



**Governor's Office of  
Homeland Security &  
Emergency Preparedness**

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**JOINT INFORMATION CENTER**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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State of Louisiana News Desk #: 225.358.5361

**LDWF Reminds Residents to be Mindful of Wildlife Displaced  
by Flooding**

**BATON ROUGE, La.** -- The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) reminds the public to be mindful of wildlife species forced into populated areas by flood waters from the Mississippi River and spillways.

Rising waters force wildlife from flooded habitat into adjacent residential and commercial areas where they may come into contact with residents. LDWF urges citizens to minimize contact with animals while they seek temporary refuge from their flooded home range.

Wild animals not posing a threat to humans should be left alone and should not be fed. Feeding wild animals will encourage those animals to remain in the vicinity of a new food source when they should be allowed to find natural habitat and food sources on their own.

Basic Tips:

- Avoid areas where displaced wildlife has taken refuge.
- Avoid interaction with and do not feed displaced wildlife.
- Avoid roadways near flooded areas to reduce likelihood of disturbance and collisions with wildlife.

### **Species of Concern:**

**Black Bears:** The Louisiana black bear remains on the federal Threatened and Endangered Species List. The black bear is a species of concern during a flood incident, when high water moves bears out of their habitat within the Mississippi Alluvial Valley. For assistance with black bears that may be forced into populated areas by flood waters, call 1-800-442-2511 toll free.

**Alligators, Snakes:** Flood waters will carry reptiles into populated areas where they may not normally be noted in significant numbers. Following the impact of flood waters, exercise extreme caution when salvaging possessions from flooded areas. Wildlife, especially reptiles, may remain in flooded areas and pose a safety threat.

Poisonous snake species in Louisiana include the canebrake rattlesnake, the copperhead, the cottonmouth, the eastern diamondback rattlesnake, the harlequin coral snake, the pygmy rattlesnake and the Texas coral snake. For more information on snake species found in Louisiana, including frequently asked questions, visit LDWF's website at this link: <http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/resource/snakes-louisiana>.

**Deer, Feral Hogs:** Deer and feral hog populations within the Mississippi Alluvial Valley represent the two large quadruped species that may appear in populated areas in significant numbers as flood waters move wild animals out of natural habitat. As is the case with all wild animals, how these species will react to humans in close contact situations is unpredictable. LDWF recommends allowing these species, when sighted individually or in groups, to move unimpeded through flooded areas as they seek higher ground.

For assistance with these, or any other wildlife species, that endanger human health or safety, call the following LDWF field offices at:

- Baton Rouge 225-765-2800
- Hammond 985-543-4777
- Monroe 318-343-4044
- New Iberia 337-373-0032
- Opelousas 337-948-0255
- Pineville 318-487-5885

The Department of Wildlife and Fisheries is charged with managing and protecting Louisiana's abundant natural resources. For more information, visit us at [www.wlf.louisiana.gov](http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov) on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/ldwffb](http://www.facebook.com/ldwffb) or follow us on Twitter @LDWF.

*For emergency updates from the State of Louisiana, visit [emergency.louisiana.gov](http://emergency.louisiana.gov) or follow along on Twitter at @GOHSEP and Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/gohsep>.*