

Feral Swine

HISTORY

Feral swine are non-native mammals believed to have first been introduced to North America (Florida) by early explorers around 1539. Since that time they have spread to more than 23 states including Louisiana.

BIOLOGY

Feral swine are the most prolific breeder of all North American mammals. A sow is sexually mature at 6 months old, will have 2 litters per year, and each litter will average 4-8 piglets. Populations can double every 4 months.

DAMAGE

Feral swine cause millions of dollars of damage each year. Damage occurs to crops, pastures, lawns, wildlife food plots, water sources, native plant species, levees, aviation (aircraft strikes), roads (rooting and vehicle strikes), fragile native habitat such as marshes, and reforested trees. Damage also occurs in the form of predation of livestock, deer fawns, ground nesting birds and their eggs, and alligator eggs. Feral swine carry diseases such as psuedorabies that can be transmitted to native wildlife and domestic animals and brucellosis that can be transmitted to humans. Also, feral swine directly compete with native wildlife such as deer, squirrels, and turkeys for available food sources.

DAMAGE MANAGEMENT

Although electric and conventional fencing can protect some small areas such as food plots, the only way to truly manage feral swine damage is via lethal removal. Shooting and trapping are the most effective methods. Call your local USDA/APHIS/Wildlife Services (WS) office (Monroe – (318)-343-6499) to discuss the best tactics for feral swine removal on your property.

TENSAS RIVER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE (TRNWR)

In an effort to protect native wildlife species and habitat, TRNWR and WS are working cooperatively to lethally remove feral swine from the Refuge. Hunters and visitors of the Refuge play an important role in this project. While hunting, if you see a group of feral swine please target adult sows first. Be very careful with target identification. Feral swine and bears can look very similar in low light or thick vegetation. Because of disease issues, please wear personal protection equipment such as gloves if you chose to handle the carcass.

Please report any recent sightings, incidental harvest, or fresh feral swine sign to the headquarter office at (318) 574-2664.