THE MARATHON OF CONSERVATION

Good data. Long vision. Lasting results.

NatureServe

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Eastern Red-Backed Salamander (*Plethodon cinereus*).
NatureServe Global Status: Secure (G5). Photo by Larry Master.

NatureServe

THE MARATHON OF CONSERVATION

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

NatureServe empowers decision-makers to stay the course and achieve lasting outcomes for species and ecosystems across North America. With our trusted data and long-term collaborations with government agencies, states, NGOs, private companies, and other partners, NatureServe has accomplished something that few organizations have: sustained, science-driven conservation success.

ON THE COVER

Eastern Carpenter Bee (*Xylocopa virginica*) on Wild Bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*).
NatureServe Global Statuses: Secure (both G5). Photo by: Amanda Eberly.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

Conservation is a marathon, not a sprint. In 2025, we were reminded once again that lasting progress for biodiversity depends on persistence, partnership, and trusted science. At NatureServe, we remain focused on the long view. The sustained application of verified data generates lasting results.

Lori Scott (left) and Anne Bowser (right).

In 2025, we expanded the scientific foundation that makes conservation possible. A major update to the U.S. National Vegetation Classification marked an important milestone, strengthening the nation's official standard for defining ecosystems and guiding planning decisions across states, agencies, and organizations. States use these classifications in a variety of ways, including to help identify key habitats that support species of greatest conservation need in their State Wildlife Action Plans. This resource powers collaboration across the NatureServe Network and reflects our shared commitment to developing actionable data for conservation and stewardship.

We also took strides to improve the accessibility of our science and data. With the launch of InSite by NatureServe, we are bringing trusted information into even more planning processes by providing companies with a resource to better understand biodiversity risks and opportunities.

At the same time, we broadened the scope of conservation through our first dedicated mycology program, which established our role supporting fungal conservation. We also published a landmark pollinator study highlighting urgent risks facing native species.

Conservation is a fluid, ongoing process. All of our work in 2025 built on decades of partnerships and data, and sustaining its impact will require NatureServe to remain a prominent force in conservation and land use planning. This long view is highlighted in our featured story, which follows the Tennessee coneflower through decades of threats, declines, and ultimately recovery—illustrating the role that NatureServe and the NatureServe Network play in supporting biodiversity across the entire journey.

In a year of change across the conservation landscape, one thing remained constant: the need for reliable, science-based information. Thank you for helping sustain this work. Together, we are staying the course for biodiversity across North America.

Onward and upward,

Anne Bowser
Chief Executive Officer

Lori Scott
Executive Director

NATURESERVE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Bryce Maxell, *Chair*
Carolyn Hendricks, *Vice Chair*
Jane Breckinridge, *Secretary*
Nancy Weiss, *Treasurer*
David Anderson
Anne Bowser
Francisco Carrillo
James Donovan**
Sunny Fleming*
Chris Friesen
Kathy Goodin**
Cindy Hewitt*
Deborah Lucas
Steven P. Quarles
Lori Scott
John Trezise
Alan Weakley

NATURESERVE STRATEGIC ADVISORS

Vishal Ahluwalia
James Donovan
Tom Morris
Richard Pedersen

* Retiring Board Member
** New Board Member

NETWORK HIGHLIGHTS

OFFICE OF KENTUCKY NATURE PRESERVES

Cranberry oil bee (*Melitta americana*). NatureServe Global Status: Not ranked (GNR). Photo by Caroline Kane, Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves.

As part of an effort to uncover the hidden diversity of the state's native bee species, the Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves identified hundreds of species of native bees, with support from partners like the Louisville Zoo. The work has uncovered many bee species never before documented in Kentucky, revealing just how much remains to be discovered and laying the groundwork for stronger conservation of the state's pollinator communities.

COLORADO NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM

Black-tailed prairie dog (*Cynomys ludovicianus*). NatureServe Global Status: Apparently Secure (G4). Photo by Noelle Guernsey.

The Colorado Natural Heritage Program's long-running Homes on the Range Project identifies conservation strategies for the black-tailed prairie dog, an important species that shapes the health of entire grassland ecosystems. In 2025, the project's scientists published a major study in the journal *Diversity and Distributions*. The resulting analyses and models will help guide conservation efforts for the black-tailed prairie dog for years to come.

VIRGINIA NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM

The Virginia Natural Heritage Program has mapped freshwater mussel richness across the Chesapeake Bay watershed in Virginia. To extend this work into the Virginia portion of the Central Appalachia Habitat Stewardship Program boundary, it has secured National Fish and Wildlife Foundation funding. This mapping project uses overland flow patterns with land cover and nutrient information to identify buffers where targeted restoration and conservation actions can most effectively improve water quality and support imperiled mussel populations.

James spinymussel (*Parvaspina collina*). NatureServe Global Status: Critically Imperiled (G1). Photo by Dr. Roble, Virginia Natural Heritage Program.

SOUTH CAROLINA HERITAGE TRUST

Researchers from the University of Georgia, the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, Emory University, and the University of North Georgia identified two new species of black bass living in Atlantic Slope rivers in Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina. Once thought to be the same as redeye bass, Bartram's bass (*Micropterus pucpuggy*) and Altamaha bass (*Micropterus calliurus*) are now recognized as two distinct species. This important discovery has reshaped how these native fish are studied, managed, and conserved.

Bartram's bass (*Micropterus pucpuggy*). NatureServe Global Status: Critically Imperiled (G1). Photo by Colby Denison.

Staff from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) complete a bridge survey for bat roosts. Photo by Sophie Beasley, TPWD.

TEXAS NATURAL DIVERSITY DATABASE

In Texas, volunteers are using a standardized survey protocol to help biologists uncover where bats roost beneath bridges. The project's success in its first year quickly led to its expansion beyond the Austin area, and more than 1,500 unique surveys have now been completed. The results, shared through a public dashboard, are building a foundation for understanding where and how bats use bridge infrastructure across the state.

Oak barrens near Brinkhaven, Ohio. Photo by Richard Gardner, Ohio Natural Heritage Database.

OHIO NATURAL HERITAGE DATABASE

Scientists in Ohio are traveling back in time! The Ohio Natural Heritage Database is reconstructing what the state's landscapes looked like before European settlement by revisiting centuries-old surveyor notes. Early findings have already revealed tens of thousands of acres of grasslands and wetlands that were missing from previous maps, reshaping our understanding of Ohio's natural history. This project will guide survey efforts for the program going forward, and findings will be shared in a public map.

ATLANTIC CANADA CONSERVATION DATA CENTRE (NEW BRUNSWICK)

When a photograph recorded the elusive clubtail dragonfly in New Brunswick for the first time, scientists were not sure whether the insect had wandered in from far away. In 2025, field surveys by Atlantic Canada Conservation Data Centre scientists along the Miramichi River in New Brunswick uncovered dozens of larval skins. This provided clear evidence that the species has been breeding in New Brunswick. The discovery confirmed a previously unknown population of this vulnerable dragonfly, providing new opportunities to protect its habitat.

Elusive clubtail (*Stylurus notatus*). NatureServe Global Status: Vulnerable (G3). Left: Photo by Kelly Krechmer. Right: Photo by John Klymko, Atlantic Canada Conservation Data Centre.

CITIZENS ACROSS OREGON SEARCH FOR RARE PLANTS

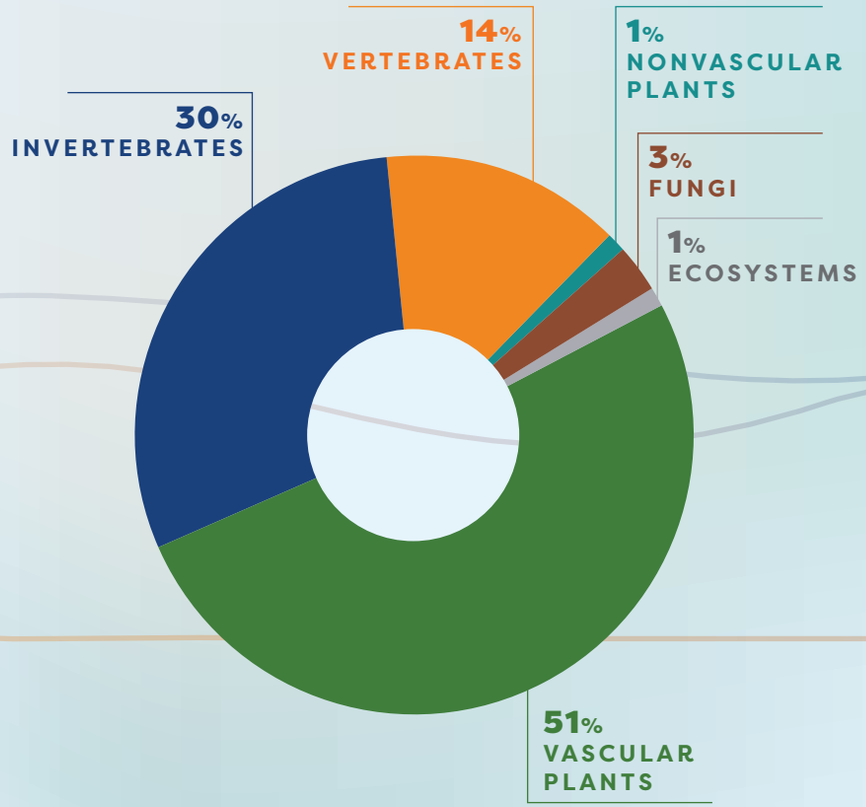
In Oregon, trained volunteers have stepped into the field to help track the state's rarest plants. Through a growing statewide effort, Oregon Rare Species Spotters, new partnerships have expanded searches into places such as the high desert near Bend. Citizen science projects like this one bring fresh data to light and help strengthen the foundation for protecting our most vulnerable species.

Volunteers with the Oregon Rare Species Spotters search for Peck's milkvetch (*Astragalus peckii*). Photo by Oregon Biodiversity Information Center.

IMPACT SNAPSHOT

27,807
New points of conservation significance mapped

2,023
Conservation status assessments completed



41
Species' habitats newly mapped

3,485
Hours of training provided

942,580
Digital tool users

8,816
Readers of three new publications

A SYMBOL OF PERSISTENCE

Tennessee coneflower (*Echinacea tennesseensis*).
NatureServe Global Status: Imperiled (G2).
Photo by Evan Grimes (iNaturalist.org).

THE RECOVERY OF THE TENNESSEE CONEFLOWER

In the cedar glades of Middle Tennessee lives a flower that is both fragile and resilient, whose path from the brink of extinction to recovery has unfolded over decades through the work of many. The Tennessee coneflower reminds us that conservation is a marathon. It is measured not in quick wins but in years of persistence, careful data collection, and an enduring commitment to seeing a species through.

First collected in the state in 1878 in Rutherford County, the Tennessee coneflower was long misclassified as a variety of a more common species and eventually faded from view. By the late 1960s, repeated surveys failed to find the Tennessee coneflower, and it was feared extinct. Then, in 1969, botanist Dr. Elsie Quarterman rediscovered it and confirmed it as a distinct species. By the mid-1970s, only three populations were known, and all were threatened by development. At the time, state protections for rare plants were limited, making federal action essential.

In 1979, **the Tennessee coneflower became one of the first plant species listed under the Endangered Species Act**. It was a critical step but far from the finish line.

The plant's survival depends on a narrow set of conditions. It thrives in open cedar glades where thin soils, intense sunlight, and periodic

The Tennessee coneflower reminds us that conservation is a marathon, measured not in quick wins but in years of persistence, careful data collection, and an enduring commitment to seeing a species through.

disturbances keep competing vegetation at bay. These ecosystems are naturally rare and easily disrupted. Protecting the Tennessee coneflower meant understanding not just where it lived, but how its habitat functioned over time.

That understanding came from data. The **Tennessee Natural Heritage Program (TNHP)**, established in 1975 and part of the broader NatureServe Network, began tracking the species. Scientists documented populations, assessed their health, and identified priority sites for protection. This work began with paper maps and field notebooks and continued as technology advanced, creating a record across decades. Botanist Andrea Shea Bishop spent years reviewing aerial imagery, mapping populations, and even knocking on landowners' doors for access to their land. She returned season after season to monitor change, each visit adding another layer of understanding. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was a close partner in this recovery effort, providing funding and review of the necessary monitoring.

NatureServe's role in making recovery possible:

- Maintaining consistent, standardized data on species and habitats over decades and across jurisdictional boundaries
- Using information on population trends, range extent, and existing threats to assess the risk of extinction for a species
- Identifying priority sites for protection and guiding land acquisition
- Connecting partners across government agencies, states, and organizations
- Ensuring continuity so that knowledge is not lost as people come and go and as technologies change

This knowledge from NatureServe and the NatureServe Network guided Tennessee in adding sites with important populations of Tennessee coneflower to the state's system of designated natural areas. Management strategies at those sites were guided by data and refined year by year. Protecting the habitat of one vulnerable species, like the Tennessee coneflower, also safeguards entire ecological communities that share the same landscape.

After recovery, following more than three decades of effort, the Tennessee coneflower was delisted in 2012. To reach this milestone, strict federal criteria had to be met, including proving that populations were self-sustaining and secure, which TNHP-collected data demonstrated. Even then, years of additional monitoring were needed to ensure that recovery would hold.

The Tennessee coneflower is one of three species that the TNHP has helped to recover, along with Eggert's sunflower, delisted in 2005, and Cumberland sandwort, delisted in 2021. Similar efforts are underway for other species in the state. Currently, the TNHP monitors 15 federally listed plant species and tracks 7 more potential candidates for listing. Every species is on its own path. Some are just beginning their recovery, while others are decades into it.

Who can tell a 30-year story like this? NatureServe can because we have been paying attention.

Conservation demands patience, persistence, and systems that endure. NatureServe and the NatureServe Network provide that foundation, carrying knowledge forward so that progress is not lost.

Today, the Tennessee coneflower blooms again in protected landscapes that people can visit and enjoy. Its survival proves that long-term investment works and that even the most fragile species can find their way back.

VICTORIES

In 2025, NatureServe transformed science, data, and collaboration into real-world outcomes for biodiversity. From expanding access to trusted information to advancing conservation research and building partnerships, these victories show how better data and stronger networks lead to smarter decisions—and measurable progress for nature.

POSITIVE CONSERVATION IMPACT THROUGH CORPORATE ENGAGEMENT

Hemlock–Northern Hardwood Forest. NatureServe Global Status: Apparently Secure (G4). Photo by Kathy Faber-Langendoen.

Improving Biodiversity Outcomes in Working Forests

With support from the Sustainable Forestry Initiative and a major paper and pulp consumer, NatureServe and the NatureServe Network developed and piloted an approach that translates complex species and ecosystem data into practical guidance for loggers and landowners. The approach uses NatureServe's rich biodiversity data to identify easily recognizable unique landscape features that provide habitat for a disproportionately large set of at-risk species. This work helps move biodiversity beyond compliance and toward voluntary, proactive land management on privately owned lands. In doing so, it supports sustainable paper and pulp production and protects functioning ecosystems and imperiled species and habitats.

Habitats WatchList: Identifying Habitats Most at Risk

In partnership with American Bird Conservancy and the authors of the new NatureServe-supported book, *Habitats of North America*, NatureServe helped develop the Habitats WatchList. This tool highlights the bird habitats most vulnerable to threats such as development, invasive species, and

Blue chanterelle (*Polyozellus atrolazulinus*). NatureServe Global Status: Not Ranked (GNR). Photo by Jessi Allen.

climate change in the United States and Canada. NatureServe contributed vegetation classification expertise, mapping, and landscape assessments to help identify where conservation action is most urgently needed and to support smarter, more targeted habitat protection. Building on this work, NatureServe and partners are piloting sustainability metrics that use the Habitats WatchList to identify high-priority habitats and species within key geographic areas.

ADVANCING CONSERVATION SCIENCE

Launching a New Era for Fungi Conservation

NatureServe launched its first-ever mycology program. This has expanded our work on at-risk fungi, an often overlooked but expansive kingdom comprising over 30,000 species in the United States and Canada. Within its first year, the program had partnered with the Oregon Biodiversity Information Center to establish a rare fungus-monitoring network. The network employs consistent methods to track populations, threats, and trends.

Williston's bumblefly (*Criorhina nigripes*). NatureServe Global Status: Apparently Secure (G4). Photo by Braden Judson (iNaturalist.org).

Early efforts have already documented species such as the blue chanterelle (*Polyozellus atrolazulinus*) and quinine conk (*Laricifomes officinalis*). These measures have laid critical groundwork for integrating fungi into biodiversity planning across North America as well. Efforts are also underway to better understand the status of several fungal and lichen species across the U.S. Southeast through partnerships with the NatureServe Network and other experts in the field.

Groundbreaking Study Highlights Pollinators at Risk

A NatureServe-led study found that more than one in five native pollinators in the United States and Canada are at elevated risk of extinction. Evaluating nearly 1,600 species—including bees, butterflies, moths, beetles, bats, and hummingbirds—it represents the most comprehensive assessment of pollinator risk in North America to date. The findings have been widely shared with government agencies, researchers, and conservation partners. The study has helped prioritize conservation action by identifying pollinators at-risk locally and threats to species. As a result of this work, we have added

important pollinator groups to our comprehensively assessed species. Additionally, the findings continue to shape NatureServe's work. They guide our prioritization of assessment updates and inform how climate change tools are incorporated into ranking, deepening our understanding of species most at risk.

Northern Great Plains Rough Fescue Prairie. NatureServe Global Status: Imperiled (G2). Photo by Lysandra Pyle.

A Major Update to the U.S. National Vegetation Classification

NatureServe, the Ecological Society of America, and federal partners released a major update to the U.S. National Vegetation Classification (USNVC), the national standard for describing and mapping terrestrial ecosystems. This foundational system guides ecosystem-based planning and management nationwide, including in many State Wildlife Action Plans. It is also widely used by federal agencies like the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, and Bureau of Land Management. The updated USNVC improves alignment with global standards, revises descriptions of some ecosystem types, and introduces interactive maps on NatureServe Explorer. The update has made ecosystem data more consistent and accessible across the country.

Growing NatureServe's Species Habitat Modeling Library

NatureServe continued to advance its Species Habitat Modeling program in 2025. It expanded its library to include models for more than 2,600 species. These models are already helping NatureServe Network programs support conservation planning and inform public decision-support tools. Updates to the model dashboard have made it easier for practitioners to discover these data from across the NatureServe Network.

MAKING BIODIVERSITY DATA USABLE

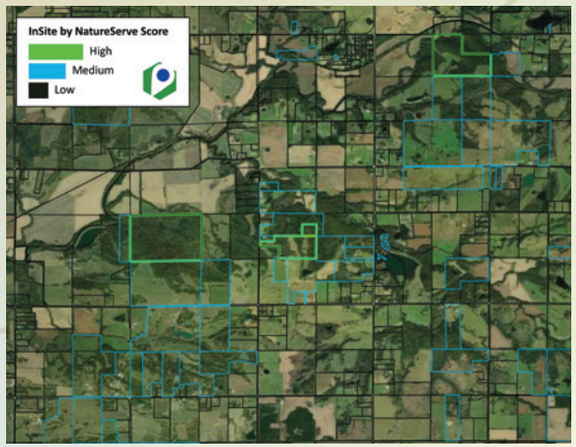
Biodiversity for Beginners:
Bringing Science to New Audiences

NatureServe released *Biodiversity for Beginners*, a free, accessible e-book for parents, educators, and anyone curious about the natural world. The guide explains what biodiversity is, why it matters, and how everyday actions can help protect it.

By translating complex science into clear, engaging language, the book broadens awareness of biodiversity and reinforces NatureServe's vision of a world where the best available science informs conservation and stewardship decisions. In doing so, it helps cultivate the next generation of informed stewards.

InSite by NatureServe: Biodiversity Insight at the Parcel Level

In 2025, NatureServe brought decades of species and ecosystem science to the scale where decisions happen. Built on the NatureServe Network's trusted biodiversity data, InSite by NatureServe translates complex science into a clear, standardized site-level report that assesses species' extinction risk, priority ecosystems, and habitat condition. Through a partnership with Regrid, NatureServe integrated the InSite biodiversity index with nationwide parcel data, embedding biodiversity screening directly into everyday planning tools.



Parcel-level biodiversity scores from InSite by NatureServe.

OUR SUPPORTERS

NatureServe thrives because of dedicated supporters like you—people who understand the power of high-impact biodiversity data in protecting our most vulnerable species. Your generosity strengthens our ability to collect, analyze, and share the critical information needed to safeguard plants, animals, and ecosystems across North America. Thank you for believing that, together, we can harness science, data, and technology to drive informed conservation decisions. Your support ensures that biodiversity flourishes for generations to come.

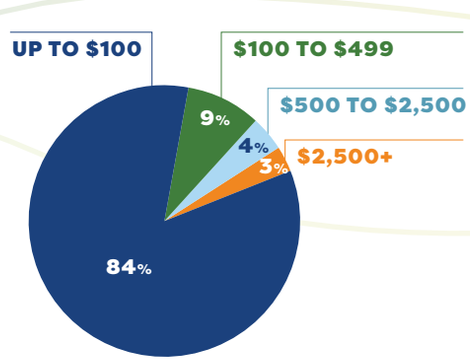
We are proud to garner the highest ratings from these charity watchdog organizations. You can be assured that your contributions are well managed and maximize impact.

Charity Navigator ✦✦✦✦ FOUR-STAR

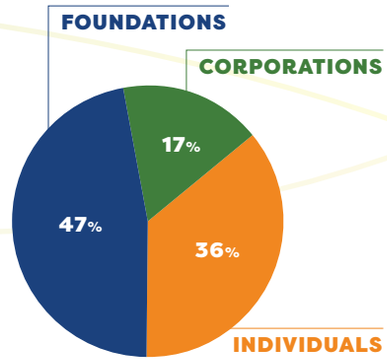
Platinum Transparency 2025 Candid.

Platinum Transparency 2026 Candid.

2025 CONTRIBUTIONS



INDIVIDUAL GIVING



SOURCES OF CONTRIBUTIONS

YOUR IMPACT

Throughout this annual report, you can see the impact that NatureServe has had on the protection of species and ecosystems. What you may not see are the many people and organizations who came together to make this possible. We still offer the best biodiversity information in North America, thanks to you!

FINANCIALS

Below is the status of NatureServe's financials for the 2025 fiscal year (July 1, 2024–June 30, 2025).

REVENUE

CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS: $2,161,552 (23%)

- Individual Donors, Corporate Sponsors, and Foundation Grants: $827,729
- In-kind Support: $1,333,823

GRANTS, CONTRACTS, AND PROGRAM FEES: $6,977,250 (73%)

- Government (Federal): $3,465,077
- Non-government: $3,512,173

OTHER INCOME: $397,402 (4%)

TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE: $9,536,204
INVESTMENT GAINS: $97,618

TOTAL REVENUE: $9,633,822

EXPENSES

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES: $7,237,466 (69%)

- Scientific Data and Methods: $2,731,223
- Technology Research and Development: $1,756,948
- Conservation Products and Services: $1,415,472
- In-kind Expense: $1,333,823

FUNDRAISING: $621,952 (6%)

GENERAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE: $2,598,712 (25%)

TOTAL EXPENSES: $10,458,130

NET ASSETS AS OF JUNE 30, 2025: $2,566,227

NatureServe's financial statements for the year ending on June 30, 2025, were audited by the certified public accounting firm of Rogers & Company, CPAs PLLC.

Black-crowned Night Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*). NatureServe Global Status: Secure (G5). Photo by Larry Master.

CONSERVATION IS A MARATHON, NOT A SPRINT

Every conservation victory takes time. It takes years of data collection, countless partnerships, and a commitment to keep asking the right questions. For over 50 years, NatureServe has provided the scientific foundation that makes these long-term efforts possible.

MISSION

We leverage the power of science, data, and technology to guide biodiversity conservation and stewardship.

VISION

NatureServe envisions a world in which the best available science informs conservation and stewardship decisions so that biodiversity thrives.

/natureserve
@natureserve
@natureserveorg
/company/natureserve

DESIGN BY KATHY CONOPIO