

What good are they?

North Carolina's Endangered Species



photo: S.C. Wildlife

The disappearance of the *peregrine falcon* was an early warning of the environmental damage caused by persistent pesticides like DDT that affected entire food chains.

Sea turtles living in polluted waters often develop fibrous tumors that can be fatal, possibly because the pollutants are suppressing their immune systems. So far the disease has not been seen in North Carolina, indicating that our coastal waters are still relatively clean and safe for the turtles (and for us).



photo: Brooks Burr

The *Waccamaw silverside* lives in a single lake in NC, where it is an indicator of good water quality.



photo: USFWS

6 Reptiles

9 Birds

4 Fish

7 Mollusks



photo: USFWS

The *Tar River spiny mussel* lives only in North Carolina; it is very sensitive to pollution, and its presence indicates the river water is not polluted with toxic chemicals.



photo: John MacGregor

Bats are the only major predators of night-flying insects such as mosquitoes; a single *Virginia big-eared bat* can eat 600 mosquitoes in an hour.

The *Carolina northern flying squirrel* lives only in the high mountains of North Carolina and Tennessee. Its decline was one of the first warnings that the health of the high-elevation forests was in jeopardy.



photo: USFWS

13 Mammals

26 Plants

3 Insects & Arachnids



photo: USFWS

Spider venom from tarantulas like North Carolina's tiny *spruce-fir moss spider* is being researched as a possible treatment for Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases and for preventing brain damage in stroke patients.



photo: Nora Murdock

Heller's blazing star grows only in North Carolina; only 8 populations remain. Many other blazing stars have yielded valuable medicinal chemicals, including some that shrink tumors caused by several types of human cancer.



photo: USFWS

Seabeach amaranth once occurred from Cape Cod to South Carolina; North Carolina is now its last stronghold. This plant builds dunes and stabilizes beaches by binding sand within its root system.



photo: Nora Murdock

The *rock gnome lichen*, found only in the Southern Appalachians, is extremely sensitive to air pollution. Where the lichen thrives, the air is good for people to breathe.

North Carolina's Endangered and Threatened Species

Mammals:

gray bat
Indiana bat
Virginia big-eared bat
eastern cougar
manatee
Dismal Swamp southeastern shrew
Carolina northern flying squirrel
finback whale
humpback whale
right whale
sei whale
sperm whale
red wolf

Birds:

bald eagle
peregrine falcon
piping plover
wood stork
Bachman's warbler
Kirtland's warbler
ivory-billed woodpecker
red-cockaded woodpecker
roseate tern

Reptiles:

alligator
Kemp's ridley sea turtle
green sea turtle
hawksbill sea turtle
leatherback sea turtle
loggerhead sea turtle

Fish:

spotfin chub
Cape Fear shiner
Waccamaw silverside
shortnose sturgeon

Mollusks:

dwarf wedge mussel
Cumberland bean pearly mussel
Tar River spiny mussel
little-wing pearly mussel
Carolina heelsplitter mussel
Appalachian elktoe mussel
noonday snail

Insects and Arachnids:

American burying beetle
St. Francis' satyr
spruce-fir moss spider

Plants

Schweinitz's sunflower
mountain golden heather
small whorled pogonia
Heller's blazing star
pondberry
rough-leaved loosestrife
Canby's dropwort
bunched arrowhead
green pitcher plant
Blue Ridge goldenrod
dwarf-flowered heartleaf
mountain sweet pitcher plant
Cooley's meadowrue
harperella
swamp pink
Michaux's sumac
small-anthered bittercress
spreading avens
Roan mountain bluet
Virginia spiraea
white irisette
sensitive joint-vetch
American chaffseed
smooth coneflower
seabeach amaranth
rock gnome lichen



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