

New York Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy

From Vision to On-the-Ground Action



Longear sunfish were raised in stock ponds and then released into three historical waters during 2006 and 2007, helping to ensure that this colorful fish continues to live in New York waters for future generations.

The New York Department of Environmental Conservation is using its wildlife action plan to enhance the state's efforts to conserve species that improve the lives of New York residents and visitors. Planners used the state's major watersheds to organize the strategy, both to instill a sense of place to partners and to build on the state's successful watershed programs, many of which have been running for over 30 years.

Proactive Efforts that Benefit Wildlife and People

Restoring Longear Sunfish

New York's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy identified the longear sunfish as a priority species in its historic watersheds. Pollution from suburban development and intense agricultural practices have reduced this fish to a single, small population in its New York range. With

State Wildlife Grants funds, university researchers and state fisheries staff determined that several waters where longear sunfish used to live still retain good habitat. Longear sunfish were raised in stock ponds and then released into three historical waters during 2006 and 2007. Follow-up surveys reveal that fish have survived – an early indication of success. These proactive restoration efforts will help ensure that this colorful fish continues to live in New York waters for future generations.

Gathering Information to Take Action

Conserving the Spruce Grouse

New York's conservation strategy prioritizes developing a long-term monitoring program to determine spruce grouse population and habitat patterns. The spruce grouse is endangered in New York and recent evidence suggests that its numbers are still declining. In partnership with the State University of New York, the Department of Environmental Conservation surveyed spruce grouse locations, radio-tagged individual birds to track movements, and examined habitat. Findings support the idea that as the state's lowland boreal forests mature, they may be less suitable for spruce grouse. Information from this study will help New York make smart management decisions to ensure the species' long-term persistence in the state.

Protecting Imperiled Land, Water, and Wildlife

Conserving Karner Blue Butterflies

The drastic decline of the Karner blue butterfly in the last 50 years has attracted widespread public attention and its conservation has become a priority



Longear sunfish/Scott Wells

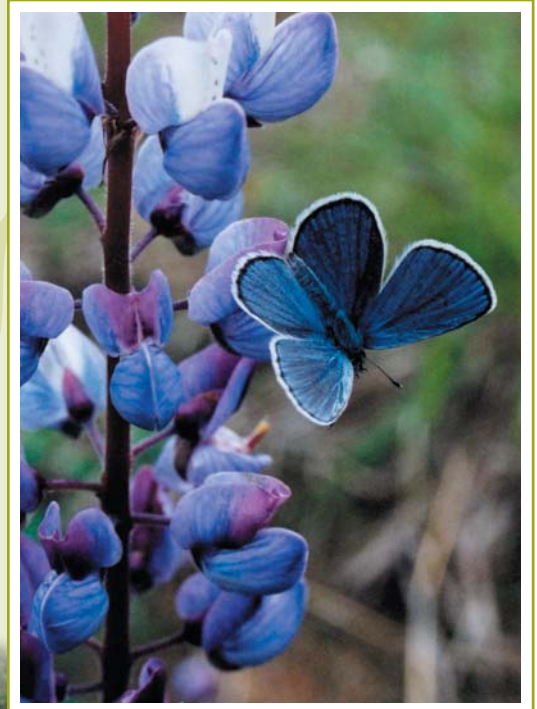
in New York's conservation strategy. The primary causes of the decline are habitat loss and degradation due to human activities such as agriculture, urbanization, and fire suppression, which negatively affect other wildlife as well. With State Wildlife Grants funding, former habitat has been restored by clearing invasive trees and planting native grasses and wildflowers, especially wild blue lupine, the exclusive food source for Karner blue caterpillars. Butterflies have already colonized portions of the restored area, a good sign of success. Such restoration efforts are helping to conserve the Karner blue butterfly and other wildlife before they become more rare and costly to protect.

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Karner blue butterfly on wild lupine/Carly Voight



Spruce grouse with radio collar/Angelena Ross

Habitat restoration efforts such as invasive tree removal and planting native grasses and wildflowers are helping to conserve the Karner blue butterfly and other wildlife before they become more rare and costly to protect.