

## APPENDIX B. MEDIA EXAMPLES

The following documents are examples of some of the media coverage generated about the Wildlife Action Plan and the State Wildlife Grants Program in North Carolina.

- **FIRST AMONG equals** – Article in *Wildlife in North Carolina* magazine, February 2004.
- **Federal Grants Directly Benefit North Carolina's Wildlife** – Commission press release that generated more than 12 articles in the news media across North Carolina, May 2004.
- **N.C. Develops Wildlife Plan** – Write-up in North Carolina Sea Grant *Coastwatch* magazine, High Season (July) 2004.
- **More Federal Dollars Wanted For Wildlife Diversity** – 'Back porch' note in *Wildlife in North Carolina* magazine, August 2004.

# FIRST AMONG

## *equals*

CERTAIN ANIMALS STAND TO GAIN FROM NEW FEDERAL FUNDING WHEN THE WILDLIFE COMMISSION PRIORITIZES NORTH CAROLINA'S MOST VULNERABLE SPECIES.

*written by Margaret Martin*

**Y**ou probably haven't seen a Southern hognose snake. They'd never scare the daylights out of you, draped across your front porch rail or slithering away from your compost heap. They stay underground, mostly, digging for lizards and spadefoot toads with an endearing, upturned nose for a shovel. Not much is known about the secretive snake except that it is highly adapted to a shrinking habitat type, the longleaf pine forest. Its numbers seem to be declining along with the longleaf pine.

Lack of information about a species in decline can thwart protection measures even as the animal disappears. Jeff Beane, a herpetologist at the N.C. State Museum of Natural Sciences, has made a point of studying some of the state's least-known reptiles. Concerned that the Southern hognose could slip through the cracks, Beane collected enough data on the species to advocate successfully for its inclusion in 2001 on the state list of Special Concern species, indicating a need for further study.

Then last winter, Beane got a call from the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission. Would he be willing to serve as an expert on a Species Review Committee for state reptiles? The committee would meet in the spring to prioritize the state's 71 reptilian species according to conservation need. Those species judged to be in greatest need would be given priority in the state's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan (CWCP). And because Beane agreed to serve on the committee, the Southern hognose snake joined the list.

FORPUNER

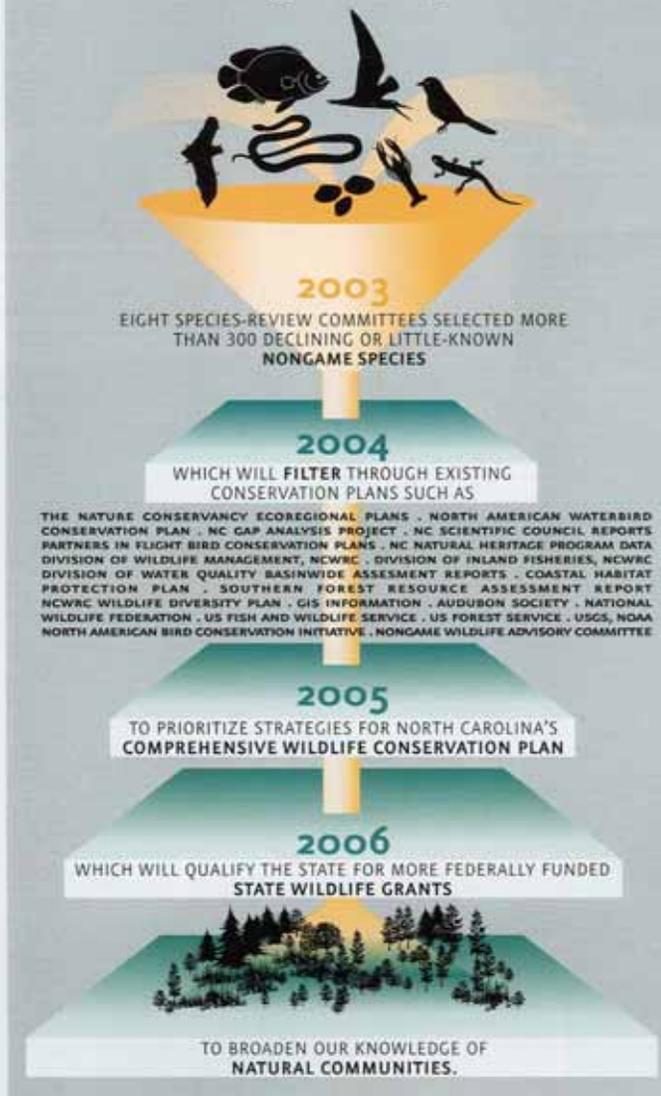
What possible difference could CWCP status make to a Southern hognose snake pursuing toads along a sand ridge? Maybe all the difference, said Salinda Daley, the nongame biologist in charge of crafting the plan. The federal government wants to provide a safety net of sorts for the snake and more than 300 other species that received priority status because of documented population declines, degradation of known habitat or lack of data about their condition. When completed, the plan will outline habitat restoration and protection measures to preserve entire communities that support the priority species.

To reach that point, though, Daley has had to grapple with vague guidelines, a stable of stakeholders, multiple databases and a dense stew of field data and biologists' best judgments. The final document will guide funding, and therefore affect policy, for conservation strategies that could make or break the survival of some species into the next century.

Federal funds for nongame research are parceled out annually to the states through State Wildlife Grants. The legislation that created this funding source is widely regarded as a watered-down version of the Conservation and Reinvestment Act (CARA), a bill that passed the U.S. House of Representatives in 2001 but stalled in the Senate. CARA would have had a funding base similar to that of federal sport fish and game funds—that is, a percentage of revenues derived from a steady source. The current level of funding may not be as much money as conservationists had hoped for—North Carolina has received about \$3 million since the program began in 2002—but it has already supported beneficial research.

"This [funding] is something we've needed for a long, long time," said Fred Harris, chief of the commission's Division of Inland Fisheries, who believes the traditional federal funding

## Planning for the Long Term



*Species of concern to state conservationists are the starting point of the Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan, which will qualify the state for federal funds for species research and habitat restoration in North Carolina. The plan will be reviewed periodically after its completion in 2005.*

sources fed a value system that placed game above nongame concerns. "Now we can look at communities of wildlife and the interdependence of species, game and nongame alike."

Unlike game specialists, nongame biologists have hundreds of species to deal with. In the past, the factor that determined which species received study was often the need of the funding source. For example, agencies such as the Army Corps of Engineers or the Department of Transportation would fund a

survey of at-risk species that happened to be in the path of a project. The CWCP should help nongame research respond more to needs that arise from the natural world. Although the scope of the plan is limited to vertebrates and a few macro-invertebrates—crayfish, snails and mussels—planners reason that the end result will benefit whole communities of organisms.

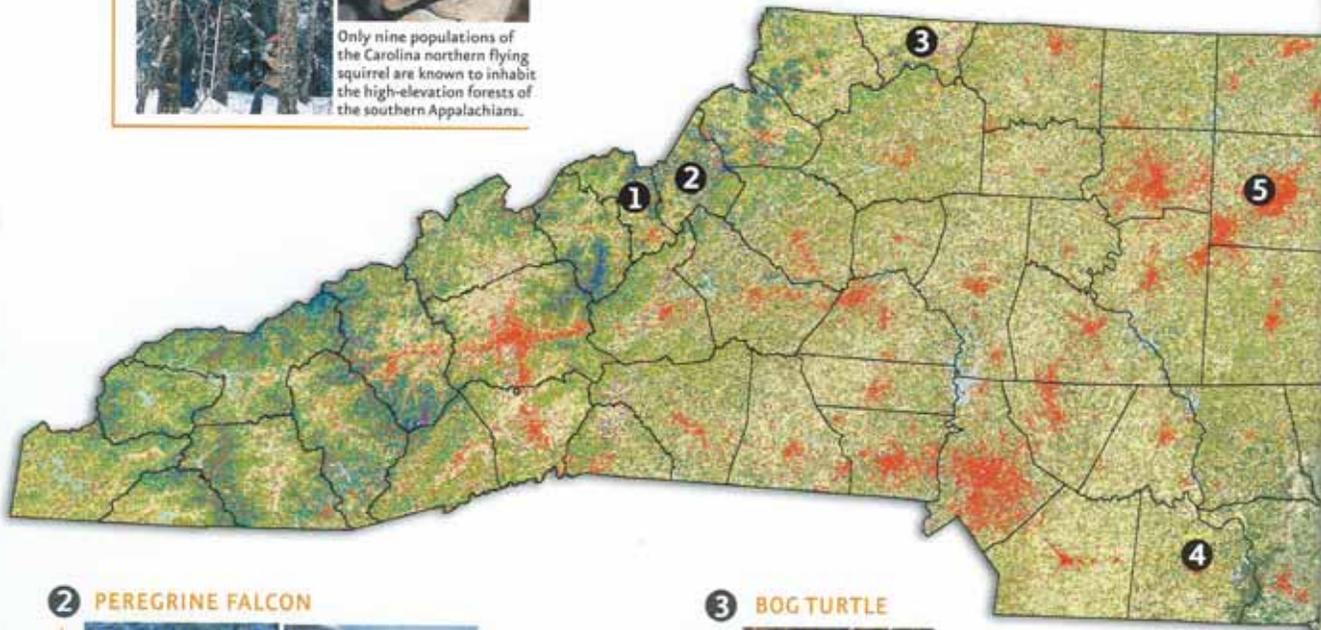
The filtering process built into the CWCP is designed to encourage the sometimes fractured conservation community to invest in a single plan that could achieve habitat restoration in key areas while there's still time. In October, Daley gathered together staff from six groups that produce environmental data relevant to the plan. Harris encouraged the assembled conservationists to find ways to forge their multiple visions into a single plan with statewide legitimacy. "I'm convinced that this is the direction we need to go in," he said. "We will have the information to predictably influence [natural] communities. That's the level we need to be working at, and that's more than one agency can accomplish. This [planning process] is good in that we're forced into partnerships with our diverse interests. We must make a sensible, comprehensive plan—a plan that will influence what wildlife communities will look like for decades."

There are many more groups within the state that will add to the plan before it is submitted to the feds in 2005. Daley is also laboring with neighboring states on conservation strategies that straddle political boundaries.

For the Southern hognose snake, a concerted effort and federal money could one day change its landscape of fast-disappearing pine thickets into sustainable swaths of longleaf pine forests. Healthy populations of Southern hognose, Pine Barrens treefrogs, red-cockaded woodpeckers and Eastern tiger salamanders would thrive in a natural community that was in trouble in 2004. That's the plan. ☐

# LINKING SPECIES RESEARCH TO HABITAT CONSERVATION

## 1 NORTHERN FLYING SQUIRREL



## 2 PEREGRINE FALCON



## 3 BOG TURTLE



## 4 ROBUST REDHORSE



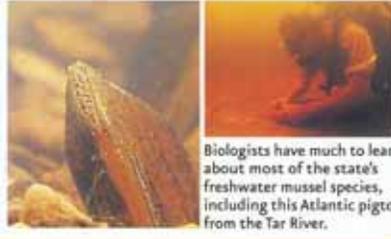
The state's conservation plan should ultimately benefit habitats that support priority species. State Wildlife Grants will encourage conservation of habitats where clusters of priority species occur. Red indicates urban areas; color variations represent 68 habitat types. Numbered sites indicate current research on priority species.

**5 GREENSBORO BURROWING CRAYFISH**



Surveys by Chris McGrath and other zoologists are expanding the known range of the Greensboro burrowing crayfish.

**6 ATLANTIC PIGTOE**

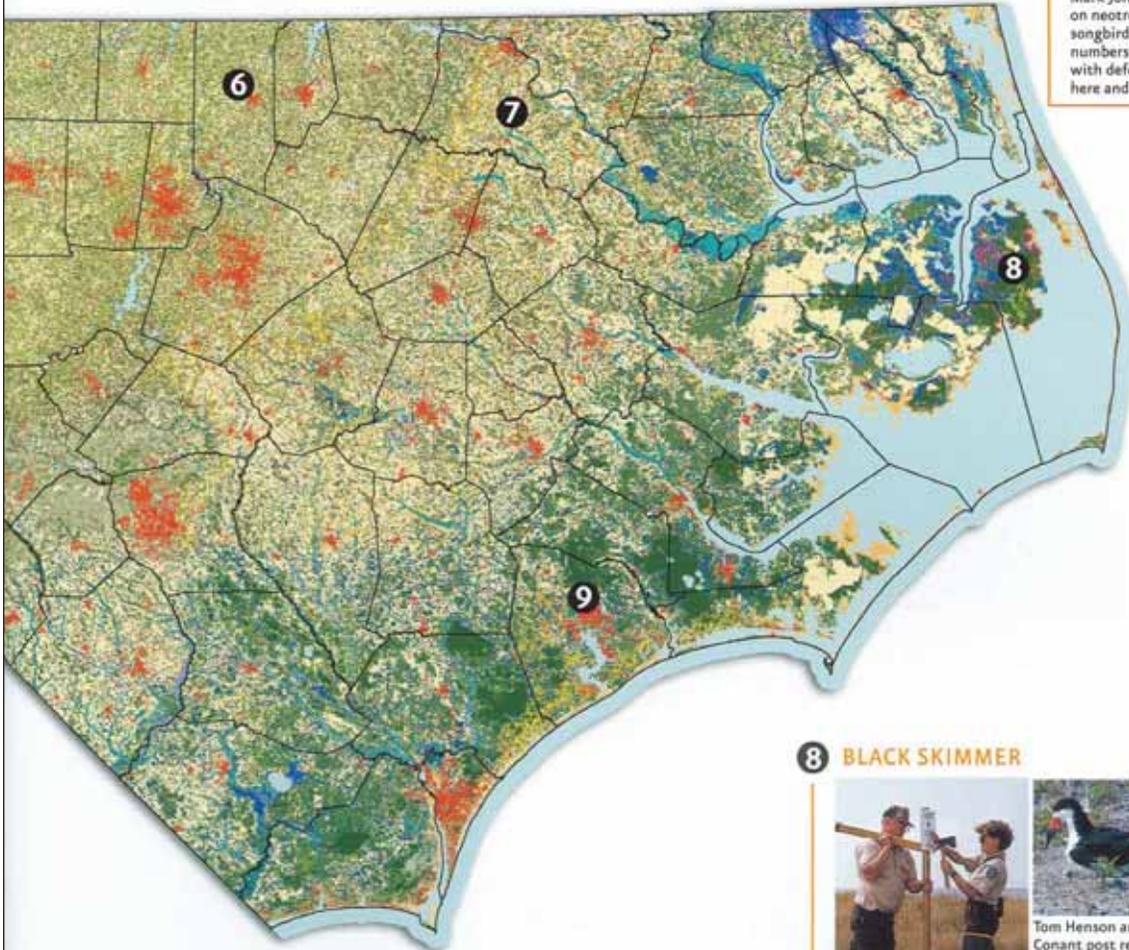


Biologists have much to learn about most of the state's freshwater mussel species, including this Atlantic pigtoe from the Tar River.

**7 CERULEAN WARBLER**



Mark Johns keeps an eye on neotropical migratory songbirds, whose declining numbers correlate directly with deforestation both here and in the tropics.



**9 GOPHER FROG**



The Carolina gopher frog breeds in temporary ponds of the longleaf pine forest. Alvin Braswell links a 15-year slide in the state's populations to habitat degradation.

**8 BLACK SKIMMER**



Tom Henson and Therese Conant post restricted access to breeding sites, in response to a decrease in the survival of young black skimmers and other colonial waterbirds.

FILE PHOTO: N.C. WILDLIFE RESOURCE COMMISSION AND N.C. MUSEUM OF NATURAL SCIENCE; PERFORMING FALCON: KEN WILSON; CERULEAN WARBLER: NATHAN HOBBS; BIRD IN ART: GRAPHIC BY VICTORIA LUMBER.

Source: N.C. Gap Analysis Project, NCSU

## Press Releases/What's New

NORTH CAROLINA WILDLIFE RESOURCES COMMISSION



### Federal Grants Directly Benefit North Carolina's Wildlife

**RALEIGH, N.C. (May 20)** – Salamanders, songbirds, mussels, turtles and other wildlife in North Carolina are getting strong support from the state's congressional delegation in the budget for the 2005 fiscal year.



**Commission biologists seine for tangerine darters in the upper Pigeon River.**

Led by Rep. Robin Hayes (R), four N.C. representatives—Hayes, Cass Ballenger (R), Bob Etheridge (D) and David Price (D)—signed a letter sent to the Interior Appropriations Committee urging a \$100 million budget for the State Wildlife Grants (SWG) program that supports the work of state wildlife agencies, such as the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission.

"As a longtime environmental advocate, I have fought for legislation that protects public lands and endangered species and keeps our air and water clean," said Price. "These [wildlife grant] programs are particularly important for the environmental preservation efforts in rapidly developing communities across our state."



**Black skimmer on nest**

Sen. John Edwards (D) signed a similar letter for the senate's budget leadership.

The SWG program provides funds to states for the research, management and conservation of wildlife "with the greatest conservation need, but not covered under other grant programs," according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which administers the SWG program.

**Media:** Hi-res versions of these images may be downloaded [here](#). Please credit the NC Wildlife Resources Commission.

All states receive funds for sport fish and game management through the service's Sport Fish Restoration program and Wildlife Restoration program. Funds for these programs are derived from taxes on hunting and fishing equipment sales. For fiscal year 2003-2004 North Carolina received \$7.3 million dollars from these programs.

The service also provides funds for endangered-species research and management. Most of North Carolina's fish and wildlife, however, fall outside the definitions of either a sport or endangered species. The SWG program, subject to annual appropriations, supports the conservation of these animals.

"SWG enables the faunal diversity and aquatic nongame program to set its own priorities," said Tom Henson, the Commission's faunal diversity coordinator. "In the past, we had to spend most federal money for work on endangered species. That meant we didn't have the opportunity to survey and research more common species, like basking turtles."

Congress first authorized the SWG program in fiscal year 2001. Since then, North Carolina's allocation has ranged from \$1.2 to \$1.5 million per year. Ongoing SWG projects include a crayfish inventory, reptile surveys, black skimmer and common tern nesting research, native fish reintroduction and the preparation of a conservation plan for North Carolina. The Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan is a detailed document that will prioritize species' needs and guide SWG spending in years to come.

[See more information on the conservation plan here.](#)

The SWG program has boosted the research, survey and management of North Carolina's nongame species. Previously, the Commission relied on its Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Fund—voluntary contributions from North Carolinians through a line item on state tax returns, wildlife resources license plates and donations—as the backbone for this work. Now the fund provides the federally required matching dollars for SWG grant projects, essentially stretching each dollar from the fund into four dollars for planning projects and two dollars for implementation projects.

The Commission's Faunal Diversity and Aquatic Nongame Program, established in 1983, works to coordinate species and habitat-protection efforts for wildlife that are not hunted, fished or trapped. The program strives to prevent more than 1,000 native nongame mammals, reptiles, birds, amphibians, mollusks and crustaceans from becoming endangered and to recover those already endangered.

The Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Fund is the primary source of state funds for the program and provides nearly all the state matching dollars for SWG grants. Since 1984, taxpayers have given \$6,933,382 dollars for wildlife conservation through voluntary contributions via state tax returns, wildlife resources license plates and donations.

[See more information on the Commission's Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program.](#)

[Return to News/Press Releases](#)

## N.C. Develops Wildlife Plan

What is being done about the robust redhorse or mole salamander — two North Carolina species of special concern?

The State Wildlife Grants (SWG) program, created by Congress in 2001 as a branch of the Conservation Trust Fund, provides federal funding to each state and territory to support cost-effective conservation with the goal of preventing wildlife from endangerment.

The grants call for statewide Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plans — due by October 2005.

North Carolina holds a \$1.7 million share of funding — out of \$80 million proposed for the 2005 budget — to be utilized by the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission (WRC). Efforts must focus on the “species in greatest need of conservation.” Generally these are nongame species not supported by recreational fees and taxes.

Species review committees guided by WRC and composed of North Carolina wildlife experts helped to compile a list of more than 300 species.

The comprehensive wildlife plan is slated for completion by July 2005. Stakeholders will review the plan and provide input.

Funds from SWG have supported a variety of projects in North Carolina, including research on beach nesting birds. To find out more about the wildlife plan, visit WRC’s Web site at [www.wildlife.state.nc.us](http://www.wildlife.state.nc.us). Click on the link to Wildlife Species and Conservation and navigate to the N.C. Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan page.

— L.L.



# back porch

NEWS  
and  
NOTES

Edited by Greg Jenkins

## More Federal Dollars Wanted for Wildlife Diversity

**S**alamanders, songbirds, mussels, turtles and other wildlife in North Carolina are getting strong support from the state's congressional delegation this year. Four North Carolina representatives

NEWS



State Wildlife Grants from the federal government fund research on nongame creatures such as the black skimmer.

signed a letter urging a \$100 million appropriation for the State Wildlife Grants (SWG) program, which supports the work of agencies such as the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission (see "First Among Equals," February 2004).

The grant program funds the research, management and conservation of wildlife "with the greatest conservation need, but not covered under other grant programs," according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which administers the SWG program.

All states receive funds for sport fish and game management through the service's Sport Fish Restoration program and Wildlife Restoration program. Funds for these programs are derived from taxes

on hunting and fishing equipment sales. In fiscal year 2004, North Carolina received a total of \$7.3 million from both programs.

The service also provides funds for endangered species research and management. But most of North Carolina's fish and wildlife are not sport or endangered species. The SWG program supports the conservation of these animals. The grants benefit the commission's Faunal Diversity and Aquatic Nongame Program, which works to prevent more than 1,000 native nongame animals from becoming endangered and to help those already endangered.

"State Wildlife Grants enable the faunal diversity and aquatic nongame program to set its own priorities," said Tom Henson, the Wildlife Commission's faunal diversity coordinator. "In the past, we had to spend most federal money for work on endangered species. That meant we didn't have the opportunity to survey and research more common species, like basking turtles."

Congress authorized the program in 2001. Since then, North Carolina has received \$1.2 to \$1.5 million per year. Ongoing projects include a crayfish inventory, reptile surveys, black skimmer and common tern nesting research, native fish reintroduction and the preparation of a conservation plan for North Carolina. A Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan will prioritize nongame species' needs and guide spending of State Wildlife Grants in years to come.

### AT HOME WITH WILDLIFE

#### The Pool Is Open

**I** heard a fellow once say that it was so hot, his outdoor thermometer climbed down the pole and crawled under the porch.

The dog days of summer create one big sauna here in North Carolina. If you aren't headed to the pool for some cool relief, then you are probably headed for the beach. Wildlife is no different, taking every opportunity to cool off in a bird bath or water hole. Birds use these backyard water attractions for drinking as well as bathing, which keeps parasites down.

But before running out and plunking down cash for a bird bath, you may already have one. A bird bath can be something as simple as a clay tray in which a potted plant once sat, or that oval piece of plastic your kids used to sled down snow-covered hills last winter. You can even take a large log, chisel out a 3-inch-deep depression, and fill it with water for a rustic bird bath.

Regardless of what you find, make sure it has a rough surface so birds can light on the rim without slipping off. Automatic misters or drippers provide a moving-water element birds can't resist. A homemade alternative is a plastic 2-liter bottle hung over a bath. Simply punch a pinhole and fill with water.

To attract more birds, place the bird bath in an open area. With little or no expense, you can have a water device to keep your backyard bird population quenched and drenched.

—Chris Powell

