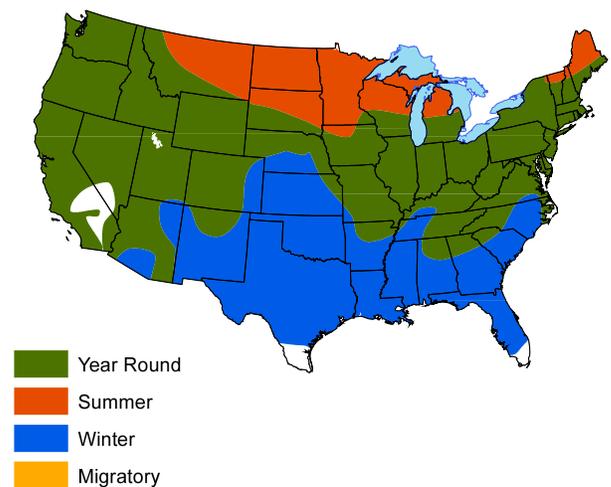
Water Development for Wildlife: drinking water may be provided in birdbaths or pans of water

Wildlife or Fish Survey: point counts and autonomous recording units (ARUs) may be used to detect species occurrence and monitor population trends

Artificial Feeders: for use in **Urban** areas; millets and sunflower seeds are favorites



Lee Karney



Sooty grouse

General information

The sooty grouse is a relatively large grouse that occurs predominantly in coastal mountainous areas from northern California north through British Columbia. Sooty grouse are found in coniferous forest with scattered small herbaceous openings and shrub cover. Sooty grouse roost in forest edges near shrub vegetation where they forage. Their nests are usually on the ground, often under shrubs or near fallen logs. Sooty grouse typically forage on the ground spring through fall, but may spend most of their time foraging on buds and needles in trees during winter. Males often vocalize with a deep booming call that can be difficult to locate while perched in trees.

Habitat requirements

Diet: soft mast, buds, seeds, forbs, and insects from spring to fall; needles of coniferous trees may be eaten in winter

Water: necessary water obtained from dew and diet

Cover: nest on the ground near forest edges, often under shrubs or next to fallen logs

Wildlife management practices

Control Nonnative Invasive Vegetation: when nonnative invasive vegetation begins to reduce habitat quality for sooty grouse

Forest Management: *Forest Regeneration (Group Selection, Single-tree Selection)* will increase herbaceous groundcover for foraging near nesting and roosting areas; *Forest Stand Improvement* can be used in stands not ready for regeneration to enhance herbaceous groundcover

Livestock Management: livestock should be excluded from areas where sooty grouse may be nesting mid-April through mid-June

Plant Native Grasses and Forbs: where herbaceous cover is lacking in forest openings and planting is necessary

Plant Shrubs: to provide soft mast and buds where needed

Plant Trees: coniferous trees may be planted to provide a winter food source where needed

Set-back Succession: *Chainsawing* and *Prescribed Fire* can be used to maintain herbaceous groundcover and improve cover for nesting; *Herbicide Applications* can reduce woody encroachment in small herbaceous openings

Decrease Harvest: when surveys show a decline in the local population and data suggest mortality from hunting is additive or limiting population growth



Glen Tepke



Wildlife or Fish Survey: call counts, point counts, and autonomous recording units (ARUs) may be used to detect species occurrence and monitor population trends

Southwest willow flycatcher

General information

The Southwest willow flycatcher is a neotropical migrant that breeds in riparian areas of the arid southwestern United States and northwestern Mexico and winters in the rain forests of Mexico, Central America, and northern South America. This subspecies of the willow flycatcher is a federally listed threatened species because of habitat degradation and brood-rearing parasitism by brown-headed cowbirds. Habitat loss is caused by changes in the flood and fire regime (from water diversion and groundwater pumping, impoundments, and stream channelization), aesthetic mowing, and unmanaged livestock grazing. Riparian corridors with dense patches of trees (such as willows and cottonwoods) and shrubby vegetation (such as buttonbush and blackberry) with interspersed openings are preferred. This type of cover is found near rivers, swamps, lakes, and reservoirs. Nests are typically built low at the outer edge of shrubs, usually near water.



Jim Rorabaugh

Habitat requirements

Diet: insects

Water: obtained through diet

Cover: vegetation 3-15 feet tall, including relatively tall herbaceous plants, shrubs, and trees; nests are made of bark and grass

Wildlife management practices

Conservation Easement: can protect critical habitat for this declining subspecies of willow flycatcher

Control Nonnative Invasive Vegetation: when nonnative invasive vegetation begins to reduce habitat quality for southwest willow flycatchers

Livestock Management: livestock should be excluded from riparian areas when managing for southwest willow flycatchers; overgrazing removes vegetation at the height necessary for nesting and may reduce shrub cover

Plant Shrubs: along riparian areas where there is a lack of shrub cover for nesting

Plant Trees: along riparian areas where cover is lacking

Set-back Succession: Chainsawing, Prescribed Fire, or Herbicide Applications may be necessary if the tree canopy in the riparian zone is minimizing sunlight and preventing a desirable herbaceous understory and midstory

Wildlife or Fish Survey: point counts and autonomous recording units (ARUs) may be used to detect species occurrence and monitor population trends



Spotted sandpiper

General information

Spotted sandpipers are medium-sized shorebirds that occur all across North America. During the breeding season, they have pale breasts with brown spots, hence the name. They are found in very shallow water areas and along mudflats where they search for freshwater invertebrates and other foods. They are active foragers and walk in meandering paths, darting for prey. Nests are placed in a small depression on the ground, often under a canopy of vegetation, and lined with fine grasses. Spotted sandpipers exhibit an unusual breeding strategy where the female establishes and defends her territory and may breed with several males. The male incubates the eggs and takes care of the nestlings.



Habitat requirements

Diet: flies and their aquatic larvae (midges),

grasshoppers, beetles, worms, snails, small crustaceans

Water: acquire necessary water while foraging and from diet

Cover: shallow, freshwater wetlands and mudflats; sometimes dense herbaceous vegetation for nesting

Wildlife management practices

Control Nonnative Invasive Vegetation: when nonnative invasive vegetation begins to reduce habitat quality for spotted sandpipers

Livestock Management: should not allow overgrazing to limit herbaceous vegetation that is used for nesting; livestock may be excluded from areas managed for spotted sandpipers

Plant Native Warm-Season Grasses: where groundcover is lacking and planting is necessary

Repair Spillway/Levee: if not functioning properly

Set-back Succession: *Prescribed Fire* is recommended to rejuvenate herbaceous groundcover around wetlands for nesting cover

Water Developments for Wildlife: small impoundments and ponds may be constructed if habitat is limiting; water control structures allow the water level to be manipulated and provide shallow water areas and mudflats for foraging

Wildlife or Fish Survey: observation counts are used to estimate population trends



Spotted towhee

General information

Spotted towhees are relatively large songbirds that occur in the western U.S. They are fairly widespread and abundant and found in dense shrub cover, typical of woodland edges, shrub thickets, chaparral, canyon drainages, and old-fields. Nests are made of leaves, twigs, strips of bark, and grasses, and usually placed on the ground among the shrub cover against a log, clump of grass, or base of a shrub for further concealment. Nests contain 2-6 eggs. Spotted towhees may have 1-3 broods per year. Spotted towhees forage on the ground among leaf litter, where they hop and scratch for invertebrates and various seed. Spotted towhees are sensitive to habitat loss, thriving in disturbed areas where agricultural and residential developments are minimal.

Habitat requirements

Diet: ants, beetles, caterpillars, crickets, grasshoppers, moths, wasps, millipedes, spiders dominate the diet; in winter, various seeds, acorns, soft mast, and grains (oats, wheat, corn) are more prevalent

Water: necessary water is obtained from the diet

Cover: shrub cover is used for loafing, foraging, nesting, and escape

Wildlife management practices

Control Nonnative Invasive Vegetation: when nonnative invasive vegetation begins to reduce habitat quality for spotted towhees

Edge Feathering: can increase usable space where woods meet fields

Forest Management: *Forest Regeneration (Clearcut)* will create brushy cover for 5 to 10 years; *Forest Stand Improvement* (heavy thinning) can stimulate brushy understory growth

Livestock Management: livestock should be excluded from areas managed for spotted towhee

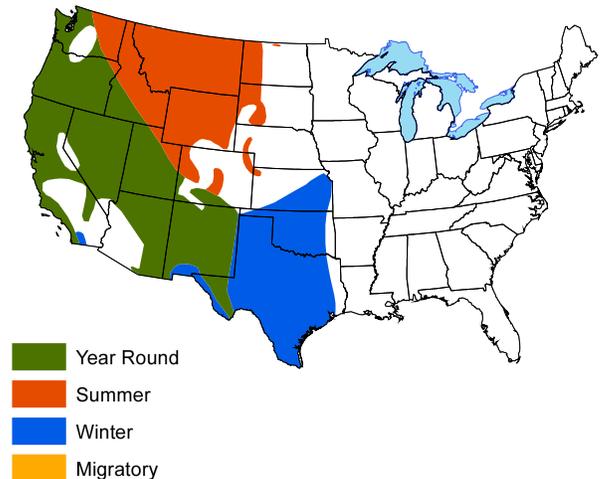
Plant Shrubs: in large open areas to provide habitat

Set-back Succession: *Prescribed Fire*, *Chaining*, and *Drum-chopping* can be used to promote dense resprouting shrubs; *Chainsawing* and *Herbicide Applications* can be used to reduce tree cover and stimulate increased shrub cover and stem density

Wildlife or Fish Survey: point counts and autonomous recording units (ARUs) may be used to detect species occurrence and monitor population trends



Dave Menke



Virginia rail

General information

The Virginia rail is a gamebird of freshwater marshes, but occasionally occurs in saltwater marshes. It prefers to stay hidden in moderately dense emergent vegetation and is more often heard than seen. If wetland vegetation becomes too thick, Virginia rails will not be as abundant. Virginia rails may be found in wetlands of all sizes, but prefer hemi-marsh, which is represented by scattered patches of emergent vegetation with small openings of open water at about a 50:50 ratio. Periodic water level manipulation should be used to favor annual wetlands plants and avoid a monoculture of perennial wetland vegetation. Shallow water depths (generally less than 1 foot) are required. Virginia rails will flee quickly on the ground through vegetation if approached and will fly rarely. They typically inhabit shallow water areas and can swim under water if attacked. Virginia rails are migratory and can travel great distances. The Virginia rail is known to build dummy nests around the vicinity of their actual nests.

Habitat requirements

Diet: insects, aquatic invertebrates, snails, small fish, and small amphibians; some seeds and plant material in fall and winter

Water: obtained from food

Cover: moderately dense wetland vegetation, such as cattails, sedges, rushes, smartweeds, and other plants are used for cover; nests are woven into vegetation over shallow water and may have a canopy over them

Wildlife management practices

Control Nonnative Invasive Vegetation: when nonnative invasive vegetation begins to limit open water or otherwise reduce habitat quality for Virginia rail

Livestock Management: livestock should be excluded from wetlands managed for Virginia rail

Repair Spillway/Levee: if not functioning properly

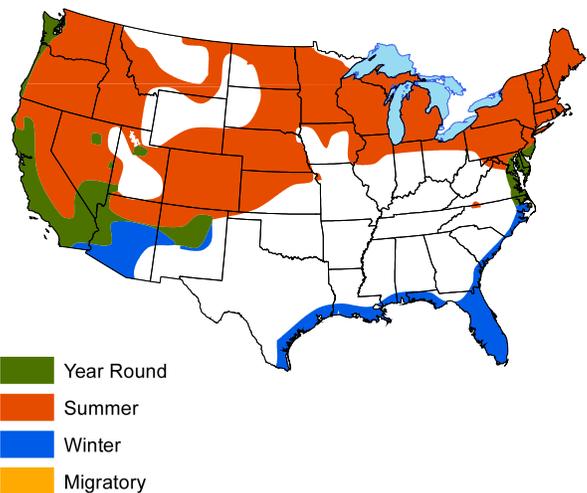
Set-back Succession: *Prescribed Fire, Disking, and Herbicide Applications* may be used in wetlands dominated by very dense perennial vegetation to encourage a hemi-marsh consisting of openings and annual plants; *Chainsawing and Herbicide Applications* may be used to reduce tree cover and create more open marsh

Water Developments for Wildlife: shallow impoundments can be constructed to provide habitat; water control structures allow periodic water drawdowns to maintain a hemi-marsh with shallow water

Wildlife or Fish Survey: Call counts and autonomous recording units (ARUs) are most often used to estimate



Dave Menke



population trends; playing a tape of their call increases the chance of hearing rails; also, ropes can be dragged across vegetation between two or more observers to flush birds during observation counts

Western bluebird

General information

Western bluebirds occur in portions of the western U.S. and southwestern U.S. and Mexico. They tend to use more wooded areas than eastern or mountain bluebirds. Western bluebirds are usually found in open woodlands, especially ponderosa and pinon pine-juniper. Open deciduous forest, particularly aspen that has been burned, where cavity trees are plentiful, are commonly used. Wooded riparian areas in arid environments also attract western bluebirds. Like other bluebirds, insects dominate the diet during spring and summer, and various fruits are most prevalent during fall and winter. Western bluebirds nest in cavities, especially old woodpecker cavities, as well as nest boxes. Clutches consist of 2-8 eggs. Western bluebirds may have 1-3 broods per year.



Michael Woodruff

Habitat requirements

Diet: invertebrates, especially grasshoppers, crickets, beetles, and spiders; various fruits, such as chokecherry, elderberry, grape, raspberry, sumac, serviceberry, and poison oak, in fall and winter

Water: necessary water obtained from diet

Cover: woodlands; nest in cavities of trees and fence posts

Wildlife management practices

Control Nonnative Invasive Vegetation: when nonnative invasive vegetation begins to compete with native vegetation and reduces habitat quality for western bluebirds

Edge Feathering: to increase foraging opportunities, perching sites, and potential cavity trees (if trees are killed and left standing) around fields

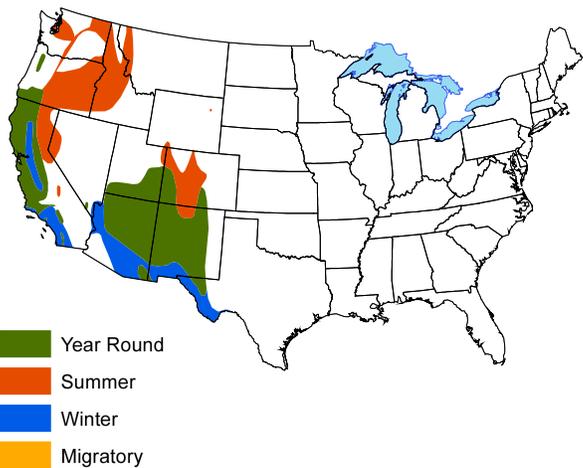
Field Borders: to increase foraging opportunities around crop fields

Forest Management: *Forest Regeneration (Seed Tree, Shelterwood)* may be used to enhance habitat in pine forests for a few years, especially if coupled with *Prescribed Fire*; *Forest Stand Improvement* may be used to enhance habitat by reducing tree density in pine forests and woodlands; where snags with cavities are limiting, softwood species >6" in diameter can be killed via girdling and spraying to provide perches and potential cavities for nesting

Livestock Management: livestock must be excluded from recently planted trees and shrubs

Nesting Structures: should be erected where a scarcity of natural cavities may be limiting the population; nest boxes should be approximately 5 feet high with an entrance hole 1½ inches in diameter; nest boxes should be placed no closer than 80 yards apart to limit territorial fighting among males

Plant Native Grasses and Forbs: where groundcover is



lacking and planting is necessary

Plant Shrubs: in large open areas where perching sites or winter foods may be limiting

Plant Trees: in large open areas where perching sites are limiting; may provide potential nest sites in distant future

Set-back Succession: *Prescribed Fire* is recommended to improve woodland structure and maintain herbaceous openings for western bluebirds; *Herbicide Applications* may be used to reduce tree density; *Chaining* and *Drum-chopping* can be used to reduce shrub cover where necessary; *Chainsawing* can be used to convert forested areas to open woodlands; *Root-plowing* may be used to reduce shrub density and promote herbaceous openings; *Mowing* may be used to maintain foraging and loafing cover for mountain bluebirds in **Urban** areas

Wildlife or Fish Survey: point counts and autonomous recording units (ARUs) may be used to detect species occurrence and monitor population trends; nest boxes should be checked to monitor use and nest success

Western kingbird

General information

Western kingbirds are large flycatchers that are readily seen throughout the western U.S. They have gray heads, yellow bellies, white throats, and a square-tipped tail. They are found in grasslands, pastures, cultivated fields, desert shrub areas, savannas, and urban areas. Scattered trees and shrubs are used for nesting cover, and human activity often improves habitat because trees and structures provide potential nest sites. Western kingbirds winter in southern Mexico and Central America.

Habitat requirements

Diet: more than 90 percent of the diet consists of insects; soft mast from various plants is occasionally eaten

Water: water requirements unknown

Cover: trees and shrubs for nesting and perching; nests also may be placed on buildings, windmills, utility poles, and antennas; herbaceous openings for foraging

Wildlife management practices

Control Nonnative Invasive Vegetation: when nonnative invasive vegetation is beginning to reduce habitat quality for western kingbirds

Edge Feathering: to increase nesting cover around fields

Field Borders: to increase prey abundance around crop fields

Plant Native Grasses and Forbs: in areas where herbaceous openings are limiting and planting is necessary

Plant Shrubs: in open areas where nesting cover is limiting

Set-back Succession: *Prescribed Fire* and *Disking* can be used to maintain herbaceous openings; *Chainsawing* and *Root-plowing* can be used to create herbaceous openings where limiting

Wildlife or Fish Survey: point counts and autonomous recording units (ARUs) may be used to detect species occurrence and monitor population trends



Gary Kramer



White-tailed ptarmigan

General information

The white-tailed ptarmigan is the smallest grouse in North America. It occurs in alpine regions where their distribution and abundance is relatively consistent over time because their range is very remote and largely undisturbed. They inhabit alpine ridges and meadows approximately 2,000 feet above timberline during spring and summer. Males vigorously defend their breeding territory from other males with “scream flights” to intimidate rivals. Rock bases are preferred nesting cover because of warmer temperatures for incubation and openness for quick escape from predators. Low-growing willow and mosses are used as cover as well. In winter, white-tailed ptarmigan are found at slightly lower elevations within a few miles of summer ranges and closer to the timberline where willows are more abundant. Willows are critical for cover and food, especially during winter. Alpine ecosystems take a long time to recover when disturbed. Therefore, preventing disturbance can be critical for white-tailed ptarmigan habitat management.

Habitat requirements

Diet: buds, twigs, catkins, fruits, seeds, flowers, stems, leaves, and insects are common in spring and summer; buds and twigs of willows are most common in fall and winter

Water: largely unknown, though they have been observed drinking water and eating snow

Cover: rocks or clumps of vegetation around rocks are most often used for nesting because of increased warmth and protection from inclement weather; high, rocky, windswept ridges with interspersed herbaceous vegetation are used for brooding; in winter, areas near the treeline up to almost the summering range where there is an abundance of willow (food) and soft snow (roosting cover) for concealment with their white winter plumage

Wildlife management practices

Control Nonnative Invasive Vegetation: when nonnative invasive vegetation begins to encroach and reduce habitat quality for white-tailed ptarmigan

Livestock Management: should prevent livestock grazing where ptarmigan occur

Plant Shrubs: willows may be planted for food and cover where they are lacking, especially near the treeline below alpine areas



Greg Lavaty



Decrease Harvest: may be necessary if the local population is declining at the current harvest level and data suggest mortality from hunting is additive or limiting population growth

Wildlife or Fish Survey: scream call counts are the only known survey technique, but they are limited because of the remote locations and small range of effectiveness; autonomous recording units (ARUs) may be effective in detecting species occurrence in remote areas

White-winged dove

General information

White-winged doves are generally found near the southern borders of the United States. They use agriculture and open areas for feeding and dense shrubs and trees for nesting and loafing. They also are found in urban and riparian areas. White-winged doves are light brown with a black mark on the cheek and a white band on the edge of their wing, for which they are named.

They build nests, comprised mainly of twigs, in trees where they will lay only 1 or 2 eggs. Both the male and female will produce crop milk to feed their young, often eating snails or bone to increase calcium content. They often roost, forage, or migrate as flocks.

Habitat requirements

Diet: a variety of grass and forb seeds (such as spurge, bristlegass, saguaro cactus, and brasil), waste grain from cropland and livestock feedlots; small areas of bare ground are beneficial for obtaining grit (small gravel) to help digest food

Water: free-standing water is required daily

Cover: tall shrubs and trees for nesting and loafing; nests are made of twigs placed on branches of shrubs or trees; nests may also be placed on the ground

Wildlife management practices

Control Nonnative Invasive Vegetation: when nonnative invasive vegetation begins to compete with native vegetation and reduce habitat quality for white-winged doves

Leave Crop Unharvested: will provide additional food from a variety of small grain crops, such as millets, grain sorghum, wheat, and oats

Livestock Management: should prevent overgrazing forbs, which will reduce food availability for white-winged doves

Plant Food Plots: where additional food, specifically grain, is needed

Plant Native Grasses and Forbs: forbs may be planted in areas where food is limiting and planting is feasible

Plant Shrubs: in large open areas where nesting sites are limited

Plant Trees: especially along riparian areas where nesting cover is limiting

Set-back Succession: *Prescribed Fire* can be used to enhance seed availability; *Disking* and *Herbicide Applications* can provide bare ground; *Chainsawing*, *Chaining*, *Drum-chopping*, and *Root-plowing* can be used to reduce shrub cover and provide increased bare ground and forb production

Soil Conservation Agriculture: eliminate tillage in the fall



Gray Kramer



to allow access to waste grain

Water Developments for Wildlife: where water is limiting, small ponds, guzzlers, or windmills can provide free-standing water

Wildlife or Fish Survey: observational surveys, point counts, and autonomous recording units (ARUs) may be used to detect species occurrence and monitor population trends

Wild turkey

General information

Wild turkeys are large gamebirds found across the U.S. They are adapted to use a wide variety of vegetation types, from deciduous forest to desert shrub to open grassland interspersed with tree-lined riparian areas. Their distribution is largely limited only by snow depth and persistence to the north, which limits their ability to forage on the ground, and by trees or large shrubs needed for roosting at night in arid regions. Wild turkeys flock together during fall and winter. Breeding occurs in spring when males gobble to attract females. Nests are a slight depression on the ground, usually placed adjacent to a log, shrub, or some other structure to aid in concealment. Shrub cover is often used for nesting, but wild turkeys also nest in open woods and in fields. Nests are lined with leaves and other vegetation and usually contain about 12 eggs. Poults (young turkeys) are precocial, meaning they are able to walk around with the hen and forage for themselves soon after hatching. Herbaceous openings, especially those with a forb canopy and open ground structure, and woodlands with a well-developed understory are preferred for brooding. Although wild turkeys spend most of their time on the ground, except when they fly up into trees in the evening to roost for the night, they can fly well and often take flight for short distances to escape predators.

Habitat requirements

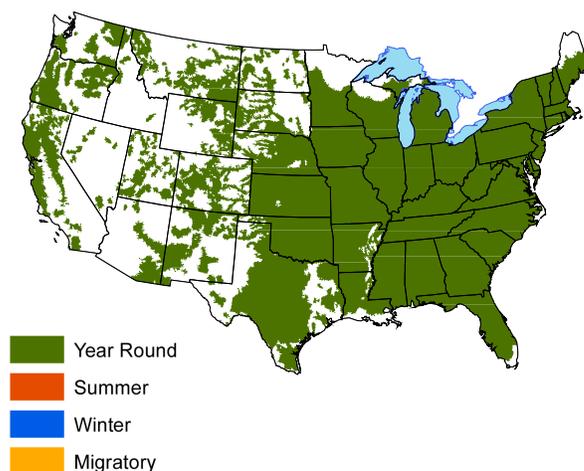
Diet: extremely varied; hard mast, especially acorns and beechnuts in the fall and winter; soft mast, such as blackberries, mulberries, and black cherry; insects and other invertebrates, including spiders and snails, are especially important for young poults and hens prior to nesting; miscellaneous seeds; leaves from forbs and grasses; grain from a variety of agricultural crops
Water: obtain water from diet, but may use free-standing water when available
Cover: mature forest, young regenerating forest, brushy areas, and old-fields for nesting; mature forest, woodlands, savannas, herbaceous openings, and grain fields for foraging; trees or tall shrubs for roosting

Wildlife management practices

Control Nonnative Invasive Vegetation: when nonnative invasive vegetation begins to reduce habitat quality for wild turkeys; common examples include sod grasses, such as tall fescue, orchardgrass, bermudagrass, bahiagrass, smooth brome, and others, such as cogongrass, which limit mobility for turkey poults and food availability; kudzu and shrub honeysuckle are other species that often degrade habitat in forested areas



Tes Jolly



Do Not Feed Wildlife: supplemental feed elevates risk of disease associated with fungal toxins

Edge Feathering: can enhance nesting and brooding cover around fields

Field Borders: to increase usable space for nesting and brooding around row crop fields

Forest Management: (in some ecoregions) *Forest Regeneration (Clearcut, Shelterwood, Group Selection, Seed-tree)* can enhance nesting and brooding cover and stimulate increased soft mast and miscellaneous seed for a few years after harvest; *Forest Stand Improvement* can improve the structure of the understory for nesting and brood rearing, increase production of soft mast and miscellaneous seed, and enable crowns of desired trees to grow and produce additional mast

Leave Crop Unharvested: especially corn, soybeans, and grain sorghum, to provide supplemental food source during fall and winter

Livestock Management: should prevent livestock from degrading habitat by overgrazing and damaging planted trees and shrubs and food plots

Plant Food Plots: to provide supplemental foods where food may be limiting; corn, soybeans, wheat, chufa, and clovers are often used

Plant Native Grasses and Forbs: where early successional vegetation is limiting and planting is necessary

Plant Shrubs: where additional soft mast or brushy cover

is needed

Plant Trees: where additional hard mast production, especially acorns, is needed and where roosting sites are limited

Set-back Succession: *Prescribed Fire* is recommended to maintain herbaceous openings, rejuvenate shrubland, and improve understory structure and composition for foraging, brooding, and nesting in forests, woodlands, and savannas; *Disking* can be used to maintain herbaceous openings and reduce thatch build-up; *Herbicide Applications, Chaining, Root-plowing,* and *Drum-chopping* can be used to reduce shrub cover and stimulate more herbaceous groundcover; *Chainsawing, Dozer-clearing,* and *Root-plowing* can be used to remove trees and create herbaceous openings, especially where brooding cover may be limiting

Soil Conservation Agriculture: eliminate tillage in the fall to provide additional waste grain during winter, especially when adjacent to tall shrub or forest cover

Water Developments for Wildlife: can be useful when there is little or no free-standing water

Decrease Harvest: may be necessary if populations are declining and data suggest mortality from hunting is additive or limiting population growth

Increase Harvest: where populations can sustain additional harvest pressure for hunting recreation and where populations need to be lowered

Wildlife Damage Management: may be necessary in rare instances when wild turkeys are depredating crops

Wildlife or Fish Survey: gobbler surveys, poult surveys, and hunter success rates are used to estimate population trends; autonomous recording units (ARUs) may be used to detect species occurrence, especially by detecting gobblers

Wilson's snipe

General information

Named after ornithologist Alexander Wilson, the Wilson's snipe is a ground-dwelling, migratory shorebird of North, Central, and South America that uses a variety of wetlands and riparian areas, especially where mudflats or sandbars are present. They breed, nest, and raise their broods during summer in their northern range and migrate to their southern range in the fall and winter. There are resident populations in the Pacific northwestern United States. High-quality Wilson's snipe habitat will have a marshy area with low herbaceous vegetation, and sparse shrubs, with a mudflat or sandbar nearby. Nests are constructed of grass bowls placed on the ground in herbaceous vegetation near water.

Habitat requirements

Diet: invertebrates (insects and larvae)

Water: obtained through diet

Cover: bogs, fens, swamps, and marshy, vegetated edges of ponds, rivers, and streams are used for courtship and nesting; areas with moist soil or mud for insect probing (such as wet fields, marshy edges of water bodies, and exposed muddy banks or sandbars) are used for foraging

Wildlife management practices

Control Nonnative Invasive Vegetation: may be necessary if nonnative plants are degrading habitat

Livestock Management: should not allow overgrazing to limit herbaceous vegetation adjacent to wetlands that is used for nesting; livestock access to wetlands should be restricted

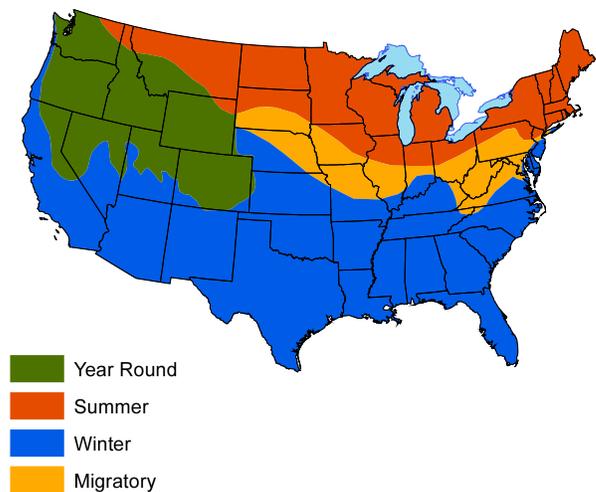
Set-back Succession: *Disking* and *Herbicide Applications* can provide bare ground; *Prescribed Fire* can maintain herbaceous groundcover; *Chaining* can reduce excessive shrub cover; *Chainsawing*, *Dozer-clearing*, *Root-plowing*, and *Herbicide Applications* may be used to remove trees and create wetland openings

Water Developments for Wildlife: shallow impoundments should be created where topography allows, providing increased feeding areas for snipe; water control structures allow manipulation of water levels, expose mudflats, and encourage aquatic vegetation

Wildlife or Fish Survey: flush counts, hunter harvest data, and breeding bird survey data are used to estimate population trends



David Ward



Wood duck

General information

Wood ducks are spectacularly colored ducks found throughout most of the U.S. They primarily use forested and shrub-emergent wetlands and riparian systems (rivers and streams), but also may forage and loaf in flooded fields, especially if there is plenty of emergent vegetation. Wood ducks nest in tree cavities, usually within or adjacent to flooded timber, but possibly up to 1 mile from water. Cavity availability is critical for a sustainable population. Thus, artificial cavities (nest boxes) are readily used by wood ducks and have been, most likely, the number one reason for the increase in wood duck populations since the mid-twentieth century.

Habitat requirements

Diet: acorns are the primary diet item in fall and winter; other hard mast, miscellaneous seeds and soft mast, as well as waste grain (especially corn) also are eaten; insects and other invertebrates are most important for wood duck chicks and hens prior to and during the nesting season

Water: obtained through diet and drink free-standing water regularly

Cover: shallowly flooded bottomland hardwoods, emergent wetlands, swamps, and marshes are commonly used for loafing and foraging cover; tree cavities in forested areas and artificial cavities used for nesting

Wildlife management practices

Control Nonnative Invasive Vegetation: when nonnative invasive vegetation begins to reduce habitat quality for wood ducks; this is applicable in wetlands as well as adjacent uplands where wood ducks may be foraging

Forest Management: *Forest Regeneration (Shelterwood, Group Selection)* in relatively large forested areas that can be flooded will create openings with emergent woody vegetation that will attract foraging and loafing wood ducks; *Forest Stand Improvement* in bottomland hardwoods that can be flooded can lead to larger crowns of favored trees and increased mast production; woody stem density should increase following FSI and improve cover in stands that can be flooded; where cavity trees are limiting, non-mast-producing trees >12" in diameter may be killed via girdling and spraying to provide potential cavities for nesting

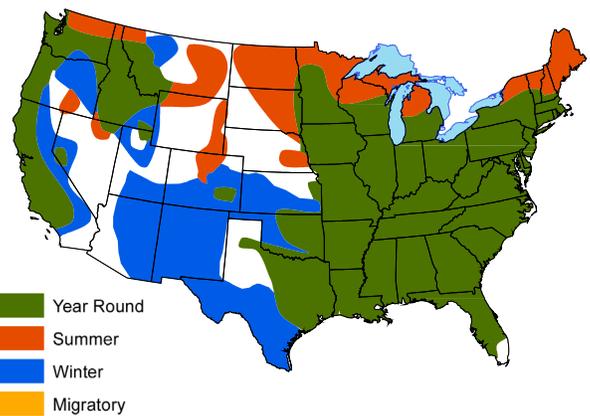
Leave Crop Unharvested: especially corn, to provide high-energy food source during fall and winter; this is especially important in fields that can be flooded and those adjacent to a water source used by wood ducks

Livestock Management: should prevent overgrazing in fields that are flooded for wood ducks; livestock should be excluded from bottomland hardwoods and areas where trees and shrubs have been planted, as well as food plots

Nesting Structures: nest boxes should be erected where a lack of natural cavities may be limiting the wood duck



Thomas G. Barnes



population; nest boxes for wood ducks should be at least 100 yards apart and should not be placed within sight of each other to prevent dump nesting (if a wood duck hen sees another hen entering a cavity or nest box, she may be stimulated to enter that cavity and “dump” her own eggs instead of laying in her own nest; thus, heat from incubation is not even over all the eggs and fewer eggs hatch overall)

Plant Food Plots: shallowly flooded grain plots, especially corn, can provide an important source of energy in fall/winter, especially during years of poor mast production

Plant Shrubs: where there is a lack of emergent woody vegetation in open areas that can be flooded

Plant Trees: mast trees planted adjacent to or within open areas suitable for flooding may provide future food and nesting cavities in areas where these trees may be limiting

Repair Spillway/Levee: if not functioning properly

Set-back Succession: *Chainsawing* can be used to create openings in bottomland hardwoods that can be flooded; *Prescribed Fire* and *Herbicide Applications* can be used to reduce tree and shrub cover in woods that can be flooded and stimulate herbaceous cover and provide increased food availability

Soil Conservation Agriculture: eliminate tillage in the fall to provide additional waste grain during winter, especially corn fields that can be shallowly flooded

Water Developments for Wildlife: shallow impoundments should be created where topography allows, providing increased feeding and nesting space for wood ducks; water control structures allow the water level to be manipulated to influence vegetation and food availability

Wildlife or Fish Survey: nest box usage rates, brood counts, and flush counts are used to estimate population trends

Yellow-rumped warbler

General information

Yellow-rumped warblers are relatively large warblers found throughout the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. They breed throughout southern Canada, the western U.S., the Great Lakes region, and the northeastern U.S. in coniferous and mixed coniferous-deciduous forests and woodlands. They winter throughout the southern U.S. using open areas, especially shrub cover with plentiful soft mast. Yellow-rumped warblers eat insects gleaned from the branches and bark of trees and shrubs, and also may catch insects on-the-fly.

Habitat requirements

Diet: ants, caterpillars, beetles, grasshoppers, craneflies, and spiders in spring and summer; various seeds and fruit during winter, such as bayberry, wax myrtle, juniper, poison ivy, greenbrier, grapes, Virginia creeper, and dogwoods

Water: necessary water obtained from diet, but free-standing water is used when available

Cover: coniferous or mixed forest and woodland during nesting season; occasionally nest in shrubs; nest is made of twigs, bark strippings, and weed stems and placed on small branches 5 to 50 feet above the ground; brushy thickets are used for feeding, loafing, and escape during winter

Wildlife management practices

Control Nonnative Invasive Vegetation: when nonnative invasive vegetation begins to reduce habitat quality for yellow-rumped warblers

Forest Management: *Forest Stand Improvement* can improve forest structure for nesting and foraging

Livestock Management: should not allow overgrazing in wintering areas; livestock should be excluded from forested areas used for nesting

Plant Shrubs: where shrub cover is lacking in winter range

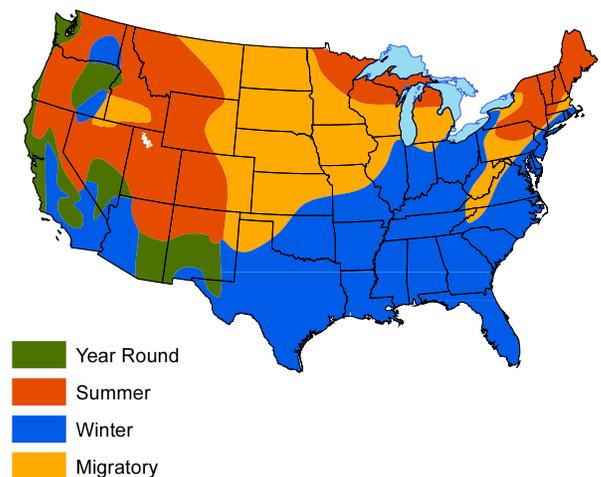
Plant Trees: where forest cover is limiting during the nesting season

Set-back Succession: *Prescribed Fire* and *Herbicide Applications* can be used to maintain open areas with scattered shrub cover in wintering areas

Wildlife or Fish Survey: point counts and autonomous recording units (ARUs) may be used to detect species occurrence and monitor population trends



Frank Miles



Mammals

American beaver

General information

Beavers occur throughout most of North America. They are found in various wetlands that have permanent water with a variety of shrubs and trees adjacent to the water. Beavers build dams from tree branches, shrubs, and mud to form ponds that stabilize water levels, slow water movement, and provide shelter beneath the ice in winter. Beavers also build lodges from sticks and mud and dig burrows in banks of streams and rivers. Beavers eat the inner bark of shrubs and trees and store cuttings in caches (piles of branches) for use during winter. The ecological benefits provided by beavers cannot be overstated. Beavers are responsible for creating habitat for many species of birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish, and invertebrates. Without beavers, the distribution and abundance of many freshwater wetland-associated species would decline dramatically. Unfortunately, beavers were once such a valuable fur resource that trapping led to their extirpation in many parts of their former range. Today, beavers have rebounded with help from wildlife agency regulations and a lack of available fur market. In some areas, beavers have become a nuisance, as they cut down trees and dam ditches and streams in undesirable places. Their dams often flood crops, destabilize road edges, and kill trees. When beavers construct dams in places that cause problems, removal of the beaver is usually the best solution. If the dam is destroyed and the beavers remain, they will build the dam again.

Habitat requirements

- Diet:** primarily bark from shrubs and trees; also some forbs and grasses
- Water:** prefer slow moving or still water at least 5 feet deep (to allow movement under water)
- Cover:** bottomland riparian areas that can be dammed to provide still water with sufficient depth

Wildlife management practices

- Control Nonnative Invasive Vegetation:** when nonnative invasive vegetation begins to reduce habitat quality for American beaver
- Livestock Management:** should prevent livestock access to riparian areas and other wetlands where beaver is a focal species to prevent foraging on shrubs and young trees; this may include developing livestock watering facilities in upland areas beaver may use and maintain good water quality
- Plant Shrubs:** where beavers are desired, but not present, deciduous shrubs may be planted along riparian areas



Steve Hersey



- where there are few trees or shrubs to make the area more attractive to beavers
- Plant Trees:** where beavers are desired but not present, deciduous trees may be planted along riparian areas where there are few trees or shrubs to make the area more attractive to beavers
- Decrease Harvest:** may be necessary where an increased beaver population is desired and trapping pressure has limited growth
- Increase Harvest:** where populations can sustain additional trapping pressure for recreation and/or where populations need to be lowered
- Water Developments for Wildlife:** a Clemson Beaver Pond Leveler or similar device can be installed in beaver dams to maintain water levels if needed
- Wildlife Damage Management:** should be implemented where beavers are causing problems for landowners, such as flooding timber, crops, roads, and other areas
- Wildlife or Fish Survey:** presence and extent of beaver activity (dams, evidence of cutting shrubs and trees) and trapper harvest data are used to estimate population trends over time

American marten

General information

Martens are found primarily in mature coniferous or deciduous-coniferous forest of the upper Great Lakes, Rocky Mountains, and the mountains of the Pacific region and New England. Martens are carnivorous. They give birth and raise young in dens of hollow trees, stumps or rock crevices.

Habitat requirements

Diet: primarily voles, snowshoe hares, ruffed grouse, and squirrels; also opportunistically eat eggs, amphibians, soft mast, and carrion

Water: necessary water obtained from diet

Cover: mature conifer forests, but also mixed hardwood forests; dens in hollow logs, stump holes, and rock crevices

Wildlife management practices

Control Nonnative Invasive Vegetation: when nonnative invasive vegetation begins to reduce habitat quality for American marten

Forest Management: *Forest Regeneration (Single-tree Selection, Group Selection)* and *Forest Stand Improvement* can diversify understory structure and composition and increase abundance of prey; snags should be retained for prey

Plant Trees: where additional forest cover is needed

Decrease Harvest: may be necessary when trapping pressure is limiting population

Increase Harvest: where populations can sustain additional trapping pressure

Wildlife or Fish Survey: track counts, trapper harvest data, and trail cameras can be used to estimate population trends over time



USFWS



Big brown bat

General information

Big brown bats are one of 46 bat species in North America. They inhabit nearly all of the U.S., except south Florida and south-central Texas. They use a variety of vegetation types, from farmland to mature deciduous forest. Big brown bats are common in urban areas, including cities, parks, and suburban neighborhoods. They frequently use buildings and houses for daytime summer roosts and sometimes as winter hibernacula, but most hibernate in caves. Big brown bats are insectivores. Lactating females will eat their weight in insects daily. Males and females may roost individually or in small numbers, but males and females usually roost separately. Females may roost together in a maternal colony when pups are born and nursing. Females usually give birth to one or two pups, often in a hollow tree or attic. Big brown bats, as well as all other bat species, are nocturnal and are the only mammals capable of flying. Big brown bats will drink “on-the-wing” by dipping their lower jaw into a water source. Big brown bats hibernate in the winter in northern latitudes. Therefore, they do not actively feed during winter months, but instead rely on stored fat reserves.

Habitat requirements

Diet: night-flying insects, especially beetles

Water: free-standing water is required daily when they are active

Cover: buildings and hollow trees are often used for daytime roosts; bat houses also may be used for daytime roosting; caves, mines and buildings are used for hibernation

Wildlife management practices

Nesting Structures: may provide additional roost sites if natural roost sites are limiting in Urban areas

Plant Trees: in large open areas where few trees are present to promote future old trees that may provide roost sites

Set-back Succession: *Chainsawing, Dozer-clearing, Root-plowing, Herbicide Applications, and Prescribed Fire* (in rural areas) can be used to maintain more than 50 percent open areas for foraging; mowing may be used in **Urban** areas to maintain openings

Water Developments for Wildlife: where available open water is not available, small ponds and shallow impoundments may be constructed for drinking and



Don Pfitzer



to attract insects; water developments should be constructed with nothing above the water (such as fencing or bracing) so bats have an unobstructed flight path

Wildlife Damage Management: may be necessary when roosting or hibernating in areas occupied by humans

Wildlife or Fish Survey: observation counts and autonomous recording units (ARUs) are used to estimate population trends

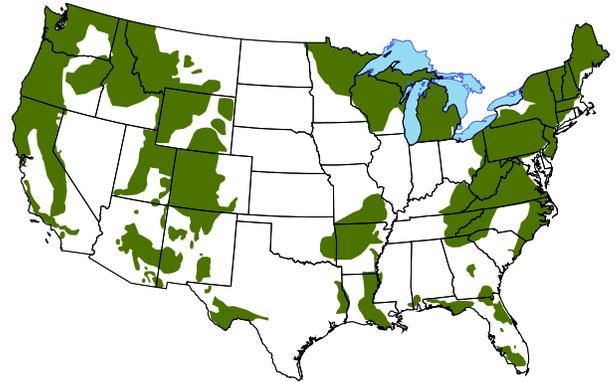
Black bear

General information

Black bears are game mammals that primarily use mature deciduous or mixed deciduous/coniferous forest interspersed with early successional openings containing soft mast. Young regenerating stands, shrub thickets with dense brushy cover, and riparian corridors also are used. Black bears generally are secretive and avoid human contact. However, black bears are highly adaptable and may occur in and around human dwellings and become problematic, especially if food is available. Black bears are primarily nocturnal, but may be seen anytime during the day. They hibernate in winter (even in warm climates such as Florida and Louisiana) and have large home ranges (several square miles) that vary based on sex, age, and/or time of year. In general, adult male home ranges (up to 50 square miles) are much larger than female home ranges (15 square miles). Black bears are omnivorous. However, more than 90 percent of their diet consists of vegetation. Liberalizing or restricting females in the harvest influences population growth. Regulation of bear population density is influenced by public tolerance toward bear-human conflicts, property damage, livestock and agricultural damage, and the desire to see bears.



Steve Hillebrand



Habitat requirements

Diet: in spring, skunk cabbage, squaw root, grasses, and insects; occasionally, small to medium-sized mammals, such as deer fawns and young livestock (calves and lambs); during summer and early fall, a variety of soft mast, such as blackberry, blueberry, serviceberry, black cherry and pokeweed, are important; during late fall, acorns, beechnuts, and hickory nuts, as well as field corn and soybeans, help bears prepare for hibernation; when natural foods are scarce, bears may wander near human residences and feed on bird seed, dog/cat food, and other food scraps

Water: free-standing water is used for drinking; spring seeps and other shallow water sources are used to cool off and get away from biting insects; water is seldom a limiting factor because black bears have such a large home range

Cover: mature hardwood or mixed hardwood-conifer forests for foraging; brushy areas and young regenerating forest for loafing and escape; early successional openings primarily for foraging, usually for soft mast; rock crevices, excavations, hollow trees, dense mountain laurel and rhododendron thickets for hibernation

Wildlife management practices

Control Nonnative Invasive Vegetation: when nonnative invasive vegetation begins to reduce habitat quality for black bear

Do Not Feed Wildlife: supplemental feeding increases risk of habituation on a food source provided by humans, decreases fear of humans, and increases conflicts with

people

Edge Feathering: can stimulate increased soft mast production around row-crop fields (especially corn, soybean, and wheat)

Forest Management: *Forest Regeneration (Clearcut, Shelterwood, Group Selection)* creates dense escape and loafing cover for bears; an abundance of soft mast (pokeweed, blackberry, huckleberry, blueberry) is usually available in recently regenerated stands; *Forest Stand Improvement* practices can stimulate increased hard mast production and can stimulate groundcover, which usually increases soft mast production

Leave Crop Unharvested: strips of corn, wheat, grain sorghum, or soybeans should be left standing, especially where adjacent to escape cover, to provide food close to cover

Livestock Management: livestock should be removed from forested areas because they consume foods that black bear eat and reduce cover for black bear in the understory

Plant Food Plots: where food may be limiting, forage and grain plots (especially corn) may be planted to provide additional nutrition

Plant Shrubs: crabapple, blueberry, hawthorn, wild plum, elderberry, and others can be planted within forest openings where soft mast is lacking

Plant Trees: apple, pear, cherry, persimmon, mulberry, and dogwood are good choices to provide additional soft mast where lacking

Set-back Succession: *Prescribed Fire* can stimulate groundcover and soft mast in early successional

openings, maintain shrub cover when quality begins to decline, and stimulate understory structure and soft mast availability in forests, especially where sufficient sunlight reaches the forest floor; *Dozer-clearing*, *Root-plowing*, and *Chainsawing* can be used to increase early succession

Soil Conservation Agriculture: eliminate tillage in the fall to provide additional waste grain during winter, especially when adjacent to dense shrub or forest cover

Decrease Harvest: may be necessary when additional bears are desired and hunting pressure may be limiting population growth

Increase Harvest: where populations can sustain additional hunting pressure for recreation and where populations need to be lowered

Wildlife Damage Management: may be needed if bear-human conflicts occur in agricultural or urban settings

Wildlife or Fish Survey: scent stations, winter den surveys, camera surveys, and hunter harvest data are used to estimate population trends

Black-tailed jackrabbit

General information

The black-tailed jackrabbit is a large, long-eared hare that lives in open, arid grasslands and brushland in the west. They prefer open pastures, even those that have been grazed, rather than thick brush for the increased visibility that helps them avoid predators. This jackrabbit has brownish fur peppered with black. Its hind feet are as large as its ears and used to run fast, up to 36 mph, to elude predators, such as hawks, coyotes, and bobcats. The large ears help regulate body heat by increasing or decreasing the blood flow through the ears. Black-tailed jackrabbits are mostly seen in the late evening hours and stay out at night to forage when they would be less likely to face predation. During the day, black-tailed jackrabbits rest in hollows made in the ground at the base of shrubs or in tall grass for shade. They mate year-round and produce 1 to 4 litters per year with up to 8 young per litter. They do not typically make a nest. Black-tailed jackrabbits eat a wide range of vegetation depending on what is available. A concentration of these jackrabbits may overgraze parts of a property and is considered a pest in many places. Their population can be affected by a reduction in forage as a result of brush encroachment and development.



Ryan Hagerty

Habitat requirements

Diet: forage crops, twigs, cactus, mesquite, grasses, and forbs

Water: obtained from the foods they eat

Cover: open grasslands for foraging; shrubs and tall grasses for burrow cover

Wildlife management practices

Control Nonnative Invasive Vegetation: when nonnative invasive vegetation begins to reduce habitat quality for black-tailed jackrabbits

Livestock Management: should provide adequate forage for jackrabbits where black-tailed jackrabbit is a focal species

Plant Shrubs: can provide cover where trees and shrubs are lacking

Set-back Succession: *Prescribed Fire, Chaining, Drum-chopping,* and *Root-plowing* can be used to reduce shrub cover where necessary

Decrease Harvest: may be necessary if harvest has been excessive and an increase in the black-tailed jackrabbit population is desired

Increase Harvest: where population can withstand additional harvest for recreational hunting or when population needs to be lowered



Wildlife Damage Management: is necessary when jackrabbits reduce forage available for livestock

Wildlife or Fish Survey: observation counts are used to monitor population trends