

2020 marks 30 years of the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act

MESA helps protect the most vulnerable animal and plant species of Massachusetts and the habitats upon which they depend.



The year 2020 marks the 30th anniversary of the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act (MESA). Through the implementation of MESA, MassWildlife's Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) conserves and protects the most vulnerable native animal and plant species of Massachusetts and the habitats upon

which they depend. Currently, there are more than 400 native plants, vertebrates, and invertebrates that are officially listed as Endangered, Threatened, or of Special Concern.

Many rare species have benefited from the protection afforded under MESA and the work of NHESP over the years, including the restoration and conservation of several notable species such as the peregrine falcon, bald eagle, and northern red-bellied cooter. However, there is still a lot to do and in the face of habitat loss, emerging diseases, invasive species, climate change, and other threats, this work is more important than ever!

NHESP staff are diligently working to recover rare species and their habitats. NHESP's conservation efforts include targeted restoration and active management of habitats; collection, management, and analysis of statewide biological data; conducting regulatory reviews; and the development of educational programming, publications, and conservation tools to connect residents with nature and help guide state and partner conservation priorities.

NHESP's work is primarily funded through grants, regulatory review fees, and donations from supportive citizens. Donations to NHESP are received through a voluntary check-off on the state income tax form and direct donations throughout the year. NHESP donations go directly into the

Endangered Wildlife Conservation Fund, which can only be used for administering NHESP programs. These donations are critical to ensure the dedicated NHESP staff can continue to perform important conservation work, including field research and surveys, regulatory review, habitat management, land protection, and education. Without such support, NHESP cannot protect, manage, and restore the Commonwealth's most imperiled animals and plants and the sensitive communities and habitats on which they depend. In addition to donations, citizens can help by reporting the location of a rare species or vernal pool to help NHESP keep its database current.

Join the celebration! Go to [Mass.gov/30MESA](https://www.mass.gov/30MESA) throughout the year to learn about MESA and how you can support NHESP.