

# Our Wildlife Heritage

Native Americans once used wild turkeys for a lot of things. Mainly they depended upon turkeys for a food source. But Native Americans also used them as a source of clothing, weapons and decoration. Early settlers from Europe relied on turkeys, too. But, in Wyoming, wild turkey are not native. That means turkeys were brought into Wyoming, but they weren't originally here. Turkeys were first brought to the Laramie Peak area outside of Wheatland. People then moved some of these turkeys to the Black Hills area around Newcastle in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Now we have turkeys all around the state. *Have you seen them where you live?*

## WHAT IF THERE WERE NO GOBBLE?

Did you know that in the 1930s, wild turkeys were close to extinction? Extinction is when all the animals of one kind die. But people worked hard to help the wild turkey make a comeback. Turkeys were restocked around the country, and their numbers grew. We now have lots of turkeys and even two kinds in Wyoming – the Rio Grande and Merriam's! We have these two species, or types, of wild turkeys, because they live in different habitats.