New observations of porcupines at Quivira National Wildlife Refuge in Stafford and Reno counties, Kansas

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The North American porcupine (*Erethizon dorsatum*) has a broad geographic range that includes western and northern parts of the continental United States, Alaska, and the majority of Canada (Roze and Ilse 2003, Woods 1973). North American porcupine reach the southern limit of their distribution in northern Mexico (List et al. 1999). In Kansas, the species has historically been found primarily in the western part of the state (Lantz 1903). Porcupines occur infrequently in the state of Kansas and so it is important to document new occurrences in order to expand the current knowledge of the species.

While associated with coniferous forests throughout much of their geographic range, porcupines may occupy a variety of habitat types (Roze and Ilse 2003). In the Great Plains, porcupines have typically been reported to occupy areas associated with riparian woodlands. Documented observations of porcupines from northwestern and northeastern Kansas have been associated with riparian areas (Walker 1975, Kamler and Gipson 2000, Kaufman and Kaufman 2011), but porcupine in Kansas have also been found in cropland and pasture (Kaufman 1988).

Figure 1. Porcupine at Quivira National Wildlife Refuge. Photo courtesy of Rachel Laubhan.