

WILDLIFE

management guide



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Endangered Species

Forty-five animal and 18 plant species found in South Carolina are threatened with extinction, and have been classified as “endangered” or “threatened” by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) or the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR).

However, nearly half of the animal species are transients or ocean-dwelling (whales) and do not actually reside in South Carolina.

The Endangered Species Act of 1973 defines these classifications as:

Endangered: Any species which is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

Threatened: Any species which is likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

A species can be endangered, threatened, common, or abundant in different parts of its range (*example, Bald Eagle*). Species identified as endangered or threatened, as well as habitats declared critical to them, are protected under federal and state laws designed to safeguard endangered individuals and promote recovery of the species. Protective measures for endangered species include the preparation of recovery plans, acquisition of essential habitat, and protection from disturbance (*pursuing, harming, harassing, taking, etc.*) for listed species. Protection from disturbance differs between federally “listed” endangered plant and animal species. No penalties are assessed if endangered plant species are harmed in the course of legal land management practices, whereas the taking of an endangered animal species or destruction of its critical habitat, either by intent or negligence, is subject to prosecution under Section 9 of the Endangered Species Act. However, destruction of an endangered plant is subject to prosecution under the Endangered Species Act if the plant is on land under federal jurisdiction (*which includes private land under management practices that require federal permits*), or if the destruction occurs during the course of another illegal act (*such as trespassing*).



In South Carolina, 18 species of plants are classified at the federal level and another 400 plant species are unofficially classified as in trouble at the state level. Most of these were placed on the endangered species list because of the direct alteration or loss of the species’ habitat. The majority of the adverse impacts, including pollution, urbanization, poorly planned timber harvest, wetland drainage, and conversion to agricultural land, are all caused by humans.



ENDANGERED SPECIES MANAGEMENT

Because of the wide variety of threatened and endangered species, management actions for these species are varied.

Many of the listed fish, mollusks and amphibians are rare because of water pollution and wetland degradation. Forest land owners can help these species by preserving wetlands, maintaining streamside buffer zones, using fertilizers and pesticides carefully, and keeping silt out of streams during logging and road-building operations.

Many of the listed plants or terrestrial animals are rare because they are closely associated with rare habitats. A few examples are Canby's Dropwort (*Carolina Bay*), red-cockaded woodpeckers (*longleaf*

pine forests), and bog turtles (*small bogs in the mountains and piedmont*). Use of management practices that maintain rare habitats is the best way to perpetuate these species. Important rare habitats include bogs, mountains, bottomland hardwood forests and fire-maintained prairies in the Piedmont; and longleaf pine forests, Carolina bays, and maritime forests in the Coastal Plain.

If you think you might have a threatened or endangered species on your property or in waters associated with your property, consult with a SCDNR or USFWS biologist about legal management practices and the best way to enhance habitat for the species.

Federal and State Listed Endangered and Threatened Wildlife of South Carolina Forests

Mammals

Eastern cougar
blue whale
bowhead whale
finback whale
humpback whale
manatee
right whale
Sei whale
sperm whale
Indiana bat
Rafinesque's bat
small-footed bat
big-eared bat

Birds

bald eagle
peregrine falcon
wood stork
Kirtland's warbler
ivory-billed woodpecker
red-cockaded woodpecker
Bachman's warbler
Bewick's wren
American swallow-tailed kite
Arctic peregrine falcon
common ground-dove
Eskimo curlew
glossy ibis
least tern
piping plover
Wilson's plover

Amphibians/ Reptiles

flatwoods salamander
Webster's salamander
dwarf siren
pine barrens tree frog
bog turtle
coal skink
East Indigo snake
gopher tortoise
green sea turtle
hawksbill turtle
Kemp's Ridley turtle
leatherback turtle
loggerhead turtle

Fish

Carolina Darter
sandhill chub
shortnose sturgeon

