

## Endangered Species

In general, an endangered species is an organism that is in danger of disappearing from the earth if its situation isn't improved soon. One of main causes for endangerment is habitat destruction. Many of these animals' natural habitats are being destroyed to make room for new buildings. The only thing that we know is that we must act fast or these animals could be gone forever.

# Endangered Vertebrates of Massachusetts



This poster was created by the 7th grade Apollo HOWL team at PCIS (Plymouth Community Intermediate School) who are: Deven D., Rachael D., Timothy F., Justin H., Gina L., Emma T., Stephen S., and our teacher, Mr. Phillips. HOWL stands for Helping Others While Learning. HOWL is a service learning program at PCIS; it was created by Mr. Phillips who is a science/technology teacher. In HOWL, students work collaboratively to help improve the environment of the schools, the community, and the world. This poster was made in collaboration with Mrs. Rioux's art classes. Mrs. Rioux is the 7th and 8th grade art teacher at PCIS.

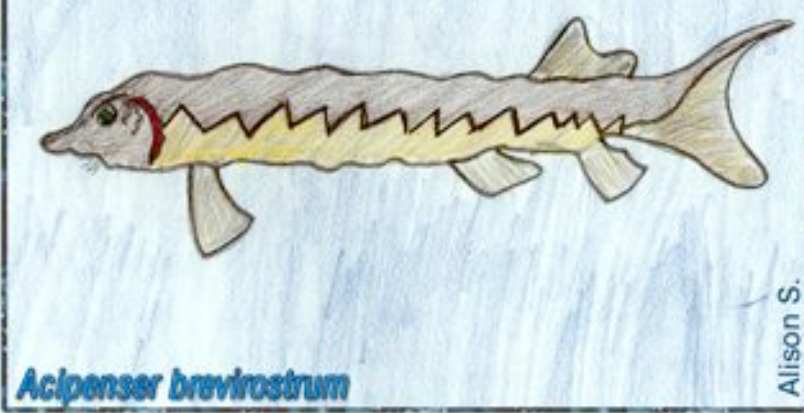
## N. Red-Bellied Cooter



*Pseudemys rubriventris*

The northern red-bellied cooter is the largest freshwater turtle in Massachusetts besides the snapping turtle. It can grow about a foot long and weigh 10 pounds. It lives in the Plymouth County. It lays five to seventeen eggs. They live for forty to fifty-five years. The ratio of males to females hatched depends on the temperature of the nest, males for cold weather females for warm, so in Plymouth there are more males than females.

## Shortnose Sturgeon



*Acipenser brevirostrum*

Alison S.

The shortnose sturgeon is one of the largest species of fish found in a river. It can grow up to four feet in length and weigh 50 pounds. Shortnose sturgeon can live up to 67 years. They are born in fresh water but then migrate to the ocean to grow up and come back to the fresh water to have babies. Mollusks and crustaceans are their primary food source.

## Least Bittern



*Icthyophaga exilis*

Brandon J.

The least bittern is the smallest heron found in North America. These birds nest in vast marshes with plant life in southern Canada and around Massachusetts. The nest is a platform made of mainly cattails. It lays around ten eggs per season. These birds migrate at night to open waters in the southern U.S. They eat fish and insects and habitat loss caused numbers to decline. They aren't good flyers. It is protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918.

## Bald Eagle



*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*

Anthony C.

The bald eagle is the national emblem of the United States. It builds the largest nest of any living bird species. The largest bald eagle nest is 13 feet deep, 8 feet wide, and weighs one ton. The bird itself grows to be 6-15 pounds, with a wingspan of 72-96 inches. From head to tail, an adult bald eagle can be between 28 and 42 inches. A female bald eagle is about 25% larger than a male. This eagle's diet consists of mainly fish.

## Leach's Storm-Petrel



*Oceanodroma leucorhoa*

Hailey G.

The Leach's storm-petrel is 7.5 in long and its wingspan is 19 in. It is very hard to tell apart the males and females. The lifespan of this bird is unusually long for a bird that is a small size, with an average of 20 years and maximum recorded lifespan of 36 years.

## Upland Sandpiper



*Bartramia longicauda*

Carl E.

The upland sandpiper is a shorebird that is endangered. It is 11 to 13 inches long, has a wingspan of about 19 inches, and weighs up to 8 pounds. They eat mainly insects, including beetles, grasshoppers, and crickets. Today there are around 350,000 upland sandpipers left. Luckily, the governors of Massachusetts and Connecticut have purchased a large field on the border of both states to try to raise and breed upland sandpipers there.

## Northern Right Whale



*Eubalaena glacialis*

Hailey C.

The northern right whale is a large, rare whale that is extremely endangered. It is around 50 to 60 feet long and weighs about 22 to 33 tons. The northern right whale can be found in the northern waters most of the year. Its diet consists of plankton, krill, pteropods, and copepods. Scientists aren't sure of the exact number, but they think the number of northern right whales left in the North Atlantic is only about 400.

## Hawksbill Sea Turtle



*Eretmochelys imbricata*

Jillian T.

The hawksbill sea turtle is found in regions such as the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. They are found in water deeper than 60 feet. They are 35 to 127 kg in weight, and 25 to 45 inches in length. A baby hawksbill turtle lives without its mother. They're omnivores, so they eat food such as sea jellies, mollusks, fish, sea plants and other animals.

## Pied-Billed Grebe



*Podilymbus podiceps*

Ashley R.

The pied-billed grebe is a species of water bird. It is 13-15 inches in length. The pied-billed grebe prefers fresh water to salt water. Also, it is rarely ever seen flying. To escape from danger the pied-billed grebe dives under the water and swims away. They feed on fish, bugs, and amphibians.

## Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtle



*Lepidochelys kempi*

Cameron O.

Adult Kemp's Ridley sea turtles can grow to be about 65 centimeters long. It eats mollusks, crustaceans, algae and sea urchins. They are the smallest sea turtle species in the world, growing to about 100 lbs. This sea turtle changes color with its development. The age of the adulthood is debated; some say they are mature at 7-15 years old, but others say 35 years old. In the wild, they live to be about 50 years old.

## Copperhead



*Agkistrodon contortrix*

Tiffany S.

The average length of adult copperheads is 30 inches. Males are usually larger than females. They have a copper-colored head and reddish-brown bodies. There are temperature-sensitive organs on the head, between the eye and the nose. In North America it prefers forests, is located near rocks and ledges, and found in swampy regions. It is found here in Massachusetts. It eats rodents, frogs, large insects, and occasionally cicadas. These snakes' venomous bites are non-lethal.

## Peregrine Falcon



*Falco peregrinus*

Chris G.

Most peregrine falcons are around 40 to 60cm long. They weigh close to 2 pounds. They eat pigeons, doves, small birds, and some small mammals. A female will lay around 2-6 eggs. 40% of all peregrine falcons won't live past 1 year old. Although, if a peregrine falcon remains healthy, it can live to be 13 years old.

## Fin Whale



*Balaenoptera physalus*

Katie D.

The fin whale is long, sleek, and streamlined with a V-shaped head that is flat on top. The only other whale that is larger in size is the blue whale. Fin whales consume up to 2 tons of food a day and eat crustaceans. They are often found alone but may travel in groups from three to seven. Fin whales are found in all seas but prefer temperate to polar waters more than tropical waters. They have a slightly curved dorsal fin far back on its body. The fin whale can measure up to 88 feet long.

## American Bittern



*Botaurus lentiginosus*

Oliver A.

The American bittern is an exciting bird to learn about. It weighs about 600 grams. This bird lives in the mid-United States to northern Canada. Its wintering stretches from south Atlantic coast across the Gulf coast and west to southern California. The diet for this bird usually consists of: insects, amphibians, crayfish, small fish, and mammals.

## Henslow's Sparrow



*Ammodramus henslowii*

Oliver A.

The Henslow's sparrow is a small sparrow at 4-5 inches in length. It is likelier to be heard with its song than seen. Their breeding habitat is shrubby fields, in areas around Massachusetts. The nest is a well-concealed cup near the ground in a colony of others. They eat insects and seeds. Habitat loss made its numbers decrease. It migrates in April to May, and then again in September to October.

## Roseate Tern



*Sterna dougallii*

Gina L.

The roseate tern is a sea bird in the tern family. Its population has been in long term decline, though conservation measures have reversed the decline in the last few years. This bird's wingspan is 67-76 cm, with a length of 33-36 cm. The adults have very long, flexible tail streamers and orange legs. In summer, the bellies of adults become a pinkish tinge which gives the bird its name.

## N. Redbelly Dace



*Phoxinus eos*

Hailey W.

The northern redbelly dace can grow up to 2.5 in and it is a type of minnow. They live for at least 3 years. It is found in lakes and small streams in the northeastern U.S. This type of fish spawns in the spring and early summer May to early August. The dace lays about 5 to 30 eggs. The eggs hatch in 8 to 10 days at 70 to 80 degrees F.

## Sperm Whale



*Physeter catodon*

Deven D.

The sperm whale is the largest toothed whale in the world. Its brain weighs more than 20 pounds. The sperm whale's diet consists of mainly giant squid, fish, octopus, and skate. They use echolocation to catch their prey. Sperm whales live in groups called pods. They live together in tropical and cool waters at the surface of the ocean, but dive down to catch its prey.

## Blue Whale



*Balaenoptera musculus*

Mariessa P.

The blue whale is the largest mammal to ever inhabit the earth. It can grow to be as long as 105 feet from head to tail. The blue whale weighs about 200 tons. Sadly, its population is dangerously low, it is estimated that less than 2000 remain on earth. The blue whale's diet is primarily a small crustacean called krill.

## Leatherback Sea Turtle



*Dermochelys coriacea*

Courtney S.

Leatherback sea turtle are the largest turtles on Earth, their growth beyond 8.5 feet in length and over 2,000 lbs in weight. They can live up to 45 years. These turtles get their name from their shells. The color of their carapace is black. They can dive 4,035 feet below the surface, deeper than any other turtle, and can stay down for up to 35 minutes total.

## Atlantic Sturgeon



*Acipenser oxyrinchus*

Kristen W.

The Atlantic sturgeon goes from salt to fresh water to spawn. They may live to 60 years old. Males migrate into fresh water during April and March, and come one month before the females do. The females lay eggs in flowing water up to 60 feet deep. The males and females migrate back to the Atlantic until late fall.

## Eastern Ratsnake



*Pantherophis alleghaniensis*

Rachael D.

There are no differences between males and females. Adult ratsnakes may be 5-6 feet long. The eastern ratsnake is typically found around old buildings, old fields, and edges near rocky areas and ledges. The eastern ratsnake is the largest snake in Massachusetts. Eastern ratsnakes are threatened by habitat alteration and roads, both as barriers to migration and as sources of vehicle transportation.

## Humpback Whale



*Megaptera novaeangliae*

Shannon L.

The humpback whale lives in pods and has two blowholes. Humpbacks grow to about 52 feet long, and weigh 30-50 tons. Females are slightly larger than males. These whales are seasonal feeders and carnivores that filter feed tiny crustaceans or small fish including herring, mackerel, capelin, and sand eel from the water. An average sized humpback whale will eat 4,400-5,000 pounds of food a day during the feeding season in cold waters.

## Northern Bog Turtle



*Glyptemys muhlenbergii*

Sageen H.

The bog turtle is a small and semi-aquatic. Its shell reaches a length of 4 inches. A bog turtle's lifespan is around 25 years. It prefers to live in marshy meadows and spring seeps. However, people like building homes in these areas. This is one reason that this turtle's population is decreasing. Fortunately, it is now illegal to sell, trade, own, catch, or kill bog turtles.

## Sedge Wren



*Cistothorus palustris*

Jim D.

The sedge wren has a 4-5 inch length. Their breeding habitat is wet meadows and marsh edges in eastern North America and central Canada. The male often builds several unused nests in his territory; he may puncture the eggs of other bird nesting nearby. These birds migrate to coastal areas in the southeastern United States, and the entire Gulf Coast south through eastern Mexico. They mainly eat insects, and also spiders.

## Timber Rattlesnake



*Crotalus horridus*

Rachael D.

Adult timber rattlesnakes usually grow to be about 36-60 cm long. These snakes mainly feed on small mammals but may eat bird, frogs or even other snakes. These snakes will normally live in deciduous forests in rugged terrain. During the summer, pregnant females prefer rocky ledges with high temperatures, while males and non-pregnant females spend more time in cooler, denser woodland.

## Indiana Myotis



*Myotis sodalis*

Matthew M.

The Indiana myotis, or Indiana bat, is a small bat that is endangered. It is about 2 inches long, has a wingspan of 9.5 to 10.5 inches, and weighs less than half an ounce. There are around 244,000 Indiana bats left. Since 1975, the population of these bats has dropped 50%. Luckily, if we can conserve these bats, they could make a full recovery in about 20 years.

## Lake Chub



*Couesium plumbeus*

Sean K.

The lake chub is part of the minnow family. It lives in cold, clear lakes and fast-flowing, cold rivers and can grow to 4 inches long. It eats mainly zooplankton, but also eats water insects and algae. Lake chub breeds from spring to late summer. When the mother lake chub lays the eggs, neither the mother, nor the father watches over them. The eggs will hatch in about 10 days and they will live for 5 years.

## Golden-Winged Warbler



*Vermivora chrysoptera*

Nicolaj M.

The golden-winged warbler is about 4.5 inches long, has a wingspan of 7.5 inches, and weighs only .33 ounces. The bird is found in southeastern Canada and eastern United States. The golden-winged warbler diet consists of insects and spiders. The golden-winged warbler's population is around 200,000. Its population is decreasing at about 2.5% each year.

## Short-Eared Owl



*Asio flammeus*

Noah B.

The short-eared owl is nocturnal and normally quiet. The short-eared owl's length is 33 to 43 centimeters and weighs more than 475 grams. They eat deer mice, moles, rats, rabbits, and muskrats. Females are slightly larger than males. They do not like to be disturbed in their nesting territory.

## Sei Whale



*Balaenoptera borealis*

Morgan F.

This whale is known for sudden invasions of an area to exploit an available prey source. They can swim at speeds up to thirty miles per hour. The sei whale is a smaller relative of the fin whale. Sei whales have little blubber so they were not hunted until the late 1950's. Sadly, a population crash followed which created a need to protect them. Now the law says that limited hunting is tolerable.