Project Title: Defining Black Bear Species Range in Central NY
Area: Ringwood Natural Area: Ithaca, New York
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The goal of this research project is to track the movement of the American Black Bear as they move into Tompkins County and surrounding areas. Using natural history information of black bears, in combination with animal tracking, and citizen reports, trail cameras are placed in areas of interest to capture visual evidence of bear presence. With identified track/sign and sightings a comprehensive map is being made to document bear movement.

Cameras were placed within the Ringwood Natural Area on two separate occasions. The first was in the winter of 2015. One camera was placed in the preserve based on potential habitat for bears: beech trees, ridgelines, nearby cornfields, and wetlands. Then in the spring of 2016, two additional cameras were placed within the area to increase surveillance. Neither round of trail camera placement resulted in any bear images.

Ringwood Natural Area, however, is still a candidate for future research. Based on the terrain of the area and surrounding areas it is probable bear habitat. As the frequency of bears continues to rise in the area, and more reported sightings come flooding in, it is our intention to continue to monitor the preserve and surrounding areas to see if bears are already present or move into the Ringwood area.