



SPECIES AT RISK

IN NORTHERN ONTARIO



ENDANGERED

Endangered species live in the wild in Ontario and are facing imminent extinction or extirpation. Generally, these species and their habitats are protected under Ontario's *Endangered Species Act, 2007*.



American Badger *jacksoni* subspecies (*Taxidea taxus jacksoni*)

Endangered Provincially and Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Short, sturdy member of the weasel family; grey, with dark legs; bold black and white stripes on head and face
- Long claws and a streamlined skull make badgers excellent diggers
- Inhabits tallgrass prairie, sand barrens and farmland
- Feeds on groundhogs, rabbits and small rodents
- Nocturnal

RANGE

- Ranges from California to the Great Lakes
- Fewer than 200 live in Ontario, primarily in the southwest near Lake Erie
- Also found in northwestern Ontario in the Thunder Bay and Rainy River Districts

THREATS

- Habitat loss
- Road mortality

PROTECTION

- Provincially protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*
- Federally protected under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002*

Fewer than 200 American badgers live in Ontario.



gregvandeleest/ Essentials Collection/ Getty Images



Little Brown Bat (*Myotis lucifugus*)

Endangered Provincially and Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Glossy brown fur
- Can be four to five centimetres long, weighing four to 11 grams, with wingspan of 22 to 27 centimetres
- Closely resembles northern long-eared bat but distinguished by long, thin fleshy projection with rounded tip at opening of ears
- Hibernates from September / October, until April / June
- Nocturnal, most active during first three hours after sunset

RANGE

- Found across Canada (except Nunavut) and most of the United States
- Widespread in southern Ontario, and found as far north as Moose Factory and Favourable Lake

THREATS

- Fungal disease called white nose syndrome
- Wind turbines
- Habitat loss

PROTECTION

- Provincially protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*
- Federally protected under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002*

White Nose Syndrome has had devastating impacts on Little Brown Bat populations across North America



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MAMMALS



BIRDS

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REPTILES



FISH



PLANTS

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INSECTS



Cougar (Mountain Lion) (*Puma concolor*)

Endangered Provincially

DESCRIPTION

- Canada's largest and most powerful wild cat
- Short brown, greyish or reddish fur with white belly and chest
- Can reach up to two metres in length and weigh over 60 kilograms
- Has a long, black-tipped tail, and black markings on muzzle and ears
- Lives in large, undisturbed forests or other natural areas with little human activity

Early settlers hunted and trapped cougars extensively and by the late 1800s cougars were believed to be extirpated from much of their eastern range in Canada.

RANGE

- In Ontario, believed to live mostly in the north but also reported in southern Ontario

THREATS

- Habitat loss
- Human disturbance

PROTECTION

- Provincially protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*



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Northern Long-eared Bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*)

Endangered Provincially and Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Dull yellow-brown fur with pale grey belly, long rounded ears
- Weighs between six and nine grams; about eight centimetres long; wingspan of 25 centimetres
- Similar to the little brown bat, except fleshy portion covering ears is pointed
- Hibernates from October to March, mostly in caves or abandoned mines

RANGE

- Found as far north as Moosonee, and the north shore of Lake Superior

THREATS

- Fungal disease called white nose syndrome
- Wind turbines
- Habitat loss

PROTECTION

- Provincially protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*
- Federally protected under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002*



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Approximately 40 percent of the northern long-eared bat's global range is in Canada.



MAMMALS



BIRDS

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REPTILES



FISH



PLANTS

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INSECTS



Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*)

Endangered Provincially

DESCRIPTION

- One of the largest and most powerful birds of prey, weighing as much as 5.9 kilograms, with wingspan over two metres
- Golden-brown feathers on back of neck, head and upper wings; rest of body is dark brown
- Nests in remote, undisturbed ledges of cliffs and large trees

RANGE

- Widespread distribution in North America
- Recent reports indicate only six pairs nest in northern Ontario (Hudson Bay Lowlands)
- Difficult to monitor population as nesting sites are remote

THREATS

- Habitat disturbance
- Human persecution
- Electrocutation on power lines
- Collisions with wind turbines
- Chemicals and toxins in prey

PROTECTION

- Provincially protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*



Currently there are believed to be only 10 to 20 pairs in the province.



Loggerhead Shrike *migrans* subspecies (*Lanius ludovicianus migrans*)

Endangered Provincially and Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Robin-sized bird with black bill hooked at tip
- Medium-grey crown and back; white throat and breast; racoon-like black face mask; black tail with white outer feathers; black wings with bold white patch that flashes when in flight
- Prefers pastures and other grasslands with scattered low trees and shrubs
- Builds nests in small trees and hunts near spiny, multi-branched shrubs or barbed wire fencing to impale prey before eating

RANGE

- Though concentrated in southern Ontario, occasionally found within its former broad range in northern Ontario

THREATS

- Habitat loss and succession
- Toxins in prey
- Road mortality

PROTECTION

- Provincially protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*
- Federally protected under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*

Loggerhead shrike populations have declined since the 1970s in Ontario and beyond.



MAMMALS



BIRDS

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REPTILES



FISH



PLANTS

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INSECTS



Piping Plover *circumcinctus* subspecies (*Charadrius melodus circumcinctus*)

Endangered Provincially and Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Small shorebird with stubby orange bill with black tip; black breast band and head band; bright orange legs; white belly; back, wings and tail are the colour of pale sand which blends in with beaches
- Nests on dry sandy or gravelly beaches just above the reach of water and waves
- Eats mostly insects and small crustaceans

RANGE

- Breeds along shores of the Great Lakes and in Lake of the Woods area

THREATS

- Habitat loss and degradation
- Human disturbance
- Storm surges and severe weather

PROTECTION

- Provincially protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*
- Federally protected under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002* and under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*

Over the past 50 years, piping plovers vanished from almost all known nest sites on the Great Lakes, but protection efforts have helped repopulate some former breeding sites in Ontario.



Dan Irizarry CC BY-NC-SA 2.0



Red Knot *rufa* subspecies (*Calidris canutus rufa*)

Endangered Provincially and Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Plump, medium-sized shorebird named for its brick-red face, throat and breast in breeding plumage
- Back is speckled grey-brown; straight black beak
- Prefers open beaches, mudflats, and coastal lagoons to feed on molluscs, crustaceans and other invertebrates

RANGE

- Found on coastal mudflats along the southwest coast of Hudson Bay and James Bay during migration

THREATS

- Food loss at migration sites (decline of horseshoe crab populations due to unregulated commercial harvesting)
- Habitat loss and degradation (as a result of pollution, recreation and development)
- Climate change

PROTECTION

- Provincially protected under *Endangered Species Act, 2007*
- Federally protected under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002* and under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*

The *rufa* subspecies of red knot has shown a 70 percent decline in population in the past 15 years.



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INSECTS



Pygmy Snaketail (*Ophiogomphus howei*)

Endangered Provincially, Special Concern Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Small dark brown and black dragonfly, with yellow markings on abdomen and bright green markings on thorax
- Larva found in large, fast flowing rivers with substrates of sand and gravel
- Rarely-seen adult live in forest canopy adjacent to the river where it lived as larva

THREATS

- Habitat loss and degradation (dams and water pollution)
- Pesticides and herbicides

PROTECTION

- Provincially protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*

RANGE

- Western population occurs in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and northwestern Ontario; eastern population ranging along the Appalachian Mountains
- One record of larval skin collected in northwestern Ontario in 2007

The only known record of the pygmy snaketail was from the Namakan River in the Rainy River District in 2007.



Denis Doucet



Western Silvery Aster (*Symphyotrichum sericeum*)

Endangered Provincially and Threatened Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Perennial wildflower most noticeable in the fall when it flowers
- Can grow up to 70 centimetres, with leaves that are covered in fine hairs giving silvery appearance; pink or pale purple flowers that become redder as it ages
- Inhabits open bur oak savannahs on shallow soils over bedrock, with other prairie species

THREATS

- Habitat loss
- Human disturbance

PROTECTION

- Provincially protected under *Endangered Species Act, 2007*
- Federally protected under *Species at Risk Act, 2002*

RANGE

- Found in Lake of the Woods

Western silvery aster is Ontario's rarest aster.



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REPTILES



FISH



PLANTS

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INSECTS

THREATENED

Threatened species live in the wild in Ontario, are not endangered, but are likely to become endangered if steps are not taken to address factors threatening them. Generally, these species and their habitats are protected under Ontario's *Endangered Species Act, 2007*.



Gray Fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*)

Threatened Provincially and Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Weigh up to 4.2 kilograms, and are approximately one metre long including the tail, which averages 37 centimetres
- Grey fur with light cinnamon coloured patches on its body; black tail tip
- Shorter legs and smaller snout than red fox

RANGE

- Rainy River District into southeastern Manitoba
- Southwestern Ontario (Windsor) to southwestern Quebec (Sherbrooke)

THREATS

- Harsh winters
- Habitat loss
- Disease

PROTECTION

- Provincially protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*
- Federally protected under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002*

Fewer than 250 mature grey foxes are estimated to exist in Canada.



John McClure CC BY-NC-SA 2.0



Polar Bear (*Ursus maritimus*)

Threatened Provincially, Special Concern Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Largest terrestrial carnivore in the world
- Has water-repellent, translucent hair that appears white, allowing it to blend in with its snowy surroundings; large forepaws make it a strong swimmer

RANGE

- Canada is home to two-thirds of the world's polar bears
- In Ontario, found along Hudson Bay and James Bay

THREATS

- Habitat loss
- Climate change
- Over-hunting
- Pollution

PROTECTION

- Provincially protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*

Ontario is home to the world's southern-most population of polar bears.



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MAMMALS



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INSECTS



Wolverine (*Gulo gulo*)

Threatened Provincially, Special Concern Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Largest member of weasel family with large head and large paws with semi-retractable claws
- Dark brown fur with pale golden-brown stripes along the sides of body; dark brown face
- Unique markings on chest have been used to identify individuals
- Mainly scavenges on moose, caribou, beavers, snowshoe hares, squirrels, voles and sometimes berries

The population recovery of wolverine is slowed by their low reproductive rate - only about half of the females give birth to young in any year.

RANGE

- Northern Eurasia and North America
- In Ontario, eastern population of wolverine inhabits primarily northwest boreal forest and coastal tundra

THREATS

- Habitat loss and fragmentation

PROTECTION

- Provincially protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*



Anna Yu/Signature Collection/Getty Images



Woodland Caribou Boreal Population (*Rangifer tarandus caribou*)

Threatened Provincially and Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Medium-sized member of deer family with thick coat for warmth and large rounded hooves for digging for food and walking easily on snow
- Excellent swimmer with hollow hair for buoyancy
- Female caribou, which also have antlers, only birth one calf per year

RANGE

- Boreal forest across North America
- Two populations in Ontario (the forest-dwelling woodland caribou and the forest-tundra woodland caribou)

THREATS

- Habitat loss, degradation and fragmentation
- Predation and disease
- Climate change

PROTECTION

- Provincially protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*
- Federally protected under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002*

The woodland caribou has disappeared from about 50 percent of its historic range in Ontario.



Ontario Nature



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INSECTS



American White Pelican (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*)

Threatened Provincially, Not Listed Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Very large bird weighing about six kilograms with wingspan up to three metres; white feathers and black wing tips; large orange-yellow bill and pouch; a stout tail; webbed feet
- Juvenile birds have greyish feathers
- Nests in colonies on isolated islands in freshwater lakes
- Forages in shallow waters up to 50 kilometres away from nest

RANGE

- Migrates south to the Gulf Coast states and Mexico
- In Canada, found from interior British Columbia, east to northwestern Ontario

THREATS

- Water level changes
- Habitat degradation
- Human disturbance
- Disease

PROTECTION

- Provincially protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*

Ontario has about 10 percent of the world's population of American white pelicans.



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Bank Swallow (*Riparia riparia*)

Threatened Provincially and Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Small songbird with brown upperparts, white underparts and distinctive dark breast band
- Up to 12 centimetres long, weighing 10 to 18 grams
- Eats insects, primarily when flying

RANGE

- Found throughout southern Ontario with sparse populations scattered across northern Ontario

Canada's bank swallow population declined by an estimated 98 percent between 1970 and 2011.

THREATS

- Habitat loss
- Pesticides
- Climate change
- Vehicle collisions

PROTECTION

- Provincially protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*
- Federally protected under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*



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INSECTS



Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*)

Threatened Provincially and Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Medium-sized songbird with glossy steel-blue back and upper wings, rusty-red forehead and throat, and short bill
- Long tail feathers form distinctive, deep fork
- Builds cup-shaped mud nests on human-made structures that are re-used from year to year
- Eats insects

RANGE

- Found throughout southern Ontario and as far north as Hudson Bay, where suitable locations for nests exist

THREATS

- Habitat loss
- Pesticides (resulting in reduced populations of insect prey)

PROTECTION

- Provincially protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*
- Federally protected under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*

The number of barn swallows in Ontario decreased by an estimated 65 percent between 1966 and 2009.



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Bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*)

Threatened Provincially and Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Medium-sized songbird inhabiting grasslands, pastures and hayfields
- In summer, male is black with a white back and yellow collar; female is tan colour with black stripes
- Named for its bubbling musical song
- Builds small nest on the ground in dense grasses; both parents tend young, sometimes with the help of a third bird

RANGE

- Breeds across North America
- Widely distributed throughout most of Ontario south of the boreal forest, where suitable habitat exists

THREATS

- Habitat loss and degradation
- Incidental mortality (mowing of hay during the breeding season)
- Pesticides
- Persecution on wintering grounds

Over the last 10 years, the bobolink's population in Ontario decreased by 33 percent.

PROTECTION

- Provincially protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*
- Federally protected under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*



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INSECTS



Chimney Swift (*Chaetura pelagica*)

Threatened Provincially and Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Small, sooty brown bird, 12 to 14 centimetres long with long slender wings and light-coloured throat
- Distinguished by acrobatic and erratic flight pattern
- Catches its prey (insects) in flight
- Mostly found in urban areas where it nests in chimneys and other human-made structures

Canada's chimney swift population has declined by 96 percent since 1968 and decreases in Ontario over the past decade are close to 20 percent of the population each year.

RANGE

- Widely distributed in southern Ontario, with confirmed breeding populations in near Sault Ste Marie, Sudbury and the Rainy Lake District

THREATS

- Decline in insect prey population
- Habitat loss (suitable chimneys that allow swifts to enter)

PROTECTION

- Provincially protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*
- Federally protected under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002* and under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*



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Eastern Meadowlark (*Sturnella magna*)

Threatened Provincially and Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Medium-sized migratory songbird with bright yellow throat and belly, black "V" on breast and white flanks with black streaks; brown back with black streaks; light brown and black striped head; pinkish legs
- Breeds in moderately tall grasslands, alfalfa fields, weedy borders of croplands, roadsides, orchards, airports and other open areas
- Population in Ontario decreased by almost 65 percent during the past 40 years

RANGE

- In Ontario, primarily found south of the Canadian Shield but also inhabits Lake Nipissing and Lake of the Woods areas

THREATS

- Habitat loss and degradation
- Pesticides

PROTECTION

- Provincially protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*
- Federally protected under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*



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The eastern meadowlark's population in Ontario decreased by almost 65 percent during the past 40 years.



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INSECTS



Least Bittern (*Ixobrychus exilis*)

Threatened Provincially and Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Smallest member of the heron family; brown and beige plumage with large chestnut patches on wings
- Crown and back of males are black but are lighter in females and juveniles
- Throat is light tan with whitish streaks; white belly; legs and beak are bright yellow



passion4nature/ Essentials Collection/Getty Images

RANGE

- Found mostly south of the Canadian Shield
- Small numbers breed occasionally in northwestern Ontario

THREATS

- Habitat loss and degradation (wetlands)
- Pesticides, fertilizers and other toxic substances
- Invasive plants
- Human disturbance (motorboats)
- Climate change and changing water levels

PROTECTION

- Provincially protected under *Endangered Species Act, 2007*
- Federally protected under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002* and under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*

The least bittern experienced a decline of about 30 percent in Ontario between 1999 and 2009.



Eastern Whip-poor-will (*Antrostomus vociferus*)

Threatened Provincially and Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Medium-sized bird with mottled brown and grey feathers that blend into its surroundings
- Mostly heard rather than seen
- Name derived from its call, which sounds like “whip-poor-will”
- Inhabits mix of open and forested areas, open wetlands or openings in mature, deciduous, coniferous and mixed forests

RANGE

- In Ontario, breeds as far north as the shore of Lake Superior

THREATS

- Habitat loss and degradation
- Pesticides
- Climate change

PROTECTION

- Provincially protected under *Endangered Species Act, 2007*
- Federally protected under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002* and under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*

The whip-poor-will experienced a population loss of 75 percent in Canada between 1968 and 2007.



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INSECTS



Blanding's Turtle Great Lakes - St. Lawrence Population (*Emydoidea blandingii*)

Threatened Provincially and Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Medium-sized turtle that can reach 27 centimetres
- Bright yellow throat, chin and belly; rounded black and brown shell with yellow flecks and streaks; head and limbs are black-grey
- Can survive in the wild for more than 75 years

RANGE

- In Canada, separated into Great Lakes – St. Lawrence population and Nova Scotia population
- Can be found throughout southern, central and eastern Ontario and as far north as Sudbury

THREATS

- Habitat loss
- Vehicle collisions
- Illegal collection for pet trade

PROTECTION

- Provincially protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*
- Federally protected under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002*

About 20 percent of the global range of the Blanding's turtle is in Canada, mainly in Ontario.



Tracy Parker



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Lake Sturgeon (*Acipenser fulvescens*)

Threatened (Great Lake – Upper St. Lawrence River and northwestern Ontario populations) and Special Concern (Southern Hudson Bay/James Bay populations) Provincially, Threatened (Great Lakes – Upper St. Lawrence) Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Canada's largest freshwater fish, weighing up to 181 kilograms and reaching over two metres in length long
- Can live more than 100 years
- Ancestral ties to species dating back 200 million years
- Body covered with large bony plates; has cartilage instead of bones
- Dark to light brown or grey on back and sides with lighter underside; extended snout with four whisker-like organs hanging near the mouth for bottom feeding
- Spawns in relatively shallow, fast-flowing water with gravel and boulders at the bottom and will spawn in deeper water where habitat is available

RANGE

- In Ontario, rivers of the Hudson Bay basin, the Great Lakes basin and their major connecting waterways, including the St. Lawrence River

Overfishing, habitat loss and declining water quality caused dramatic declines of lake sturgeon following European settlement.

THREATS

- Habitat loss, degradation and fragmentation
- Overfishing
- Pollution
- Non-native species

PROTECTION

- Threatened population provincially protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*



abadonian/Essentials Collection/ Getty Images



FISH



PLANTS

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INSECTS



Shortjaw Cisco (*Coregonus zenithicus*)

Threatened Provincially and Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Member of whitefish family; up to 35 centimetres long, weighing up to one kilogram
- Olive-tan to greenish back; silvery sides; purple sheen; white belly
- Large eyes; small head; very small mouth with no teeth and small lower jaw
- Feeds on zooplankton, aquatic insects and crustaceans, such as freshwater shrimp

RANGE

- Widely distributed throughout central Canada
- In Ontario, found in Lake Superior, Lake Nipigon and some smaller inland lakes
- Extirpated from lakes Michigan, Erie and Huron

THREATS

- Overharvesting
- Invasive species

PROTECTION

- Provincially protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*

The shortjaw cisco has been extirpated from lakes Michigan, Erie and Huron.



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Pitcher's Thistle (*Cirsium pitcheri*)

Threatened Provincially, Endangered Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Slender stem and leaves covered in fine, whitish fuzz; up to one metre tall; greyish-green leaves deeply divided into narrow, spine-tipped segments
- May grow for years before flowering when it produces between two to 125 flowering heads; made up of many small pinkish or creamy-white flowers
- Seeds have downy white "parachutes" and can be dispersed by the wind

RANGE

- Globally vulnerable endemic thistle of the Great Lakes
- In Canada, found only in Ontario, restricted to about 30 sites with core range on Manitoulin Island

THREATS

- Habitat loss and degradation
- Human disturbance (recreational vehicles)
- Invasive plants

PROTECTION

- Provincially protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*
- Federally protected under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002*



Noah Cole

Some 15 percent of the global population of Pitcher's thistle is located in Ontario.



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INSECTS



Showy Goldenrod (*Solidago speciosa*)

Threatened (Boreal Population), Endangered (Great Lakes Plains Population)
Provincially and Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Large perennial that grows up to two metres in height
- Large, toothed, egg-shaped lower leaves and smaller more smooth-edged upper leaves
- Numerous upright, unbranched stems rising from central clump; small yellow flowers form cylindrical clusters along upper 30 centimetres of stem

RANGE

- In northwestern Ontario, a single population of about 1,000 plants

THREATS

- Habitat loss
- Human disturbance (pedestrian and recreational vehicle traffic)
- Invasive species

PROTECTION

- Provincially protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*
- Federally protected under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002*



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In Canada, the boreal population of showy goldenrod is known to occur at one site only - on Dufresne Island, near Kenora.



Small-flowered Lipocarpha (*Lipocarpha micrantha*)

Threatened Provincially, Endangered Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Tiny annual sedge that grows in dense clumps
- Curved stems with narrow leaves; small flowers tightly clustered in dense oval spikes near top of stem; tiny seeds are brown with bluish highlights

RANGE

- Found in the Lake of the Woods and Rainy Lake areas

Small-flowered lipocarpha surveys tallied approximately 1,800 on Sable Island in Lake of the Woods and about 75 at Pound Net Bay on Rainy Lake.

THREATS

- Habitat loss and degradation
- Pollution
- Erosion
- Human disturbance (recreational vehicles)
- Invasive plants

PROTECTION

- Provincially protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*
- Federally protected under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002*



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SPECIAL CONCERN

Species of special concern live in the wild in Ontario, are not endangered or threatened, but may become so due to a combination of biological characteristics and identified threats. These species and their habitats do not receive protection under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007* or under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002*



Beluga Western Hudson Bay Population (*Delphinapterus leucas*)

Special Concern Provincially and Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Small, toothed whale, up to four metres in length and weighing about a tonne
- Pronounced “melon-head”; dorsal ridge rather than a true fin
- White skin as adult (soft grey when young)
- Very social animal that produces a wide range of complex sounds to communicate

RANGE

- In summer, congregates in river estuaries and shallow bays to moult and calve
- They live in the open ocean in fall and winter
- Usually winters in seas off Baffin Island, mingling with other populations

THREATS

- Overhunting
- Increased freight shipping in Hudson Bay
- Potential disturbance from hydroelectric development on coastal rivers of Hudson Bay Lowlands

PROTECTION

- Not protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007* or under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002*

The beluga population along the Ontario coastline of Hudson Bay is estimated at more than 7,000.



alazor/ Essentials Collection/ Getty Images



Eastern Wolf (*Canis lupus lycaon*)

Special Concern Provincially and Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Smaller than gray wolf; fawn-coloured with long black guard hairs on the back and sides; back of ears reddish
- Lives in packs of three to six adults, with home range as big as 50,000 hectares
- Preys mostly on deer and moose
- Population in Canada estimated at 2,000, about half in Ontario

RANGE

- Found mainly in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence regions of Quebec and Ontario

THREATS

- Hunting and trapping
- Habitat loss and fragmentation
- Road mortality

PROTECTION

- No hunting and trapping in Algonquin and 10 surrounding townships
- Protected in Lake Superior Provincial Park, Chapleau Crown Game Preserve and Nipissing Crown Game Preserve
- Not protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007* or under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002*



Holly Kuchera/ Essentials Collection/ Getty Images

The current range of the eastern wolf represents only about 42 percent of its historic range in Canada.



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INSECTS



Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)

Special Concern in Ontario, Not Listed Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Bright white head, neck and tail and dark brown body; beak and talons bright yellow; wingspan just over two metres
- Young are mostly brown with variable speckles of white; it takes four years to attain the distinctive adult plumage
- Both parents share duty of incubating eggs and looking after young
- Feeds mainly on fish but also known to catch birds and small mammals, scavenge for carrion, and take food from other birds
- Nests on huge stick platforms located near water and situated high in trees

RANGE

- Widely distributed throughout North America
- Nests throughout Ontario, with the highest density in the northwest
- Historically common in southern Ontario along shore of Lake Erie
- Rebounded after banning of DDT, an intensive re-introduction program and environmental clean-up efforts

THREATS

- Habitat loss
- Pollution
- Illegal shooting
- Accidental trapping
- Electrocution

PROTECTION

- Not protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*

In 2013, 1,082 overwintering bald eagles were reported on Christmas Bird Counts in Ontario, the highest total number ever.



Missy Mandel



Black Tern (*Chlidonias niger*)

Special Concern Provincially, Not Listed Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Small, boldly marked tern with black head and underparts; forked tail; straight pointed bill; slender shape; long, narrow wings
- Eats insects
- Builds floating nests in loose colonies in shallow marshes, especially in cattails

RANGE

- Breeds in temperate regions of Europe and North America, and in Canada from British Columbia to New Brunswick
- Scattered throughout Ontario, breeding mainly in marshes along the Great Lakes. There are also confirmed breeding sites scattered throughout northern Ontario, as far north as Dryden

THREATS

- Habitat loss (wetlands)
- Water pollution
- Human disturbance at nesting colonies (especially boat traffic)
- Invasive species
- Climate change

PROTECTION

- Federally protected under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*
- Not protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*

The black tern has experienced a continuous decline across its global range since the 1950s, with a 61 percent decline between 1966 and 1996 in North America.



Ingrid Taylor CC BY 2.0



MAMMALS



BIRDS



REPTILES



FISH



PLANTS



INSECTS



Canada Warbler (*Cardellina canadensis*)

Special Concern Provincially, Threatened Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Small, brightly-coloured songbird; male is more brightly coloured than female, with bluish-grey back and tail and bright yellow underparts; black forehead; distinctive black necklace across chest
- Male sings distinctive song of clear, liquid notes ending emphatically
- Breeds in range of deciduous and coniferous forest types with well-developed, dense shrub layer
- Usually nests on or near ground on mossy logs or roots along stream banks or on hummocks

Between 1997 and 2007, the Canada warbler declined by 43 percent in Canada.

RANGE

- Approximately 80 percent of the species' global breeding range is located in Canada where it breeds in all provinces and territories except Nunavut and Newfoundland and Labrador
- Breeds in the boreal shield; in Ontario it is most abundant along the southern shield

THREATS

- Habitat loss

PROTECTION

- Federally protected under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002* and under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*



PaulReevesPhotography / Essentials Collection/ Getty Images

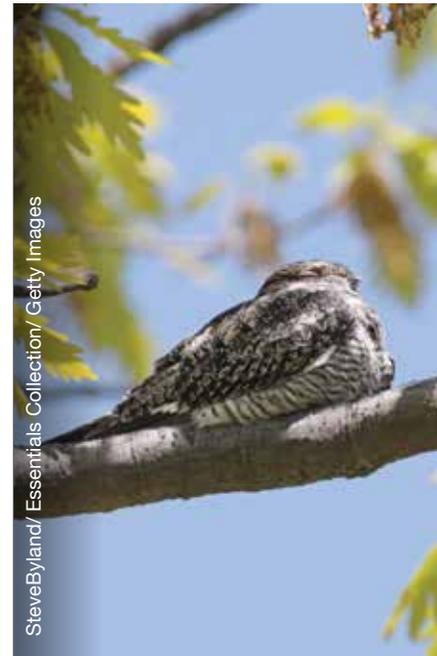


Common Nighthawk (*Chordeiles minor*)

Special Concern Provincially, Threatened Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Medium-sized bird, active at night or at twilight
- Well camouflaged; long wings with wide white stripe that can be seen when flying; short legs; short bill and wide mouth to catch insects on the wing
- Lays eggs on bare ground
- Inhabits wide variety of habitats with open or semi-open areas (farmland, open woodlands, rock outcrops, peat bogs, prairies, gravel pits and urban rooftops)



SteveByland/ Essentials Collection/ Getty Images

RANGE

- In Canada, found in all provinces and territories except Nunavut
- Occurs throughout Ontario except for coastal regions of James Bay and Hudson Bay

THREATS

- Insecticides (loss of insect prey)
- Habitat degradation
- Proliferation of nest predators (domestic cats, skunks, raccoons, crows)

PROTECTION

- Federally protected under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002* and under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*

From 1995 to 2005, the Breeding Bird Survey showed a 50 percent population decline of common nighthawk in Canada.



MAMMALS



BIRDS



REPTILES



FISH



PLANTS



INSECTS



Eastern Wood-pewee (*Contopus virens*)

Special Concern Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Small forest bird, up to 15 centimetres long
- Greyish-olive upper parts; pale on under parts; pale wing bars
- Distinctive three-part song: “pee-ah-wee”
- Eats insects

RANGE

- In Canada, ranges from Saskatchewan to Nova Scotia
- Mostly found in southern and central Ontario, and as far north as Red Lake, Lake Nipigon and Timmins

THREATS

- Habitat loss and degradation
- Decline in insect prey

PROTECTION

- Federally protected under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*
- Not protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007* or under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002*



Glenn Bartley

From 1970 to 2011, the Breeding Bird Survey showed a decline of over 70 percent for eastern wood-pewee in Canada, with a 25 percent decline between 2001 and 2011.



Golden-winged Warbler (*Vermivora chrysoptera*)

Special Concern Provincially, Threatened Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Small grey songbird with white undersides, and distinctive yellow wing patches and forehead; male has black throat and black patch behind its eyes; female has same markings in grey
- Builds nest on the ground, where female lays two to six eggs
- Eats insects

RANGE

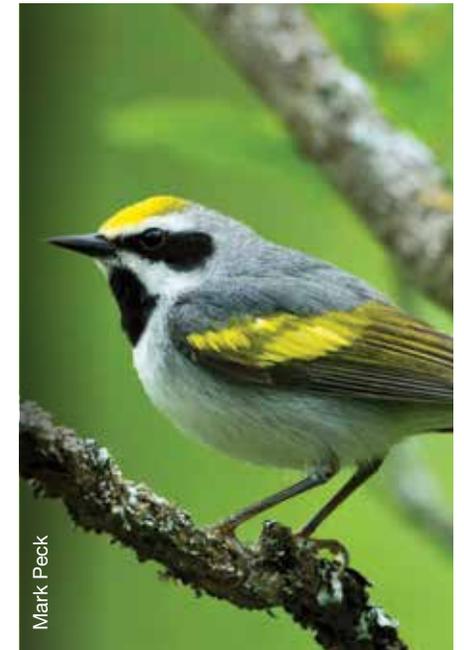
- Found in southern Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec, as well as north-eastern United States
- Breeds in central-eastern Ontario, as far south as Lake Ontario and St. Lawrence River, and as far north as the northern edge of Georgian Bay; also found in Lake of the Woods area

THREATS

- Habitat loss
- Hybridization with blue-winged warbler
- Nest parasitism by brown-headed cowbird

PROTECTION

- Federally protected under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002* and under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*



Mark Peck

The golden-winged warbler, one of the fastest declining passerine species in North America, experienced a decline of 79 percent in Canada from 1996 to 2006.



MAMMALS



BIRDS

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REPTILES



FISH



PLANTS

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INSECTS



Horned Grebe (*Podiceps auritus*)

Special Concern Provincially and Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Small duck-like waterbird with a short, pointed bill; black head with distinctive patch of golden yellow feathers behind its eye called “horns”; front of neck and upper breast are reddish
- Males and females look similar, although breeding males are typically brighter than females
- Nests near small ponds, marshes and shallow bays

RANGE

- Found across Eurasia and in North America
- In Canada, breeds mainly in all of the prairies, but also in British Columbia, the territories, northwestern Ontario and the Magdalen Islands
- Rare breeder in Ontario

THREATS

- Habitat loss (wetlands)
- Pollution (agricultural runoff, oil spills)
- Disease

PROTECTION

- Federally protected under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*
- Not protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007* or under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002*

Long-term trends (1970 to 2011) for horned grebe demonstrate a significant decline in Canada.



PaulReevesPhotography/ Essentials Collection/Getty Images



MAMMALS



BIRDS

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REPTILES



Olive-sided Flycatcher (*Contopus cooperi*)

Special Concern Provincially, Threatened Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Medium-sized songbird with deep brownish olive-grey feathers along sides and back
- Perches conspicuously at top of tall trees
- Has a loud, three note whistle that sounds like “quick, three beers”

RANGE

- Breeds in every province and territory except Nunavut
- In Ontario, widely distributed throughout the central and northern areas

THREATS

- Habitat loss and degradation
- Decline in insect prey

The olive-sided flycatcher has experienced a widespread and constant decline since 1960, with a 79 percent loss from 1968 to 2006.

PROTECTION

- Federally protected under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002* and under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*
- Not protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*



Fred Hochstaeder



FISH



PLANTS

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INSECTS



Peregrine Falcon

(Falco peregrinus anatum/tundrius)

Special Concern Provincially and Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Dives at speeds of up to 300 kilometres per hour, literally knocking its prey (birds) out of the air
- Distinctive black facial mask that resembles a helmet; black “moustache;”
- Bright yellow legs and feet; slate blue-grey back; whitish underparts with fine, dark barring on thighs and lower breast
- Usually nests on tall, steep cliff ledges adjacent to large water bodies, but some adapt to city life and raise young on ledges of tall buildings



ca2hill/Essentials Collection/Getty Images

RANGE

- Species widely distributed in every continent except Antarctica
- Historic North American distribution of the eastern subspecies is east of the Rocky Mountains and south of the tree line
- Large breeding population in the Lake Superior watershed in northwestern Ontario

THREATS

- Habitat loss
- Pesticides
- Harvest for falconry (especially in Mexico)
- Persecution by humans

PROTECTION

- Federally protected under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*
- Not protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007* or under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002*

Extirpated from Ontario in the 1960s, the peregrine falcon has increased steadily in numbers since the ban of DDT and reintroduction efforts.



Red-necked Phalarope

(Phalaropus lobatus)

Special Concern Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Up to 18 centimetres long, weighing up to 48 grams with wingspan of 31 to 34 centimetres
- Lobed toes; straight, fine bill
- Females are mostly dark grey with a chestnut neck and upper breast, black face with a white throat
- Males have duller colouring than females
- Has a distinctive white wing stripe which helps distinguish this species from others

The red-necked phalarope has declined over the last 40 years in an important staging area, though overall population trends are unknown.



Mark Peck CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

RANGE

- Across Canada, all provinces and territories
- In Ontario, found in tundra ranges adjacent to Hudson Bay and James Bay

THREATS

- Habitat loss
- Pollution

PROTECTION

- Not protected under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002*



MAMMALS



BIRDS

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REPTILES



FISH



PLANTS

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INSECTS



Rusty Blackbird (*Euphagus carolinus*)

Special Concern Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Medium-sized bird with pale yellow eyes; slightly curved black bill
- During breeding season, male's plumage turns black with green iridescence on body and violet iridescence on neck and head; female's plumage is greyish brown with no iridescence
- In autumn, plumage of both sexes turns rusty hue, hence the name

The total population of rusty blackbird has declined by an estimated 85 percent since the 1960s.

RANGE

- Found in all provinces and territories, which represents 70 percent of North American breeding range
- Breeds across northern Ontario

THREATS

- Loss of habitat and degradation
- Bird control programs for agriculture in the United States

PROTECTION

- Not protected under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002*



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Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*)

Special Concern Provincially and Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Medium-sized owl with large round head; small tufts of feathers that look like ears; fairly long wings; short tail
- Well camouflaged: brown back and creamy-buff chest with brown streaks
- Mostly seen in flight during dawn and dusk
- Lives in open areas such as grasslands, marshes and tundra where it hunts for small mammals

RANGE

- Breeds in all Canadian provinces and territories
- In northern Ontario, scattered distributions along the James Bay and Hudson Bay coastlines and Rainy River District
- Most northern populations are migratory, moving southward in winter

The short-eared owl population has declined by 23 percent in the last decade.

THREATS

- Habitat loss and alteration (wetlands and grasslands)
- Decrease in prey abundance
- Collisions with vehicles, utility lines and fences

PROTECTION

- Not protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007* or under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002*



Terry Alexander/Shutterstock



MAMMALS



BIRDS



REPTILES



FISH



PLANTS



INSECTS



Wood Thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*)

Special Concern Provincially, Threatened Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Medium-sized song bird that can be 20 centimetres long
- Rusty-brown upper parts and white underparts with large black spots on the breast and sides
- Eats insects and plant materials
- Found in large mature deciduous and mixed forests

RANGE

- Found all across southern Ontario and scattered through northern Ontario
- There is a small population near Lake of the Woods in northwestern Ontario

THREATS

- Loss of habitat
- Parasites

PROTECTION

- Federally protected under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*
- Not protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007* or under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002*

Long-term trends (1970 and 2011) show a decline of 83 percent, with a decline of 38 percent between 2001 and 2011.



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Yellow Rail (*Coturnicops noveboracensis*)

Special Concern Provincially and Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Small quail-like marsh bird with short bill and tail
- Chest and face are buff-yellow; dark crown and dark stripe through its eyes; distinctive yellow and black streaks on back; white wing patch visible in flight
- Seldom seen, as it lives deep in the reeds and marshes of shallow wetlands
- Male makes distinct clicking sound during breeding season that resembles two pebbles being banged together

RANGE

- Ranges across much of central Canada and parts of the northern United States
- In Ontario, found in Hudson Bay Lowlands region and some localized marshes in southern Ontario

THREATS

- Habitat loss and degradation (wetlands)
- Invasive plants
- Incidental mortality (agricultural operations)
- Collisions with infrastructure
- Overgrazing by snow geese in the Hudson Bay Lowlands

PROTECTION

- Federally protected under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*
- Not protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007* or under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002*

There is evidence of local declines of yellow rail in several parts of its breeding range.



© Dave Quady



MAMMALS



BIRDS



REPTILES



FISH



PLANTS



INSECTS



Eastern Milksnake (*Lampropeltis triangulum*)

Special Concern Provincially and Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Can be over one metre in length
- Distinctive blotches that are red with black borders on dorsal; black and white checkerboard pattern on bellies
- Not venomous

RANGE

- Widespread throughout southern Ontario
- Can be found as far north as Lake Nipissing and Sault Ste. Marie

THREATS

- Human persecution
- Habitat loss

PROTECTION

- Not protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007* or under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002*

Although still relatively widespread in Ontario, the milksnake's late maturation and low reproductive potential make it vulnerable to a variety of threats.



Missy Mandel



Northern Map Turtle (*Graptemys geographica*)

Special Concern Provincially

DESCRIPTION

- Yellow, tan or orange lines on upper shell or carapace resemble contour lines on a map and are surrounded by dark borders
- Rest of the carapace olive green or greyish brown
- Lower shell or plastron light yellow to cream colour; yellow spot behind the eyes; both legs have intricate pattern of bright yellow lines
- Female eats molluscs; male and young eat mainly insects and crayfish
- Inhabits rivers and lakeshores where it basks on exposed rocks and fallen trees

RANGE

- Found as far north as Algoma, Sudbury and Nipissing Districts
- Live primarily in large lakes and rivers with most observations from the shores of Georgian Bay, Lake St. Clair, Lake Erie, Lake Ontario and the many lakes in Frontenac County, and along larger rivers including the St. Lawrence, Thames, Grand and Ottawa

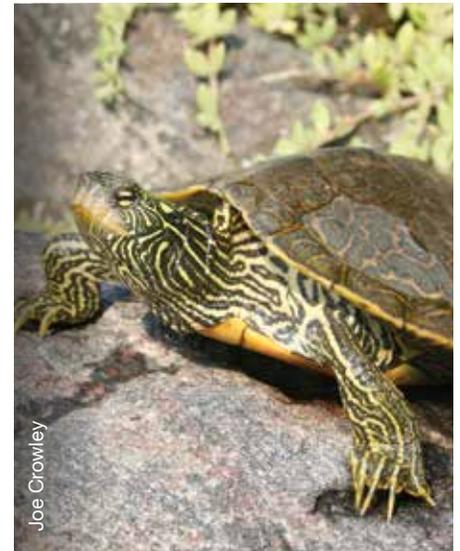
Sizes and trends of northern map turtle populations are poorly understood. The species late maturation makes it vulnerable to a chronic increase in adult mortality rates.

THREATS

- Habitat loss and degradation
- Pollution
- Invasive species (zebra mussels)
- Road mortality
- Boat propeller strikes
- Wildlife trade

PROTECTION

- Not protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*



Joe Crowley



MAMMALS



BIRDS

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REPTILES



FISH



PLANTS

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INSECTS



Snapping Turtle

(Chelydra serpentina)

Special Concern Provincially and Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Canada's largest freshwater turtle, reaching 20-26 centimetres and weighing almost 15 kilograms
- Can live well over 100 years
- Large black, olive or brown shells typically covered in algae
- Tail can be longer than body, with triangular crests along its length
- Prefers slow-moving, shallow waters

RANGE

- In Canada, found from Saskatchewan to Nova Scotia
- Though primarily limited to the southern part of Ontario, occurs as far north as Kenora

THREATS

- Habitat loss and degradation (including wetland loss, dredging, road grading, water drawdowns)
- Road mortality
- Persecution
- Hunting
- Wildlife trade
- Pollution
- Nest predation
- Boat propeller strikes

PROTECTION

- Not protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007* or under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002*



Benjamin Simeneta/Essentials Collection/Getty Images

Snapping turtle is legally hunted in Ontario.



Deepwater Sculpin

Great Lakes - Western St. Lawrence Populations
(Myoxocephalus thompsonii)

Special Concern Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Flat, long body, four to 10 centimetres long; lacks true scales
- Has separated dorsal fins and large pectoral fins with three bands
- Eyes located at top of head; large mouth with small teeth
- Dark grey to brown in colour with dark marking along its back; light speckles on its sides and a pale belly

RANGE

- Patchy distribution in Canada, limited to cold, deep water
- In Ontario, occurs in lakes Nipigon, Ontario, Superior, Fairbank and Huron

THREATS

- Habitat loss and degradation
- Declining water quality (eutrophication)
- Aquatic invasive species

PROTECTION

- Not protected under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002*

Deepwater sculpin are widespread in lakes Superior and Huron, although they may be in decline in the latter.



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MAMMALS



BIRDS



REPTILES



FISH



PLANTS



INSECTS



Kiyi Upper Great Lakes Population (*Coregonus kiyi kiyi*)

Special Concern Provincially and Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Silvery sides with pink or purple iridescence; dark back; white underside
- Large eyes; long paired fins; extending lower jaw

RANGE

- Historically found in all the Great Lakes except Lake Erie
- Now occurs only in Lake Superior (extirpated from Lake Huron in 1973 and from Lake Michigan in 1974)

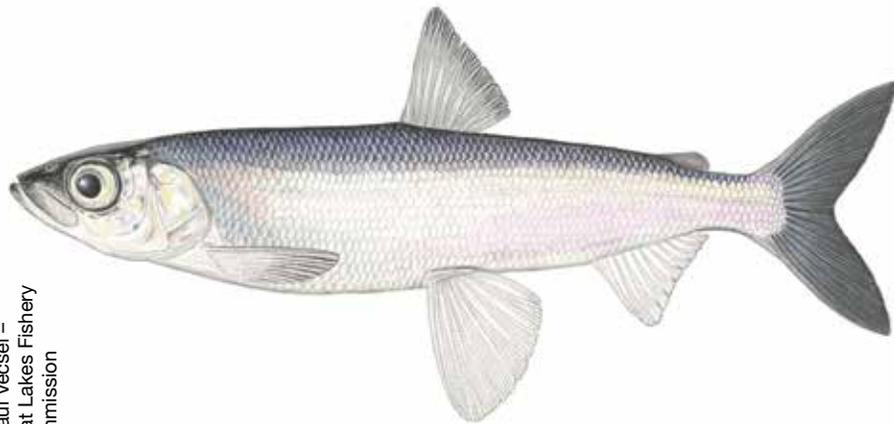
THREATS

- Overfishing
- Introduced species (sea lamprey, alewife, rainbow smelt)
- Habitat degradation (eutrophication)

PROTECTION

- Not protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007* or under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002*

The Lake Ontario subspecies is considered extinct. The Great Lakes subspecies has been extirpated from lakes Huron and Michigan, and it now occurs only in Lake Superior.



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Great Lakes Fishery
Commission



MAMMALS



BIRDS

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REPTILES



Northern Brook Lamprey (*Ichthyomyzon fossor*)

Special Concern Provincially and Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Small (up to 16 centimetres), non-parasitic lamprey that feeds on diatoms and protozoans
- Dark greyish-brown back and sides; pale grey or silvery white belly; jawless mouth with teeth arranged in a circle; seven pairs of gill openings
- Larva burrows in soft mud and spends about six years growing

RANGE

- In Canada, ranges from Manitoba to Quebec
- In Ontario, inhabits rivers draining into lakes Superior, Huron and Erie, and the Ottawa River

No estimates exist for the Canadian populations of northern brook lamprey.

THREATS

- Pollution (including chemical control of sea lamprey)
- Changes in water levels and temperature

PROTECTION

- Not protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007* or under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002*



Fish of Isle Royale National Park



FISH



PLANTS

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INSECTS



Monarch Butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*)

Special Concern Provincially and Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Large orange and black butterfly with small white spots
- Caterpillar black, white and yellow striped; feeds on milkweed plants
- Jade-coloured chrysalis with gold spots
- Migrates to Oyamel fir forest of Mexico in winter

RANGE

- Eastern population is widespread throughout Ontario



johnrudak / Essentials Collection / Getty Images

THREATS

- Habitat loss
- Widespread and increasing use of insecticides and herbicides
- Climate change
- Severe weather events

PROTECTION

- Not protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007* or under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002*

Since the late 1990s, both the western and eastern populations of the monarch have declined dramatically.

EXTIRPATED

Extirpated species lived in the wild in Ontario at one time but no longer do so. They still live elsewhere in the wild. Extirpated species and their habitats are protected under Ontario's *Endangered Species Act, 2007* if the species are again found in Ontario.



Eskimo Curlew (*Numenius borealis*)

Extirpated Provincially, Endangered Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Medium-sized, brownish shorebird; upper parts are sooty black to greyish-brown; underparts cinnamon; primary wing feathers are dark and unbarred; faint stripe above the eye
- Long, slender, slightly down-curved bill

RANGE

- May be extinct (no fully substantiated records since 1963, when a single bird was collected in Barbados)
- Passed through Ontario on migration between Northwest Territories and South America along the Hudson Bay and upper James Bay coasts

THREATS

- Overhunting (primary cause of historic decline)
- Habitat loss and fragmentation

Once one of the most numerous birds in Canada, the Eskimo curlew may now be extinct.



Jim, the Photographer CC BY 2.0

PROTECTION

- Provincially protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*
- Federally protected under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002* and under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*



MAMMALS



BIRDS



REPTILES



FISH



PLANTS



INSECTS



Greater Prairie-chicken (*Tympanuchus cupido*)

Extirpated Provincially and Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- Large brown grouse with light and dark barring; short rounded tail
- Male has yellow eye combs
- During courtship dance male erects its wings and tail feathers, and produces a loud booming sound from orange air sacs on its neck
- Non-migratory bird that requires large undisturbed areas of grasslands with few trees and shrubs for nesting and overwintering

RANGE

- No longer found in Canada, but still found in United States
- Once ranged from Alberta to Ontario, numbering in the millions
- Expanded into northwestern Ontario when land was cleared for agriculture in early 1900s
- Extirpated from Ontario by 1970s

THREATS

- Habitat loss (grasslands)

PROTECTION

- Provincially protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*
- Federally protected under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002*

The greater prairie-chicken is no longer found in Canada but can still be found in some parts of the United States.



Tony Morris CC BY-NC 2.0



MAMMALS



BIRDS



REPTILES



Paddlefish (*Polyodon spathula*)

Extirpated Provincially and Nationally

DESCRIPTION

- One of the largest freshwater fish in North America and one of the most prehistoric fishes in Ontario, with records dating back 70-75 million years
- Thick, robust filter feeder with a long, paddle-like snout, and scale-less skin
- Closely related to sturgeons and sharks with skeleton that is mostly cartilage rather than bone
- Can live up to 30 years, reaching up to two metres or more in length and 68 kilograms in weight
- Lives in slow-moving sections of large rivers and lakes; migrates to fast flowing rivers with gravel bottoms to spawn

RANGE

- Still found in the Mississippi River drainage system, from Montana to Louisiana
- Once inhabited inshore areas of Great Lakes and large tributary rivers
- Not seen in Canada for the last 70 years
- Last specimen captured in Ontario in 1917

THREATS

- Habitat loss and degradation (dams, dredging)
- Industrial pollution
- Overfishing

PROTECTION

- Provincially protected under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*
- Federally protected under the *Species at Risk Act, 2002*

The last captured specimen in Ontario was in 1917.



Lynn Chan CC BY-NC 2.0



FISH



PLANTS



INSECTS

