

Connecting Corridors: What they mean to wildlife

Head and shoulders
Photo of DC or
Soil Conservationist
here

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As you think about the needs of wildlife, it can often help if you put yourself in their place, as best you can. That's true when you think about the value of wildlife connecting corridors. If you were a wild animal or bird, given the choice, you would probably spend most of your time in a larger patch of habitat rather than a smaller one. And, you might well need to move from one habitat patch to another, searching for water or new or fresh food.

But you'd want to do it over, behind or through some protective cover, hidden from predators, wouldn't you? That's where connecting corridors are valuable for wildlife.

Connecting corridors are the strips of grass and/or shrubs and trees that connect larger habitat areas-- whether they be wetlands, native grasses, woodlands, or other habitat.

In recent years, interest in connecting corridors has grown because wildlife corridors are seen as ways to allow wildlife and plants to spread across natural landscapes that have been cut into pieces by roads, development, logging or other land disturbances.

The corridors allow animals to find new resources and prevent isolation of species.

Studies have shown that wild

areas connected by corridors have more wildlife or greater biodiversity than disconnected fragments.

There is some concern about corridors entrapping some wildlife species, since predators can more easily find their prey in a narrow strip of habitat. For that reason, the wider the corridor, the better. In most situations, landowners creating corridors may want to consider a design that is edge feathered, which includes zones of grasses, shrubs and trees all in the same corridor. The center of the corridor would be planted to trees, with strips of shrubs on each side, bordered on the outside by zones of grasses and legumes. This combination offers habitat for wildlife that may use all three types for food and cover, as well as wildlife that needs only one of the habitat types.

For more information on wildlife habitat, check the web at <http://www.whmi.nrcs.usda.gov/animals.html> or stop at our office at _____ (Number) _____ (Street) in _____ (city).



Riparian, or streamside, plantings of trees, shrubs and grasses make excellent connecting corridors. They can sometimes be a wildlife oasis in a sea of crop fields.

Wildlife Ways Did you know....



Owls have the best hearing of all birds. They fly silently at night; even though many owls live their entire lives near people, they are seldom seen. It is illegal to capture or kill an owl.