

Definitions of terms and risk categories

Extinct: A species that no longer exists.

Extirpated: A species no longer existing in the wild in Canada, but occurring elsewhere.

Endangered: A species facing imminent extirpation or extinction.

Threatened: A species likely to become endangered if limiting factors are not reversed.

Critically Imperiled: A species that is extremely rare due to very few populations (often 5 or fewer occurrences) or because factors such as very steep declines make it especially vulnerable to extirpation.

Imperiled: A species that is rare due to very restricted range, few populations (often 20 or fewer), steep declines, or other factors making it very vulnerable to extirpation.

Special Concern: A species with characteristics that make it particularly sensitive to human activities or natural events.

Yellow montane violet

BC: Imperiled, Red-listed
Canada: Threatened

Sharp-tailed snake

BC: Critically imperiled, Red-listed
Canada: Endangered

Macoun's meadowfoam

BC: Special concern, Blue-listed
Canada: Special concern

Western bluebird (Georgia Depression pop.)

BC: Possibly extirpated, Red-listed
Canada: Unranked

Phantom orchid

BC: Imperiled, Red-listed
Canada: Threatened

Dun skipper

BC: Vulnerable, Blue-listed
Canada: Threatened

Facts

Over 99 percent of modern species extinctions are caused by human activities.

Destruction of habitat is the main cause of species decline in Canada.

What can you do to help?

Encourage and support government initiatives to protect species at risk.

Support land conservancies in their efforts to acquire land for protection.

Sign a conservation covenant with a land trust and protect your land forever.

Remove invasive species.

Respect our natural and wild areas in our yards, parks and all public and private lands.

Learn more about species at risk:
Garry Oak Ecosystem Recovery Team
<http://www.goert.ca>
BC's Conservation Data Centre
<http://srmwww.gov.bc.ca/cdc>
Environment Canada Species at Risk site
<http://www.speciesatrisk.gc.ca>

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Species at Risk On Salt Spring Island

Find out how you can help!



According to the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COWEWIC), there are currently 456 plant and animal species at risk in Canada.

Experts regularly assess the status of wildlife across the country. The species considered "at risk" are listed in five categories: Special Concern, Threatened, Endangered, Extirpated, and Extinct.

The destruction of their habitat is a major factor in their decline, along with the presence of invasive species, climate change, suppression of natural events, environmental contamination, over harvesting and excessive trade and disease. Many species face an uncertain future.

Yellow montane violet

Viola praemorsa



Distribution In Canada this plant is found on southern Vancouver Island and on Salt Spring Island. Its range extends south along the coast to central California.

Habitat Yellow montane violet is a shade-intolerant species that is restricted to open Garry oak stands and grass-dominated meadows. It takes advantage of high light levels, warm temperatures and moist conditions of early spring. It can be distinguished from the common yellow violets found on SSI by its hairy and somewhat fleshy leaves.

Threats Habitat destruction is the most direct and immediate threat to several populations of this species. Grazing by feral sheep and competition from invasive species (esp. broom) and suppression of fire are also factors that threaten the Yellow montane violet.

Sharp-tailed snake

Contia tenuis

Distribution

Sharp-tailed snakes are found from southern BC to central California. In BC they only occur in isolated locations, mostly on southern Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands.



Habitat In BC, the snakes are found mostly on south-facing, rocky slopes and in small woodland and forest openings. Coarse woody debris appears to be an important habitat requirement.

Threats Extensive human disturbance and habitat fragmentation limit the availability of habitats. The use of pesticides and chemical slug-bait may also reduce food availability and may poison the snakes.

Macoun's meadowfoam

Limnanthes macounii

Distribution In Canada, Macoun's meadowfoam is found only in British Columbia.

Habitat Macoun's meadowfoam grows in vernal pools, seeps or in wet depressions in open Garry oak and Douglas-fir forests.



Threats Habitat destruction or modification is the greatest threat to populations of Macoun's meadowfoam. Collection of specimens of Macoun's meadowfoam is another limiting factor.

Western bluebird

Sialia mexicana



Distribution In Canada, western bluebirds were once widely distributed across southern BC and currently breed from the Okanagan Valley to southwest Alberta. The Georgia Depression population is thought to be extirpated, with no official recordings from southeast Vancouver Island or the Gulf Islands since mid-1990's.

Habitat Prefer sparsely treed woodlands with open understories and scattered trees and snags. In the Georgia Depression, the species nested from 30-600 m elevation. The Garry oak ecosystem was historically an important part of their habitat.

Threats The loss of Garry oak habitat and removal of dead standing trees in combination with fire suppression and invasive shrubs has led to loss of open understories. The birds accept nest boxes, but may be usurped by violet-green swallows occupying the boxes.

Phantom orchid

Cephalanthera austini

Distribution In Canada, it is found only in the extreme southwest of British Columbia, with populations on the Saanich Peninsula of Vancouver Island, Salt Spring Island, and the lower Fraser Valley on the mainland.

Habitat Most often the phantom orchid grows in soil under the humus litter in coniferous forests with sparse ground cover. The species usually occurs on south- or west-facing slopes.

Threats Habitat destruction or modification, and the in growth of understory from lack of fires are important threats to the phantom orchid.

Dun skipper

Euphyes vestris

Distribution The dun skipper ranges from BC southward to central California. In BC there are only a few known populations on southern Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands.

Habitat The butterfly can be found in open, moist areas where the larval food plant occurs. This habitat can be of a disturbed nature such as railroad or power line right-of-ways or roadside ditches. The butterfly is also found in fairly dry conditions where spring floods or permanent springs provide moist conditions for the larval food plant.

Threats The larval food plants needed by this butterfly include a variety of sedges of the genus *Carex* and *Cyperus*. In any given habitat, the skipper uses only one or two of the available *Carex* or *Cyperus* species. This may limit the distribution of the western population.

