

WILDLIFE HABITAT SUITABILITY

Description of Wildlife Habitat Elements

Grain and seed crops are seed producing annuals used by wildlife. Examples are corn, wheat, rye, oats, barley, millet, buckwheat, and sunflowers.

Grasses and legumes are domestic, perennial grasses and herbaceous legumes that are planted for wildlife food and cover. Examples are fescue, bluegrass, bromegrass, timothy, orchardgrass, clover, alfalfa, trefoil, reed canarygrass, and crownvetch.

Wild herbaceous plants are native and naturally established herbaceous grasses and forbs, including weeds, that provide food and cover for wildlife. Examples are bluestem, Indiangrass, blueberry, goldenrod, lambsquarters, dandelions, blackberry, ragweed, wheatgrass, fescue, and nightshade.

Hardwood trees and the associated woody understory provide cover for wildlife and produce nuts or other fruit, buds, catkins, twigs, bark, or foliage that wildlife eat. Examples of native plants are oak, poplar, cherry, apple, birch, beech, maple, hickory, hazelnut, black walnut, and viburnum. Examples of fruit bearing shrubs that are commercially available and suitable for planting on soils rated good are hawthorn, honeysuckle, sumac, silky dogwood, highbush cranberry, autumn olive, and crabapple.

Coniferous plants are cone bearing trees, shrubs, or ground cover that furnish habitat or supply food in the form of browse, seed, or fruitlike cones. Examples are pine, spruce, hemlock, fir, yew, cedar, larch, and juniper.

Wetland plants are annual and perennial wild herbaceous plants that grow on moist or wet sites, exclusive of submerged or floating aquatics. They produce food or cover for wildlife that use wetland as habitat. Examples of wetland plants are smartweed, wild millet, rushes, sedges, reeds, wildrice, arrowhead, waterplantain, pickerelweed, and cattail.

Shallow water are bodies of surface water that have an average depth of less than five feet and are useful as habitat for wildlife. They can be naturally wet areas, or they can be created by dams or levees, or by water control devices in marshes or streams. Examples are muskrat marshes, waterfowl feeding areas, wildlife watering developments, beaver ponds, and other wildlife ponds.

Kinds of Wildlife Habitat

Openland habitat consists of croplands, pastures, meadows, and areas that are overgrown with grasses, herbs, shrubs, and vines. These areas produce grain and seed crops, grasses and legumes, and wild herbaceous plants. The kind of wildlife attracted to these areas include bobwhite quail, pheasant, meadowlark, field sparrow, killdeer, cottontail rabbit, red fox, and woodchuck.

Woodland habitat consists of hardwood or conifers, or a mixture of these and associated grasses, legumes, and wild herbaceous plants. Examples of wildlife attracted to this habitat are wild turkey, woodcock, thrushes, woodpeckers, owl, tree squirrels, gray fox, porcupine, raccoon, white tail deer, and black bear.

Wetland habitat consists of water tolerant plants in open, marshy or swampy, shallow water areas. Examples of wildlife attracted to this habitat are ducks, geese, herons, bitterns, rails, kingfishers, muskrat, otter, mink, and beaver.

Rangeland habitat consists of native grassland areas. These areas produce grasses, legumes, shrubs and wild herbaceous plants. Examples of wildlife attracted to this habitat are mule deer, badgers, antelope, prairie chickens, sharptail grouse and prairie dogs