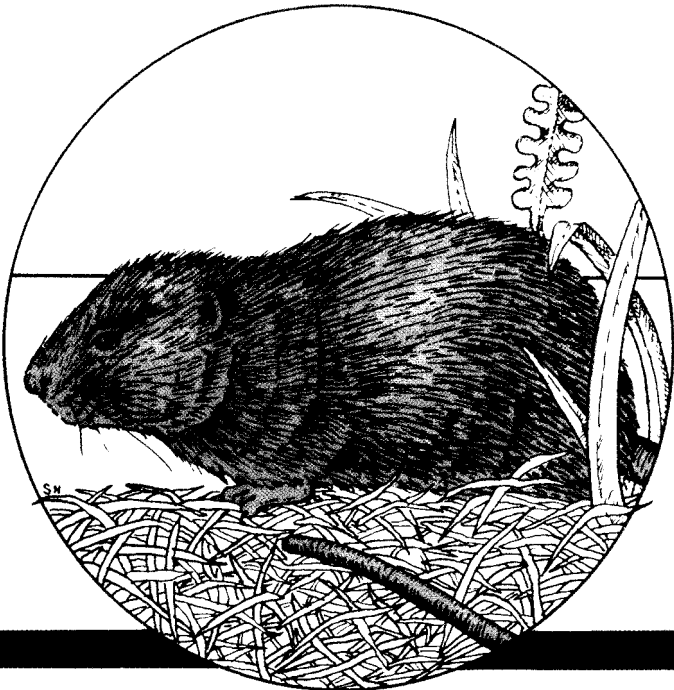


FLORIDA FISH AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

CHECKLIST OF FLORIDA'S MAMMALS

WITH NOTES ON DISTRIBUTION, HABITAT, AND ABUNDANCE



Checklist of Florida's Mammals

INTRODUCTION

Florida has an interesting variety of mammals including terrestrial, freshwater, and marine species. Although most have wide geographic ranges, a few of Florida's mammals are found nowhere else in the United States. To introduce you to the mammals that occur in Florida, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission has published this list of species with summaries of their range, habitats, and abundance.

This checklist was originally produced for the Commission by Larry N. Brown. Dr. Brown's book *Mammals of Florida* (1997, Windward Publishing, Miami, Florida) provides natural history accounts and photographs of Florida's mammals.

Mammals are distinguished from other animals, such as birds or reptiles, by several uniquely mammalian features. The most obvious and best known characteristic of mammals is the hair or fur that covers much of their body. Even apparently bare-skinned mammals such as armadillos and whales have some sparse hairs. Mammals are also unique in having mammary glands which produce milk for the young. Biologists also characterize mammals by lesser-known features, such as teeth of several different shapes and a lower jaw composed of a single pair of bones.

This checklist identifies the 99 species of wild mammals currently found in Florida, 11 of which have been introduced or recently expanded their range into the state. Some of the

bats and whales included in the list are wide-ranging species that have been seen in Florida only a few times. The checklist also identifies 2 mammals that have been extirpated from Florida and 6 that may occur here. The latter are species that occur just outside of Florida's borders and may well be found within the state in the future.

You will notice that the mammals in this checklist are identified not only by their common or English name but also by their scientific or Latin name. Although many mammals have common names that are widely recognized, others are known by more than one name. Pocket gophers, for example, are sometimes called salamanders, and the round-tailed muskrat is often referred to as the Florida water rat. Still other species, such as the pantropical spotted dolphin and Rafinesque's big-eared bat, are known mostly to scientists and seldom called by their common name. The two-part scientific name gives each species a unique label that is recognized by biologists worldwide and, thereby, helps prevent the confusion that arises with common names.

Despite this formal system of naming animals, our incomplete knowledge about some species of mammals can leave even scientific names in dispute. The scientific names used in this checklist are, with few exceptions, those listed in the second edition of *Mammal Species of the World* edited by D. E. Wilson and D. M. Reeder (1993, Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C.). The common names are primarily those given in the *Revised Checklist of North American Mammals North of Mexico* by J. K. Jones and others (1986, Texas Tech University Press, Lubbock, Texas).

Biologists classify or group mammals and all other animals in a hierarchical fashion based upon biological similarity

between species. You will notice this checklist not only gives the names of Florida's mammals but also divides them into groups called orders and families. Biologists are familiar with this format for classifying or grouping species, but some explanation is needed for the beginning naturalist.

Briefly, all mammals belong to a large taxonomic group known as the Class Mammalia. Within this class are several subgroups known as orders, and within those are still smaller groups called families. Each family contains at least one genus, and each genus contains at least one species. The genus name is the first part of a mammal's scientific name, and the species name is the second part. Mammals can be further classified into subspecies, but this checklist is limited to species.

Mammals within the same taxonomic group, whether it be order, family, or genus, have similar characteristics. Thus you can use the taxonomic classification of a species to gauge its similarity to other species. For example, the striped skunk may not seem like a mink or an otter, but skunks actually have characteristics more similar to those and other species of the Family Mustelidae than to other mammals. As another example, the short-tailed shrew and the pine vole look very much alike to most people, but many features of their biology are quite different, and their classification into separate orders reflects this.

In addition to naming and classifying mammals, the Florida checklist presents information on the distribution (range), habitat, and abundance of each species within the state. The range information indicates those portions of the state where each species is known to occur. Of course, most mammals occupy only particular areas or habitats, even

within their known range. The checklist also indicates the habitats or environments in which the species typically occurs or is most likely to be found.

The estimate of relative abundance indicates how common a species is in comparison to other species. This subjective estimate is based on the species' abundance throughout its range. Actual populations can vary greatly, not only between locations but also between years or seasons. Also noted in the checklist are those species with Florida populations that are designated by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission as endangered or threatened.

You can use the range, habitat, and abundance information to assist you in finding specific mammals or helping identify those you see. However, keep in mind that only very brief and general information is included in the checklist, and you may observe exceptions to this information.

Most mammals are quite secretive and not easily observed; in fact, many are active mainly at night. Watching mammals is more difficult, therefore, although no less rewarding, than watching birds. You can often indirectly observe mammal activities by following their tracks or noting their den locations and other signs of their presence. Field guides and other books available in libraries and bookstores can help you identify mammals and their signs as well as learn more about mammalian biology and conservation. Museums and *zoos* are also good places to learn more about mammals. Whatever sources you utilize, be sure to spend plenty of time in the woods and along the water observing the wild mammals of Florida.

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— Florida Fish and Wildlife
Conservation Commission

Additional copies of this checklist may be obtained from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, 620 South Meridian Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1600. As knowledge of Florida's mammals increases, the information in this checklist will change. Corrections, updates, or suggested revisions for the checklist would be appreciated and should be directed to the address above.

KEY TO SYMBOLS

- A** = Abundant
- C** = Common
- F** = Few records in Florida and likely not a resident
- R** = Rare or locally common
- U** = Unknown abundance
- †** = Some or all populations or subspecies are endangered, threatened, or of special concern in Florida. (See the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's most recent list of endangered and threatened species for current status.)
- *** – Absent from Florida Keys
- **** – Nonnative species that has expanded its range or been introduced into Florida.

SPECIES	FLORIDA RANGE	TYPICAL HABITAT	RELATIVE ABUNDANCE
ORDER MARSUPIALIA – POUCHED MAMMALS			
Family Didelphidae – Opossums			
<input type="checkbox"/> Virginia opossum <i>Didelphis virginiana</i>	Statewide	Most habitats	A
ORDER XENARTHRA – ARMADILLOS			
Family Dasypodidae – Armadillos			
<input type="checkbox"/> Nine-banded armadillo <i>Dasypus novemcinctus**</i>	Statewide*	Most habitats	A
ORDER INSECTIVORA – INSECTIVORES			
Family Soricidae – Shrews			
<input type="checkbox"/> Southern short-tailed shrew <i>Blarina carolinensis</i>	Statewide*	Forests	C+
<input type="checkbox"/> Least shrew <i>Cryptotis parva</i>	Statewide*	Fields	C
<input type="checkbox"/> Southeastern shrew <i>Sorex longirostris</i>	N 2/3	Wet forests	R+
Family Talpidae – Moles			
<input type="checkbox"/> Star-nosed mole <i>Condylura cristata</i>	N 1/3	Wet forests	F
<input type="checkbox"/> Eastern mole <i>Scalopus aquaticus</i>	Statewide*	Most habitats	A
ORDER CHIROPTERA – BATS'			
Family Molossidae – Free-tailed Bats			
<input type="checkbox"/> Wagner's mastiff bat <i>Eumops glaucinus</i>	S 1/4	Buildings, trees	R+
<input type="checkbox"/> Little mastiff bat <i>Molossus molossus**</i>	Keys	Buildings	R
<input type="checkbox"/> Brazilian free-tailed bat <i>Tadarida brasiliensis</i>	Statewide*	Buildings, trees	C

SPECIES	FLORIDA RANGE	TYPICAL HABITAT	RELATIVE ABUNDANCE
Family Phyllostomidae – Leaf-nosed Bats			
<input type="checkbox"/> Antillean fruit bat <i>Artibeus jamaicensis</i>	Lower Keys	Trees	F
Family Vespertilionidae – Twilight Bats			
<input type="checkbox"/> Big brown bat <i>Eptesicus fuscus</i>	Statewide*	Caves, trees	R
<input type="checkbox"/> Silver-haired bat <i>Lasionycteris noctiuagans</i>	W panhandle	Trees	R
<input type="checkbox"/> Red bat <i>Lasiurus borealis</i>	N 2/3	Trees	C
<input type="checkbox"/> Hoary bat <i>Lasiurus cinereus</i>	N 1/3	Trees	U
<input type="checkbox"/> Northern yellow bat <i>Lasiurus intermedius</i>	Statewide*	Trees	C
<input type="checkbox"/> Seminole bat <i>Lasiurus seminolus</i>	Statewide*	Trees	C
<input type="checkbox"/> Southeastern bat <i>Myotis austrorivarius</i>	N 2/3	Caves, trees, buildings	A
<input type="checkbox"/> Gray bat <i>Myotis grisescens</i>	N panhandle	Caves	R+
<input type="checkbox"/> Little brown bat <i>Myotis lucifugus</i>	N border	Caves, buildings	F
<input type="checkbox"/> Northern long-eared bat <i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>	N panhandle	Caves, trees, buildings	F
<input type="checkbox"/> Indiana bat <i>Myotis sodalis</i>	N panhandle	Caves, trees	F+
<input type="checkbox"/> Evening bat <i>Nycticeius hiemalis</i>	Statewide*	Trees, buildings	C
<input type="checkbox"/> Eastern pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus subflauus</i>	Statewide*	Caves, trees	C
<input type="checkbox"/> Rafinesque's big-eared bat <i>Plecotus rajnesquii</i>	N 3/4	Trees, buildings	U

¹Bats may forage in a variety of habitats. Habitats listed here are those in which the species roost and raise young.

SPECIES	FLORIDA RANGE	TYPICAL HABITAT	RELATIVE ABUNDANCE
ORDER CARNIVORA – FLESH-EATING MAMMALS			
Family Canidae – Foxes and Coyotes			
<input type="checkbox"/> Coyote <i>Canis Introns**</i>	Statewide	Fields	C
<input type="checkbox"/> Red wolf <i>Canis rufirs</i>	Statewide*	Most habitats	
<input type="checkbox"/> Gray fox <i>Urocyon ciitireonrgenteus</i>	Statewide*	Most habitats	C
<input type="checkbox"/> Red fox <i>Vulpes vulpes</i>	Statewide*	Uplands	C
Family Felidae - Cats			
<input type="checkbox"/> Bobcat <i>Lynx rufus</i>	Statewide	Most habitats	C
<input type="checkbox"/> Panther or cougar <i>Puma coricolor</i>	S 1/3	Most habitats	R+
Family Phocidae – Hair Seals			
<input type="checkbox"/> Hooded seal <i>Cystophorn cristatn</i>	Atlantic	Coastal marine	R
<input type="checkbox"/> Harbor seal <i>Phocn uituliia</i>	Atlantic	Coastal marine	R
Family Mustelidae – Weasels and Skunks			
<input type="checkbox"/> River otter <i>Litirn cnnadensis</i>	Statewide*	Streams, lakes	C
<input type="checkbox"/> Striped skunk <i>Mephitis mephitis</i>	Statewide*	Most habitats	C
<input type="checkbox"/> Long-tailed weasel <i>Mustela frennta</i>	Statewide*	Most habitats	R
<input type="checkbox"/> Mink <i>Musteln vison</i>	N coasts, Everglades, Big Cypress	Marshes, swamp forests	R+
<input type="checkbox"/> Eastern spotted skunk <i>Spilogale ptitoriirs</i>	Statewide*	Fields, open forests	C

SPECIES	FLORIDA RANGE	TYPICAL HABITAT	RELATIVE ABUNDANCE
Family Procyonidae – Raccoons			
<input type="checkbox"/> Raccoon <i>Procyon lotor</i>	Statewide	Most habitats	A
Family Ursidae – Bears			
<input type="checkbox"/> Black bear <i>Ursus americanus</i>	Statewide*	Most habitats	C+
ORDER CETACEA – WHALES AND DOLPHINS			
Family Balaenidae – Right Whales			
<input type="checkbox"/> Right whale <i>Eubnlmena glacialis</i>	Atlantic, Gulf	Marine	R+
Family Balaenopteridae – Finback Whales			
<input type="checkbox"/> Minke whale <i>Balaenoptera acutorostrata</i>	Atlantic, Gulf	Marine	R
<input type="checkbox"/> Sei whale <i>Bnlaenoptera borealis</i>	Atlantic, Gulf	Marine	R+
<input type="checkbox"/> Bryde’s whale <i>Bnlnoptern edeni</i>	Atlantic, Gulf	Marine	R
<input type="checkbox"/> Fin whale <i>Balaenoptera physalus</i>	Atlantic, Gulf	Marine	R+
<input type="checkbox"/> Humpback whale <i>Megaptern novaenngliae</i>	Atlantic, Gulf	Marine	R+
Family Delphinidae – Dolphins and Porpoises			
<input type="checkbox"/> Saddle-backed dolphin <i>Delphinus delphis</i>	Atlantic, Gulf	Marine	C
<input type="checkbox"/> Pygmy killer whale <i>Feresa attenuatn</i>	Atlantic, Gulf	Marine	R
<input type="checkbox"/> Short-finned pilot whale <i>Globicephala macrorhynchus</i>	Atlantic, Gulf	Marine	A
<input type="checkbox"/> Risso’s dolphin or grampus <i>Granipus griseus</i>	Atlantic, Gulf	Marine	R