

Using historical citizen science to understand wildlife in the longleaf pine ecosystem

Patricia J. Hartman¹, Robert A. Gitzen², David C. Carter³, John S. Kush², Midge Coates¹, and Michael S. Barbour⁴.

¹Auburn University Libraries ²Auburn University School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences (SFWS) ³Auburn University Department of History ⁴Alabama Natural Heritage Program, AU Museum of Natural History



About Our Project

Though we know many species of the Southeastern Coastal Plain, including gopher tortoises, southeastern pocket gophers, and indigo snakes, have declined alarmingly over the last 100 years, data on their historical distributions and abundances is limited. Information is also sparse on how or whether populations of these and other species respond to longleaf pine restoration efforts. Anecdotal evidence does exist, however, in the observations and memories area residents such as hunters and private landowners. In an attempt to capture this untapped source of knowledge, we are conducting an oral history project about longleaf-associated wildlife species in Alabama and adjacent areas.

CALL FOR INTERVIEWEES!

We are currently seeking members of the public who have lived or spent time in southern Alabama forests and surrounding areas. If you or someone you know might be interested in participating in our project, please contact:

Patricia Hartman
pjh0011@auburn.edu
334-844-1740



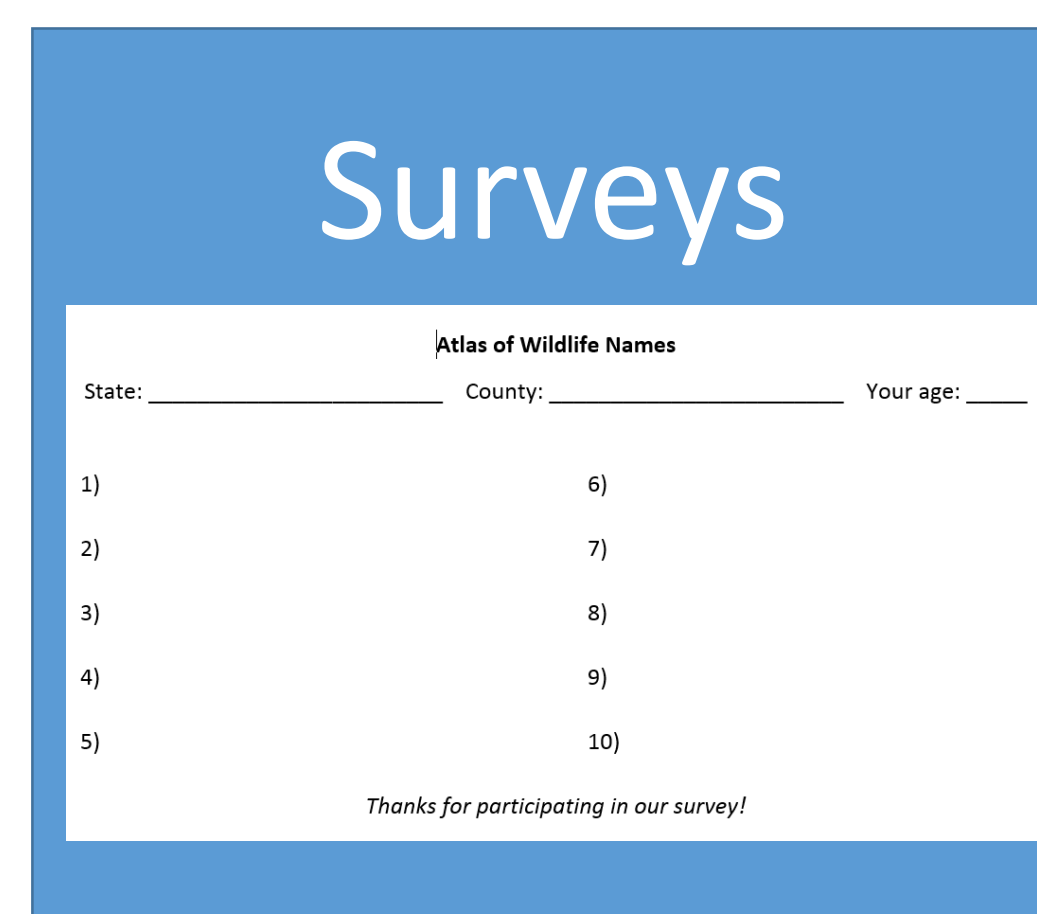
Learning from the Public

Since June of this year, we have been interviewing area hunters, naturalists, landowners, and biologists about their memories and experiences with wildlife in longleaf pine forests. The interviews cover a range of species and subjects, and their unstructured format allows us to opportunistically collect valuable presence/absence data and observed population trends for particular species of interest.

Our overarching purposes are to:

- 1) Use this knowledge to inform wildlife management efforts for species of concern
- 1) Preserve the natural and cultural heritage of this unique region

Interviews and associated materials will be archived and made publicly available in a digital collection at Auburn University Libraries. To our knowledge, this is the first oral history collection specifically devoted to wildlife conservation.



Quick survey: What's in a name?

One observation from our interviews is the striking regional variation in names and nicknames of longleaf-associated wildlife. We are in the process of developing an atlas of wildlife names and would appreciate your input!

- 1) What type of animal is responsible for creating the mounds pictured at right?



What names and/or nicknames have you heard for the animals pictured below? If you haven't seen these animals, please write "N/A."

2)



3)



4)



5)



6)



7)



8)



9)



10)



