



## Species at Risk in South East Alberta

Info Sheet 2012-02

*There are many reasons why plants and animals end up with populations at risk. In some cases, there is one clear cause for the population decline; in other cases, populations drop for a combination of reasons. And for some species scientists may not know the exact cause. The most common reasons that species come to be at risk include: disappearing habitat, habitat degradation, human disturbance, introduction of exotic species, overharvesting, persecution, isolation of populations, pesticides and disease.*

In Alberta, plant and animal species are assigned a general status. Species with a general status label of *At Risk*, *May be at Risk* or *Sensitive* are all considered Species at Risk (SAR). Approximately 85% of Alberta's SAR are found in SEAWA's backyard, the Grassland Natural Region (see map). These plant and animal species have a low or declining population and are – or may be – at risk of disappearing. Some may simply be naturally rare in Alberta, but like those who are feeling impact from human pressure, they still require special management to ensure their survival.

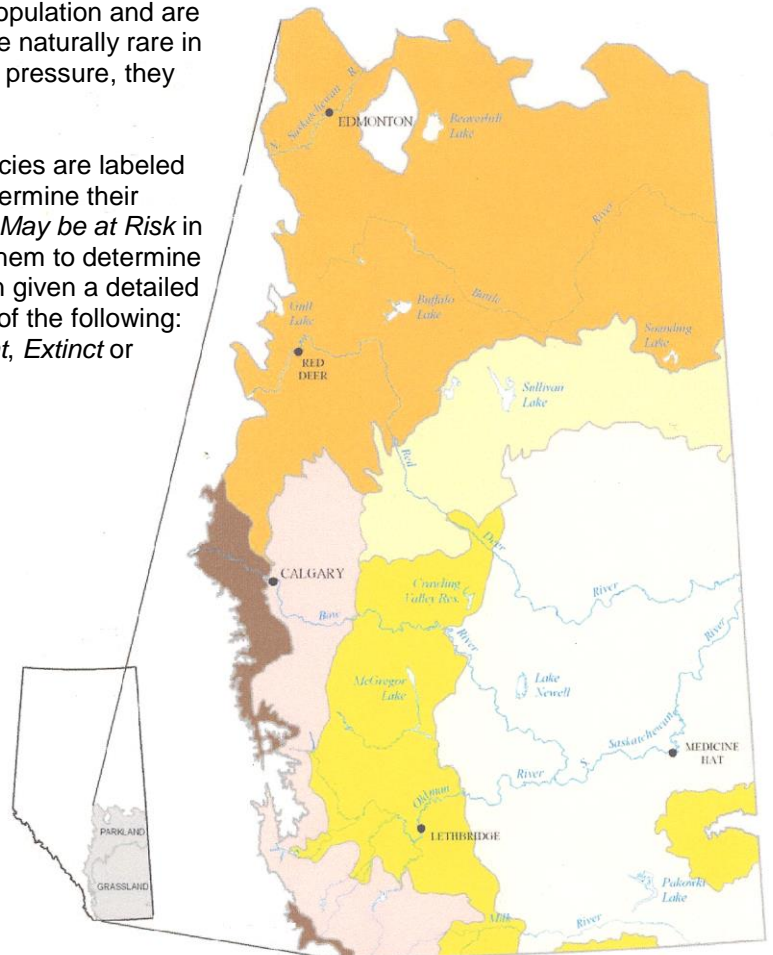
Species with healthy populations are labeled *Secure*. Species are labeled *Undetermined* when there is insufficient information to determine their status. Most species that have been ranked as *At Risk* or *May be at Risk* in Alberta will have a Detailed Status Report completed for them to determine if they should be protected by law. These species are then given a detailed as well as general status. A detailed status could be one of the following: *Endangered*, *Threatened*, *Special Concern*, *Data Deficient*, *Extinct* or *Extirpated*.

Endangered or Threatened species in our region include:

- [Swift fox](#)
- [Sage grouse](#)
- [Burrowing owl](#)
- [Ferruginous hawk](#)
- [Northern leopard frog](#)
- [Short-horned lizard](#)

Species of Special Concern include:

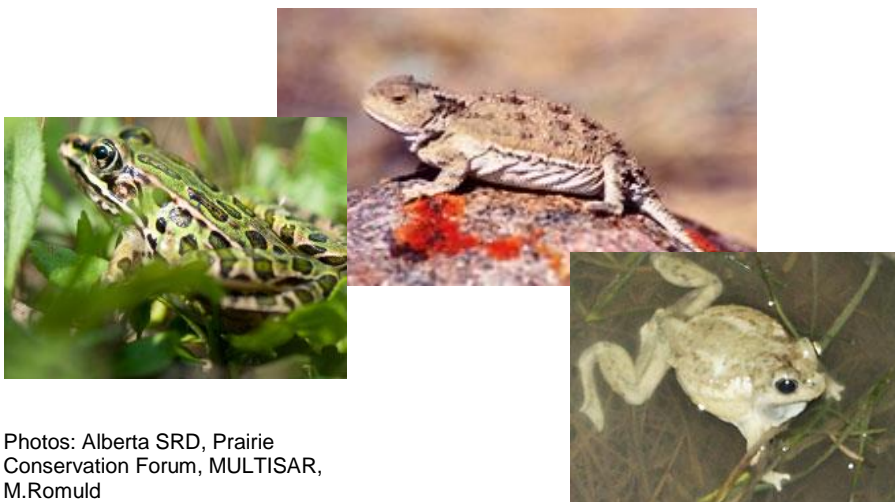
- [Long-billed curlew](#)
- [Loggerhead shrike](#)
- [Sprague's pipit](#)
- [Prairie falcon](#)
- [Ord's kangaroo rat](#)





If a species receives a national or provincial status of *Endangered* or *Threatened* a recovery plan must be prepared. The recovery plan guides management and recovery efforts for the species, generally for a five-year period.

MULTISAR (multiple species at risk) was created to conserve habitat for species at risk in Alberta's Grassland Natural Region. The partners involved in carrying out the project include agricultural producers, Alberta Conservation Association, Prairie Conservation Forum, Alberta Environment and Parks and others. Previously confined to the Milk River Basin, in 2007 the project was expanded to include the entire Grassland Natural Region. MULTISAR works to maintain and improve habitat for at risk species by recommending Beneficial Management Practices (BMPs) to landholders that manage native prairie habitats in Alberta. In 2008, Operation Grassland Community (OGC), a habitat stewardship program of the Alberta Fish and Game Association, joined MULTISAR in the development and delivery of Species at Risk Conservation Plans throughout the Grassland Natural Region.



Photos: Alberta SRD, Prairie Conservation Forum, MULTISAR, M.Romuld

If a species is **extinct** it means that it no longer exists anywhere on the planet.

If a species is **extirpated** it means that it no longer exists in a certain region but it may exist elsewhere on the planet.



*Here are a few excellent resources to help you learn more about Alberta Species at Risk:*

[\*At Home on the Range: Living with Alberta's Prairie Species at Risk.\*](#)

[\*Alberta's Prairie Species at Risk: Identification Guide\*](#)

*Alberta Environment & Parks website:* [aep.alberta.ca](http://aep.alberta.ca)

*MULTISAR website:* [multisar.ca](http://multisar.ca)

*Prairie Conservation Forum website:* [albertapcf.org](http://albertapcf.org)



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SEAWA is one of eleven Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils (WPACs) in Alberta. The SEAWA watershed includes the South Saskatchewan River Sub-Basin within Alberta, and the closed-drainage system Pakowki Lake Watershed.