



# ALABAMA WILDLIFE

## VOLUME FOUR

### **Conservation and Management Recommendations for Imperiled Wildlife**

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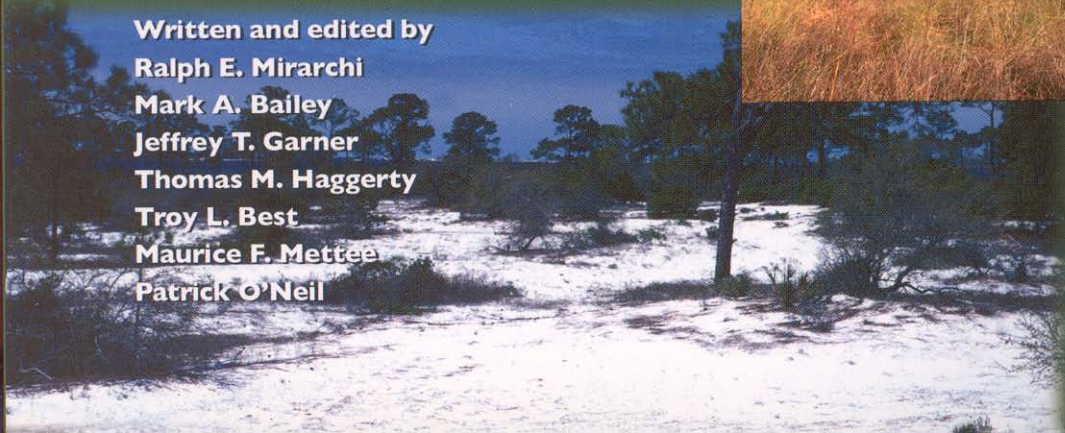
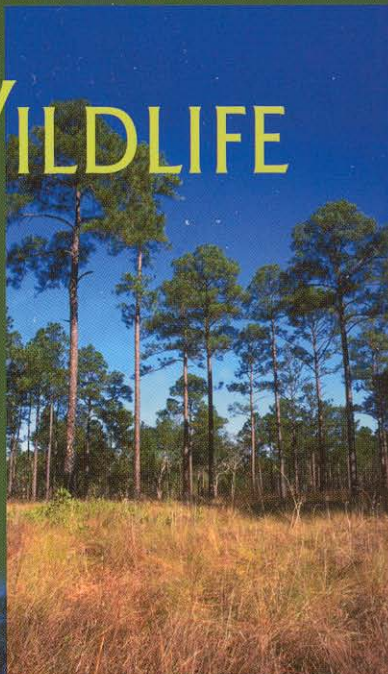
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## ELK

### *Cervus elaphus* Linnaeus

A program to reintroduce elk into Alabama on private, federal, and state-owned lands is recommended once potential problems with chronic wasting disease (CWD) are resolved. Except for the southern coastal area, habitats suitable for elk are present in most regions of the state. This large, charismatic ungulate would be a popular game species and a favorite among wildlife watchers. Appropriate steps to build cooperative relationships with farmers and other landowners must be taken prior to any reintroduction however. With proper management of population size, damage to agricultural crops could be minimized and working relationships between landowners and wildlife managers could be maximized. With changing attitudes toward wildlife as a resource for hunting and watching, public education could lead to cooperation necessary for reintroduced populations of elk to survive and flourish in Alabama. Until the recent problems that have arisen with CWD, a number of eastern states, including some in the Southeast, had begun reintroducing Rocky Mountain elk (*C. e. nelsoni*) into suitable habitats. Presence of this deadly disease in populations of wildlife has halted many transplant and reintroduction efforts in the United States. At present, caution and patience are needed to assure that CWD is not spread to Alabama by reintroduction.

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