



New York Field Office

<http://nyfo.fws.gov>

Endangered Species



New York State Senator

Hillary Rodham Clinton



Bald eagle

In drafting the Endangered Species Act (ESA) over a quarter century ago, Congress set an ambitious goal: to reverse the alarming trend of human-caused extinctions that threatened certain species, and the ecosystems in which we all live.

In New York State, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is actively engaged in carrying out provisions of the Act at two offices: the New York Field Office, centrally located in Cortland, New York, and the Long Island Field Office, located close to where issues arise with Long Island's four listed species, in Islip, Long Island.

The Service's endangered species responsibilities include:

- Listing, reclassifying, and delisting species under the ESA;
- Providing information and biological opinions on the effects of Federal Agencies' activities on listed species;
- Enforcing species protection under the Act;
- Overseeing species recovery activities, including providing for the protection of important habitat; and
- Providing assistance to States and others to assist with their endangered species conservation efforts.

Wind Power

The Service recognizes that wind-generated electrical energy is renewable, produces no emissions, and is generally environmentally clean technology and that the Secretary of the Interior strongly endorses the development of wind energy. However, we are uncertain about the potential impacts to our trust species including migratory birds and Federally listed species such as the bald eagle and Indiana bat. The Service has developed interim guidelines to assist applicants with project siting, construction, and monitoring to avoid and minimize impacts to wildlife from wind power projects. More information can be found at <http://www.fws.gov/r9dhcbfa/windenergy.htm>. Our office is currently reviewing at least 15 potential wind power projects in New York State.



Indiana bat

Partnerships

Partnerships play a vital role in the conservation and recovery of Federally-listed species. The New York and Long Island Field Offices are active partners with multiple Federal and State agencies, non-governmental organizations, local municipalities, colleges and universities, and private citizens.

Partnerships for Conservation of Karner Blue Butterflies



Karner blue butterfly

We work closely with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), The Nature Conservancy, the Albany Pine Bush Preserve Commission, and the Wilton Wildlife Preserve and Park to restore habitat for the Federally and New York State listed endangered Karner blue butterfly. Karner blue butterflies depend on wild blue lupine for their larval food source. In addition to lupine, Karner blue butterfly habitat includes various nectar plants for the adults, native grasses for roosting, and some trees/shrubs for shade. Habitat restoration can include the removal of invasive vegetation, removal of man-made structures, and planting of lupine, nectar plants, and grasses, and we have assisted with these efforts by both conducting and funding the actions.

Partners in Conservation of Bog Turtles

We are also involved in a fairly new partnership with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, NYSDEC, New York Natural Heritage Program, and Environmental Defense to restore and manage habitat for the Federally listed threatened bog turtle in southeastern New York. This involves the control of invasive plant species using techniques such as bio-control of purple loosestrife, manual removal, and controlled grazing (using cows, goats, and sheep) to restore open fen and wet meadow habitats.

Partnerships for Habitat Restoration for Roseate Terns

We worked with several of our partners to restore roseate tern habitat in Shinnecock Bay at Warners Island. This island was the former site of a roseate tern colony, but has experienced severe erosion over the years which resulted in the abandonment of this site by roseate terns. In addition, we partnered with the Boy Scouts of America and U.S. Geological Service - Biological Resources Division, on the development and construction of roseate tern nesting boxes which will augment the restoration projects and efforts to reestablish roseate tern colonies at some of their historic nesting areas.



Roseate tern

Partners in Conservation of Piping Plovers

With our partners, we support recovery actions to enhance breeding opportunities and nesting success for piping plovers across the north and south shores of Long Island from Queens County in the west to Suffolk County in the east. These efforts are beginning to bear success – in 2001, the New York Atlantic Coast piping plover population was 309 pairs and in 2002, 369 pairs nested while fledging 1.62 chicks per pair. The total 2001 U.S. Atlantic breeding pair count of 1280 pairs was the highest since the species' 1986 listing under the ESA. Increases occurred in all three U.S. Atlantic recovery units, with the largest percentage gains occurring in New York-New Jersey.



Installing symbolic fencing on Long Island to protect piping plover nests

Partnerships for Conservation of Seabeach Amaranth

The Long Island Field Office has the primary lead for recovery efforts for seabeach amaranth on Long Island, which supports the largest population of seabeach amaranth within its historical range, extending from South Carolina to Massachusetts. Each year Endangered Species Biologists from the Long Island Field Office assist the New York Natural Heritage Program in conducting annual surveys for this threatened species. In 2002, a total of 190,000 plants were surveyed at twenty-one sites stretching from Breezy Point, Queens County, to Hampton Beach in Suffolk County, along the south shore of Long Island. Over 50% of the plants occur at a single location – Jones Beach Island East.

Partnership for Conservation of Sandplain Gerardia

Sandplain gerardia is the only plant in New York State that is Federally listed as endangered. Once 60,000 acres of native grassland provided habitat for plants such as sandplain gerardia, and its pink blossoms by the millions colored the prairies in the late summer. Now, all but 200 acres of those grasslands have been lost to development or grown up in brush, and by the 1980s sandplain gerardia had almost disappeared. On Long Island, significant remnant populations remain only at Sayville, the Hempstead Plains, and Montauk. Sayville supports the largest population of sandplain gerardia on Long Island, with 85-95% of the total number of plants. Protection of the Sayville grasslands is critical to survival of sandplain gerardia on Long Island. The Nature Conservancy, with support from the Service, the NYSDEC, and the Federal Aviation Administration, has been working for more than 15 years to improve sandplain gerardia habitat and increase the numbers of plants that appear each year. The Nature Conservancy, with support

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Keeping the area in a healthy prairie state is an ongoing process that involves prescribed burns by trained agency prescribed fire crews, cutting shrubs, and mowing. Each fall mature seeds are collected by hand and resown, sometimes in totally new locations. Total numbers of sandplain gerardia on Long Island have increased from about 500 in 1990, to 14,000 in 2001, and more than 80,000 in 2003. This progress is very encouraging, but most of these plants occur at just one site.

ESA Assistance



Searching for bog turtles during a training session

The New York Field Office regularly provides ESA assistance to Federal, State, and local governments, as well as private organizations and individuals. We have provided local training to identify potential habitat of listed species (*e.g.*, bog turtle) and to understand various sections of the ESA. We are working with local municipalities to better understand the role the Service may play in reviewing development projects that occur within their jurisdictional boundaries. In addition, in coordination with the Karner Blue Butterfly Recovery Team, we are developing Karner blue butterfly survey protocols to help us locate additional sites for protection and to ensure consistent project reviews which will provide more certainty to prospective developers.

The New York Field Office and Long Island Field Office provide ESA assistance to Federal permit applicants and others to determine if proposed development projects may affect listed species. If a project may affect listed species, we work with applicants, local agencies, and Federal agency staff to see if all adverse impacts can be avoided. If avoidance is not possible, we continue the consultation process with the Federal agency and/or coordination with the applicant or project proponent to develop measures to minimize adverse effects and we may eventually issue a permit under the ESA for any potential “take” of a listed species that may result from the proposed project.