

# Oak Ridge Reservation Wildlife Management



photo by Curtis Boles

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# Wildlife Management Implementation

- The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) is responsible for wildlife management on the Oak Ridge Reservation (ORR) through an agreement with the United States Department of Energy (DOE) Oak Ridge Office.
- TWRA actively manages the Three Bend Scenic and Wildlife Refuge through an additional agreement with DOE.
- TWRA and the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) are responsible for the management of the Black Oak Ridge Conservation Easement area.
- UT-Battelle/ORNL is responsible for coordinating wildlife management activities on the ORR.

# White-tailed Deer Management



- The white-tailed deer population on the Oak Ridge Reservation (ORR) is managed through yearly fall hunts.
- Deer hunts were initiated in 1985 in response to increases in the number of deer/vehicle collisions. Between 1985 and 2004, 8,870 deer were harvested off the reservation and yearly deer/vehicle collisions have been reduced. There were no hunts conducted in 2001.
- Hunts are administered by the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) on a permit basis.

# Wild Turkey Management



photo by Curtis Boles

- The wild turkey population on the ORR is managed through yearly spring hunts.
- Turkey hunts were initiated in 1997 as a means of managing the increasing population on the reservation. Between 1997 and 2004, 419 turkeys were harvested off the reservation.
- Hunts are administered by the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) on a permit basis.

# Canada Goose Management



photo by Pat Parr

- The ORR supports a large Canada goose population.
- The high numbers of Canada geese on the ORR present certain nuisance problems. These nuisance concerns are mainly related to their propensity to leave droppings on sidewalks and parking lots, and their sometimes aggressive behavior.
- Several management techniques are used on the ORR in order to address goose nuisance problems. These include nest control, relocation of geese to natural areas on the reservation, and relocation to other areas in east Tennessee. Geese are collected for relocation in yearly round ups during their summer flightless period.

# Nuisance Wildlife Management



- Adaptable wildlife, such as raccoons and skunks, can cause nuisance problems when they enter buildings to find den sites and frequent open dumpsters in search of food.
- Wildlife managers on the ORR encourage good building maintenance and closure of dumpsters to discourage entrance by these animals. Animals that do become a nuisance are trapped and removed from the area.
- Nuisance birds, such as house sparrows and starlings, can cause concerns with their propensity to nest and roost in buildings. ORR wildlife managers encourage good building maintenance and keeping other points of entry (e.g. doors and windows) closed wherever possible. Keeping outdoor eating areas clean of food scraps is also important in keeping these birds away.
- General advice is provided to facilities and operations personnel on the various means of discouraging nuisance wildlife.

# Habitat Management



- Active habitat management is conducted on the ORR to promote certain wildlife species.
- The planting of native grass fields provides habitat for rare species such as the grasshopper sparrow and more common “showy” species like the blue grosbeak. This type of management is practiced by TWRA on the Three Bend Scenic and Wildlife Area.
- Overall management schemes implemented on the ORR include preservation of un-fragmented forested areas that preserve habitat for area-sensitive bird species, and the promotion of overall habitat diversity.
- The preservation of large contiguous natural areas on the ORR provides habitat for species not found in surrounding areas where habitat has been fragmented by development.

# Wildlife Surveys



- Wildlife surveys are conducted for all proposed construction projects on the ORR to assure that impacts to wildlife populations are minimized to the maximum extent practicable. Clearing restrictions and shifts in construction location to avoid impacts to sensitive habitat are commonly recommended.



# Wildlife Surveys cont.



- Advanced acoustical technologies are used to record and identify bat calls. Managers are particularly on the look out for federally endangered Indiana and gray bats. Mist netting is also conducted to capture and identify bats on the ORR.

# Wildlife Surveys cont.



- Bird surveys are conducted on routes established throughout the ORR under the state implemented Partners in Flight program. TWRA sponsors bird ID training programs for participants.