

# Extirpated Mammals

An extirpated plant or animal is a species that can no longer be found in part of its original range. These mammals once roamed across Illinois. Due to habitat loss and fragmentation, unregulated hunting and other issues, these animals can no longer be found in the wild. Only one species was legally delisted because of extirpation, the white-tailed jackrabbit. Many others are not legally listed as extirpated. Some of the species like black bear, cougar, or gray wolf sometimes come into the State from neighboring states but are no longer found here. Many of them disappeared from the State before the Endangered Species Act was passed.

Some of these mammals were never abundant in the state, while other mammals, like the American bison, used to number in the tens of thousands across Illinois. The state now hosts captive herds of elk and bison, but the wild versions of these creatures are gone from Illinois. Probably forever.

