

# Animals and Plants of Virginia

Virginia is home to diverse habitats that support a wide variety of plants and animals. Shenandoah National Park alone has more species of plants than all of Europe, as well as a population of 300 to 600 black bears. Much of Virginia is covered in temperate deciduous forest, with many species of trees, including oak, hickory, and ash at higher elevations. The western mountains are the home of the largest population of trillium wildflowers in the United States. To the east of the mountains are the lower hills of the Piedmont, with deciduous and mixed forests and rivers and streams that flow from the Blue Ridge mountains to Chesapeake Bay. This region merges into the eastern coastal plain. Near the eastern coast, pine forests, grasslands, and wetlands plants are common. Mammals found in Virginia include numerous deer, foxes, rabbits, and raccoons. Virginia rivers are rich in fish such as catfish and bass. The Chesapeake Bay area is home to fish and shellfish.

Invasive species are found from the western mountains to the eastern coast of Virginia. To learn more about these species and where they pose a threat, see the following link:

[http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural\\_heritage/vaisc/documents/VISWG-Invasives-Brochure.pdf](http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural_heritage/vaisc/documents/VISWG-Invasives-Brochure.pdf)

To learn more about the plants and animals in various regions of Virginia, see the following links:

Flora and Fauna of Shenandoah National Park

<http://www.ohranger.com/shenandoah/flora-fauna>

Chesapeake Bay Program

<http://www.chesapeakebay.net/discover/bayecosystem>