



## Attwater's Prairie Chicken

*Tympanuchus cupido attwateri*

**Date of Listing:** Endangered, 1967  
**Diet:** Small green leaves, seeds and insects  
**Life Span:** 2-3 years

**Size:** 17 inches in length  
**Where it Lives:** Tallgrass coastal prairies  
**Reproduction:** Usually 12 eggs

**Interesting Fact:** Some traditional dances of the North American Plains Indians are based on the booming display of male prairie chickens.

Attwater's Prairie Chickens live on coastal prairie grasslands with tall grasses such as little bluestem, indian-grass and switchgrass. The birds like a variety of tall and short grasses in their habitat. They gather to choose a mate in an area of bare ground or short grass where the males can be easily seen by the females. This is called a "booming ground" or "lek." The males dance and make a booming noise to attract the females. Hens build their nests in tall grass and the eggs hatch in April or May.

Prairie chickens are endangered because the tallgrass prairie has been plowed up for farmland and covered by cities. Habitat has also been lost because of heavy grazing by cattle, although some cattle ranches maintain good grassland habitat suitable for prairie chickens. Visit the Attwater's Prairie Chicken National Wildlife Refuge near Eagle Lake to learn more about prairie chickens.

This is a male  
Attwater's Prairie  
Chicken. He dances  
to attract a mate.  
Can you dance like a  
prairie chicken?



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