



Nebraska Invasive Species Council
Terrestrial Invasive Wildlife Species List* – Updated 02/16/2026

***DISCLAIMER:**

As opposed to aquatic invasive species and noxious weeds, **there is no official list of Nebraska’s invasive terrestrial (land-dwelling) wildlife species created by a regulatory agency in the state. This list is unofficial; it is not for regulatory purposes.**

Instead, this list is intended to serve two purposes:

1. To be used as a resource for landowners and land managers who find one of these wildlife species on their land and want more information.
2. To encourage the public to report sightings of some of these wildlife species, which can be shared with regulatory agencies and other organizations to help prevent the wildlife's spread and/or establishment in Nebraska and/or to help determine possible management strategies.

Species on this list may be included for a variety of reasons. Those reasons may include:

- The wildlife species shows common characteristics identified as invasive in published scientific literature.
- The wildlife species is designated as invasive by a regulatory agency and/or government authority in a nearby state.
- The wildlife species' population is expanding or has expanded rapidly, causing environmental and/or agricultural damage, and/or acting problematically as determined through credible reports from land managers, landowners, researchers, and/or scientists in Nebraska.

INVASIVE SPECIES

Invasive species are plants, animals, or other organisms that are found in an area where they do not naturally exist, and their introduction to that area does or is likely to harm the environment, economy, or human health. They may be from an area very far away (non-native), such as another continent, country, or state, or from an area close by (native), such as another county, city, or neighboring habitat.

Invasive species are usually brought to the new area by someone or something, either accidentally or on purpose, through trade, travel, recreation, e-commerce, land/resource use change, or unwanted/accidental pet release. Once introduced to a new environment, they spread quickly and aggressively, harming other wildlife by using up their resources, such as food, water, and habitat, that they need to survive. Since they are new to the area, they often don't have natural predators, which allows their population to expand at alarming rates.

There are two types of invasive species in Nebraska: terrestrial (land-dwelling) and aquatic (water-dwelling).

COMMON CHARACTERISTICS

For a species to be considered invasive, it typically possesses one or more of the following traits:

1. **Non-Native Origin:** An invasive species is introduced to an ecosystem outside of its natural range. This introduction can occur intentionally, such as through the import of ornamental plants or pets, or accidentally, such as through ballast water in ships or contaminated goods.
2. **Rapid Reproduction and Spread:** Invasive species often reproduce quickly and in large numbers. They can adapt to a variety of environments, allowing them to spread far and wide.
3. **Ecological Disruption:** Invasive species can out-compete native species for resources like food, water, and space. They may also prey on native species or introduce diseases, leading to declines in native populations.
4. **Lack of Natural Predators:** In their new environment, invasive species often have few or no natural predators to keep their populations in check. This allows them to thrive unchecked.

TERRESTRIAL INVASIVE WILDLIFE

Terrestrial invasive wildlife include exotic, non-native, or new to the area animals that are land-dwelling, meaning they live in non-aquatic habitats, including agricultural fields, prairies, rangelands, forests, urban landscapes, wildlands, and along waterways.

Terrestrial invasive wildlife includes vertebrates (animals with a backbone), such as reptiles, birds, amphibians, and mammals. They pose a significant threat to Nebraska’s land-focused resources, supplies, or infrastructure.

With no natural enemies to keep their population in check and their ability to outcompete Nebraska’s native species for food and other resources, terrestrial invasive wildlife can become widespread across a landscape quickly.

SPECIES CATEGORIES

The Nebraska Invasive Species Council created four categories for terrestrial invasive wildlife that are found in Nebraska. Those categories are as follows:

1. **Watchlist:** potential invasive species that are uncommon but may be present in Nebraska, and their impacts are unknown at this time.
2. **Potential:** invasive species that have not yet been sampled in Nebraska and are considered a high threat.
3. **Priority:** invasive species that are considered highly unwanted species and all efforts should be made to prevent the expansion of their populations.
4. **Established:** invasive species that are well established in Nebraska and total elimination is impossible. Local removal and control are the best that can be expected.

WATCHLIST TERRESTRIAL INVASIVE SPECIES

Watchlist terrestrial invasive species are potential invasive species that are uncommon but may be present in Nebraska, and their impacts are unknown at this time. Those species include:

| Common Name | Species Name |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Nine-Banded Armadillo | <i>Dasypus novemcinctus</i> |

POTENTIAL TERRESTRIAL INVASIVE SPECIES

Potential terrestrial invasive species are invasive species that have not yet been sampled in Nebraska and are considered a high threat. **There are currently no known potential terrestrial invasive wildlife species in Nebraska.**

PRIORITY TERRESTRIAL INVASIVE SPECIES

Priority terrestrial invasive species are invasive species that are considered highly unwanted species, and all efforts should be made to prevent the expansion of their populations. Those species include:

| Common Name | Species Name |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| Feral Hog | <i>Sus scrofa</i> |

ESTABLISHED TERRESTRIAL INVASIVE SPECIES

Established terrestrial invasive species are invasive species that are well established in Nebraska, and total elimination is impossible. Local removal and control are the best that can be expected. Those species include:

| Common Name | Species Name |
|------------------------|------------------------------|
| Eurasian Collared Dove | <i>Streptopelia decaocto</i> |
| European Starling | <i>Sternus vulgaris</i> |
| House Mouse | <i>Mus musculus</i> |
| House Sparrow | <i>Passer domesticus</i> |
| Norway Rat | <i>Rattus norvegicus</i> |
| Rock Pigeon | <i>Columba livia</i> |

COMPLETE TERRESTRIAL INVASIVE WILDLIFE SPECIES LIST

| # | Common Name | Species Name | Category |
|----------|------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Eurasian Collared Dove | <i>Streptopelia decaocto</i> | Established |
| 2 | European Starling | <i>Sternus vulgaris</i> | Established |
| 3 | Feral Hog | <i>Sus scrofa</i> | Priority |
| 4 | House Mouse | <i>Mus musculus</i> | Established |
| 5 | House Sparrow | <i>Passer domesticus</i> | Established |
| 6 | Nine-Banded Armadillo | <i>Dasypus novemcinctus</i> | Watchlist |
| 7 | Norway Rat | <i>Rattus norvegicus</i> | Established |

| | | | |
|---|-----------|----------------------|-------------|
| 8 | Rock Dove | <i>Columba livia</i> | Established |
|---|-----------|----------------------|-------------|

REFERENCES

National Invasive Species Information Center. *What are invasive species?* U.S. Department of Agriculture. <https://invasivespeciesinfo.gov/what-are-invasive-species>

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. (2025). *The Nebraska Natural Legacy Project: State Wildlife Action Plan (3rd ed.)*.
<https://outdoornebraska.gov/wpcontent/uploads/2025/07/Legacy-Plan-3rd-Edition.pdf>

Nebraska Legislature. Neb. Rev. Stat. § 37-1402: *Invasive species, defined*. Retrieved October 28, 2025, from <https://nebraskalegislature.gov/laws/statutes.php?statute=37-1402>

PlayCleanGo. *What Is an Invasive Species?* North American Invasive Species Management Association. <https://playcleango.org/2025/01/08/what-is-an-invasive-species/>

Roy, H. E., Pauchard, A., Stoett, P. J., Renard Truong, T., Meyerson, L. A., Bacher, S., Galil, B. S., Hulme, P. E., Ikeda, T., Kavileveetil, S., McGeoch, M. A., Núñez, M. A., Ordoñez, A., Rahlao, S. J., Schwindt, E., Seebens, H., Sheppard, A. W., Vandvik, V., ... Ziller, S. R. (2024). Curbing the major and growing threats from invasive alien species is urgent and achievable. *Nature Ecology & Evolution*, 8(7), 1216-1223. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41559-024-02412-w>

United States Forest Service. *Invasive Species*. U.S. Department of Agriculture. <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/invasive-species>