Rare Animals of Louisiana

Bachman’s Sparrow
*Aimophila aestivalis*

**Rarity Rank:** S3/G3  

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<th>State</th>
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**Identification:**
- Relatively plain with a long, rounded tail and large bill
- Wings, back and crown streaked with chestnut brown
- Underparts white and somewhat buffy
- Often runs along ground when disturbed
- Commonly recognized by simple but pleasant song
- Total length between 13 and 15 cm

**Habitat:**
- Mixed Hardwood-Loblolly Forest, Pine Flatwoods, Slash Pine/Post Oak Forests, Pine Savannah
- Open habitats that provide dense floor of many grasses and forbs as well as a few shrubs
- Suitable habitat is created and maintained when understory shrubs are removed by frequent burning

**Food habits:**
- Seeds (mainly *Panicum* grass) and insects

**Range:**
- Breeding Range: Eastern Oklahoma and Texas to North Carolina and south to the Gulf coast
- Spends winter in the southern portion of breeding range and is very secretive at this time

**Reproduction:**
- Monogamous, though polygamous males have been recorded
- Minimum of two clutches each breeding season
- Nests are built by the female and are usually a cupped nest, frequently domed, primarily on the ground and made of grasses, forbs, rootlets and horse hair
- White or sometimes faint blue ovate eggs
- Female incubates and broods
- Both parents feed young

Range based on occurrences in Natural Heritage database
**Threats:**
- Timber harvests may eliminate habitat
- Farm abandonment when it results in forest succession where ground vegetation decreases while a shrubby understory is formed
- Hurricanes and other catastrophic events often negatively affect habitats and populations in coastal regions

**Beneficial Management Practices:**
- Frequent burning encourages the growth of grasses in the understory
- Thinning of trees in highly forested area allows more ground space for nesting
- Use of techniques that avoid the total elimination of ground vegetation allows for quick inhabitation of the site

**LA River Basins:**
Pearl, Pontchartrain, Vermillion-Teche, Mermentau, Calcasieu, Sabine, Red, Ouachita

**References:**