

WILDLIFE of the Everglades

Audubon works hard to protect these and other listed species that rely on the River of Grass for survival.



Florida Panther (Endangered-US)

The Florida panther is one of the most endangered mammals in the U.S. Related to mountain lions of the west, panthers in Florida were over-hunted nearly to extinction until the 1950s when they were first protected by the State of Florida. They typically inhabit hydric pine flatwoods and marsh habitat, and are sometimes spotted at Audubon's Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary.

Roseate Spoonbill (Threatened-FL)

Nearly extirpated from Florida in the 1900s, Roseate Spoonbill populations have rebounded significantly. They are still at risk, however, due to loss of habitat and erratic water levels in Florida Bay affecting food availability. Audubon biologists band spoonbills to aid in studying their reproductive success and habitat needs.

Florida Manatee (Threatened-US)

The Florida manatee lives in near-shore marine, estuarine, and fresh waters that are shallow, warm, and calm. As herbivores, they eat seagrasses and other submerged or floating vegetation. The Everglades provide essential habitat for manatees, especially in winter when their population concentrates in the warmest waters available.

Florida Grasshopper Sparrow (Endangered-US)

The Florida Grasshopper Sparrow is a federally endangered bird that lives only in central Florida's dry prairie ecosystem. The conversion of prairies to agricultural and urban uses has drastically reduced its habitat. Its population has declined steeply but a new captive breeding program released more than 100 birds to conservation lands in 2019.



Wood Stork (Threatened-US)

Wood Storks are year-round Florida residents that nest colonially over water. Their feeding strategy relies completely on shallow water levels where they can wade. During the nesting season, adults rely on the seasonal dry-down of wetland areas to concentrate prey. Audubon actively manages habitat for the storks' benefit and advocates for their feeding grounds downstream.



American Crocodile (Endangered-US)

Unlike alligators, crocodiles are shy and prefer salty or brackish water. Their range extends from South and Central America to south Florida. Crocodiles have been victims of coastal development and habitat destruction. Now, research conducted by Audubon staff and other scientists is showing that crocodile hatch dates in Florida Bay are shifting due to elevated sea-surface temperatures.



Everglade Snail Kite (Endangered-US)

The success of the Everglade Snail Kite is a key ecological indicator for the health of the Greater Everglades. Snail Kite numbers declined significantly until the early 2000s due to degradation of water quality and sporadic water levels. By restoring the river of grass, we can ensure there will always be places for kites to feed, nest and raise their young.



Since stopping the plume trade, Audubon has defended America's Everglades against many human threats. Audubon continues to provide critical science and leads state and national advocacy to restore balanced water and wildlife to the Greater Everglades Ecosystem. Audubon protects birds and the places they need, today and tomorrow.

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Photo credits (p.1) Everglades: Ian Shive; Roseate Spoonbill: Hannah Maddaugh/APA; (p.2) Wood Stork: RJ Wiley; Crocodile, Snail Kite: Mac Stone.