



Illinois

# ENDANGERED & THREATENED SPECIES

## A Word on Endangered and Threatened Species

When talking about species, there are many words used when explaining about what is happening to different plants and animals. What is the difference between extinct, endangered, threatened, and many more? What do they all mean?

**Extinct** - when no living member of the species is alive or when there are no breeding pairs of a species alive (only males or females of a species)

**Endangered** - when the number of the species living is so low that they are in danger of becoming extinct in part or all of its geographic range

**Threatened** - when the number of a species living is low enough or declining that they are in danger of becoming endangered

**Species of Concern** - when the numbers of a species are declining or low enough that they are in danger of becoming threatened and may be in need of conservation action

**Candidate Species** - a species that is being considered to be listed as threatened or endangered (i.e. monarch butterfly)

**Keystone Species** - a species with far-reaching effects on the ecosystem, many other species depend on them and if their population numbers are low, it will affect other species, (i.e. oak trees, beavers, native bees)

**Rare** - this refers to plants whose total population has few individuals and is has a limited geographic range

**Extirpated** - a species no longer found in part of its geographic range that was once abundant, (i.e. bison, mountain lion, black bear)



siltary salamander (*Ambystoma platineum*) (state endangered)  
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yellow-headed blackbird (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*) (state endangered)  
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