

Rare Animals of Louisiana

Louisiana Black Bear

Ursus americanus luteolus

Rarity Rank: S2/G5T2

	1	2	3	4	5
State					
Global					
	imperiled		rare		secure



Photo: Black Bear Conservation Committee

Identification:

- Large, shy, bulky
- Head is rather large and rather blunt in profile, eyes relatively small, nose pad broad
- Tail is very short and inconspicuous
- The dense fur is black and a whitish patch may be present on the chest
- Track pattern distinctive, almost human-like; front prints about 12 cm long and 8 cm wide, back prints 17 cm long and 7 cm wide
- The outside toe print is generally larger than the other four and the claw prints are usually obvious
- Usually solitary except when in family unit of mother and cubs

Habitat:

- Primarily restricted to large tracts of heavily wooded bottomland hardwoods and swamps
- Dens in large tree cavities, slash piles, thickets, or thick vegetation during the winter

Food habits:

Bears are omnivores, although most of diet is hard mast, fruits, berries and other vegetation

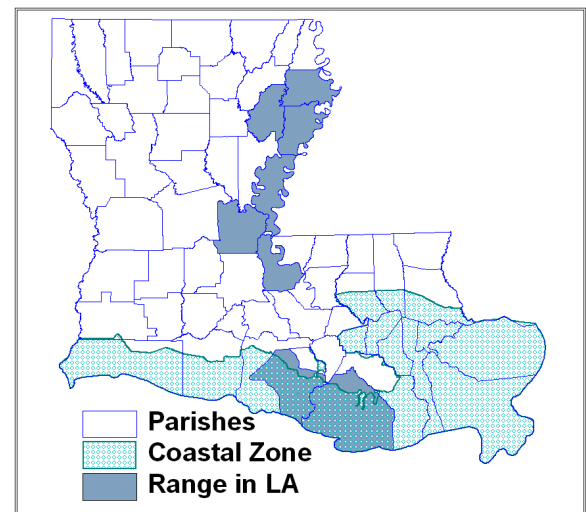
Range:

Formerly numerous and found throughout Louisiana, though currently there are only three sub populations in existence:

1. Northeastern Louisiana in the vicinity of Tensas River National Wildlife Refuge,
2. Northeastern Atchafalaya Basin in Pointe Coupee parish
3. Southern Atchafalaya River Basin (primarily St. Mary Parish)

Reproduction:

- Females produce 1 to 5 cubs (average of 2) every other year in January or February
- Cubs emerge from the den in spring and remain with the mother for about 17 months, including their first winter
- Females are sexually mature at 3 to 5 years
- Reproductive success decreases with lack of food



Range based on occurrences in Natural Heritage database

Rare Animals of Louisiana



Threats:

Habitat loss and degradation due to agricultural, industrial and residential development and poaching

Beneficial Management Practices:

- Habitat restoration is necessary
- Timber management practices that produce maximum diversity

LA River Basins:

Terrebonne, Atchafalaya, Vermilion-Teche, Ouachita



Black Bear Cubs

Photos: [Black Bear Conservation Committee](#)



Black Bear tracks

References:

NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. 2006. Version 6.1 . Arlington, Virginia, USA: NatureServe. Available: <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer>. (Accessed: June 20, 2007).

Funding provided by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program

For more information, please visit our Web pages at

www.wlf.la.gov/wildlife/louisiana-natural-heritage-program or 225-765-2811

www.BTNEP.org or 1-800-259-0869