

# Mini 4-H WILDLIFE



- Mini 4-H is open to youth who are currently in **Kindergarten, first, or second grade** at the time of their enrollment on 4HOnline.
- Enroll in Mini 4-H through the 4HOnline website by January 15, <https://in.4HOnline.com>
- There is no state program fee or manual fee for Mini 4-H, a local club fee may apply.
- Each Mini 4-H member can enroll in up to 5 mini 4-H projects and is able to **exhibit 2 mini-projects** at the St. Joseph County 4-H Fair.
- All projects to be exhibited must be entered into Fairentry.com (<https://stjoseph-in.fairentry.com>) prior to check-in.
- All Mini 4-H projects are checked in on Monday or Tuesday of project turn-in week, one week before fair starts, in the 4-H Exhibit Hall of the Esther Singer Building. Enter Gate 2 off Ironwood Road.
- Your completed Mini 4-H project will receive a 4-H ribbon once it is exhibited at the 4-H Fair.

## WILDLIFE:

In this project you will learn to observe more of the wonders of nature by identifying birds and mammals. In this project, you will be supplied with the pictures to color, cut out and attach to your poster.

**Exhibit Requirements:** Exhibit a 14” x 22” horizontal poster with 3 birds and 3 mammals. The title on the poster should be “WILDLIFE IN INDIANA”. Under each animal give its name and what it eats.

## 4-H PLEDGE: I pledge...



My head to clearer thinking



My heart to greater loyalty



My hands to larger service



My health to better living

For my CLUB, my COMMUNITY, my COUNTRY, and my WORLD.

In this project you will learn to observe more of the wonders of nature by learning to identify these birds and mammals. This is not just a coloring exercise. The best way to learn what colors to use and other identifying characteristics is to see the live bird or mammal. You may be able to see some of these in the wild, at a zoo, or perhaps mounted in a natural history museum, or you may resort to a reference book.

Since food is one of the basic requirements of wildlife, it is important to know what the natural diet of each species is. The natural diet is what they would eat in the wild.

In this project you will be supplied the pictures to color and cut out for your poster. You will also be supplied the principal diet for each of the species in this project.

Please check 4-H fair book for the date and time of your project entry.

## WILDLIFE IN INDIANA



There are 52 species of mammals found in Indiana today. It is possible that one or two more may eventually be added. About 14 species may be considered rare or at least have restricted ranges.

In regard to birdlife more than 250 different kinds of birds might be seen in Indiana some time during the year.

Kinds of plants found determine where the different animals are found. Also, plant communities have changed due to changes in land use; therefore, the number and kind of animals have changed. So we can only use the variety and abundance of animals that were present 50 years ago as a guide to what is found at present.

This justifies the statement: "The variety and amount of wildlife we have today is the result of how man decided to use the land many years ago". The wildlife that is found here 25 or 50 years in the future will de-

pend on what we decide to do with the land now or at least in the very near future.

Perhaps at this point it would be well to define "wildlife" as we think of it today. Wildlife includes all non-domesticated animals, such as mammals, birds, fish, reptiles (snakes) and amphibians (frogs, etc.) that may be of interest or value to man.

As stated earlier, the wildlife resource has been extremely important to man; at one time his existence depended on it. But what about today? Does wildlife have any value in our modern-day society? The answer is a big YES.

## VALUES OF WILDLIFE

### Biological Value

We hear a great deal today about biological control of insects and other human and crop pests. Wildlife plays an important part in this. Many species of animals feed on rodents, insects, weed seeds, and carrion. However, it must be pointed out that in many cases animals do not distinguish between beneficial and harmful insects or rodents.

The purple martin, for example, does not feed on mosquitoes; they feed on any kind of flying insect. If mosquitoes happen to be there, that is what they eat; if not, they will feed on something else.

Sunlight, water, and gases act together to produce oxygen. Energy is stored in plant tissue. When animals eat the plants, a part of this energy and the minerals are then stored in animals tissue. That animal may be eaten by another or die of some other cause. When the animal dies, it decomposes and again becomes a part of the soil. Therefore, animals contribute to soil fertility. This is a continuing and very important process in a natural system..

These few paragraphs have given you an idea of what is meant when someone speaks of the biological values of wildlife. Undoubtedly, you could list many more.

## ADDITIONAL SOURCES

National Wildlife Federation, 1412 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036

The National Audubon Society, 1130 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10028

## PROJECT SPECIES

The animals chosen for this project are some of the most common in Indiana. They are: opossum, muskrat, eastern cottontail rabbit, raccoon, striped skunk, and squirrel (eastern fox, eastern gray, or red squirrel). The birds are: barn swallow, blue jay, cardinal, goldfinch, robin, and house wren.

This is not just a coloring exercise. It is hoped that the 4-H member will learn to observe more the wonders of nature by learning to identify these animals. The best way to learn what colors to use and other identifying characteristics is to see the live bird or mammal.

It is not probable that the 4-H'er will see the animals in the wild, in the zoo, or perhaps mounted in a natural history museum, he will have to resort to a reliable reference book. The colors should be reproduced as accurately as possible.

Since food is one of the basic requirements of wildlife, it is important to know what the natural diet of each species is. The natural diet is what they would eat in the wild.

The following is the principal natural diet for each of the species in this project:



## Bird or Mammals

## Principal Foods

Opossum	Carrion, young of small animals, tree fruits, corn, insects, crayfish.
Muskrat	Cattails, water plants, sedges, grasses, occasionally mussels and crayfish.
Rabbit	Green vegetation, bark, twigs.
Raccoon	Eggs, small birds and mammals, frogs, crayfish, insects, wild fruits and berries, corn, acorns, beechnuts.
Skunk	Insects, rodents, snakes, frogs, eggs, worms, carrion, fruits.
Squirrel	Nuts, acorns, seeds, buds, fruit.
Barn Swallow	Flying insects entirely: flies, bees, ants, beetles
Blue Jay	Acorns, beechnuts, grains, some insects, eggs, young birds.
Cardinal	Fruits, weed seeds, insects.
Gold Finch	Mainly weed seeds, grain, wild fruit.
Robin	Insects, worms, seeds, fruits.
House Wren	Small insects.

## SCIENTIFIC VALUE

Much of the research done on human blood chemistry and heart disease has been done with monkeys because they are similar to humans in many respects. Monkeys were also used in the development of the life-saving Salk polio vaccine. In case you have forgotten, monkeys were also the first travelers in space.

Recently, science has found that the kind of life found in a body of water may indicate the degree of pollution in it and whether that pollution was caused by oxygen depletion, a change in temperature, or the addition of a chemical.

By analyzing deer antlers from wilderness areas, scientists can tell how much radioactive fallout has contaminated the area.

These examples and many others are commonplace but few people ever think about the contributions of wildlife in regard to scientific achievement.

## ECONOMIC VALUE

Some people in our society can see no value in anything unless it concerns money. Sportsmen, bird-watchers, campers and hikers spend billions of dollars each year on fishing tackle, boats, motors, sporting arms and ammunition, boots, clothing cameras, binoculars and other equipment.

In addition, people make money from commercial fishing and trapping. This also is an economic value of the wildlife resource.

Several billion pounds of fish caught by commercial fishermen can be worth millions of dollars. This must be recognized as income from wildlife. Even today trapping provides extra money and in some cases a modest income for thousands of part-time trappers. Thus, wildlife contributes significantly to the economy.

## ENVIRONMENTAL VALUE

As you study wildlife, you will find that it is very sensitive to changes in the environment. These

changes may be so slight that most people are not aware of them. Yet, they may mean the difference between life and death for some wildlife species.

Wildlife is immediately affected by changes in the area where it lives. Just by changing water temperature a few degrees, introducing some pollutant, draining wetlands, channeling a natural watercourse, clearing a forest, fall plowing, or any similar land use change may and has resulted in serious problems for wildlife.

Because of this sensitivity, wildlife is a reliable indicator of environmental quality. Man must have clean water, fertile fields, and healthy forests; consequently, proper use of our nation's resources is in the interest of man and of the wildlife resource that he enjoys.

It has been said that what is good for wildlife is good for man; but, what man does may not be good for wildlife.

## SUGGESTED REFERENCES

### BIRDS

Peterson, Roger Tory, *A Field Guide to the Birds*, Houghton Mifflin.

Pough, Richard H. *Audubon Bird Guide*, Double-day & Co.

Zim, H.S. and T.N. Gabrielson. *Birds, A Guide to the Most Familiar American Birds*, Simon and Schuster (The Golden Nature Series)

### MAMMALS

Burt, W.H. and R.P. Grossenheider. *A Field Guide to the Mammals*, Houghton Mifflin Co.

Zim, H.S. and D.F. Hoffmeister. *Mammals, A Gold Nature Guide*, Golden Press, New York.

Cahalane, Victor H. *Mammals of North America*, The Macmillan Co., N.Y.

Anthony, H.E. *Field Book of North American Mammals*, Putnam's Sons, N.Y.

## PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

Read this manual about our wildlife source.

Learn to know six common mammals and what they eat.

Learn to know six common birds and what they eat.

Carefully color the birds and mammals and assemble your exhibit.



## EXHIBIT REQUIREMENTS

Carefully color the birds and mammals. Cut them out and mount them on a 14 X 22 horizontal white cardboard. You should use any 3 birds and 3 mammals. You may color them with crayons, colored pencils, or paint, whichever you can use best. The cardboard should be displayed horizontally.



### Title your poster "WILDLIFE IN INDIANA"

Under each bird & mammal, give its name and the main kind of food it eats. You may print, type, use a computer or write the information on the label. Your label might look like this.

NAME _____ OPOSSUM _____
FOOD EATEN <u>Carrion, tree fruits, corn</u> <u>Insects, young of small animals, crayfish</u>



**PLEASE CHECK YOUR 4-H HANDBOOK FOR THE PROJECT CHECK-IN DATE.**



