

PUMA

LINED SNAKE

CERULEAN WARBLER

BALD EAGLE

Minnesota's Wild and Rare

Discover and learn about some of the amazing Wild and Rare animals that make Minnesota their home. Find all eight Wild and Rare stations as you explore the Medtronic Minnesota Trail.



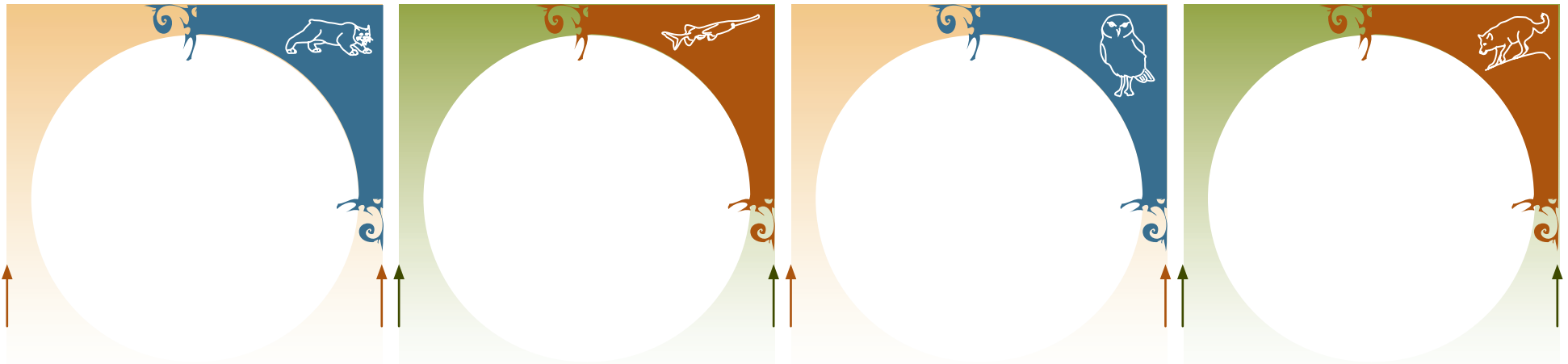
Medtronic

LYNX

PADDLEFISH

BURROWING OWL

GRAY WOLF



Bald Eagle
Haliaeetus leucocephalus



The second largest raptor (bird of prey), the bald eagle has a wingspan nearly 6 to 8 feet (1.8-2.4 m). After nearly disappearing from most of the United States, the number of nesting pairs in the lower 48 states has increased from barely 400 in 1963 to an estimated high of nearly 10,000 pairs in 2007. Minnesota is home to the second largest bald eagle breeding population, behind Alaska. The recovery of the bald eagle has been successful enough to remove it from the federal endangered species list.

Cerulean Warbler
Dendroica cerulea



The cerulean warbler is a beautiful blue songbird that nests in larger, older forests. Of Minnesota's 234 kinds of breeding birds, the cerulean warbler is one of about 130 neotropical migrants, which means winters are spent in Central or South America and young are raised in summer in North America. The Cerulean warbler winters in the Andes Mountains of South America and returns to Minnesota from late April to mid-May. It is important to have healthy habitats in both places for these birds to survive.

Lined Snake
Tropidoclonion lineatum



This rare, small prairie snake has been found in only one county in Minnesota, Rock County. The name "lined snake" refers to its 3 stripes: 1 stripe down the back and 2 stripes along the sides. Garter snakes can look like the lined snake, but lack the double row of black half-moons on their belly that lined snakes have. Lined snakes eat mostly earthworms and other small soft-bodied animals that can fit in its small mouth. Like many rare prairie wildlife species, the lined snake needs native prairie habitat, which remains on only a small part of the landscape.

Puma or Cougar
Puma concolor



Largest of the North American cats, the puma (also called cougar or mountain lion) may weigh over 200 pounds (91 kg) and measure nearly 8 feet (2.4 m) long. Pumas are mostly solitary animals and are sensitive to humans. In Minnesota, they are most likely to be found in remote, heavily forested places. They need large areas of habitat to survive. There have been very few confirmed reports of pumas in Minnesota, and no evidence yet of cougars reproducing in the state.

Gray Wolf
Canis lupus



A symbol of the wild, the gray wolf has been the center of much study and controversy. As predators at the top of the food chain, they eat mainly deer and moose, but also feed on beaver, snowshoe hare, and sometimes birds and small mammals. After years of protection from hunting, wolf numbers have grown. Of the lower 48 states, the gray wolf population is highest in Minnesota. The Minnesota wolf population has increased enough to be removed from the federal endangered species list, another successful recovery effort.

Burrowing Owl
Speotyto cunicularia



A state endangered species, the small burrowing owl is distinctive among North American owls in several ways: it has long legs, a short tail, no ear tufts, and is active day and night. In Minnesota, burrowing owls nest in abandoned burrows excavated mainly by American badgers and Richardson's ground squirrels. If disturbed, burrowing owls will bob up and down, and if approached too closely will dive into their burrows rather than fly away.

Paddlefish
Polydon spathula



The paddlefish is native to the Mississippi River basin, requiring large expanses of free-flowing river in which to complete its life cycle. Paddlefish are one of the few true large river species found in Minnesota. They have a long, paddle-like snout and a shark-like tail. Their diet is primarily plankton, which are detected by special sensors in the snout. Their body is scaleless except for a small patch of scales on the tail fin. Paddlefish are long-lived species, surviving for at least 20 years.

Canada Lynx
Lynx canadensis



The rare Canada lynx is one of three wild cats native to Minnesota, along with the bobcat and the puma. Lynx can look similar to bobcats, but appear taller because they have longer legs. Large, furry feet help them walk on snow. Minnesota once had the largest lynx population in the Midwest, but the species was listed as federally threatened in 2000 after continual decline. Lynx are so closely linked to their main prey, snowshoe hares, that their numbers and reproductive success depend on the availability of snowshoe hares.