

# Indiana Comprehensive Wildlife Strategy

## From Vision to On-the-Ground Action

*Early identification of threats to fish, wildlife and their habitats contributes to the goals of Indiana's Comprehensive Wildlife Strategy by providing an opportunity to prevent species from becoming endangered.*

Since habitat loss is the biggest threat to Indiana wildlife, the Indiana Department of Fish and Wildlife considered a habitat-based approach to wildlife conservation the most efficient way to address the needs of the widest variety of species. Experts strongly support protecting migration routes and managing populations of common species as methods for conserving wildlife populations.

### *Proactive Efforts that Benefit Wildlife and People* **Improving Management of Birds Breeding in Indiana**

Early identification of threats to fish, wildlife and their habitats contributes to the goals of Indiana's Comprehensive Wildlife Strategy by providing an opportunity to prevent species

from becoming endangered. Observations of birds carrying nest material, singing from the same place for more than a week, courting a female, or chasing rival males help determine whether bird species are breeding in the state and where they are breeding. In 2007, biologists and volunteers completed

the third of six field seasons necessary to map the current distribution of breeding birds in Indiana. Gathering this important information will allow Indiana to make smart, proactive management decisions to conserve its diverse array of birds for future generations to enjoy.

### *Gathering Information to Take Action* **Researching Causes of Eastern Box Turtle Decline**

Indiana's wildlife strategy has prioritized identifying threats to Indiana's wildlife and conducting research that will help to understand these factors and how to address them. Populations of eastern box turtles have declined across their entire range in recent years. Road mortality, habitat fragmentation, and collection are all problems, leading Indiana to prohibit the collection of wild box turtles within the state. To investigate threats to the box turtle, biologists are using radio-tracking methods to collect information on box turtle home ranges and movement patterns throughout spring, summer, and fall. Transmitters left on turtles during the winter provide information on the condition of hibernating turtles. As Indiana communities grow, these research efforts will help us fulfill our responsibility to conserve the eastern box turtle and the places it lives for future generations.



Black-crowned night heron in nest/  
Indiana Department of Natural Resources



Eastern box turtle with radio transmitter attached/Indiana Department of Natural Resources

**Working with Partners to Bring Back  
Wildlife and Natural Areas  
Restoring Allegheny  
Woodrats in Indiana**

Identifying and addressing negative impacts to priority species, such as the Allegheny woodrat, is a key component of Indiana's wildlife strategy. The Allegheny woodrat has a peculiar habit of collecting items like twigs, bone, seeds, pencils, and snail shells into large caches called middens. The decline of this state-endangered species is likely due to habitat fragmentation, reduced genetic diversity, and a fatal parasite. The Wildlife Diversity Section has partnered with Purdue University and The Nature Conservancy to experimentally release woodrats obtained from non-threatened populations elsewhere in its range and to research the parasite's effects on woodrat populations. Future trapping of woodrats will provide information on

their habitat and where they live. These research efforts will provide Indiana with the necessary information to conserve the Allegheny woodrat and the habitat it needs for survival.

**Association of Fish & Wildlife  
Agencies**

444 North Capitol St, NW, Suite 725  
Washington, DC 20001  
202.624.7890  
[www.teaming.com](http://www.teaming.com)  
[www.wildlifeactionplans.org](http://www.wildlifeactionplans.org)

**Division of Fish and Wildlife,  
Indiana Department of  
Natural Resources**

402 W. Washington St. W273  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
[http://www.in.gov/dnr/fishwild/  
endangered/](http://www.in.gov/dnr/fishwild/endangered/)



*As Indiana  
communities grow,  
these research  
efforts will help  
us fulfill our  
responsibility to  
conserve the eastern  
box turtle and the  
places it lives for  
future generations.*

Allegheny woodrat/Indiana Department of Natural Resources