



Ruth L. Hine was the first woman to work professionally in the field of wildlife conservation in Wisconsin. In 1949 she received a PhD in zoology, wildlife ecology and botany from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and began her career as a field biologist with the Department of Natural Resources. During her 36 years with the DNR, Ruth was involved in countless research projects, from mice through moose, and became an expert on native Wisconsin flora and fauna. She had an early concern for endangered plants and animals and worked almost single-handedly to identify and protect them. She established surveys and inventories, organized volunteers and solicited donations, kept records and wrote technical bulletins. Her efforts culminated in the establishment of the Office of Endangered Species (now the Bureau of Endangered Resources). The frog survey, spruce grouse observation records, and many other of Ruth's early initiatives are still carried out today.

Ruth was an accomplished and sought-after research editor. More than 400 research reports, journal articles, bulletins and books bear her stamp, and more than 200 authors benefited from her knowledge and know-how.

In the 1980's Ruth's interests became more focused on prairie species and the restoration of prairies. She became an authority on, and advocate of, re-establishing prairies, and is directly responsible for a number of prairie plantings found in southern Wisconsin today.

Ruth felt a need to teach people about the earth and its resources, and how to care for the land. Before retiring from the DNR in 1986, she began developing outdoor awareness and earth stewardship programs for the Lutheran Outdoor Ministries. Today, she works fulltime as a naturalist and an outdoor educator.

Ruth's accomplishments have been recognized by the State of Wisconsin's prestigious "Virginia Hart Award" and by her peers through the "Wisconsin Award".