

# **Faunal Inventory of Georgia Caves**

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## **Abstract**

Georgia contains nearly 500 caves, mostly found in the northwestern and southwestern corners of the state. The faunal composition of most caves in the state is largely unknown. Charged with the protection, conservation, and management of all nongame wildlife in the state, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources' Nongame-Endangered Wildlife Program recently initiated a faunal inventory of these caves in hopes that a better understanding of their biota will help to properly guide conservation and management measures. Inventory methods consist mainly of hand collecting and baiting. Most invertebrate specimens are sent to appropriate experts for identification. Thus far, 25 caves have been surveyed. Despite only a modest number of sampled caves to date, many interesting finds have been made including the discovery of several undescribed species. We plan to present an overview of the project and elaborate on the early discoveries.