Predators are only a small part of the wildlife management issue.
Predators

- Predation implies tooth and claw, and blood and terror to most people.
- To biologists, a predator is an animal that kills and eats other animals.
- Special abilities of predators include speed, a sense of determining angles of pursuit, strength, and a sharp sense of smell and vision.
Mountain Lion

- Also called cougar or pumas
- Large long tailed cats
- Their spotted fur is dull, tawny in color on the back sides, with white underneath
- Ears are small and rounded
- Main food is deer, but will also eat porcupines, livestock, and a variety of other small animals
- Live primarily in rocky canyons or dense brush
Bobcat

- Barely twice the size of a housecat
- Reddish brown or grayish fur spotted with black
- A ruff surrounds the face, and pointed tufts of hair rise from the tips of its ears that help in amplifying sound
- Prefer rocky canyons or outcrops, but often live in wooded areas
- Eats whatever is available
Coyote

- Number one predator of livestock in the U.S.
- They are light gray to dull yellowish color, with white underparts
- Fur is long and heavy, giving a shaggy look
- Only use dens when raising young, and do not hibernate
- Have expanded their range to all parts of the U.S.
- Well known for their high pitched yapping
Red Fox

- Most handsome of the wild candids
- Its coat is pale yellowish-red to deep reddish brown with light underparts
- Ears and lower legs are black; the tail is bushy reddish-yellow with a black and white tip
- Prefer brush as well as grasses and sedges
- Eat mostly mice, rats, squirrels and berries
- Sharp sense of smell, hearing, and eyesight
Gray Fox

- Compares in size to a small shepherd dog
- It is dark gray, except the reddish coloration on its side; it also has a white throat, and a black stripe down the long bushy tail
- Range throughout the Eastern Texas
- Able to climb small trees
- Eat small mammals, birds, plants, and insects
Osprey

- Also called the fish hawk because it flies over large bodies of water and takes aquatic prey
- They have a white head, dark eye stripe, and are dark brown above and white below
- Nest near fresh or salt water in dead trees, on rocky cliffs, or sand dunes and even in telephone poles
- Eat mainly fish, but will also eat water snakes and salamanders
Osprey Nest
Red-Tailed Hawk

- “Chicken Hawk”
- They have a dark reddish uppertail and paler red undertail
- Body feathers are highly variable, but usually are mottled brown
- Live in a variety of regions, but mostly in woods, to plains, and prairie groves, to deserts
- Prey mostly on rodents
Northern Harrier

- They have a white rump and a owl like facial appearance
- Males are grayish above and mostly white below with black wing tips; Females are brown above and have heavy brown streaking and spotting on a whitish belly
- Common resident of the wetlands
- They prey on mice, rats, and frogs
Great-Horned Owl

- They have a wing span up to five feet.
- They are molted brown, yellow, and black; they also have horn-like feathers that protrude from the brow of the bird.
- Head rotates up to 200 degrees, and their eyesight is ten times better than humans.
- They are nocturnal and eat game birds and domestic fowl.
Bald Eagle

- Endangered species and are the national emblem of the U.S.
- Immature bald eagles look like the golden eagle
- Live around sea coasts and areas along rivers and lakes
- Prey mainly on fish
- Their population has diminished due to shooting, pesticides and human encroachment
Bull Frogs

- One of the larger frogs in Texas
- Usually a drab, green color, with a sticky tongue
- They have a slimy wet skin that allow for air exchange between the body and the environment
- Live on land and water
- Eat insects and smaller frogs
American Alligator

- Size: 6-16 feet
- Dark, appearing black
- This reptile can be found in a variety of freshwater habitats, including swamps, lakes, and bayous. It also occurs in the brackish waters of coastal marshes
- Feed on fish, turtles, birds, crawfish, crabs, and other water life
Western Diamond Rattlesnake

- Named after its diamond shape pattern on its back
- Ranges from 5-8 feet
- It is venomous that vibrates its tail to scare predators
- It is responsible for more serious snake bites than any other North American snake
- Eats rabbits, rats, mice, and gophers
Badger

- They are short-legged, heavy bodied animal with a short, stubby tail
- They have a long, curved foreclaws and shovel-like hind claws; Head is broad and flattened
- Fur is long, shaggy, and yellowish-grey; Also have a white stripe that extends from its nose to shoulders
- Eat Squirrels, gophers, mice, and other small mammals
- Prefers open country and plains that range over the western U.S.
Raccoon

- The most economically important furbearer in Texas
- Black mask over the eyes and ringed tail
- Nocturnal
- Has gray coarse shaggy fur with some brown on sides and black on the back
- Eats animal matter and plants
- Carry diseases harmful to human
Pest and Nuisance Species

- Wildlife species that become overabundant in area and may cause crop and livestock damage
- Pests are harmful to humans in some way
- Nuisances are usually just annoying or unpleasant
Nuisance Wildlife

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Nuisance Wildlife...

- What do you consider a “nuisance”?
- What laws/regulations apply?
- What landscaping or gardening decisions can you make to avoid potential problems?
Nuisance Wildlife

- Exclusion
- Cultural Methods & Habitat Modification
- Frightening
- Repellants
- Toxicants
- Trapping
- Shooting
Nuisance Wildlife

Some Resources for you: (Besides your local Extension Office)

- Purdue’s FNR-FAQ-16-W
- IDNR Nuisance Wildlife Information Hotline

(1-800-893-4116)
# Rabbits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plants frequently damaged:</th>
<th>Less frequently damaged:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tulips</td>
<td>Mountain Ash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrots</td>
<td>Basswood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peas</td>
<td>Red/Sugar Maple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beans</td>
<td>Honey locust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beets</td>
<td>Ironwood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rose family</td>
<td>Red/white oak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apple trees</td>
<td>Willow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackberries</td>
<td>Japanese barberry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raspberries</td>
<td>Sumac</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cherry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nut producing trees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evergreens</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
More rabbits...

- HABITAT ELIMINATION - brush etc.
- REPELLENTS - 44 registered
- TRAPS - box traps, live traps, etc.
- EXCLUSION - fencing does not have to be tall or especially sturdy
More Rabbits…

POISONS - none registered

TRAPS - box traps, live traps, bait with ear corn, apples, etc.

SHOOTING - permit must be issued BEFORE shooting the animal
Deer

- Deer are here to stay, so we need to learn to deal with them.
- Deer are selective feeders.
- Careful plant selection can prevent problems.
- In severe cases, exclusion practices may be needed ("Peanut butter fence, polytape fence, etc.")
# Deer Plant Selection

**Frequently Damaged:**
- Balsam/Fraser Fir
- Norway maple
- Eastern Redbud
- Atlantic White Cedar
- Clematis
- Cornelian Dogwood
- Winged Euonymus
- Wintercreeper
- Catawba Rhododendron
- Apples
- Cherries
- Plums

**Seldom Damaged:**
- Rhododendrons
- Evergreen Azaleas
- English Ivy
- Pinxterbloom Azalea
- Hybrid Tea Rose
- European Mountain Ash
- Yews (Eng., West., Jap.)
- American Arborvitae
- Barberry
- Common Barberry
- Paper Birch
- Common Boxwood
- Russian Olive
- American Holly
- Drooping Leucothoe
- Colorado Blue Spruce
- Japanese Pieris
Opossums

- They like garbage, compost, pet food, etc.
- Very smart animals, more intelligent than dogs!
- When a nuisance, not protected legally
- Exclusion - “build them out” of structures
- Traps

SHOOTING - legal if interfering with property, report to conservation officer
Chipmunks/Ground Squirrels

- feed on seeds, insects, berries, fruit
- hardware cloth for buildings
- hardware cloth covered with soil on flower beds
- keep birdfeeders away from house
- trapping (with rat traps) most effective, use peanut butter and raisin bran or oatmeal for bait.
- generally not destructive, some people even enjoy watching them!
More Squirrels...

- Many different types of bird feeders are designed to exclude squirrels...pick your favorite

- If you can’t beat ‘em, join ‘em! Some people set aside special feeders just for the squirrels
Voles

They are similar in appearance to mice, but with more compact bodies & shorter tails.
More Voles...

- **EXCLUSION:**
  - hardware cloth cylinders around trees (1/4 inch mesh) buried 6 inches deep - 2 feet high

- **TOXICANTS** - many rat/mouse poisons labeled for voles

- Rarely in homes - use mouse traps if needed

- **TRAPPING** - use peanut butter bait
Moles

Insectivore – feed on insects almost exclusively
Active day and night
Like moist soils – easier to move about
Not blind, but rely on smell to find food in the dark
Moles... my favorite remedy?
Raccoons

**EXCLUSION** - electric wires– 3 & 6 inches high
   - Tight fitting lids on garbage cans
   - Chimneys - chimney cap
**HABITAT MODIFICATION** - remove food
**FRIGHTENING** - lights, radios, dogs, windmills

**TRAPPING** - bait with cat food, tuna, chicken
   - Live traps – what then?

**SHOOTING** - legal if interfering with property, report to conservation officer
Sssssnakes!
Woodpeckers
What in the world?
Skunks
More Skunks…

- Their range is 2 - 3 miles from home den.
- Mate in Feb.-March, 4 -6 in a litter 60 days later
- Nocturnal, slow moving, very confident animals
- Live in trees, hollow logs, groundhog holes as homes.
- Eat both plants and animals, as well as insects
- Feeding on grubs – skunks can tear up a yard in a single evening and may come back!
More Skunks…

- Skunks are not protected furbearers
- SHOOTING - legal if interfering with property, report to conservation officer
- Normally, they do not climb...fences generally work if 3 ft high+ hole is small enough (2.5 inches)
- Mothballs/ ammonia rags are temporary, at best
- Gas cartridges work well for burrows
Red-Winged Blackbird

- Abundant in North America
- Males are black with red and yellow shoulder patch
- Females resemble large, brownish sparrows
- Cause considerable damage to corn, sunflowers, oats, and rice
Black Crow

- One of the most familiar birds in U.S.
- Cause a variety of damage
- Pull up corn plant sprouts and eats the kernels, consume peanuts, grains, pecans, and fruits
- Sometimes attack small calves, pigs, and lambs
- They eat young water fowl, pheasants and other nesting birds
Pigeon

- Also known as rock doves
- Typically gray with a whitish rump and black band on the tail and wings
- Their droppings damage buildings, cars, and vegetation
- Carry and spread diseases, and threaten the human safety around airports
Beaver

- Largest North American rodent
- Hind feet are webbed
- Fur is long and coarse usually reddish-brown
- Tail is flat, scaled, and almost hairless
- Most damage is result of dam building, bank burrowing, tree cutting, or flooding
Nutria

- Imported to Louisiana in 1930’s for fur
- Damage dams, drainage ditches, vegetation
House Mouse

- Small slender rodent with slightly pointed nose
- Very troublesome cause damage to consumption and contamination of foodstuff and animal feed
- They can transmit diseases to humans
Armadillo

- Horny protective plate covering its head, body, and tail
- Prefers dense brush, woodlands, or forest near creeks and rivers
- Annoy humans by rooting in lawns, golf courses, vegetable gardens, and flower beds
The End…