

# Endangered Species in Your Backyard

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It is time once again for my annual plug for the Audubon International Cooperative Sanctuary Program. Have you joined since I last wrote? I hope so. If not, what's holding you up? This is a great program, and with your membership, you are supporting a great cause and will be improving your image as an environmental steward to your community. Please consider joining, if you haven't already.

I would like to bring to your attention another aspect of the Cooperative Sanctuary Program: threatened or endangered species. Golf courses are becoming some of the only refuges left for species to survive, and more often, these rare species are settling in the areas provided by golf courses. In my involvement at Eagle Brook C.C., I found out from Audubon International that five species on our wildlife inventory are recognized as threatened species in Illinois. These species are: Pied-Billed Grebe, Black Crowned Heron, Great Egret, Sand Hill Crane (one time) and Little Blue Heron. Beyond the obvious definition of being endangered or threatened, I wasn't sure how they were determined.

I contacted Glen Kruse, who is the head of the Endangered Species Program for the Natural Heritage Program/Division of Natural Resources. He mentioned that there are two separate listings for threatened and endangered species: federal and state. These lists have similarities; however, the federal one is more generic. The state list is more detailed and is

divided into regions. The state definitions of threatened and endangered species are as follows:

**Threatened:** Any breeding species which is likely to become a state endangered species within the foreseeable future in Illinois.

**Endangered:** Any species which is in danger of extinction as a breeding species in Illinois.

The animals that are deemed either threatened or endangered are determined by an independent, governor-appointed board known as the Endangered Species Protection Board. They do all the legwork in determining which species are endangered in the state of Illinois. Once on the list of endangered species, the DNR is responsible for managing them and their habitats.

I contacted the DNR's web page at [dnr.state.il.us/](http://dnr.state.il.us/) (no www) and pulled down their current list of threatened and endangered species. Their list was quite extensive (20 pages) and included the following numbers for endangered and threatened species:

Fish	21/9
Reptiles & Amphibians	9/9
Birds	33/9
Mammals	6/3
Invertebrate Animals	40/9
Plants	306/57

If you would like this list, I can make a copy, or you can download it from the DNR's web page listed above.

Currently, to help manage these species and their habitats, the state has 23 regional/district

heritage biologists located across the area. Brad Semel is one of these biologists (McHenry County area); and some of his duties include managing state natural areas and nature preserves, assisting in prairie burns, prairie restoration and keeping track of plant and animal populations. They try to keep up with land development within their districts and offer advice and coordinate these developments so they won't disturb any special habitats. One endangered species project Brad has worked on was assisting on the development of Thunder Hawk G.C. Also, in the Chain of Lakes area, his department is working with the Army Corp of Engineers to help deter the erosion (six acres down to almost one acre) of an island that is the only known nesting site for the Foster's Tern.

Hopefully, this has enlightened you a little bit on endangered species and their management. Once again, it is important to realize the impact we have on the environment. If we can manage our property to its fullest potential, only great things can be reaped from our efforts, and our image in the public will be kept as an asset. Finally, as a last note, join the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program! 