

Manitoba's Species At Risk

An Overview

Animal and plant species have come and gone since life on earth began, with many reasons for their extinction. However, the rate of change on earth seems to be increasing. Habitat is being lost due to human population growth, non-native species are outcompeting native species, species are being overexploited, and the earth's climate is changing. The rate at which species are becoming extinct appears to be increasing. Many countries, provinces and states have enacted legislation to ensure that species at risk of extinction are given special protection.

"Species at risk" are defined as plants and animals that are in danger of extinction or extirpation throughout all or a portion of their range. Although the terms "endangered" and "threatened" are commonly used, here they are used in the legal sense. This overview deals with species that are legally designated under Manitoba's *Endangered Species Act*.

Manitoba's Endangered Species Act

The *Endangered Species Act* was proclaimed in 1990 and amended in 1993 by the government of Manitoba. It was enacted to ensure the protection and survival of species designated as Endangered or Threatened in the province, and to enable the reintroduction of designated Extirpated species into the province.

The Act prohibits human activities that would kill, disturb or interfere with any listed species. It also prohibits human activities that damage, destroy or remove habitats and natural resources that protected species are dependent upon for life and propagation. Possession of species listed by regulation under the Act is prohibited. The minister may grant permits providing exceptions to these rules for listed species, for the purposes of scientific research or reintroduction efforts.

Species can be regulated under the Act in one of three categories: Extirpated, Endangered and Threatened. An additional Vulnerable category, not regulated under the Act, serves as a "watch list" for species that could become threatened if the factors affecting them are not reversed.

Extirpated Species

Any species once native to Manitoba that has disappeared through all of its Manitoba range. Extirpated species are declared as such by regulation under the Act.

Extirpated species may still be found elsewhere in their range, or in captivity. When a species becomes extirpated throughout its entire range, it is considered extinct. Species currently listed as Extirpated in Manitoba are:

Birds:

Greater prairie chicken (*Tympanuchus cupido*)
Long-billed curlew (*Numenius americanus*)
Trumpeter swan (*Cygnus buccinator*)

Butterflies:

Riding's satyr (*Neominois ridingsii*)

Mammals:

Grizzly bear (*Ursus arctos horribilis*)
Muskox (*Ovibos moschatus*)
Pronghorn (*Antilocapra americana*)
Swift fox (*Vulpes velox*)

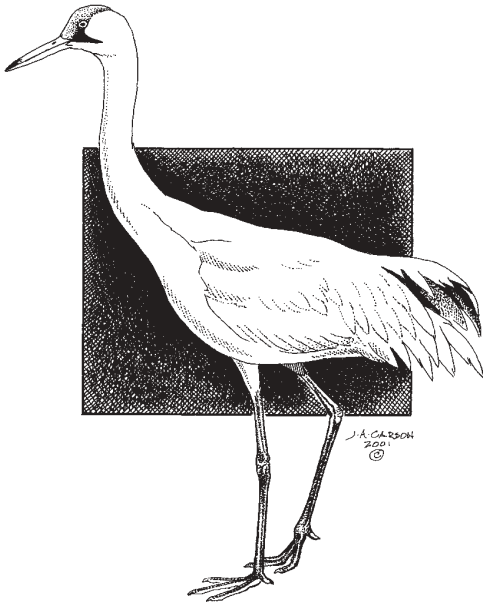
Endangered Species

Any native Manitoba species that is threatened to disappear throughout all or most of its Manitoba range. Endangered species are declared as such by regulation under the Act.

Species currently listed as Endangered in Manitoba are:

Birds:

Baird's sparrow (*Ammodramus bairdii*)
Burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*)



- Whooping cranes once bred in southern Manitoba, but are now only observed here during migration.



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Cool Facts

Extirpated species such as the Trumpeter swan are occasionally observed and reported in Manitoba by the public. However, the species will remain listed as Extirpated until it is confirmed as being a breeding resident in Manitoba.

About 25 per cent of Manitoba's native plants and animals are considered provincially rare, often because Manitoba is at the edge of their range. The 28 species listed as Extirpated, Endangered, or Threatened in Manitoba make up less than 1 per cent of all Manitoba's known plants and animals.

Many of Manitoba's species at risk, such as the Piping plover and Western prairie fringed orchid, are at risk throughout their entire range. Others, such as the Great Plains ladies'-tresses, are considered common in nearby provinces and states.

Southern Manitoba is home to most of Manitoba's species at risk. This is due in large part to the impact that human settlement has had on habitat for these plants and animals.



- Manitoba's largest population of Western silvery aster is found in and around Birds Hill Provincial Park.

Eskimo curlew (*Numenius borealis*)
Loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*)
Peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*)
Piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*)
Whooping crane (*Grus americana*)

Butterflies:
Uncas skipper (*Hesperia uncas*)

Plants:
Small white lady's-slipper (*Cypripedium candidum*)
Great Plains ladies'-tresses (*Spiranthes magnicamporum*)
Western prairie fringed orchid (*Platanthera praeclara*)

Threatened Species

Any native Manitoba species likely to become endangered or at risk due to low or declining numbers in Manitoba if the factors affecting it do not improve. Threatened species are declared as such by regulation under the act.

Species currently listed as Threatened in Manitoba are:

Amphibians

Great Plains toad (*Bufo cognatus*)

Birds

Ferruginous hawk (*Buteo regalis*)

Butterflies

Dakota skipper (*Hesperia dactotae*)

Ottoe skipper (*Hesperia ottoe*)

Mammals

Mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*)

Plants

Culver's root (*Veronicastrum virginicum*)

Riddell's goldenrod (*Solidago riddellii*)

Western silvery aster (*Aster sericeus*)

Western spiderwort (*Tradescantia occidentalis*)

This list is current as of March, 2002 and is subject to change. Visit the Wildlife and Ecosystem Protection Branch Web site for updated lists.

Get involved in recovery

If you have one of Manitoba's species at risk on your property, congratulations. Your land management skills have helped to maintain an important part of our natural heritage.

Contact the Wildlife and Ecosystem Protection Branch if you would like more information on Manitoba's species at risk.

Manitoba Conservation Wildlife and Ecosystem Protection Branch

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Partners in production of this fact sheet:

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Wildlife and Ecosystem Protection Branch
Environment Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service
Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation

Extirpated Species

Any species once native to Manitoba that has disappeared through all of its Manitoba range. Extirpated species are declared as such by regulation under the Endangered Species Act.

Endangered Species

Any native Manitoba species threatened to disappear through all or most of its Manitoba range. Endangered species are declared as such by regulation under the Endangered Species Act.

Threatened Species

Any native Manitoba species likely to become endangered or at risk due to low or declining numbers in Manitoba if the factors affecting it don't improve. Threatened species are declared as such by regulation under the Endangered Species Act.

Vulnerable Species

Species not regulated under the Endangered Species Act but which could eventually be considered Endangered or Threatened if the factors affecting them do not improve.