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# Kansas Wildlife Damage Reporting System

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# Kansas Wildlife Damage Reporting System<sup>1</sup>

Bart L. Hettenbach<sup>2</sup>

Abstract.--In the past several years Kansas State University's Extension Wildlife Damage Control Program and the Kansas Fish and Game agency have developed a cooperative program for reporting wildlife damage complaints. The paper will present some data collected, describe the usefulness of this data and provide some data interpretation.

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to describe the important information that can be obtained from a simple cooperative reporting system conducted between state agencies.

In the past several years Kansas State University's Extension Wildlife Damage Control program and the Kansas Fish and Game agency have developed such a program. The standard reporting form first designed has been further improved over the past few years (fig. 1). The standardized reporting form provides us with

information such as the complainant's name, county, description of the problem, economic loss, recommended actions, and whether the problem was solved. This form is then filled out and returned to our office monthly by Wildlife Conservation Officers and County Extension Agents. Wildlife damage control volunteers receive a newsletter six times a year and report on a yearly basis to our office. There are approximately 200 wildlife damage control volunteers in Kansas. There are 105 County Agricultural Agents, and 60 Fish and Game personnel who participate in sending wildlife damage control reports.

COUNTY \_\_\_\_\_ WILDLIFE DAMAGE COMPLAINT RECORD Month \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_\_\_

Complainants Name	County	DESCRIBE PROBLEM: Species and numbers of wildlife involved, crop or item damaged, degree of damage (estimated), contributing factors, etc.	*Economic Loss			Recommended Actions	Was Problem Solved?
			1	2	3		

Return to: F. Robert Henderson, Extension Wildlife Damage Control, Room 113, Umberger Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506

\*Economic Loss Rate: (Check one) 1. Nuisance; 2. \$1-300; 3. \$300 or more.

**Cooperative Extension Service, Kansas State University, Manhattan**  
All educational programs and materials available without discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or handicap.

Figure 1.--Standardized reporting form used.

<sup>1</sup>Paper presented at the Eighth Great Plains Wildlife Damage Control Workshop. South Dakota School of Mines, Rapid City, April 28-30, 1987.

<sup>2</sup>Bart L. Hettenbach is a Senior in Wildlife Biology, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas.

METHODS

These data are based on reports received and kept by Kansas State University in the Extension Wildlife Damage Control office. Once each month, the agency, county, month, species, and economic loss are entered on a Zenith computer into a DBase II file for storage on a hard disk and back-up floppy disk. After this information is entered into the computer, it can be utilized to write informative reports. Reporting individuals from the two agencies report each month even if they receive no requests regarding wildlife damage control.

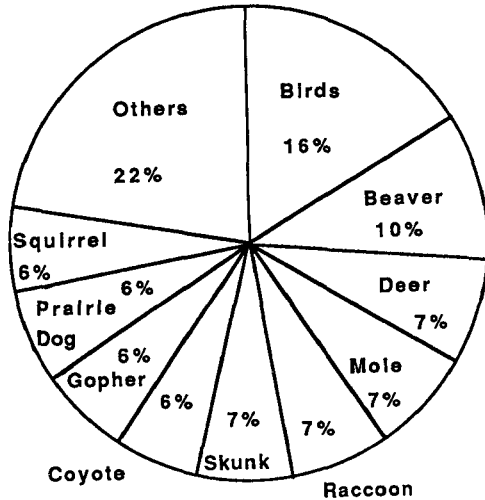


Figure 2.--This pie chart indicates the percent of damage caused by the top 10 individual species in Kansas for 1986.

RESULTS

Figure 2 shows the 1986 statewide damage for Kansas and indicates which species caused the most damage. As figure 3 shows, rodents caused the greatest economic loss. In 1986, of the 1,959 reports, 63% were nuisance, 31% were between \$1 and \$300 damage, and 6% were estimated at over \$300 damage.

The data collected also show where damage is occurring in the state. Kansas is divided into five administrative Extension areas, as shown in figure 4.

**KSU EXTENSION ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS**

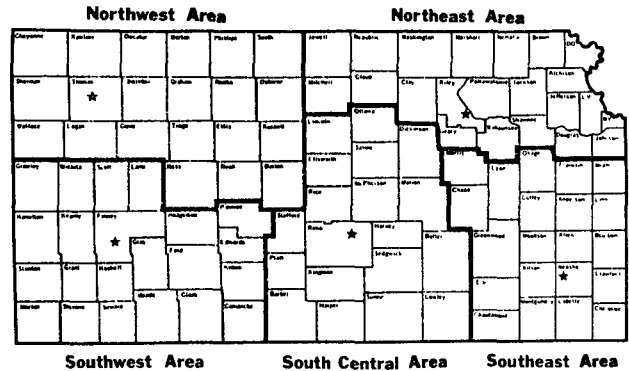


Figure 4.--Kansas State University Extension administrative units.

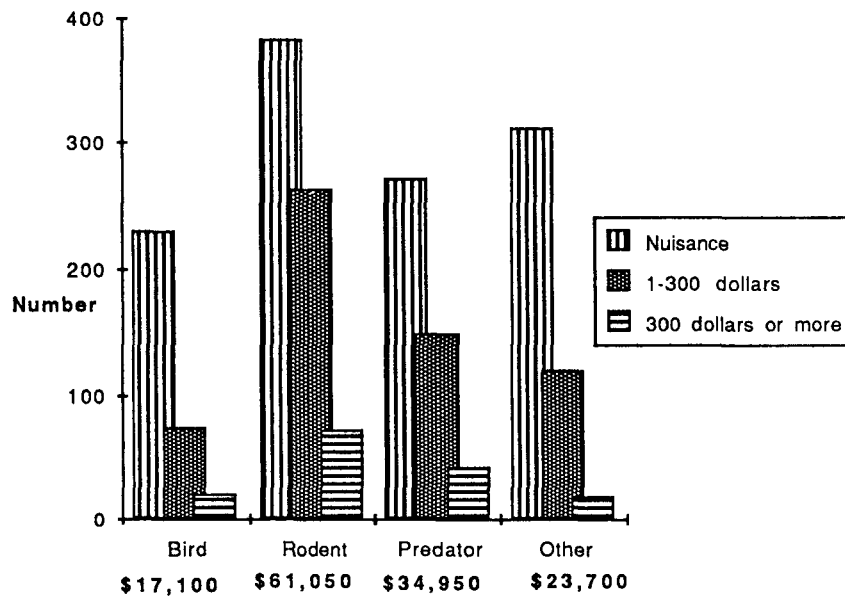


Figure 3.--Estimated dollars of damage which occurred in 1986.

In figure 5, beaver damage complaints have been broken down into the five KSU Extension administrative units.

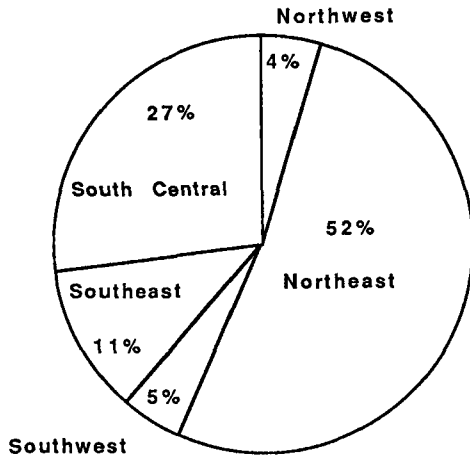


Figure 5.--Beaver damage for 1986, divided into KSU Extension administrative units.

A few problems do exist with our reporting system. All cooperators do not report on time, and some neglect to report at all. The ones that do report regularly sometimes do not include all the information requested. The dollar estimates

may be low, as each respondent estimates these subjectively. The most common problem found with these reports is the lack of follow-up to determine if the problem was solved. Often Agency personnel assume the problem was solved since the complainant did not call back. We have checked a randomly chosen sample, and indications are that over 80% of the problems are reduced, if not solved.

#### SUMMARY

The information obtained from these reporting forms indicates where in the state help is needed in educating people on the best methods of control. This kind of data also shows: (1) times of the year problems are most likely to occur; (2) changes from year to year; and (3) for research, the need for improving old control methods or finding new ones. These kinds of data are helpful to explain the extent of wildlife damage in Kansas and to help reduce wildlife conflicts with people. We realize that not all losses or complaints with wildlife are reported. However, this standardized method of reporting does indicate trends and gives a good idea as to the kinds of wildlife problems and our ability to solve or reduce these problems in Kansas.