



Extirpated & Extinct Species

A species is considered to be **extirpated** from Nova Scotia when it is no longer found in the province, but still survives elsewhere in the world. A species is **extinct** when it is no longer found anywhere on the planet.

At least four species are listed by law as “extirpated from Nova Scotia”, but many more were never listed or were reintroduced. At least five species that used to live in our province no longer survive anywhere on earth. They are gone forever. This is why we have to work together, to prevent this from happening to the species listed in this guide. These are the short stories of those who were lost.

Extirpated

Eastern Wolf (*Canis lupis*):

It is thought that very few wolves ever lived in the province. Bounties were offered in the late 1700s and wolves were extirpated from Nova Scotia in the 1800s.

Woodland Caribou (*Rangifer tarandus*):

Prior to European settlement, thousands of caribou roamed barrens and woodlands in Nova Scotia. Due to over-hunting, habitat loss, climate change, and competition with deer, the species was extirpated from Nova Scotia in the early 1900s.

Atlantic Walrus (*Odobenus rosmarus rosmarus*):

Walrus were known to breed on Sable Island, but were hunted for their oil, and disappeared in the late 1800s.

Grey Whale (*Eschrichtius robustus*):

These giants were historically found along the continental shelf of the North Atlantic, but have been extirpated from the Atlantic ocean since the 1800s.



Although extinction is a natural process and has occurred on earth since life began, today species are disappearing at an unprecedented rate. Humans are the main cause of this mass extinction, but we can also be the cure . . . **you can make a difference.**

Extinct

Sea Mink (*Mustela macrodon*):

Only recognized as a unique species after it was already extinct (~1894). It likely disappeared due to over-harvesting for the fur trade.

Labrador Duck (*Camptorynchus labradorius*):

Very limited breeding range in Labrador - only several confirmed sightings from Nova Scotia. Last living individual was seen in New York in 1878.

Passenger Pigeon (*Ectopistes migratorius*):

Was once very common in North America; flocks of millions of birds were known to block out the sun. Market hunting reduced numbers greatly, and they disappeared from Nova Scotia in 1850, and from the world in 1914.

Great Auk (*Pinguinus impennis*):

The largest and only flightless member of the auk family. They nested on coastal islands and were hunted for feathers used in bedding, as well as for food. The species disappeared from Earth in 1844.

Eelgrass Limpet (*Lottia alveus alveus*):

Lived in blades of eelgrass, and was the first maritime invertebrate known to have gone extinct (~1929). Its disappearance affected the marine ecosystem, hurting migratory duck populations and scallop fisheries.

