

Applegate, R.D. 2000. Use and misuse of prairie chicken lek surveys. *Wildlife Society Bulletin* 28:457-459.

Density of an animal population is defined as the number of individuals per unit of area. Density is further subdivided into actual density, derived from total counts or estimators, and relative density, derived from censuses (Andrewartha 1971). Censuses, often considered total counts, also can refer to estimates of population size or density (Caughley and Sinclair 1994). Of the methods by which animal density is monitored, the index method should provide an integer that relates proportionally to the actual density of the population (Leopold 1933, Caughley and Sinclair 1994, Link et al. 1994, Greenwood 1996). An index provides an indication of the direction of density, up or down, and provides relative density. Indices contrast with censuses by being proportional only to the actual density value, rather than being an estimate (Caughley and Sinclair 1994).