

Feral Swine:

. A Threat To Illinois



History of Feral Swine in Illinois

- Feral swine, aka feral hogs, feral pigs, wild boar, razorbacks, are all defined as feral if they are unrestrained and have adapted to living in a wild or free-ranging environment.
- Feral swine most often result from free range livestock, dumped pets, and intentional releases by individuals desiring to establish populations for recreational purposes.
- The first reports of feral swine in Illinois occurred in the early 1990's among several southern Illinois counties.
- As many as 32 counties have reported the presence of feral swine; most of which have been the result of escaped livestock and dumped pets.
- After extensive investigations, two self sustaining breeding populations were identified in Illinois.



Threats to fish and Wildlife

- Feral swine (FS) compete directly with native wildlife for habitat and food sources such as acorns, nuts, and food plots.
- Damage to soil, agricultural crops, and natural habitats result from FS wallowing, rooting, trampling, and feeding behaviors.
- FS prey upon native wildlife including amphibians, reptiles, small mammals, and eggs and the young of ground-nesting birds,
- Rooting and wallowing leads to soil erosion, sedimentation, and decreases water quality.
- FS have high reproductive rates — adults sows may have 2 litters per year with 5-10 piglets per litter. Juveniles may begin breeding in as little as 6 months of age. At these rates, 60-70% of the population must be removed each year just to keep the population from increasing.
- Adults have no natural predators.



Disease Threats

- Feral swine may carry more than 30+ parasites and 30+ diseases, many of which are transmissible to people, pets, wildlife, and livestock.
- Diseases most often effecting people include brucellosis, E coli, salmonella, and trichinellosis.
- Feral swine also have the potential to carry diseases that affect domestic swine such as classical swine fever, pseudorabies, and tularemia.

Illinois' Damage Management Program

- IDNR and USDA Wildlife Services are working in collaboration with landowners throughout the state to eliminate feral swine from their properties.
- Program consists of education, outreach, disease monitoring, and direct management activities.
- Assistance is provided to identify if feral swine are present on properties, provide training, and implement effective methods of removal - all free of charge.
- Trapping (corral traps) is the most efficient and effective way to remove entire family groups of feral swine.
- Shooting is effective only at removing individuals, not at eliminating large groups/ populations.



Legal Status

- Swine are considered feral if they are unrestrained and have adapted to living in a wild or free-roaming environment.
- Feral swine may only be shot by hunters who are deer hunting during the firearm deer seasons, including the late winter and CWD seasons.
- Hunters need to be sure the swine they intend to shoot are not escaped livestock.
- It is illegal to transport, release, to guide or to hunt feral swine in an enclosure.
- Landowners are required to obtain a free nuisance wildlife permit to remove feral swine outside of firearm deer seasons.



To Request a Nuisance Wildlife Removal Permit or to Report Sightings of Feral Swine contact:

- Illinois Department of Natural Resources at (815) 369-2414
- USDA, APHIS, Wildlife Services at (866)-487-3297

It is against the law to intentionally release any hog onto land in Illinois

Report releases to IDNR law enforcement at 1-877-2DNRLAW

