Our Playing Field

Serving a state that is essentially a peninsula wedged between the Atlantic Ocean and the Delaware Bay and River, the NJFO focuses a good deal of its energy on wetlands. There are approximately one million acres of wetlands in the state – 600,000 acres of freshwater and 400,000 acres of estuarine wetlands. Two of our most problematic exotics (purple loosestrife and an aggressive form of common reed, both wetlands invaders) and even the names of some of the species we protect (the threatened swamp pink; the endangered seabeach amaranth) reinforce the fact that many of the environmental issues in New Jersey are distinctly coastal, estuarine, or riverine. At the same time, the Appalachian ridges of the Highlands and the unusual flora and fauna of the sandy Pinelands present us with a broad diversity of opportunities, while the overwhelming number of Superfund sites in the state will inundate us with contaminants problems for years to come. The most populous state in the nation presents the Service with a series of challenges, every one of them monumental. In fact, New Jersey provides a matrix for environmental problems nationwide: if we can recover and sustain this state's ecological health, given the almost unprecedented stress on New Jersey's wildlife and its habitats, we will have learned invaluable lessons that can be applied elsewhere.

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http://njfieldoffice.fws.gov

Swamp Pink (*Helonias bullata*)

Seabeach amaranth (*Amaranthus pumilus*)