

# Indiana Wildlife Habitat Education Program CDE

## 1. Purpose

The primary purpose of this event is to increase youth understanding of wildlife ecology and management practices. Other skills that will be enhanced include team work, oral and written communication, decision making, leadership, and interpersonal social skills.

## 2. About WHEP and Registration

- The WHEP CDE is offered in two parts – the Regional Invitational and State Event.
- Individual participation – Youth may register and participate as an individual at the Regional Invitational only. Individual participants cannot advance to the State Contest.
- Teams must designate Senior 4-H, Senior FFA division, or Junior (4-H and FFA combined) at time of registration and must meet eligibility rules as defined in the Indiana 4-H/FFA Ag Judging Handbook.
  - Dates, registration instructions, and deadlines are listed on the Indiana 4-H/FFA career development event website, <https://extension.purdue.edu/4-H/get-involved/state-programs/career-development-events/index.html>.

## 3. Regional Invitational

- The regional invitational will be the second Saturday in April.
- The regional invitational will be held concurrently in the northern, central and southern parts of the state.
- Activities: Wildlife Management Practices and Wildlife Challenge
- Equipment: Each participant must bring their own pencils and a clipboard. No storage clipboards are allowed.
- Pre-registration is required two weeks prior to the regional invitational contest. Payment can be submitted with registration or the day of the contest. Payment will be required for all registered contestants, even if they do not compete.

## 4. State Contest

- Participants – The top two junior teams plus top two (2) senior teams from each regional invitational will automatically qualify for the state contest, regardless of division. The next three (3) highest scoring senior teams from all regional invitational events combined will automatically qualify for the state contest, regardless of division. If a regional invitational is not represented by both senior 4-H and senior FFA in these nine (9) qualifying teams, the highest placing team in that senior division from that particular regional invitational may compete at the state contest in order to have each regional invitational represented by 4-H and FFA.
- The state contest will be the second Saturday in May.
- Location – Wright Center, Martell Forest, Purdue University
- Activities: Senior 4-H and Senior FFA will complete Wildlife Management Practices, Wildlife Management Plan, and Wildlife Challenge. Junior teams will complete Wildlife Management Practices and Wildlife Challenge.
- Equipment: Each participant must bring their own pencils and a clipboard. No storage clipboards are allowed. Colored pencils, stencils and drawing tools are allowed for the Wildlife Management Plan.
  - Contest dates and registration deadlines are listed on the Indiana 4-H/FFA judging website, <https://extension.purdue.edu/4h/Pages/CDE.aspx>.

# Indiana Wildlife Habitat Education Program CDE

## 5. Activities

Participants complete three activities in the Indiana WHEP CDE. The *Wildlife Management Practices* and *Wildlife Challenge* activities are completed by individuals working on their own. The *Wildlife Management Plan* activity is done as a team of three or four individuals working together. These activities are described below.

- **Wildlife Management Practices** (individual event) —Youth will recommend Wildlife Management Practices (WMP's) for wildlife and habitat on a given site. For the Indiana WHEP CDE, only those practices recommended for species listed under the **Eastern Deciduous Forest , Urban, or Wetland ecoregions** of the National Manual will be considered. See the National WHEP manual (Activity I) for more information. Procedure:
  - The ecoregion and species for judging will be determined by the committee, and coaches will be notified by February 1 that year's ecoregion. Unless otherwise noted, ecoregion will be the same for both the Regional Invitational and State Contest.
  - Youth will be given a scenario (verbally or written) about the site to describe field conditions.
  - Youth will be provided a handout using an 'X' indicating all potential practices. Participants are to clearly mark out any 'X' indicating that practice is not to be considered for that specie.
  - Each species should be listed separately and WMPs should be recommended as if each species was the only species considered on the site.
  - All boxes are counted in the scoring. Participants receive credit for putting an X in a box of a recommended WMP and for leaving the boxes blank where no WMP is recommended.
  - The Regional Invitational will consist of 5 species, and 8 species at the State Contest.
  - Participants will have a maximum of 60 minutes to complete this activity at the Regional Invitational and State Contest.
- **Wildlife Challenge** (individual event) —The objective of the Wildlife Challenge is to demonstrate knowledge of wildlife identification, wildlife management concepts, wildlife management terminology, wildlife management practices, foods, and the biology and ecology of wildlife species. This activity has two separate components – Wildlife Identification and General Knowledge.

### Wildlife Identification

- Participants will rotate among up to 20 stations.
- An animal specimen or portion of specimen, photo, Powerpoint slide, or animal sign (for example, track) will be located at each station.
- Participants will have 10 minutes total at the State Contest to look at the items presented at each station and write down the wildlife species name.
- Participants may not touch specimens. Supervisors will be on hand to pick up specimens for closer inspection on request.
- At the Regional Invitational, youth will complete a Scantron form using multiple choice answers.
- At the State Invitational, participants will write down the name of each species. Correct spelling and capitalization of species must be used at the State Contest in order to receive 10 points per specimen. Incorrect spelling and/or capitalization answers will result in a 2 point deduction per specimen. Refer to the WHEP Manual

# Indiana Wildlife Habitat Education Program CDE

for proper spelling and capitalization. For example, “beaver”, “deer”, “woodduck”, or “Eastern cottontail” will not receive full credit. These species should be written as American beaver, white-tailed deer, wood duck, and eastern cottontail, respectively.

- The 51 wildlife species listed in the **Eastern Deciduous Forest, Urban, and Wetland** ecoregions of the national WHEP manual may be used for this activity. A combined list is provided at the end of this document for your convenience (some species are listed in multiple ecoregions).

## General Knowledge

- Questions for this portion of the Wildlife Challenge may be from information within **Concepts and Terms** and the **Glossary** of the WHEP Manual; and information in the **Eastern Deciduous Forest, Urban, and Wetland Ecoregions**, and the **Wildlife Species** and **Wildlife Management Practices** associated with that ecoregion.
- Questions are multiple choice or true/false.
- Participants will be allowed 30 minutes maximum to complete their exam at the State Contest.
- At the Regional Invitational, participants will have 60 minutes total to complete Wildlife Identification and General Knowledge.
- **Wildlife Management Plan** (team event, State Contest Only) —Participants are given landowner objectives for a specific area. The area may include **Eastern Deciduous Forest, Urban, and Wetland** ecoregions. Teams work together to write a wildlife management plan and sketch how the area should look when managed for specific wildlife species. See the National WHEP manual (Activity II) for more information.
  - This activity will only be completed at the State Contest.
  - Youth will be scored on their plan Background, Development, Implementation, Evaluation, and Neatness and Overall Format.
  - Coaches will be notified by February 1 that year’s ecoregion.
  - The ecoregion used for this activity will be the same as is used for the Wildlife Management Practices activity.
  - Each team will be supplied a field condition sheet and 2 pieces of white paper, 8 ½” x 11”. One is to be used for their written plan and one for their map.
  - Each team will be supplied 1 piece of color paper for notes.
  - Each team will be allowed to keep their notes, but must turn in their completed written plan and map (white papers).
  - Teams will have a maximum of 60 minutes to complete this activity.

## 6. Event Scoring

### Regional Invitational Contest

- Wildlife Management Practices – 400 pts
  - Each contestant will begin with a baseline of 200 points. 4 points will be awarded for each practice correctly identified (X marked box that is to be marked) and 2 points will be deducted for each incorrectly identified practice (X marked in a box that should have been left blank, and blank box that should have been marked). A contestant cannot earn more than 400 points nor less than 0 points.
- Wildlife Challenge – 400 pts
  - Identification – 200 pts
  - Written exam – 200 pts

# Indiana Wildlife Habitat Education Program CDE

Individual scores will be summed for each event. For each team, the top three individual score totals will be calculated for the final total team score.

## State Contest Weights

- Wildlife Management Practices – 400 pts
  - Each contestant will begin with a baseline of 200 points. 4 points will be awarded for each practice correctly identified (X marked box that is to be marked) and 2 point will be deducted for each incorrectly identified practice (X marked in a box that should have been left blank, and blank box that should have been marked). A contestant cannot earn more than 400 points nor less than 0 points.
- Wildlife Challenge – 400 pts
  - Identification – 200 pts
  - Written exam – 200 pts
- Management Plan – 1500 pts

Individual scores will be summed for each event. For each team, the top three individual score totals will be summed together and the management plan scored added to calculate the final total team score.

## 7. Resources

- Indiana Wildlife Habitat Education CDE website:  
<https://extension.purdue.edu/4h/Pages/CDE.aspx>
- *National 4-H WHEP Handbook*, available on-line only at [www.whep.org](http://www.whep.org)
- *Wildlife Habitat Education Program – Wildlife Identification Guide* (FNR-515-W)
- *Wildlife Habitat Education Program –Teaching and Learning Wildlife Management Practices* (FNR-494-W)
- *Wildlife Habitat Education Program – Preparing for the Wildlife Challenge* (FNR-509-W)
- *Developing a Wildlife Habitat Management Plan* (FNR-991-W)

Purdue FNR publications are free at <https://mdc.itap.purdue.edu/>

## 8. National Event

Teams competing in the National WHEP Contest should be prepared for all Activities outlined in the manual, including Activity II-B: Oral Defense of Written Plan. Activity II-B requires each team member to demonstrate their understanding of the written plan. Team members will be called individually into a room with two judges where they will be asked a series of questions relating to the written plan. The National WHEP Contest will also include sound files in the Wildlife Challenge, including bird, frog, toad, and mammal calls. Team members will be responsible for knowing calls for species in the ecoregion in which the National WHEP Contest is being held plus the Urban and Wetland ecoregions.

4-H Teams: The top 4-H team qualifies to attend the National 4-H/FFA Wildlife Habitat Education Contest. The national 4-H event is held in late July/early August at various locations across the country. The highest scoring 4-H team from the WHEP CDE may represent Indiana at the national event. If the first place team is unable to attend, the next highest placing 4-H team will be offered the trip. Participants must be enrolled in 4-H and aged 14-19. Youth may attend the national contest only once. See the National Website for contest information, [www.whep.org](http://www.whep.org)

## **Indiana Wildlife Habitat Education Program CDE**

FFA Teams: The top FFA team qualifies for and may choose from the National FFA Organization's Environmental & Natural Resources Management Career Development Event or the National 4-H/FFA Wildlife Habitat Education contest. The second place FFA team may attend the remaining contest.

# Indiana Wildlife Habitat Education Program CDE

Potential species for the Wildlife Identification portion of the Wildlife Challenge activity.

## **Birds**

American bittern  
American robin  
American woodcock  
brown thrasher  
Canada goose  
common nighthawk  
eastern bluebird  
eastern meadowlark  
European starling  
golden-winged warbler  
great horned owl  
house finch  
house sparrow  
house wren  
mallard  
mourning dove  
northern bobwhite  
northern flicker  
northern pintail  
ovenbird  
peregrine falcon  
redhead  
rock pigeon  
ruby-throated hummingbird  
song sparrow  
spotted sandpiper  
Virginia rail  
wild turkey  
Wilson's snipe  
wood duck

## **Mammals**

American beaver  
big brown bat  
bobcat  
common muskrat  
coyote  
eastern cottontail  
eastern gray squirrel  
gray fox  
Indiana bat  
mink  
raccoon  
river otter  
white-tailed deer

## **Reptiles and Amphibians**

American bullfrog  
crawfish frog  
eastern box turtle  
eastern snapping turtle  
tiger salamander  
timber rattlesnake

## **Fish**

bluegill  
largemouth bass