

Louisiana black bear is removed from US 'endangered' list

March 10 2016



A black bear is seen in the Shenandoah National Park in Virginia

The Louisiana black bear, which inspired the popular stuffed animal "teddy bears" in the early 1900s, was taken off the Endangered Species List on Thursday after 24 years of conservation efforts, US officials said.

The Louisiana black bear (*Ursus americanus luteolus*) was listed as

endangered in 1992, when only about 150 existed in the wild. Their population had declined drastically due to habitat loss and overhunting.

Today, the US Fish and Wildlife Service says between 500 and 750 bears live in the species' currently range, which includes the forests of Louisiana and Mississippi.

"Successful recovery efforts are allowing breeding populations to expand," said the US Fish and Wildlife Service in a statement.

"As such, the bear is not likely to become in danger of extinction now or within the foreseeable future."

The FWS proposed delisting the Louisiana black bear in May 2015, and accepted public comments for a period of time before issuing the final decision.

"As I said last spring when the delisting proposal was announced, the Louisiana black bear is another success story for the Endangered Species Act," said US Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell.

The Louisiana black bear rose to fame in the early 20th century after one bear's encounter with the president.

In 1902, president Theodore "Teddy" Roosevelt was on a hunting trip in Mississippi. He was unable to find any bears to shoot until the third day, when aides found a [black bear](#) that had been chased and attacked by dogs and tied it to a tree for Roosevelt to shoot.

The US leader decided he could not shoot the bear, but ordered that it be put down to end its suffering. The story spread in US newspapers and editorial cartoons, and inspired the creation of stuffed animals named "teddy [bears](#)" by a Brooklyn candy store owner.

© 2016 AFP

Citation: Louisiana black bear is removed from US 'endangered' list (2016, March 10) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2016-03-louisiana-black-endangered.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.