

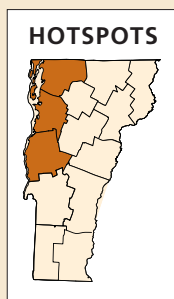
Habitat losses endanger wildlife

The wildlife enjoyed by so many of Vermont's residents and visitors is threatened by shrinking natural habitat. Many critical ecosystems have been lost, fragmented or damaged by development.

Reductions in viable habitat have life and death consequences for species representing every link in the food chain, from predators such as the bear and bobcat, to large herbivores such as moose and deer, to small reptiles and vulnerable indicator species such as amphibians.

the FACTS

- Every year, more than 10 square miles of Vermont's natural habitat are lost to commercial and residential development.¹⁴⁰
- The state's endangered species list includes 154 plants and 34 animals. Twenty percent of Vermont's vertebrates are considered endangered, threatened or of "special concern."¹⁴¹
- Seven out of the state's 40 documented amphibian species are endangered. In some areas, state biologists have discovered that 43% or more of young frogs from a single species are malformed.¹⁴²
- Preliminary results from a citizen survey conducted by the University of Vermont and the Vermont Institute of Natural Science are showing a significant decline in some bird populations.¹⁴³
- Approximately 21% of endangered plants and 13% of threatened plants depend on wetlands for survival. Vermont has lost more than 35% of its original wetlands and continues to lose this essential land feature to development. Ninety-five percent of Vermont's remaining wetlands are privately owned. Nearly 40% of the state's wetlands are located in the counties with the fastest-growing populations: Chittenden, Addison, Franklin and Grand Isle.¹⁴⁴



FRAGILE ECOSYSTEM



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