



Pick a Species and Learn All You Can

STUDENT ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS

Materials Needed:

- Pencil
- Paper or Notebook
- Missouri Bird Conservation Plan – Technical Section
- Research Materials (Ex: Computer with internet, books, articles, etc.)

Introduction (Read before doing the activity)

In this activity you will pick a species from the Missouri Bird Conservation Plan that you would like to study. Using the skills and knowledge you gained in Lessons 1-4 of this unit, you will do your own research to find out as much as you can about the species you choose including what is stated in the Missouri Bird Conservation Plan – Technical Section. You are encouraged to choose a species that sparks your interest that you may not know anything about already.

Activity Instructions:

1. Take out or open your copy of the Missouri Bird Conservation Plan – Technical Section. Read the 'Call to Action' section entirely and then answer the following questions in your notebook.
 - a. What are four systematic roles that birds play for healthy ecosystem function?
 - b. In Missouri, what did residents show the greatest interest in for their ranking of future interests in outdoor activities?
 - c. True or False? Birding or Bird-watching can also be an economic driver.
 - d. How many of the 29 species highlighted in this Bird Plan have been given a special designation by Partners in Flight as "Common Birds in Steep Decline"?
 - e. List two of the four causes of decline discussed by the ornithological community.
 - f. What is the good news?
2. Read the Bird Plan section on "How the Plan is Organized" so you can better understand the context of the species listed in the plan.
3. Skip to page 17. The top of the page should read "Example Species Account". Review how each species account is organized.

4. Review each species listed in the five natural community types and the special circumstance birds.
5. Of all these species listed, choose one that sparks your interest that you would like to study for this project and learn more about. You cannot choose the King Rail.
6. After you have chosen your species, it is time to do a deep dive into its life history and learn all you can about the species. You can start with the information already listed in the Bird Plan.
 - a. What habitat does it live in? (Aka What natural community is it listed under?)
 - b. What is its percent global population decline since 1970? Is it state endangered? Is it a "Common Bird in Steep Decline"?
 - c. What are the suggested Broad Management Guidelines?
 - d. If you are unfamiliar with any of the terms listed, make sure to research those too!
7. Other suggested sources of information to start out with are:
 - a. Any field guide on birds in Eastern North America you can access
 - b. Searching your species on AllAboutBirds.org
 - c. Searching your species on Audubon's Guide to North American Birds
 - d. Searching your species under the 'Science' tab on eBird.org
 - e. Exploring the Partners in Flight website: <https://partnersinflight.org/>
 - f. Exploring the American Bird Conservancy website: <https://abcbirds.org/>
 - g. Google Scholar: <https://scholar.google.com/> for any current or past research studies on your species or similar species.
8. Make sure to explore the above resources and others to learn as much as you can about the species you chose to better aid you in the other activities in this lesson. After you finish your research, you should be able to answer all the questions you had to answer about the King Rail in the previous lessons.

Conclusion

Learning as much as we can about a species is an important first step in the conservation and protection of a species. Hopefully, during your research, some of the information you learned sparked some ideas for conservation.

