

North Carolina Wildlife Action Plan

From Vision to On-the-Ground Action

North Carolina's wildlife action plan takes a habitat-based approach to address the needs of the state's wildlife. The plan gives 371 species priority status for conservation efforts. It categorizes those species with 23 habitat types, such as beach/dunes, floodplain forests, bogs and associated wetlands, or one of 17 river basins in the state. The plan identifies threats and appropriate conservation actions by habitat and includes strategies for urban wildlife management, private lands management, land conservation, and conservation education, outreach, and recreation.

The Wildlife Resources Commission works with local and federal partners to collect native fish from the wild and place them into a rehabilitated stretch of Pigeon River. Maintaining natural, healthy populations of wildlife in North Carolina's rivers means cleaner and healthier waters overall, benefiting people as well.

Protecting Imperiled Land, Water, and Wildlife

Restoring Native Fish to Pigeon River

Restoration of priority species is a key component of North Carolina's wildlife action plan. Nearly 100 years of pollution from a paper mill severely damaged a stretch of Pigeon River in North Carolina. Corporate investments in cleaner processes and better waste management have reversed the pollution, but surveys indicate that many native fish species were lost, including striped and

silver shiners, which are priority species. The Wildlife Resources Commission is working with local and federal partners to collect these and other native fish species from the wild and place them into the rehabilitated stretch of Pigeon River. Gilt darters and silver, striped, telescope, mirror, and saffron shiners have been reintroduced and follow-up sampling has revealed early indications of success. Maintaining natural, healthy populations of fish and wildlife in North Carolina's rivers means cleaner and healthier waters overall, which ultimately benefits people as well.



Pigeon River/North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission



Sampling Pigeon River/North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission



Bat house during construction/North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission

Proactive Efforts that Benefit Wildlife and People

Building a Rafinesque's Big-eared Bat House

The Rafinesque's big-eared bat is a priority species in North Carolina's wildlife action plan. Roost caves are threatened by frequent human visitation. The bats also use old abandoned buildings to raise young during the summer. One old house was regularly monitored until it burned down in 2005. To provide a roosting site for the displaced bats, the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission and several partners built an artificial bat house near Hurricane Creek in July 2007. This bat house provides additional habitat for this winged mammal and ensures the long-term viability of monitoring efforts, which will help prevent the Rafinesque's big-eared bat from becoming endangered and avoid more costly recovery efforts.

Gathering Information to Take Action

Researching the Robust Redhorse

Not much is known about the robust redhorse, a fish that eluded observation for over 100 years until its rediscovery in 1980. The wildlife action plan has prioritized obtaining more information

on its life history and identifying areas critical to its survival. State and federal agencies, utility companies, and conservationists are all working together to help the robust redhorse. Spring electrofishing provides information about robust redhorse abundance and locations, including mating areas. Radio transmitters help biologists determine where the fish go during the year and what habitats they are using. These results will help evaluate

the effects of hydropower operation on the robust redhorse and inform recommendations for energy production which meets the needs of this fish and other species that depend on healthy waters. This information will allow North Carolina to make good, cost-effective management decisions regarding this fish and the healthy waters it needs for survival.

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Robust redhorse/North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission

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