

Reptiles in British Columbia that are Endangered, Threatened, or of Special Concern



"The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) exists to provide Canadians and their governments with advice regarding the status of wildlife species that are nationally at risk of extinction or extirpation." - www.cosewic.gc.ca

"The Species at Risk Act (SARA) is a federal law with three main goals: to prevent endangered or threatened species from becoming extinct or extirpated; to help in the recovery of endangered, threatened and extirpated species; and to manage species of special concern to help prevent them from becoming endangered or threatened." – www.pc.gc.ca

"British Columbia has no stand-alone endangered species act. The provincial Wildlife Act protects virtually all vertebrate animals from direct harm, except as allowed by regulation (e.g., hunting or trapping). Legal designation as Endangered or Threatened under the Act increases the penalties for harming a species, and also enables the protection of habitat in a Critical Wildlife Management Area." - www.env.gov.bc.ca

There are four different listing categories under SARA (and COSEWIC). As defined in section 2, the four categories are:

- Extirpated species: are species that no longer exists in the wild in Canada, but exists elsewhere in the wild.
- Endangered species: are species that face imminent extirpation or extinction.
- Threatened species: are species that are likely to become endangered if nothing is done to reverse the factors leading to its extirpation or extinction.
- Special concern: are species that may become threatened or endangered because of a combination of biological characteristics and identified threats.

In BC, species and ecological communities are assigned to one of three lists, based on their provincial Conservation Status Rank.

- Red-listed species: are Extirpated, Endangered, or Threatened in British Columbia.
- Blue-listed species: are of Special Concern (formerly Vulnerable)
- Yellow-listed species: are considered secure.

Helpful Websites:

- www.cosewic.gc.ca - COSEWIC main page
- registrelep-sararegistry.gc.ca/ - the "Public Registry" has updates and information about what SARA does
- laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/s-15.3/ - in depth definition of what the laws of SARA entail
- www.env.gov.bc.ca/atrisk/toolintro.html - Ministry of Environment of BC's "Species and Ecosystem Explorer" tool

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English Name	Scientific Name	BC Status	COSEWIC Status	SARA Status	Species Code
Desert Night Snake	<i>Hypsiglena chlorophaea</i>	Red	Endangered	Endangered	R-HYCH
Gopher Snake, <i>catenifer</i> subspecies	<i>Pituophis catenifer catenifer</i>	Red	Extripated	Extripated	R-PICA-CA
Gopher Snake, <i>deserticola</i> subspecies	<i>Pituophis catenifer deserticola</i>	Blue	Threatened	Threatened	R-PICA-DE
Leatherback	<i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>	Red	Endangered	Endangered	R-DECO
Northern Rubber Boa	<i>Charina bottae</i>	Yellow	Special Concern	Special Concern	R-CHBO
Pygmy Short-horned Lizard	<i>Phrynosoma douglasii</i>	Red	Extripated	Extripated	R-PHDO
Sharp-tailed Snake	<i>Contia tenuis</i>	Red	Endangered	Endangered	R-COTE
Western Painted Turtle - Interior Population	<i>Chrysemys picta pop. 2</i>	Blue	Special Concern	Special Concern	R-CHPI-02
Western Painted Turtle - Pacific Coast Population	<i>Chrysemys picta pop. 1</i>	Red	Endangered	Endangered	R-CHPI-01
Western Pond Turtle	<i>Actinemys marmorata</i>	Red	Extripated	Extripated	R-ACMA
Western Rattlesnake	<i>Crotalus oreganus</i>	Blue	Threatened	Threatened	R-CROR
Western Skink	<i>Plestiodon skiltonianus</i>	Blue	Special Concern	Special Concern	R-PLSK
Western Yellow-bellied Racer (North American Racer)	<i>Coluber constrictor</i>	Blue	Special Concern	Special Concern	R-COCO