

# SPECIES AT RISK

in the Northwest Territories

2024



# SPECIES AT RISK IN THE NWT 2024

A guide to species in the Northwest Territories currently listed, or under consideration for listing, under federal and territorial species at risk legislation, 2024 edition.

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# HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

## Common Name

Subspecies or Population

Scientific Name

This table shows the status of the species under federal and territorial species at risk legislation, with the year of assessment and listing.

	Assessment	Legal List
Canada (population at risk, if there is more than one population in Canada)	Status as last assessed by COSEWIC	Status on the federal <i>Species at Risk Act</i> list (Schedule 1)
NWT	Status as last assessed by the NWT Species at Risk Committee	Status on the <i>Species at Risk (NWT) Act</i> list (NWT List of Species at Risk)

A physical description of the animal size, weight and colour, including distinguishing marks or behaviours.

Help identify and record species in the NWT by reporting your sightings to the appropriate agency.

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Threats to a species can vary between regions in Canada. The information in this section describes threats to the species specific to the NWT.

## CATEGORIES OF SPECIES AT RISK

Species at risk are assessed and listed in one of five status categories:

- Extinct:** a species that no longer exists anywhere in the world.
- Extirpated:** a species that no longer exists in the wild in a particular region (Canada or NWT), but exists elsewhere.
- Endangered:** a species that is facing imminent extirpation or extinction.
- Threatened:** a species likely to become an endangered species if nothing is done to reverse the factors leading to its extirpation or extinction.
- Special Concern:** a species that may become threatened or endangered because of a combination of biological characteristics and identified threats.

Other terms used in the status table:


- Not applicable:** *Species at Risk (NWT) Act* does not apply to this species.
- Not assessed:** species has not been assessed.
- No status:** species has not been listed.
- Under consideration:** species is being considered for listing.
- Not at risk:** species was assessed and found to be not at risk of extinction given the current circumstances.
- Data deficient:** species was assessed, but there was not enough information to determine the status.

## Typical Habitat

- The information in this section describes the typical habitat of the species in the NWT.

## Range Map

The map shows the range of each species in the NWT so that you can determine at a glance where they are expected to occur. Please note that the species range maps in this booklet are approximate and are not intended for legal use.



This section contains additional information about the species in the NWT.

## Did you know?

- The information in this section highlights interesting facts about the species.



- Migratory Bird Sanctuaries
- National Wildlife Areas
- National Historic Sites
- Thelon Wildlife Sanctuary
- National Parks
- Marine Protected Areas
- Terrestrial Protected Areas
- National Marine Conservation Areas

## SPECIES AT RISK IN THE NWT

Indigenous groups, scientists and people with an interest in the natural world have noticed and documented the disappearance of certain plants and animals for some time.

Every jurisdiction in Canada has signed the national *Accord for the Protection of Species at Risk* and, in doing so, has agreed to work towards a national approach for protecting species at risk, with the goal of preventing species in Canada from becoming extinct as a consequence of human activity.

The responsibility for the conservation of wildlife in the Northwest Territories (NWT) is shared by the federal, territorial and Tłı̨cẖo governments, and wildlife co-management boards. The federal government has ultimate responsibility for the management of migratory birds (as described in the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*), fish, marine mammals and other aquatic species (as described in the *Fisheries Act*). The Parks Canada Agency is responsible for all species found within their protected heritage areas. The territorial government has primary responsibility for all other species.

In 2003, the Government of Canada enacted the federal *Species at Risk Act*, with the goal of protecting wildlife species and their habitats. The purposes of the *Species at Risk Act* are to prevent wildlife species from being Extirpated or becoming Extinct, to provide for the recovery of wildlife species that are





Yellow-banded Bumble Bee in Norman Wells

Jenny Heron, iNaturalist

Extirpated, Endangered or Threatened as a result of human activity, and to manage species of Special Concern to prevent them from becoming Endangered or Threatened. The *Species at Risk Act* establishes a process for conducting assessments of the national population status of individual species, and a mechanism for listing Extirpated, Endangered, Threatened and Special Concern species. Under the federal *Species at Risk Act*, the Government of Canada is responsible for the implementation and enforcement of protection for individuals, residences and critical habitat for listed species.

In 2009, the Government of the NWT (GNWT) passed the *Species at Risk (NWT) Act*, which helps fulfill the NWT's commitment under the national Accord to provide effective protection of species at risk that are managed by the territory. The *Species at Risk (NWT) Act* sets out the processes to assess, list, protect and recover species at risk specifically for the NWT. The *Species at Risk (NWT) Act* applies to any wild animal or plant species managed by the GNWT. It applies on both public and private lands, including private lands owned under a land claims agreement.

The *Species at Risk Act* and the *Species at Risk (NWT) Act* are designed to work in a complementary fashion with other legislation and cooperatively with Indigenous people to protect species at risk and their habitats.

For more information, visit the federal [species at risk public registry](#) and [www.nwt-species-at-risk.ca](http://www.nwt-species-at-risk.ca).

# ASSESSMENT AND LISTING OF SPECIES AT RISK

## Canada

**Assessment:** The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) is a national independent group of experts that assesses the status of species. Their assessments are based on science, Indigenous traditional knowledge and community knowledge about the species and their environment. COSEWIC submits its assessments to the federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) for listing consideration, and they forward to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) if needed.

**Legal Listing:** After receiving COSEWIC's assessment the federal departments consult with governments, stakeholders, Indigenous groups, and wildlife management boards, where applicable. The federal Minister of ECCC makes a recommendation to the Governor in Council. They decide whether or not to add the species to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk (Schedule 1) of the *Species at Risk Act* or to refer the matter back to COSEWIC for further information or consideration.

## Northwest Territories

**Conference of Management Authorities:** Responsibility for the conservation and recovery of species at risk in the NWT is shared among wildlife co-management boards established under land claim agreements, the Government of the NWT, the Tłı̨chǫ Government and the federal government. The Conference established under the *Species at Risk (NWT) Act* builds consensus among these Management Authorities on the conservation of species at risk and provides direction, coordination and leadership with respect to the assessment, listing, conservation and recovery of species at risk, while respecting the roles and responsibilities of Management Authorities under land claims agreements.

**Assessment:** The Species at Risk Committee established under the *Species at Risk (NWT) Act* is an independent committee of experts responsible for assessing the biological status of species at risk in the NWT. It is similar to COSEWIC, although the Species at Risk Committee operates at the territorial





Wolverine

Liam Cowan

level and assessments may differ from those done at the national level. Assessments are based on the best available Indigenous, community and scientific knowledge of the species. The Committee uses the assessments to make recommendations on the listing of species and on conservation measures to the Conference of Management Authorities. Species flagged by the General Status Ranking Program or by community members as species that may be at risk are considered and prioritized for assessment.

**Legal Listing:** After receiving the Species at Risk Committee's assessment, the Conference of Management Authorities develops a consensus agreement on whether to add the species to the NWT List of Species at Risk. As part of reaching consensus, each co-management board carries out the consultation and processes required under their land claim agreement. The Government of the NWT is responsible for Indigenous consultation in areas without

a settled land claim and for consultation with all stakeholders such as industry, outfitters, resident hunters, environmental groups and the public.

### **For Current Information**

This booklet describes the species legally listed under the *Species at Risk Act* and the *Species at Risk (NWT) Act*, whose range includes the NWT, and those species in the NWT that are under consideration for listing, as of February 2024. National assessments of species are completed every six months. As there is no pre-set federal listing schedule, it is important to regularly visit the federal *Species at Risk Act* Public Registry at <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/species-risk-public-registry.html>, or the COSEWIC website at [www.cosewic.ca](http://www.cosewic.ca) for the most recent national information. Current information on the NWT List of Species at Risk and species scheduled to be assessed in the NWT is available at [www.nwt-species-at-risk.ca](http://www.nwt-species-at-risk.ca).

# Peregrine Falcon Recovery

Peregrine Falcon, the fastest bird in the world, is no longer a species at risk in the NWT. It is a conservation success story.

Canada's Peregrine Falcons were first listed as Endangered in 1978 after populations crashed from DDT poisoning. The pesticide DDT was widely used at the time, building up through the food chain and reducing the female falcon's ability to lay healthy eggs.

The Peregrine Falcon became an important symbol of the environmental movement. Some countries banned the use of DDT

and captive breeding programs helped to reintroduce the falcons across southern Canada. The falcons proved to be adaptable to new habitats, which also helped their recovery.

Since the 1970s, Peregrine Falcon populations in Canada have rebounded thanks to these conservation efforts. Over time, COSEWIC assessments determined the status of the species was improving. Peregrine Falcon was assessed as Not at Risk in 2017 and then removed entirely from the *Species at Risk Act* list in 2023.





Gordon Court

At the territorial level, Peregrine Falcon populations have increased as well. Over 20 years, NWT surveys found a 58% increase in the number of occupied sites. In 2022, the NWT Species at Risk Committee assessed the status of Peregrine Falcon using Indigenous, community and scientific knowledge and determined that it is Not at Risk in the NWT. Although some threats remain, the level of contaminants in the birds is low enough that it is no longer affecting reproduction in the overall population, and numbers are stable.

While it is no longer a species at risk, the Peregrine Falcon is still protected in other ways. It is protected from international trade in live birds or bird parts by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). Peregrine Falcons, their nests and their eggs are also protected under the NWT *Wildlife Act*.

The story of these resilient birds shows that our species at risk can recover when threats are stopped or reduced. It is an important example of how taking conservation and management actions can change the fate of a species.

# Barren-ground Caribou

Caribou (Barren-ground Population)

*Rangifer tarandus groenlandicus*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Threatened - 2016</b>	Under consideration
NWT	<b>Threatened - 2017</b>	<b>Threatened - 2018</b>

Barren-ground Caribou are members of the deer family. In the fall, mature males have a striking white neck and mane, and a distinct band along the flank separating the brown back from the white belly. Their colours are more faded during the winter. The velvet covering their antlers is brown. The national assessment of Barren-ground Caribou as Threatened includes the Porcupine herd, but the NWT assessment and listing do not.

Weight: Females, 85 to 135 kg (187 to 298 lb)  
Males, 100 to 140 kg (220 to 309 lb)

Report Barren-ground Caribou sightings to  
[WILDLIFE OBS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:WILDLIFE OBS@gov.nt.ca)

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Climate change impacts on habitat and health.
- Habitat loss and degradation from resource exploration and development.
- Roads that increase access for hunting and predation.
- Increasing frequency and intensity of forest fires that affect the winter range.
- Predators can have a large impact when caribou numbers are low.
- Unsustainable harvest could have a large impact, but there are measures in place to reduce harvest in response to low numbers.



## Typical Habitat

- Barren-ground Caribou give birth in places where they can minimize exposure to predators and maximize nutrition, such as open tundra and high, rocky areas.
- In summer, they seek areas with high quality grasses, sedges, shrubs and mushrooms to eat, and try to avoid insect harassment.
- Caribou move around in winter to places where food – primarily lichen – is abundant and snow is shallow.

### Sub-populations (herds)

1 - Porcupine	5 - Bluenose-East
2 - Tuktoyaktuk Peninsula	6 - Bathurst
3 - Cape Bathurst	7 - Beverly
4 - Bluenose-West	8 - Ahlak
	9 - Qamanirjuaq



Barren-ground Caribou   
National Parks

Barren-ground Caribou migrate long distances northwards in the spring to their traditional calving grounds and southwards in the fall to their winter range. They are highly social, gather together to have their calves, and travel in large groups. In the mid-1980s to mid-1990s most NWT herds were peaking in abundance, but since the late 1990s their numbers have undergone a dramatic decline. Barren-ground Caribou populations naturally undergo large cycles likely driven by climate interacting with food availability, predation and parasites. Current threats to Barren-ground Caribou are acting in addition to these natural cycles and the cumulative effects from multiple threats are unprecedented. There are management plans completed or underway for most of the Barren-ground Caribou herds in the NWT, and an NWT recovery strategy is available at [www.nwt-species-at-risk.ca](http://www.nwt-species-at-risk.ca).

## Did you know?

- Since time immemorial Barren-ground Caribou have had immense cultural, spiritual and economic importance to people in the NWT.
- Barren-ground Caribou is a keystone species that plays a crucial role in northern ecosystems.
- COSEWIC's assessment of the national status of Barren-ground Caribou looked at all Canadian herds together, including the Porcupine herd.
- When the NWT Species at Risk Committee assessed the territorial status of Barren-ground Caribou, they considered Porcupine caribou separately as a geographically distinct population. Porcupine caribou was assessed as Not at Risk in the NWT. Other Barren-ground Caribou herds are listed as Threatened in the NWT, but Porcupine Caribou are not.

# Boreal Caribou

Caribou (Boreal Population)

*Rangifer tarandus caribou*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	Threatened - 2022	Threatened - 2003
NWT	Threatened - 2012	Threatened - 2014

Boreal Caribou are members of the deer family. Compared to Barren-ground Caribou (page 12), Boreal Caribou are larger and darker, have thicker and broader antlers, and have longer legs and a longer face. Boreal Caribou look the same as Northern Mountain Caribou (page 32), but have different habitat preferences and behaviour.

Weight: 110 to 210 kg (240 to 460 lb)  
Height at shoulder: 1.0 to 1.2 m (3.3 to 4.0 ft)

Report Boreal Caribou sightings to  
[WILDLIFE OBS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:WILDLIFE OBS@gov.nt.ca)

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Habitat disturbance, both human-caused and natural, that leads to more predators on the landscape.
- Linear features (e.g. seismic lines and roads) that result in increased access by predators and hunters.
- Climate change impacts on the forest landscape over the next 20 to 40 years.





## Typical Habitat

- Boreal Caribou use almost all forested areas east of the Mackenzie Mountains.
- They tend to spend time in mature coniferous forests with plentiful lichens.
- Ridges, swamps, burned areas and meadows are also important in spring and summer.



Boreal Caribou ■  
National Parks ▨

Boreal Caribou live throughout the boreal forest of the NWT in small groups and prefer to stay within the forest year-round. During calving, Boreal Caribou females space themselves out throughout the range, often where access is difficult for predators. Boreal Caribou need large areas of intact habitats so they can spread out to avoid predators.

An NWT recovery strategy for Boreal Caribou is available at [www.nwt-species-at-risk.ca](http://www.nwt-species-at-risk.ca). A national recovery strategy and action plan are available at the federal [species at risk public registry](http://species-at-risk.ca). The national recovery strategy identifies critical habitat as a minimum of 65% undisturbed habitat throughout their range. Five regional range plans for Boreal Caribou in the NWT are being developed to ensure that critical habitat is maintained and protected. Range plans are guided by the NWT *Framework for Boreal Caribou Range Planning*.

## Did you know?

- Boreal Caribou are well adapted to their northern environment. Their large, well-insulated hooves prevent sinking when travelling on wetlands and snow and are adapted for digging through snow for food.
- Boreal Caribou are sometimes called the “grey ghosts of the forest” because they are secretive and difficult to find, and when disturbed they usually disappear quickly into the forest.

# Bowhead Whale

*Balaena mysticetus*



## Assessment

Canada  
(Bering-Chukchi-  
Beaufort Population)

**Special Concern - 2009**

NWT

Not applicable

## Legal List

**Special Concern - 2007**

Not applicable

The Bowhead Whale is a large baleen whale (baleen is a flexible material found in long, thin plates along the jaw, which act to filter small food particles rather than using regular teeth). The Bowhead Whale has a stocky, barrel-shaped body and a large head that takes up about 30% of its length. Its body is mostly black; white markings appear with age on the chin, fluke tips and tail. Bowhead Whales do not have a dorsal fin and their pectoral flippers are small and paddle-shaped. The upper jaw is bowed sharply upward, with an average of 330 baleen plates on each side. Adult females are slightly larger than adult males.

Weight: 75 to 100 t (82 to 110 tons)

Length: Females, 16 to 18 m (53 to 59 ft)

Males, 14 to 17 m (46 to 56 ft)

**Report Bowhead Whale sightings to  
WILDLIFEOBS@gov.nt.ca**

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Threats are primarily due to increased human activities in the Arctic. These threats include noise, ship collisions and pollution (such as oil spills).
- Bowhead Whales can be displaced for short periods of time by industrial activity such as seismic surveys and oil and gas development.
- Potential long-term effects from this displacement are unknown.
- Climate change influences ice conditions, potential predators and prey availability. This may impact the survival and/or distribution of this whale. The extent and nature of climate change impacts are currently unknown.



## Typical Habitat

- Bowhead Whales live in marine waters ranging from open water to thick, unconsolidated pack ice.
- They filter feed mostly on dense aggregations of small invertebrates or “zooplankton.”
- Satellite tagging studies help identify migration routes and areas frequented by Bowhead Whales in the western Arctic, which may indicate important feeding or congregation areas.



Bowhead Whale ■  
National Parks ▨

Bowhead Whales are still recovering from commercial whaling, which ended in the early 20th century when hunting became unprofitable. The population is currently believed to number over 12,000 individuals and may be at or near the pre-whaling population size. The Bering-Chukchi-Beaufort population of Bowhead Whales spends the winter (November to April) in the western and central Bering Sea amongst broken pack ice. In spring (April to June), most whales migrate along the northern coast of Alaska to the eastern Beaufort Sea, first appearing in western Amundsen Gulf in offshore lead areas in late May. In recent years, feeding aggregations of Bowhead Whale in the south-eastern Beaufort have formed approximately two weeks earlier than in the 1980s. Females give birth every three or four years to a single calf, usually during the spring migration. A national management plan for the Bering-Chukchi-Beaufort population of Bowhead Whale is available at the federal [species at risk public registry](#).

## Did you know?

- A weapon fragment found in a Bowhead Whale caught off the Alaskan coast in May 2007 dated back to 1879.
- Bowhead Whales are able to use their head and back to break ice over 20 cm thick in order to breathe.
- Bowhead Whales can live to be over 150 years of age.

# Collared Pika

*Ochotona collaris*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Special Concern - 2011</b>	<b>Special Concern - 2017</b>
NWT	Not assessed	No status

The Collared Pika is a small, solitary member of a group of species that includes rabbits and hares. The Collared Pika has small, round ears, a white underbelly and a distinctive “collar” of light grey fur around its neck.

Weight: 130 to 185 g (4.5 to 6.5 oz)  
Length: 178 to 198 mm (7 to 7.5 in)

Report Collared Pika sightings to  
[WILDLIFEOBS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:WILDLIFEOBS@gov.nt.ca)

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- The greatest threat to the Collared Pika is climate change. Potential impacts include loss of suitable alpine habitat as well as changes in precipitation patterns and warmer summer temperatures that could cause stress or mortality.
- There is uncertainty about how much Collared Pikas in the NWT will be affected.
- Naturally fragmented habitat and poor dispersal ability could make it harder for the Collared Pika to adapt to its changing environment.



## Typical Habitat

- Collared Pikas mostly live in cool and dry mountain boulder fields, or talus, at elevations above the treeline. The boulders help shelter the pikas from weather and predators.
- Medium to large rocks (greater than 30 cm), with not many smaller rocks mixed in, provide spaces for pikas to live between them.
- Suitable boulder fields must have alpine meadows nearby where pikas can find food.



Collared Pika ■  
National Parks ▨

Collared Pikas primarily live in the mountain regions of Alaska, Yukon and northern British Columbia. Their range in the NWT extends into the Richardson Mountains west of Inuvik and throughout the Mackenzie Mountains in the Dehcho and Sahtú regions. The Liard River valley may form a barrier between the Collared Pika and the more southern American Pika. There is not very much information on population size and trend of Collared Pika. A national management plan for the Collared Pika is available at the federal [species at risk public registry](http://www.speciesatrisk.ca).

## Did you know?

- Pikas defend individual territories of about 15 to 25 m radius.
- Female pikas have only a 30 day gestation period, give birth to 3 to 4 offspring, and usually do not live longer than 4 years.
- Pikas do not hibernate during the winter and survive using stored food.
- Pikas spend long hours harvesting herbs and grasses, making hay-piles to supply food during the winter.



# Dolphin and Union Caribou



**Caribou (Dolphin and Union Population)**

*Rangifer tarandus groenlandicus x pearyi*

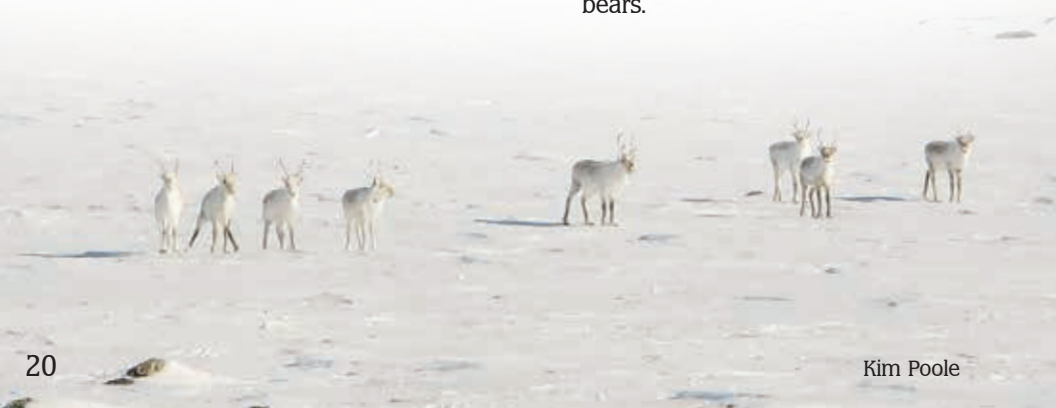
	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Endangered - 2017</b>	<b>Special Concern - 2011</b>
NWT	<b>Endangered - 2023</b>	<b>Special Concern - 2015</b>

Dolphin and Union Caribou are members of the deer family. Like Peary Caribou (page 36), Dolphin and Union Caribou have a mostly white coat in winter, and are slate-grey with white legs and under-parts in summer. The velvet covering their antlers is grey. Dolphin and Union Caribou are slightly darker than Peary Caribou.

**Report Dolphin and Union Caribou sightings to**  
**WILDLIFE OBS@gov.nt.ca**

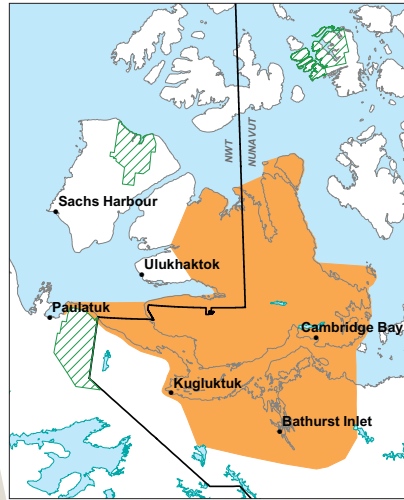
## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- A reduction in the extent, thickness, and duration of sea ice from climate change is impacting their migration and distribution.
- Ship traffic, particularly when sea ice is forming, can cause unstable or thin ice.
- Crossing to and from the mainland on unstable sea ice is dangerous.
- Climate change is causing more winter rain events and freeze-thaw cycles; these can leave an ice crust that prevents caribou from reaching their food.
- Over-harvesting contributed to past declines and the future of a sustainable harvest is uncertain.
- Communities are concerned about predation by wolves and grizzly bears.



## Typical Habitat

- Dolphin and Union Caribou summer on Victoria Island, commonly using beach ridges and river valley slopes.
- They winter on the mainland in windswept areas with shallow snow cover, primarily in the Bathurst Inlet area of Nunavut.
- Sea ice is important because they cross the ice between Victoria Island and the mainland twice a year.



Dolphin and Union Caribou ■  
National Parks ▨

Dolphin and Union Caribou were at very low numbers during the mid-20th century and had stopped migrating from Victoria Island to the Nunavut-NWT mainland. From the 1970s to the 1990s, numbers increased and Dolphin and Union Caribou resumed migrating across the sea ice. Population estimates indicated that the population was above 30,000 in 1997 but declined to about 18,000 as of 2015, with a further decline to about 3,800 in 2020. Inuvialuit Knowledge and *Inuit Qaujimajatuqagit* have also noted a declining trend and changes in distribution of Dolphin and Union Caribou. Mortality of Dolphin and Union Caribou due to drowning (breaking through sea ice), predation and hunting is relatively high.

A management plan for Dolphin and Union Caribou is available at [www.nwtspeciesatrisk.ca](http://www.nwtspeciesatrisk.ca) and the federal [species at risk public registry](https://www.speciesatrisk.ca).

## Did you know?

- In recent years, Inuvialuit and Inuit have taken a series of voluntary and legislated measures to reduce the harvest of Dolphin and Union Caribou in response to the decline.
- Dolphin and Union Caribou are often locally called Island Caribou.
- Dolphin and Union Caribou sometimes gather in large numbers along the southern shore of Victoria Island in the fall, waiting for the sea ice to become thick enough to cross.



# Eastern Red Bat

*Lasiurus borealis*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Endangered - 2023</b>	Under consideration
NWT	Not assessed	No status

The Eastern Red Bat has long, silky fur and distinctive orange to red colouring. It has a furry tail membrane and short, rounded ears. Although Eastern Red Bats are brightly coloured, they are hard to spot because they blend in with their surroundings.

Weight: 10 to 17 g (0.4 to 0.6 oz)  
Wingspan: 28 to 33 cm (11 to 13 in)

Report Eastern Red Bat sightings to  
[WILD.LIFE.OBS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:WILD.LIFE.OBS@gov.nt.ca)

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

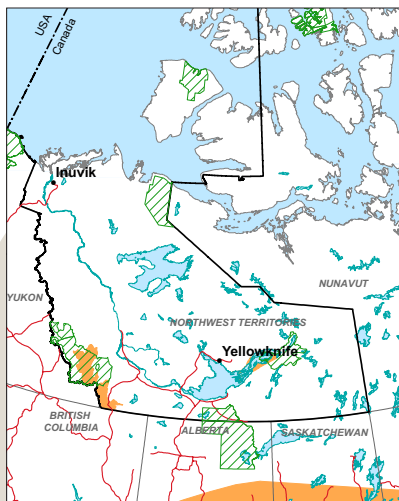
- Collisions with wind turbines kill many Eastern Red Bats, especially when turbines are built along migration routes or near other key bat habitat.
- Widespread declines in insect populations.
- Loss of forest habitat, especially deciduous forest.
- Environmental pollution such as mercury, pesticides, industrial pollutants and wildfire smoke.
- White-nose syndrome is probably not a major threat to migratory bat species.





## Typical Habitat

- Eastern Red Bats roost among the leaves of trees, clinging to twigs or to the stalks of leaves.
- They seem to prefer deciduous trees and can also roost in shrubs, sometimes quite low to the ground. Roosts are usually near the edge of a clearing.
- Eastern Red Bats search for food in open areas, catching insects in the air. Moths make up a large part of their diet, but they also eat other types of insects.
- In other parts of their range, Eastern Red Bats are often seen feeding on swarms of insects around streetlights.



Eastern Red Bat (suspected) ■

National Parks ▨

The Eastern Red Bat is an insect-eating migratory bat that flies south for the winter. Although Eastern Red Bats have never been captured or photographed in the NWT, multiple sightings and acoustic recordings suggest the species likely occurs in the southern part of the territory. In summer, Eastern Red Bats usually roost alone or with their pups. Eastern Red Bats sometimes feed or migrate in a group. During migration, Eastern Red Bats are exposed to many threats including collisions with wind turbines. The Eastern Red Bat is one of three migratory tree-roosting bat species whose Canadian population has declined dramatically in recent years; the others are the Hoary Bat (page 28) and Silver-haired Bat (page 42). An NWT bats management plan is available at [www.nwt-species-at-risk.ca](http://www.nwt-species-at-risk.ca).

## Did you know?

- The Eastern Red Bat's genus name *Lasiurus* means "hairy tail."
- When roosting, the Eastern Red Bat often wraps its furry tail membrane around itself like a blanket to keep warm.
- Hanging from a twig by a single foot and twisting slightly in the breeze, the Eastern Red Bat can look like a dead leaf.
- Unlike most bats, Eastern Red Bats often give birth to twins and can have up to five pups in a litter.

# Grey Whale

*Eschrichtius robustus*



## Assessment

## Legal List

Canada  
(Northern Pacific  
Migratory Population)

**Not at Risk - 2017**

**Special Concern - 2005**

NWT

Not applicable

Not applicable

The Grey Whale is a medium to large-sized baleen whale (baleen is a flexible material found in long, thin plates along the jaw, which act to filter small food particles rather than using regular teeth). It has a streamlined body and narrow, tapered head. Its skin is dark grey and mottled, often covered with patches of barnacles and crustaceans. This whale does not have a dorsal fin but has a low hump and a series of seven to fifteen “knuckles” along its dorsal ridge. Two to four grooves on the underside of the throat allow the whale to extend its throat so it can feed by scooping up bottom sediment and straining it through its baleen.

Weight: 22 to 38 t (24 to 42 tons)

Length: Females, 12 to 15 m (39 to 50 ft)

Males, 11 to 14 m (36 to 46 ft)

Report Grey Whale sightings to  
[WILDLIFEOBS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:WILDLIFEOBS@gov.nt.ca)

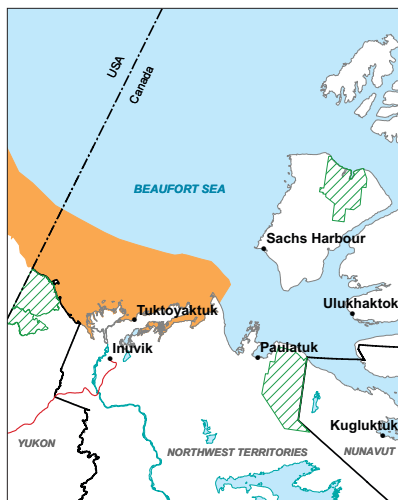
## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Loss of habitat due to industrial development (such as oil and gas) and associated noise.
- Collisions with ships are a possibility, but likelihood of collisions is low in the western Arctic at the present time.
- Years with extended ice cover on summer feeding grounds may limit ocean productivity and, therefore, feeding opportunities. This may become less of an issue with climate change.



## Typical Habitat

- Grey Whales live in shallow ocean water (less than 60 m deep) close to shore, over mud or sand bottoms.



Grey Whale ■  
National Parks ▨

In late winter of alternating years, female Grey Whales give birth to a single calf. In spring, most migrate north from Mexico to their summer feeding grounds in northern Alaska, Russia and the southern Beaufort Sea.

This migration is over 16,000 km round trip. Grey Whales feed mainly on shrimp-like animals (amphipod crustaceans). They use their baleen plates like a strainer to filter sediment and locate their prey. They scoop up mouthfuls of sediment and allow it to sift through the spaces between the baleen, with only the prey left behind in their mouths. Grey Whale populations were severely reduced by commercial whaling in the 1800s and early 1900s, but since the 1950s they have recovered considerably under international protection. Grey Whales are still susceptible to human activities especially while they spend the winter on their calving grounds.

A national management plan for Grey Whale is available at the federal [species at risk public registry](#).

## Did you know?

- When COSEWIC assessed Grey Whale in 2004, the NWT's whales were grouped with other whales from the northern Pacific and western Arctic oceans and assessed as a species of Special Concern. In 2017, the large Northern Pacific Migratory population (which includes the NWT) was assessed separately from smaller populations in British Columbia and was assigned a status of Not at Risk.
- Because Grey Whales re-circulate nutrients from bottom sediments through the water column while feeding, they are an important species in arctic marine ecosystems.
- Grey Whales can live up to 70 years of age.

# Grizzly Bear

*Ursus arctos*



## Assessment

## Legal List

Canada  
(Western Population)

**Special Concern - 2012**

**Special Concern - 2018**

NWT

**Special Concern - 2017**

No status

Grizzly Bears are larger than Black Bears and more heavily built. They can be recognized by their prominent shoulder hump, dish-shaped face and long claws. Colour varies from light gold to almost black, with pale bears being the most common on the barren-lands.

Weight: Females, 120 to 160 kg (260 to 350 lb)  
Males, 150 to 250 kg (330 to 550 lb)

Report Grizzly Bear sightings to  
[WILDLIFE OBS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:WILDLIFE OBS@gov.nt.ca)

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Individual bears move great distances so they may be exposed to the negative effects of human developments or activities, even when these activities occur at a considerable distance from the core range.
- Human activity such as communities, campsites and industrial development in the NWT may lead to human-bear conflicts and bear mortalities.



## Typical Habitat

- Grizzly Bears use open or semi-forested areas, most commonly in alpine and subalpine terrain, on the tundra and less commonly in the boreal forest.
- They are becoming more common in areas of the NWT and Nunavut where they used to be rarely seen.



Grizzly Bear ■  
 Areas of Increased Presence ■  
 National Parks ▨

The NWT is home to an estimated 4,000 to 5,000 Grizzly Bears with the highest densities found in the Mackenzie and Richardson Mountains. Grizzly Bears in the NWT, and throughout their range in Canada, are sensitive to population declines because they do not reproduce until they are between six and eight years of age, they have small litters (one to three cubs), and there are three to five years between litters.

## Did you know?

- Grizzly Bears can travel long distances. One bear collared on the tundra traveled 471 km in 23 days.
- Grizzly Bears require large areas of habitat. The largest home ranges are known from the central barrens of the NWT and Nunavut, where Grizzly Bears have home ranges of up to 6,700 km<sup>2</sup> for males and 2,100 km<sup>2</sup> for females.
- Bears are very powerful animals. Learn to avoid conflicts with bears and always travel in groups. A guide to bear safety in the NWT is available at [www.gov.nt.ca/ecc/en/services/bear-safety](http://www.gov.nt.ca/ecc/en/services/bear-safety).

# Hoary Bat

*Lasiurus cinereus*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Endangered - 2023</b>	Under consideration
NWT	Not assessed	No status

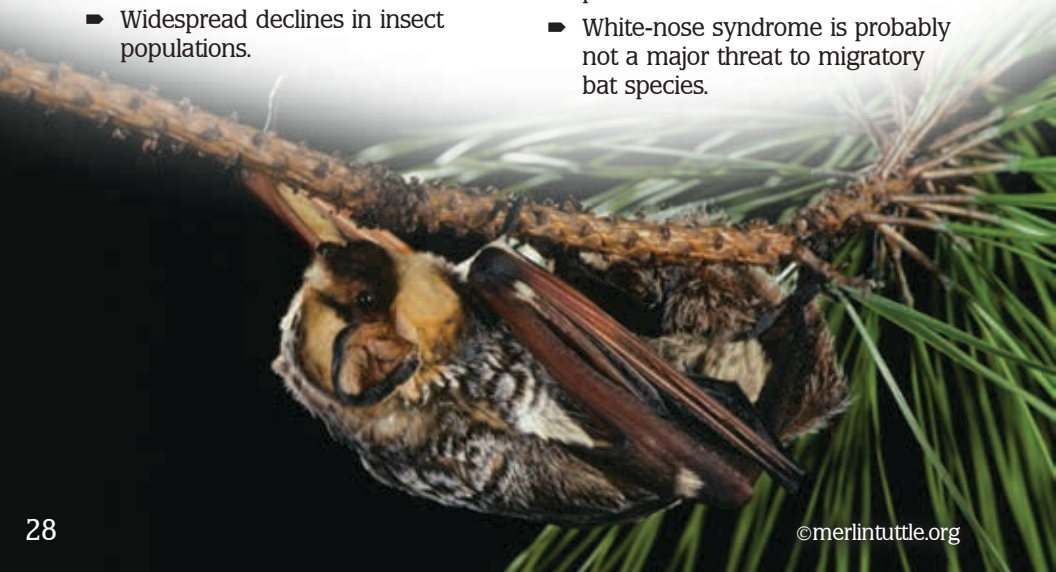
The Hoary Bat is the largest bat in Canada. The fur on its back is long and soft. Its grey-brown hairs are tinged with white, giving this bat a frosted “hoary” appearance. The Hoary Bat has yellow fur on the throat, around the ears, and on the underside of the wing. It has a furry tail membrane and short, rounded ears. Hoary Bats are rarely seen, but their distinctive echolocation calls are easily recorded on bat detectors and can sometimes even be heard by the human ear.

Weight: 16 to 38 g (0.6 to 1.3 oz)  
Wingspan: 34 to 41 cm (13 to 16 in)

Report Hoary Bat sightings to  
[WILDLIFE OBS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:WILDLIFE OBS@gov.nt.ca)

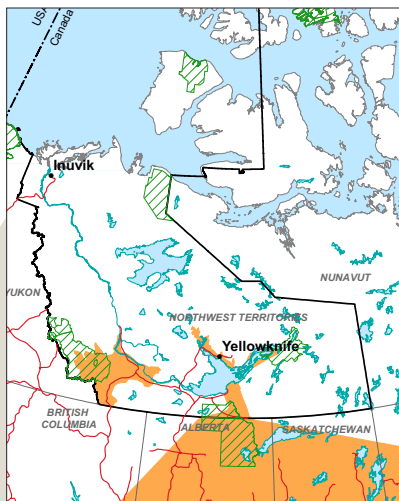
## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Collisions with wind turbines kill many Hoary Bats, especially when turbines are built along migration routes or near other key bat habitat.
- Widespread declines in insect populations.
- Loss of forest habitat, especially large mature trees.
- Environmental pollution such as mercury, pesticides, industrial pollutants and wildfire smoke.
- White-nose syndrome is probably not a major threat to migratory bat species.



## Typical Habitat

- Hoary Bats roost on tree branches among the needles and leaves.
- Roosts are usually on large, mature coniferous or deciduous trees near the edge of a clearing.
- Hoary Bats hunt for food high off the ground (7-15 meters), at or above treetop level, catching insects in the air.
- They eat moths, beetles, dragonflies, water bugs, and other large insects.



Hoary Bat ■  
National Parks ▨

Hoary Bats are insect-eating migratory bats found across North America in the summer, including the NWT. They are fast fliers and migrate hundreds of kilometres every year to spend the winter in coastal areas of the United States and Mexico. In summer, Hoary Bats usually roost alone or with their pups. However, they often form groups to migrate. Every year, many Hoary Bats are killed in collisions with wind turbines during their migration. The Hoary Bat is one of three migratory tree-roosting bat species whose Canadian population has declined dramatically in recent years; the others are the Eastern Red Bat (page 22) and Silver-haired Bat (page 42). An NWT bats management plan is available at [www.nwt-species-at-risk.ca](http://www.nwt-species-at-risk.ca).

## Did you know?

- A roosting Hoary Bat looks a lot like a dry leaf on a branch, which provides excellent camouflage.
- Because their roosts are more exposed than other bat species, female Hoary Bats forage for shorter times and stay with their young pups for longer periods to keep them warm.
- Hoary Bats are attracted to insect swarms at lights outside of buildings. However, they are rarely found inside buildings.
- Hoary Bats are the most broadly distributed bat species in the Americas, occurring from Alaska to Argentina, from Hawaii to Bermuda, and even sometimes in Iceland.

# Little Brown Myotis

*Myotis lucifugus*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Endangered - 2013</b>	<b>Endangered - 2014</b>
NWT	<b>Special Concern - 2017</b>	<b>Special Concern - 2018</b>

The Little Brown Myotis is a medium-sized bat. Fur on its back ranges from yellowish-brown to dark brown-black and is often glossy. Fur on its underside is lighter and goes from light brown to tan. The tragus (fleshy projection which covers the entrance of the ear) is short and blunt. Females are slightly larger than males and usually only have one young (called a pup) per year.

Weight: 7 to 14 g (0.3 to 0.5 oz)

Wingspan: 22 to 27 cm (9 to 11 in)

Report Little Brown Myotis sightings to  
[WILD.LIFE.OBS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:WILD.LIFE.OBS@gov.nt.ca)

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

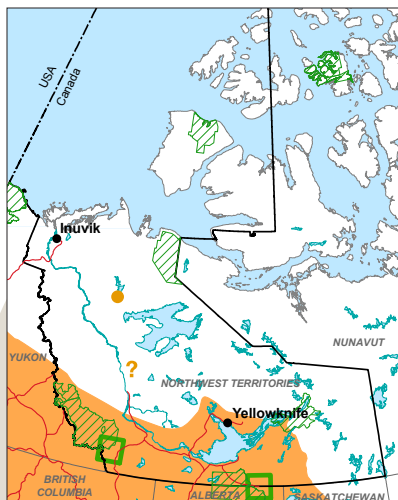
- A fungal disease called white-nose syndrome occurs elsewhere in Canada, but has not yet been reported in the NWT. It could eventually spread north. A map of its spread is available at [www.whitenosesyndrome.org](http://www.whitenosesyndrome.org).
- Bats with white-nose syndrome show loss of body fat and unusual behaviour during winter, including flying outside in the day.
- Bats with white-nose syndrome very often die of the disease.
- Human activities at hibernation sites, such as caves and mines, can have significant negative impacts on bat populations.
- Removing or renovating buildings that are used by bats or blocking their entry/exit points can kill large numbers of bats at once.





## Typical Habitat

- ▶ Little Brown Myotis hunt flying insects in a variety of habitats, often over water.
- ▶ Summer roosts can include man-made structures (like attics), tree cavities, under the bark of trees, rock crevices and caves.
- ▶ Winter hibernation sites (also called hibernacula) are usually in caves or mines.



- Little Brown Myotis ■
- Area Containing Critical Habitat
- Northern Range Limit is Uncertain ?
- Single Record ●
- National Parks

The Little Brown Myotis is an insect-eating bat found throughout much of Canada. In the NWT, it has been found north and south of Great Slave Lake, in the Dehcho, and occasionally in the Sahtú. Since 2006, this bat has been dying in significant numbers in the eastern United States and Canada from a disease called white-nose syndrome. The fungus that causes white-nose syndrome grows in humid cold environments typical of the caves where bats hibernate, and it continues to spread towards the NWT. A national recovery strategy for the Little Brown Myotis is available at the federal [species at risk public registry](#) and includes critical habitat identification. An NWT bats management plan is available at [www.nwtspeciesatrisk.ca](http://www.nwtspeciesatrisk.ca).

## Did you know?

- ▶ Approximately 3,000 bats overwinter in one NWT cave, making it the largest known hibernation site in western Canada.
- ▶ A Little Brown Myotis can eat as many as 600 mosquito-sized insects in one hour.
- ▶ Nahanni National Park Reserve is the northernmost bat hibernation area documented in North America.
- ▶ To help the Little Brown Myotis, avoid entering caves and abandoned mines where bats may be hibernating and use bat-friendly practices to deal with bats in buildings. A *NWT Guide for Managing Bats in Buildings* is available at [www.gov.nt.ca/ecc/en/services/bats](http://www.gov.nt.ca/ecc/en/services/bats).



# Northern Mountain Caribou

## Caribou (Northern Mountain Population)



*Rangifer tarandus caribou*

	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Special Concern - 2014</b>	<b>Special Concern - 2005</b>
NWT	<b>Special Concern - 2020</b>	<b>Special Concern - 2021</b>

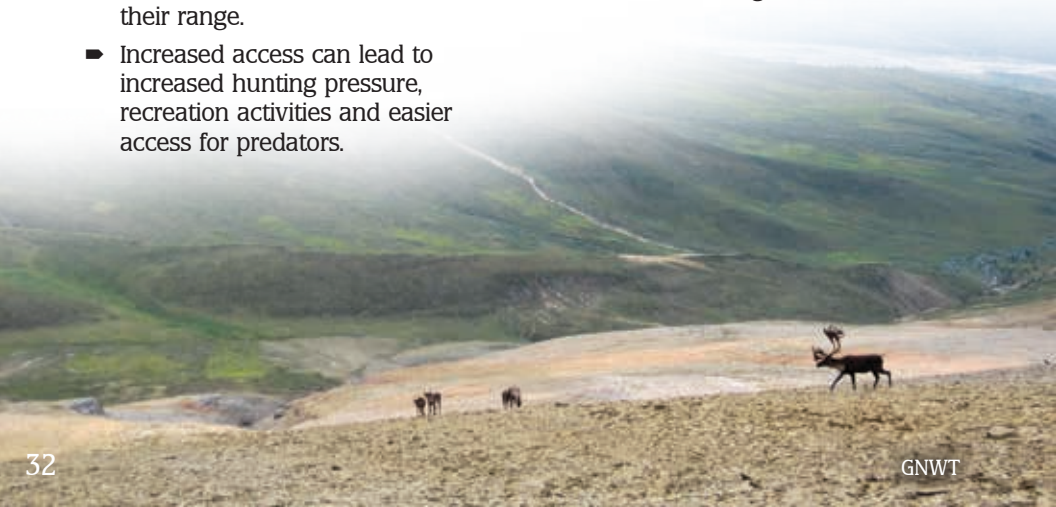
Northern Mountain Caribou are members of the deer family. Compared to Barren-ground Caribou (page 12), Northern Mountain Caribou are larger and darker, have thicker and broader antlers, and have longer legs and a longer face. Northern Mountain Caribou look the same as Boreal Caribou (page 14), but have different habitat preferences and behaviour.

Weight: 110 to 210 kg (240 to 460 lb)  
Height at shoulder: 1.0 to 1.2 m (3.3 to 4.0 ft)

Report Northern Mountain Caribou sightings to  
[WILDLIFEOBS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:WILDLIFEOBS@gov.nt.ca)

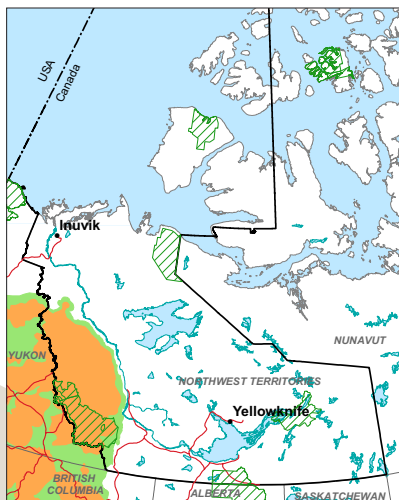
### Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Mineral exploration activities can disturb Northern Mountain Caribou and increase access into their range.
- Increased access can lead to increased hunting pressure, recreation activities and easier access for predators.
- There are fewer summer ice patches in the mountains because of climate change.



## Typical Habitat

- Northern Mountain Caribou live throughout the Mackenzie Mountains in open alpine and sub-alpine areas in summer, and montane spruce-lichen forest areas with shallow snow cover in winter.
- They have distinct migrations where they move up or down in elevation depending on the season.



- Northern Mountain Caribou ■
- Trace Occurrences ■
- National Parks ▨

Northern Mountain Caribou live in the Mackenzie Mountains in large groups, sometimes in the thousands. There are approximately 50,000 – 55,000 Northern Mountain Caribou in the NWT, Yukon and northern British Columbia. The herds in the NWT include the Bonnet Plume (about 5,000 animals), Redstone (at least 10,000 animals) and Nahanni Complex (including Coal River, La Biche and South Nahanni; about 3,000 animals). Most information on population trends in the NWT is outdated, except for the South Nahanni herd with a stable or possibly increasing population. Populations are generally thought to be stable based on scientific information, however Indigenous knowledge holders have reported population declines in certain areas or displacement. An NWT management plan for Northern Mountain Caribou is available at [www.nwtspeciesatrisk.ca](http://www.nwtspeciesatrisk.ca) and a national management plan is available at the federal [species at risk public registry](http://species-at-risk.ca).

## Did you know?

- While there is some localized hunting pressure in mountain areas with road access, overall there is limited harvesting of Northern Mountain Caribou because they live in very remote areas.
- Northern Mountain Caribou use ice patches to escape insects and cool down in the summer.
- Caribou are the only species of the deer family where both males and females have antlers.

# Northern Myotis

*Myotis septentrionalis*



Assessment  
Canada

**Endangered - 2013**

Legal List

**Endangered - 2014**

NWT

**Special Concern - 2017**

**Special Concern - 2018**

The Northern Myotis is very similar in colour and size to the Little Brown Myotis (page 30), but the ears are longer (extend beyond the nose when pressed forward) and the tragus (fleshy projection which covers the entrance of the ear) is long, slender and pointed. Sometimes the Northern Myotis and Little Brown Myotis use the same roosts or hibernacula and it is difficult to tell the species apart.

Weight: 6 to 9 g (0.2 to 0.3 oz)

Wingspan: 23 to 27 cm (9 to 11 in)

Report Northern Myotis sightings to  
[WILDLIFE OBS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:WILDLIFE OBS@gov.nt.ca)

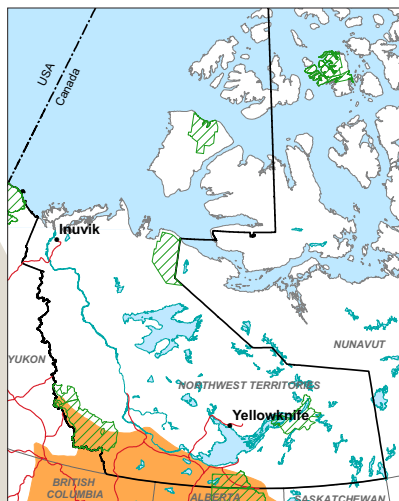
## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- A fungal disease called white-nose syndrome occurs elsewhere in Canada, but has not yet been reported in the NWT. It could eventually spread north. A map of its spread is available at [www.whitenosesyndrome.org](http://www.whitenosesyndrome.org).
- Bats with white-nose syndrome show loss of body fat and unusual behaviour during winter, including flying outside in the day.
- Bats with white-nose syndrome very often die of the disease.
- Human activities at hibernation sites, such as caves and mines, can have significant negative impacts on bat populations.
- Removal of trees used by Northern Myotis as summer roosts can affect large numbers of bats at once.



## Typical Habitat

- ▶ Northern Myotis often hunt in cluttered areas such as forests, forest edges and overgrown trails.
- ▶ Summer roosts are most often in large trees (in tree cavities and under loose bark), but can also be in man-made structures (e.g. under shingles).
- ▶ Winter hibernation sites (also called hibernacula) are usually in caves or mines.



Northern Myotis ■  
National Parks ▨

The Northern Myotis is an insect-eating bat found in forested areas throughout much of Canada. It uses echolocation to capture its prey from tree branches or leaves as well as on the fly. The Northern Myotis is highly susceptible to white-nose syndrome. Both Northern Myotis and Little Brown Myotis are long-living and reproduce slowly, which makes them sensitive to population decline. A national recovery strategy for the Northern Myotis is available at the federal [species at risk public registry](http://www.nwtspeciesatrisk.ca) and includes critical habitat identification. An NWT bats management plan is available at [www.nwtspeciesatrisk.ca](http://www.nwtspeciesatrisk.ca).

## Did you know?

- ▶ The Northern Myotis used to be called the northern long-eared bat.
- ▶ White-nose syndrome is estimated to be spreading 200 to 400 km a year, but can also jump long distances if accidentally spread by humans.
- ▶ There are eight bat species in the NWT – seven confirmed and one suspected.
- ▶ To help the Northern Myotis, avoid entering caves and abandoned mines where bats may be hibernating. Before removing large aspen trees, consider whether Northern Myotis may be roosting in them.



# Peary Caribou

*Rangifer tarandus pearyi*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Threatened - 2015</b>	<b>Threatened - 2023</b>
NWT	<b>Threatened - 2022</b>	<b>Threatened - 2014</b>

Peary Caribou are members of the deer family and are the smallest of all caribou subspecies. Like Dolphin and Union Caribou (page 20), Peary Caribou have a mostly white coat in winter and are slate-grey with white legs and under-parts in summer. The velvet covering their antlers is grey.

Weight: Males, 70 kg (150 lb)  
Length: 1.7 m (5.6 ft)

**Report Peary Caribou sightings to**  
**WILDLIFEOBS@gov.nt.ca**

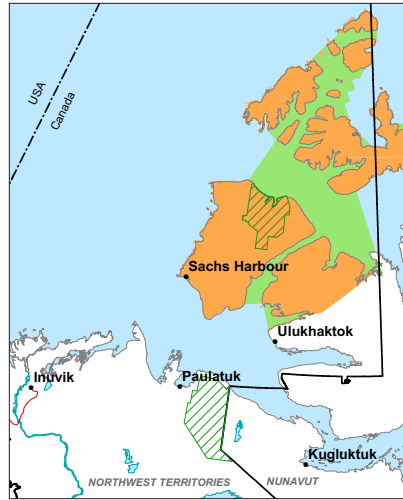
## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Severe winter and spring weather creates ice layers preventing Peary Caribou from reaching their food. Their small and variable population size makes Peary Caribou vulnerable to these severe icing events.
- Muskoxen may influence Peary Caribou populations through competition, avoidance or interactions with predators or parasites.
- Hunting and predation may have contributed to past population declines.
- A reduction in the extent, thickness, and duration of sea ice from climate change could make it harder for Peary Caribou to move between islands.



## Typical Habitat

- ▶ Peary Caribou are found in small groups on the arctic islands of the NWT and Nunavut.
- ▶ Summer range includes river valley slopes or other moist areas, and upland plains with abundant sedges, willows, grasses and herbs.
- ▶ Winter range includes exposed areas like hilltops and raised beach ridges where the snow is thinner and it is easier to find food.
- ▶ Peary Caribou need large areas with a variety of habitats, and the ability to move around to different parts of their range.



- Peary Caribou ■
- Areas Containing Critical Habitat ■
- National Parks ▨

Peary Caribou populations in the NWT declined steeply between the 1960s and the 1990s, likely due to a combination of factors including several years of unusually severe winter and spring weather. Over the last 20 years there have been sustained low numbers; however, there is recent evidence of an increase in numbers on the Queen Elizabeth Islands and Banks Island. A national recovery strategy for Peary Caribou is available at the federal [species at risk public registry](#) and includes critical habitat identification.

## Did you know?

- ▶ Inuvialuit have taken a strong leadership role in protecting Peary Caribou, including implementing self-imposed harvest quotas.
- ▶ Sea ice crossings are important movement corridors for Peary Caribou to access different parts of their range.



# Polar Bear

*Ursus maritimus*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Special Concern - 2018</b>	<b>Special Concern - 2011</b>
NWT	<b>Special Concern - 2021</b>	<b>Special Concern - 2014</b>

Polar Bear fur appears white or off-white due to translucent hairs (sunlight partially goes through them). Polar Bears have no shoulder hump and they have shorter claws and a longer neck than Grizzly Bears.

Weight: Females, less than 350 kg (770 lb)  
Males, up to 800 kg (1,750 lb)

Report Polar Bear sightings to  
[WILDLIFE0BS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:WILDLIFE0BS@gov.nt.ca)

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

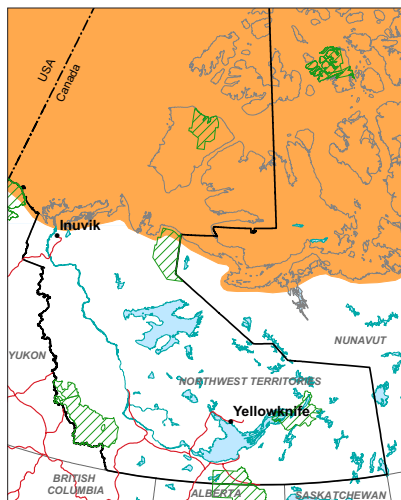
- The most serious long-term threat to Polar Bears in the NWT is habitat change due to climate change – especially reduction in sea ice. This will have direct and indirect effects on Polar Bears, including loss of habitat, ecosystem-level changes affecting the availability of prey, separation from denning areas on land, contaminants from the environment, expansion of human activities, and increased likelihood of human-bear interactions.
- Additional management concerns include increased shipping, pollution and contamination, research impacts, disease and parasites.





## Typical Habitat

- Polar Bear habitat is closely linked to density and distribution of seals (their main prey) and to the distribution of annual ice in the winter.
- Bears generally follow the retreating ice offshore in the summer.
- Maternal denning sites are usually located on land in snowdrifts near the coast, but have also been found on sea ice.



Polar Bear ■  
National Parks ▨

NWT shares three sub-populations of Polar Bears, an estimated 3,000 bears, with neighbouring jurisdictions: Southern Beaufort Sea, Northern Beaufort Sea, and Viscount Melville Sound. The Southern Beaufort Sea sub-population has likely declined based on scientific information, but is stable based on Indigenous Knowledge. The Northern Beaufort Sea sub-population is likely stable. The information for these sub-populations is being updated. Preliminary scientific results indicate the Viscount Melville Sound sub-population has increased and Indigenous Knowledge also indicates it has increased. Little is known about the fourth sub-population, Arctic Basin. A joint management plan for Polar Bears in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region is available at [www.nwt-species-at-risk.ca](http://www.nwt-species-at-risk.ca).

## Did you know?

- Polar Bears are sensitive to population declines because they only breed every three years, have small litters and take a long time to reach maturity.
- In the NWT, all human-caused mortality of Polar Bears is strictly managed through a quota system recommended by the wildlife co-management boards.
- Inuvialuit have exclusive rights to hunt Polar Bears in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, but can transfer that right to other hunters.

# Ringed Seal

*Pusa hispida*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Special Concern - 2019</b>	Under consideration
NWT	Not applicable	Not applicable

The Ringed Seal is the smallest species in the seal family. They have a small head and a short snout. Ringed Seals get their name from the pattern of light rings against a dark background that is visible on its coat. Ringed Seals are the most abundant seals in Arctic waters.

Weight: Adults, 50 to 70 kg (110 to 154 lb)  
Length: Adults, average 1.5 m (5 ft)

Report Ringed Seal sightings to  
[WILDLIFEOBS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:WILDLIFEOBS@gov.nt.ca)

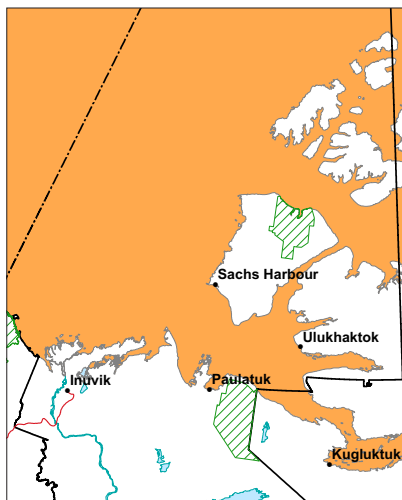
## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Habitat change due to climate change is the most serious long-term threat to Ringed Seals, including substantial reductions in sea ice and snow cover.
- Activities like shipping, tourism and industrial development are expected to increase with the longer ice-free season. These can lead to disturbance, disease, habitat change and pollution.



## Typical Habitat

- Ringed Seals live in Arctic waters near ice floes and pack ice. They create a breathing hole in the ice, which lets them use the ice year-round to raise pups, rest and moult.
- In winter and spring, breeding females prefer stable, landfast ice with good snow coverage, such as pressure ridges, bays and coastlines. Pups are born in snow lairs that provide important protection from the environment and predators. Stable ice and adequate snow depth are critical during this time.
- During the open water season, seals move around and feed on a wide variety of prey to build up their blubber reserves.



Ringed Seal ■  
National Parks ▨

Ringed Seals are found in ocean waters around the North Pole, including all seas of the Arctic Ocean. Their habitat is strongly linked to the sea ice. They eat a variety of prey including fish, shrimp, and other crustaceans. Female Ringed Seals can give birth to a single pup per year in March or April. It is difficult to determine population trends for Ringed Seals. They are still abundant, and there are about 2.3 million Ringed Seals in Canada and nearby waters. However, their habitat is changing rapidly. The Arctic has undergone substantial climatic change since the late 1970s. The extent and thickness of Arctic sea ice have decreased while the ice-free season has lengthened.

## Did you know?

- Ringed Seals create breathing holes in the ice. They use the claws on their flippers to scrape away ice to keep breathing holes open.
- In the spring, Ringed Seals haul themselves out on the sea ice to moult and bask in the sun.
- Ringed Seals are an important traditional source of food, fuel, and pelts (furs) for Inuvialuit.
- Ringed Seals are the main prey for Polar Bears and important prey for Arctic Foxes.

# Silver-haired Bat

*Lasionycteris noctivagans*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Endangered - 2023</b>	Under consideration
NWT	Not assessed	No status

The Silver-haired Bat is a medium-sized bat with black wings. Its fur is black or dark brown overall, with scattered white-tipped hairs that give it a silvery appearance. The top of its tail membrane is covered in fur. The Silver-haired Bat's ears are short and round.

Weight: 9 to 17 g (0.3 to 0.6 oz)

Wingspan: 20 to 35 cm (8 to 14 in)

Report Silver-haired Bat sightings to  
[WILDLIFEOBS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:WILDLIFEOBS@gov.nt.ca)

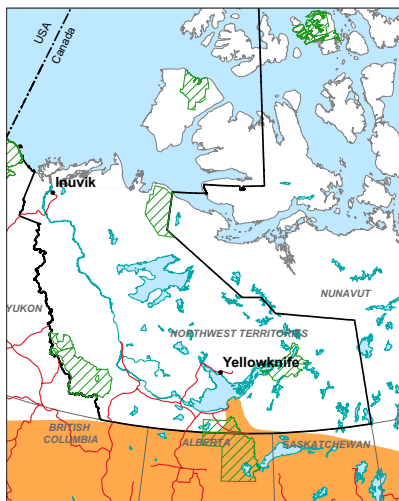
## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Collisions with wind turbines kill many Silver-haired Bats, especially when turbines are built along migration routes or near other key bat habitat.
- Widespread declines in insect populations.
- Loss of mature forest habitat.
- Removal of standing dead/dying trees used for roosting.
- Environmental pollution such as mercury, pesticides, industrial pollutants and wildfire smoke.
- Predation by domestic cats.
- White-nose syndrome is probably not a major threat to migratory bat species, but its potential impact on Silver-haired Bat is unclear.



## Typical Habitat

- Silver-haired Bats primarily roost in trees: in cavities (hollows), in crevices, or under loose bark.
- Old growth forests with many dead or decaying trees are important roosting habitat for this bat.
- The Silver-haired Bat is an agile flier that forages in forests and along forest edges, as well as over ponds.
- It eats a variety of small, soft-bodied prey like flies, moths, leafhoppers, caddisflies, beetles, ants, and spiders.



Silver-haired Bat ■  
National Parks ▨

Silver-haired Bats are insect-eating bats found across Canada, the United States and Mexico. In most of their range they migrate south for the winter, but in B.C. and Alaska some of them stay and hibernate. Little is known about this species in the NWT. In summer, Silver-haired Bats roost alone or in small groups. Multiple females and their young may roost together in a small “maternity colony.” During migration, Silver-haired Bats are exposed to many threats including collisions with wind turbines. The Silver-haired Bat is one of three migratory tree-roosting bat species whose Canadian population has declined dramatically in recent years; the others are the Eastern Red Bat (page 22) and Hoary Bat (page 28). An NWT bats management plan is available at [www.nwtspciesatrisk.ca](http://www.nwtspciesatrisk.ca).

## Did you know?

- Although black bats are a popular Halloween decoration, most real bats are not black. The Silver-haired Bat is the only NWT bat species that is black.
- A photo taken in Fort Resolution in 2011 turned out to be the first record of a Silver-haired Bat in the NWT.
- Woodpecker nest sites (cavities) are important habitat for maternity colonies of Silver-haired Bats.
- The scientific name *Lasiorycteris noctivagans* translates as “hairy night-wandering bat.”



# Wolverine

*Gulo gulo*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Special Concern - 2014</b>	<b>Special Concern - 2018</b>
NWT	<b>Not at Risk - 2014</b>	No status

The Wolverine resembles a small, stocky bear. Colour varies from brown to black, often with a pale facial mask and yellowish or tan stripes running along its sides from the shoulders and crossing at the tail.

Weight: Females, 7.5 to 11 kg (16 to 24 lb)  
Males, 12 to 16 kg (26 to 35 lb)

Report Wolverine sightings to  
[WILDLIFEOBS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:WILDLIFEOBS@gov.nt.ca)

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Although this species is classified Not at Risk in the NWT, development and other human activities can disturb Wolverines and fragment habitat, even if these activities are a considerable distance from the core range of a Wolverine.
- Disturbance of maternal den sites can result in abandonment of kits.
- Human-caused mortalities due to conflicts and harvesting could become an issue if they are not well-managed.



## Typical Habitat

- Wolverines are found in a wide variety of habitats, from the boreal forest to alpine tundra and barrenlands.
- They require large wilderness areas with adequate year-round food supplies.



Wolverine ■  
 Areas of Increased Presence ■  
 National Parks ▨

Wolverines are scavengers and predators that eat many different types of carrion and prey. Wolverines can travel long distances and they occur at low densities. The NWT population is generally stable but there are indications of recent declines in the central barrens, possibly linked to Barren-ground Caribou declines.

Wolverines only breed every two years, have small litters, and their kits can have high mortality rates. Because of this, they do not recover easily from population declines.

## Did you know?

- Wolverine fur is resistant to frost and ice and, therefore, highly valued for parka trim.
- They have large paws that help them move easily on top of crusted snow.
- They have strong jaws that allow them to crush bones and frozen food.
- An NWT-specific assessment found that Wolverine is Not at Risk in the territory, but it is still a species of Special Concern in Canada.



# Wood Bison

*Bos bison athabascæ*



## Assessment

## Legal List

Canada

**Special Concern - 2013**

**Threatened - 2003**

NWT

**Threatened - 2016**

**Threatened - 2017**

Wood Bison are the largest land mammals in North America. They are dark brown and have a massive head, a distinct beard, a shoulder hump and curved horns.

Weight: Females, 500 to 550 kg (1,100 to 1,200 lb)

Males, 650 to 1,080 kg (1,430 to 2,400 lb)

Height at shoulder: 1.5 to 2.0 m (4 to 6 ft)

**Report Wood Bison sightings to  
WILDLIFE OBS@gov.nt.ca**

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Introduced bovine brucellosis and tuberculosis and the management actions that are necessary to manage these diseases.
- Limited genetic diversity in disease-free populations.
- Naturally occurring outbreaks of anthrax.
- Collisions with vehicles.
- Spring floods and falling through thin ice.
- Human-bison conflicts and lack of public acceptance in some areas.



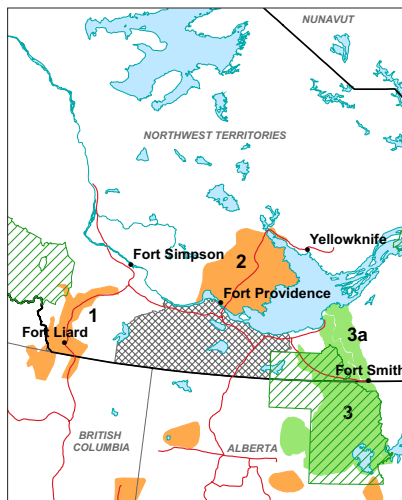


## Typical Habitat

- Slave River Lowlands and Mackenzie populations: willow savannas with grasses and sedges.
- Nahanni population: meadows and oxbows with sedges and horsetails.

### Populations

- 1 - Nahanni
- 2 - Mackenzie
- 3 - Greater Wood Buffalo National Park
- 3a - Slave River Lowlands



- Wood Bison (orange)
- Wood Bison (diseased) (green)
- Bison Control Area (cross-hatched)
- National Parks (diagonal lines)

Once on the verge of extinction due to over-hunting, Wood Bison now occur in the NWT in three free-ranging populations. The Greater Wood Buffalo National Park population, which includes bison in the Slave River Lowlands, is infected with bovine tuberculosis and brucellosis. The Mackenzie and Nahanni populations are free of these diseases. A Bison Control Area was created to prevent the spread of bovine tuberculosis and brucellosis to the Mackenzie and Nahanni populations. All bison in the control area are presumed to be disease carriers and are therefore removed. A national recovery strategy for Wood Bison is available at the federal [species at risk public registry](#) and an NWT recovery strategy is available at [www.nwt-species-at-risk.ca](http://www.nwt-species-at-risk.ca). There are also management plans available for each of the herds.

## Did you know?

- In 2013, COSEWIC assessed Wood Bison as Special Concern. Wood Bison previously had a status of Threatened (in 2000 and 1988) and Endangered (in 1978).
- The Mackenzie population experienced a large decline from 2012 to 2013, due primarily to an anthrax outbreak, but seems to be recovering. In 2019, the population was estimated to be about 1,470 animals.
- The Nahanni population was estimated to be about 544 bison in 2021.
- In 2020, the Slave River Lowlands population was estimated to have about 484 bison on the east and west sides of the Slave River outside of Wood Buffalo National Park. There is also a large population within the park, about 2,778 bison in 2019. These populations are smaller than in the early 2000s.



# American White Pelican

*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Not at Risk - 1987</b>	No status
NWT	<b>Special Concern - 2023</b>	Under consideration

The American White Pelican is a large white bird with black flight feathers – one of the biggest birds in North America. With yellow legs, webbed feet and large wings, these birds are excellent swimmers and flyers. A large pouched yellow bill helps them gather food along the surface of the water. Breeding adults develop a “horn” on their bill, which they lose after the breeding season.

Weight: 4.5 to 9 kg (10 to 20 lb) Length: 127 to 165 cm (50 to 65 in)  
Wingspan: 244 to 290 cm (96 to 114 in)

Report American White Pelican sightings to  
[WILDLIFEOBS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:WILDLIFEOBS@gov.nt.ca)

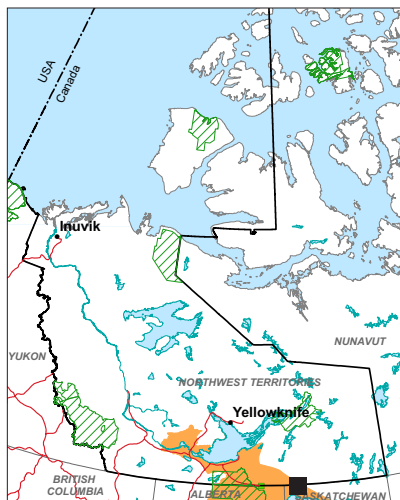
## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- There is only one known breeding colony of American White Pelicans in the NWT—which means a single threatening event could negatively impact all the pelicans in the territory.
- Pelicans are susceptible to contagious disease outbreaks because many birds live together in the colony.
- Humans can disturb pelicans by using boats and low-flying aircraft too close to nests. Adult pelicans might abandon their nests and eggs if they are disturbed.
- Flooding, drought and extreme weather events can impact nesting success and survival of chicks.
- Pelican colonies are vulnerable to predators – especially when water levels are low (providing access to nesting islands) or when nesting birds are spooked (leaving eggs and chicks unattended).



## Typical Habitat

- American White Pelicans feed in shallow waters along edges of wetlands, lakes and rivers or below rapids. They mainly eat small fish.
- They typically nest on isolated islands close to feeding areas.
- The Slave River colony is the only known breeding colony that uses habitat in the NWT. The pelicans nest on islands in the Slave River just south of the Alberta border. They feed at the Rapids of the Drowned at Fort Smith, as well as other wetlands, lakes and rivers.
- Pelicans can travel long distances to feed and are seen throughout the southern NWT.



American White Pelican ■  
 Slave River Colony ■  
 National Parks

American White Pelicans migrate every year from their winter range to their summer breeding grounds. They return to the NWT as frozen waters open up in late April or early May. They breed in colonies – groups made up of pairs of adults that nest together. These colonies range from dozens to thousands of individuals. Populations of American White Pelicans in Canada and the United States more than doubled from the 1960s and 1980s, and this increasing trend has continued. In the NWT, surveys are done on the Slave River colony every year. The colony increased during the 1970s-1990s, then began to stabilize in the 2000s with around 400-800 nests each year. In 2022, the colony was estimated to include between 1,300 and 2,100 pelicans.

## Did you know?

- In the past, American White Pelicans have nested at other places in the NWT: in the early 1900s on islands in Great Slave Lake, and in the 1980s at Oracha Falls on the Taltson River. 'Oracha' comes from the Chipewyan word for 'pelican', ?Orānchāy.
- A pelican usually lays two eggs; however, often only one chick survives. After a few weeks, chicks from multiple nests group together into "pods" while the adults are out feeding.
- The Slave River colony's nesting islands in Alberta are protected as a seasonal wildlife sanctuary. Education and advocacy by the Pelican Advisory Circle in Fort Smith has also helped to reduce human disturbance of the colony.

# Bank Swallow

*Riparia riparia*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Threatened - 2013</b>	<b>Threatened - 2017</b>
NWT	Not applicable	Not applicable

The Bank Swallow is a small, slender songbird that feeds on flying insects. It can be recognized by its small head, thin wings and long, slender, notched tail. It has pale brown upper-parts and rump, white under-parts and throat, and a well-defined dark band across its chest. Males and females have similar plumage.

Weight: 10.6 to 18.8 g (0.4 to 0.7 oz)

Length: 11.9 to 14.0 cm (4.7 to 5.5 in)

Report Bank Swallow sightings to  
[www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org)

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Large-scale decline or some other change in insect populations.
- Direct and indirect mortality due to severe weather events (cold snaps).
- Slumping of river banks where Bank Swallows nest.
- Nests located at sand/gravel mounds or aggregate quarries can be destroyed if material extraction at these sites occurs during the nesting season.
- Habitat loss and degradation from human activities.



## Typical Habitat

- Bank Swallows nest on artificial and natural sites with vertical sand-silt banks such as riverbanks, lake and ocean bluffs, sand/gravel mounds, aggregate quarries and road cuts. A burrow is dug into the side of these sites that leads to a nest chamber.
- They breed near open habitats along rivers, streams, lakes and gravel pits where they search for flying insects.



- Bank Swallow ■
- Areas Containing Critical Habitat ■
- National Parks ▨

The Bank Swallow is a widespread species of swallow that is found on every continent except Australia and Antarctica. It is found breeding in colonies in the northern two-thirds of the United States and north to the treeline of Canada. It winters mainly in South America. Like many other species of birds that feed on flying insects, the Bank Swallow has seen a decline of about 95% of its Canadian population since the 1970s. The cause of the severe declines is not fully understood, but it is likely the impact of multiple threats or cumulative effects affecting Bank Swallows on their breeding grounds, wintering grounds, and during migration. A 14% increase was recently estimated over a ten-year period (2009-2019), largely driven by a detected increase in Saskatchewan. A national recovery strategy for Bank Swallow is available at the federal [species at risk public registry](#) and includes critical habitat identification.

## Did you know?

- Bank Swallows are very social birds and are often found with other birds when away from the nest.
- Male Bank Swallows dig burrows leading to underground nest chambers using their small beak, feet and wings. The male digs the burrow before he has a mate and then the female chooses a mate and nest by hovering in front of the burrow.
- Nest burrows are 63 cm deep on average, and are generally dug straight into the side of the bank (parallel to the ground).
- Females build the nest by making a mat of straw, grasses, leaves and roots torn from the exposed bank.
- Bank Swallows nest in colonies ranging from 10 nests to nearly 2,000 nests.

For the most current species information, visit the federal [species at risk public registry](#).

# Barn Swallow

*Hirundo rustica*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Special Concern - 2021</b>	<b>Threatened - 2017</b>
NWT	Not applicable	Not applicable

The Barn Swallow is a small bird easily recognized by its steely-blue upper-parts, cinnamon under-parts, chestnut throat and forehead, and deeply forked tail. Both sexes have similar plumage, but males have longer outer tail streamers than females and tend to be darker chestnut on their under-parts.

Weight: 17 to 21 g (0.6 to 0.7 oz)

Length: 15 to 18 cm (5.9 to 7.1 in)

Report Barn Swallow sightings to  
[www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org)

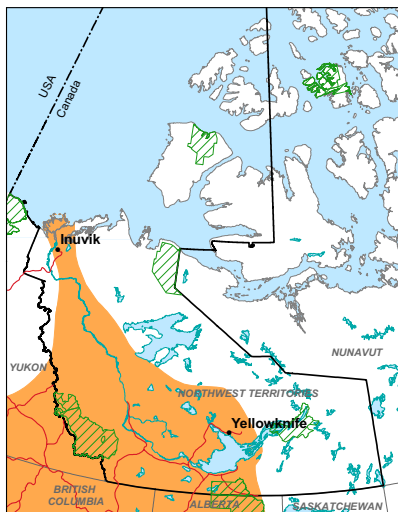
## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Large-scale decline or some other change in insect populations.
- Direct and indirect mortality due to severe weather events (cold snaps).
- Habitat loss and degradation from human activities.
- Nests located on human-built structures, such as buildings and culverts, can be destroyed if structures are modified during the nesting season.



## Typical Habitat

- Barn Swallows nest in man-made features such as buildings, garages, barns, bridges and road culverts, as well as natural habitats such as caves, and crevices in cliff faces.
- They breed near open habitats, including meadows near wetlands, where they search for flying insects and can use mud to build their nests.



Barn Swallow ■  
National Parks ▨

The Barn Swallow is the most widespread species of swallow in the world and is found on every continent except Antarctica. It breeds across much of North America and winters throughout Central and South America. In Canada, it breeds in all provinces and territories except Nunavut. Like many other species of birds that feed on flying insects, the Barn Swallow experienced declines of about 78% since the 1970s. A 1.2% decline was recently estimated in the Canadian population over a ten-year period (2009-2019). The reasons for the declines are not well understood, but they are likely the impacts of multiple threats or cumulative effects affecting Barn Swallows on their breeding grounds, wintering grounds, and during migration.

## Did you know?

- Barn Swallow nests are primarily made of mud, often mixed with grasses and stems, which they collect in their beak and attach to a ledge or vertical surface. They often return to the same nesting site and may even reuse an old nest from previous years.
- Barn Swallows prefer to nest in human-made structures. It is estimated that only about 1% of Barn Swallows in Canada currently use natural nesting sites.
- Barn Swallows can be easily distinguished from other swallows by their deeply forked tail with long outer tail streamers.

For the most current species information, visit the federal species at risk public registry.

# Buff-breasted Sandpiper

*Calidris subruficollis*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Special Concern - 2012</b>	<b>Special Concern - 2017</b>
NWT	Not applicable	Not applicable

The Buff-breasted Sandpiper is a medium-sized shorebird. Its head appears small relative to its body, and it has a short black bill and bright yellow-ochre (green-brown) or yellow-orange legs. Its neck appears long because of its small head and upright posture. It has a “buff” (pale peach or yellowy-tan) coloured breast and a mottled, dark brown and buff back that looks “scaly” because of the strong tone variation between these two colours.

Weight: 46 to 78 g (1.6 to 2.8 oz)  
Length: 18 to 20 cm (7.1 to 7.8 in)

Report Buff-breasted Sandpiper sightings to  
[www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org)

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Breeding habitat degradation from threats like climate change and industrial development.
- Direct disturbance at nest sites from human activities, such as resource exploration and development.





## Typical Habitat

- Buff-breasted Sandpiper habitat use varies throughout the breeding season on the tundra.
- Breeding displays usually start on dry, unvegetated, snow-free areas and move to moister grass and sedge meadows as the season progresses.
- Nests are typically in sedge patches near dry display areas and close to water sources, or in wetlands near large waterbodies or rivers.
- Foraging is usually on sparsely vegetated areas, especially along the banks of streams and rivers.



Buff-breasted Sandpiper ■  
National Parks ▨

The Buff-breasted Sandpiper is a shorebird that breeds in the central Canadian Arctic, including Banks Island and western Victoria Island in the NWT. Once abundant in North America, the Buff-breasted Sandpiper population declined significantly due to extensive market hunting in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The species is thought to have declined further in recent decades, likely driven by factors affecting habitat quality at migratory stopover sites and wintering areas. These factors include the conversion of native grasslands to agricultural land, pesticide exposure, wind farm development, and climate change effects. A national management plan for Buff-breasted Sandpiper is available at the federal [species at risk public registry](#).

## Did you know?

- The Buff-breasted Sandpiper is a polygynous species. This means one male may court and breed with several females.
- The Buff-breasted Sandpiper is the only North American shorebird with a lek mating system. Males gather at display areas (called “leks”) to perform competitive displays to attract mates. After mating, females care for the eggs and young without help from the males.
- While most male shorebirds stop displaying once nests are established and the breeding season progresses, Buff-breasted Sandpiper males may continue to display to females already on established nests, and even while on migration.

For the most current species information, visit the federal [species at risk public registry](#).

# Canada Warbler

*Cardellina canadensis*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Special Concern - 2020</b>	<b>Threatened - 2010</b>
NWT	Not applicable	Not applicable

The Canada Warbler is a small, brightly coloured songbird with bluish grey upper-parts and yellow under-parts. A series of patterned black spots form a “necklace” on its bright yellow breast, but tends to be greyer and less defined in females. Other features such as the white eye ring, thin pointed bill, and white feathers at the base of the tail help to distinguish this bird from similar species.

Weight: 7.9 to 16.3 g (0.3 to 0.6 oz)  
Length: 12 to 15 cm (4.7 to 5.9 in)

Report Canada Warbler sightings to  
[www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org)

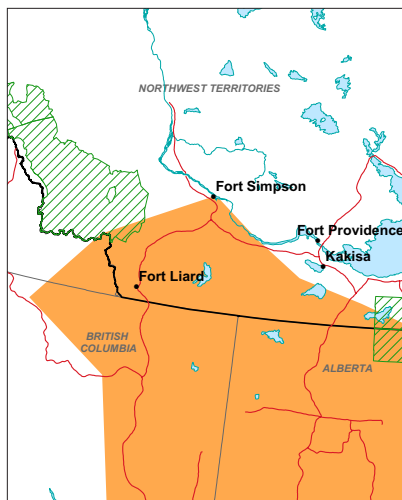
## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Loss and degradation of breeding habitat from human-caused and natural disturbances.
- Human activities resulting in increased numbers of predators and declining food sources.



## Typical Habitat

- The Canada Warbler lives in moist deciduous and mixed deciduous-coniferous boreal forests with a well-developed shrub layer, often on steep slopes.



Canada Warbler ■  
National Parks ▨

Canada Warblers have been found nesting in the southern NWT (from north of Fort Liard to Kakisa). They eat flying insects and spiders captured in flight or on the ground. The Canada Warbler population in Canada declined by about 63% since the 1970s. The reasons are not fully understood but loss of forest on the wintering grounds in South America and events occurring during migration are contributing to population declines. A 46% increase was recently estimated in Canada over a ten year period (2009-2019). A national recovery strategy for Canada Warbler is available at the federal [species at risk public registry](#).

## Did you know?

- The Canada Warbler is one of the last warblers to arrive in the NWT in the spring and one of the first to leave in the fall.
- The Canada Warbler flies approximately 8,000 km to its wintering grounds each fall, and again as it returns to its breeding grounds in the spring.
- This warbler received its name from its discovery in Canada, where the majority of its breeding range occurs.

For the most current species information, visit the federal [species at risk public registry](#).

# Common Nighthawk

*Chordeiles minor*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Special Concern - 2018</b>	<b>Special Concern - 2023</b>
NWT	Not applicable	Not applicable

The Common Nighthawk is a medium-sized bird, with dark brown plumage mottled with black, white and buff. It has long, slender, pointed wings and a long slightly notched tail. The head is large and flat, with large eyes, a small bill, and a wide mouth. In flight, a white patch can be seen on the wings of the adults. Females can be distinguished from males by their throat band, which is pale yellow rather than white. The throat band on juveniles is mottled or absent. Adult males have a white tail band which is lacking in most adult females.

Weight: 71 to 93 g (2.5 to 3.3 oz)

Length: 21 to 25 cm (8 to 10 in)

Report Common Nighthawk sightings to  
[www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org)

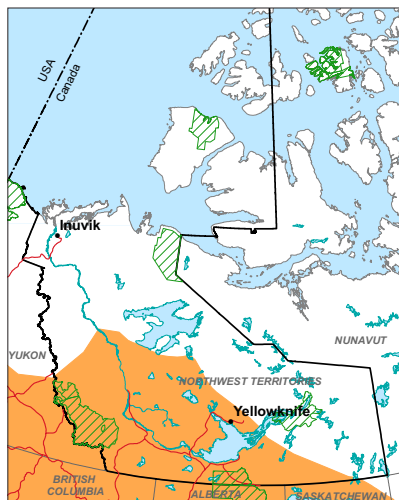
## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Collisions with motor vehicles and aircraft.
- Large-scale decline or some other change in insect populations.
- Human activities resulting in declining food sources and increased numbers of predators.
- Direct and indirect mortality due to severe weather events (cold snaps).
- Habitat loss and degradation from human activities.



## Typical Habitat

- The Common Nighthawk nests in a variety of habitats such as sand dunes and beaches, open forests, forest clearings (including recently logged or burned areas), rocky outcrops, peat bogs, marshes, lakeshores, river banks, gravel areas (roads, quarries and flat gravel-covered roofs), and airports.



Common Nighthawk ■  
National Parks ▨

Common Nighthawks arrive in the NWT to breed in mid-May to early June. They lay on average two eggs directly on the soil, sand, gravel or bare rock. Chicks stay in the nest area for about three weeks and are primarily fed by the male. Fall migration to wintering areas in South America occurs from mid-August to mid-September. Like many other species of birds that feed on flying insects, the Common Nighthawk experienced declines of about 68% since the 1970s. The reasons for the declines are not well understood but they could be the impacts of multiple threats or cumulative effects affecting Common Nighthawks on their breeding grounds, wintering grounds, and during migration. A 16% increase was recently estimated in Canada over a ten year period (2009-2019). A national recovery strategy for Common Nighthawk is available at the federal [species at risk public registry](#).

## Did you know?

- Common Nighthawks can be recognized by their loud, nasal “peent” calls and erratic, almost bat-like flight. They actively pursue flying insects at dusk and dawn, often feeding on insects attracted to lights and insects swarming over bodies of water.
- Common Nighthawks are crepuscular, meaning they are most active at dawn and dusk.
- Male Common Nighthawks perform spectacular booming courtship dives as part of mating and territorial displays. The booms are produced by air rushing through the feathers.

For the most current species information, visit the federal [species at risk public registry](#).

# Eskimo Curlew

*Numenius borealis*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Endangered - 2009</b>	<b>Endangered - 2003</b>
NWT	Not applicable	Not applicable

The Eskimo Curlew is a mottled brownish shorebird with long legs and a long, thin, slightly down-curving bill. It can be confused with its close relative, the Whimbrel, but is smaller (the size of a pigeon), has no barring or “stripes” on the under-wing feathers, and its central head stripe is not as wide or well-defined.

Weight: 270 to 454 g (9.5 to 16.0 oz)  
Length: 32 to 37 cm (13 to 15 in)

Report Eskimo Curlew sightings to  
[www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org)

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Unknown.



## Typical Habitat

- Known breeding habitat of the Eskimo Curlew consisted of upland tundra, dwarf shrub and grass tundra, and grassy meadow habitat.



Eskimo Curlew (historical range) ■  
National Parks ▨

The Eskimo Curlew once nested abundantly in the barrens of the NWT. During fall migration, huge flocks flew to the Atlantic coast and then non-stop to Argentina. Spring migration was through Texas and the mid-western states, with some birds found in the Canadian Prairies.

Unregulated market hunting brought the Eskimo Curlew to near extinction during the 19th century. A national recovery strategy for the Eskimo Curlew is available at the federal [species at risk public registry](#). Scientists have determined that recovery of this species is not feasible at this time.

## Did you know?

- The Eskimo Curlew has been near extinction for much of the last century. The last confirmed record was a bird harvested in Barbados in 1963. There have been several unconfirmed sightings since, including in the NWT, but none have been substantiated.
- The Eskimo Curlew had only two documented breeding locations, both in the NWT: at the base of Bathurst Peninsula in the Anderson River area, and in the region of Amundsen Gulf-Coronation Gulf-Coppermine River. Breeding likely also occurred in other areas of the NWT and Nunavut, and possibly in the Yukon and Alaska.
- There has been no direct evidence of nesting since 1866.
- According to COSEWIC guidelines, a species can be classified as extinct if 50 years have passed since the last credible record, there is no remaining habitat, or there is information to confirm extinction. Eskimo Curlew was last assessed by COSEWIC in 2009. At that time fewer than 50 years had passed since the last confirmed sighting.

For the most current species information, visit the federal [species at risk public registry](#).

# Evening Grosbeak

*Coccothraustes vespertinus*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Special Concern - 2016</b>	<b>Special Concern - 2019</b>
NWT	Not applicable	Not applicable

The Evening Grosbeak is a stocky songbird with a massive greenish-yellow bill. The adult male is boldly coloured with a dark brown head, brilliant yellow eyebrow stripe, yellow body and black tail. It has black wings with a distinct patch of white on each wing. The adult female is generally grayish-brown with a yellowish nape and flanks. Its wings and tail are black and white.

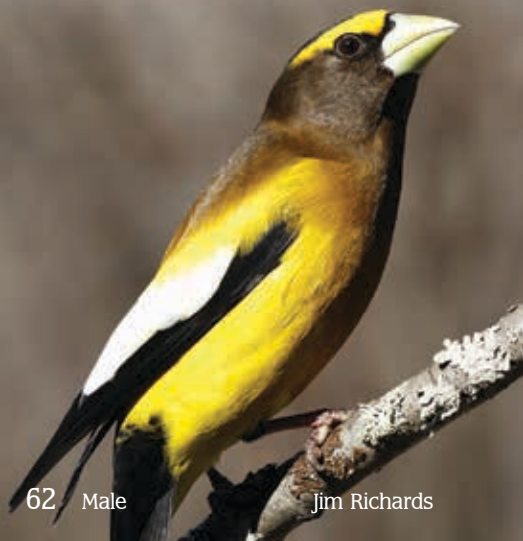
Weight: 53 to 74 g (1.9 to 2.6 oz)

Length: 16 to 18 cm (6 to 7 in)

Report Evening Grosbeak sightings to  
[www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org)

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Loss or degradation of mature and old-growth forests from human-caused and natural disturbances.
- Human activities resulting in increased numbers of predators and declining food sources.



62 Male

Jim Richards



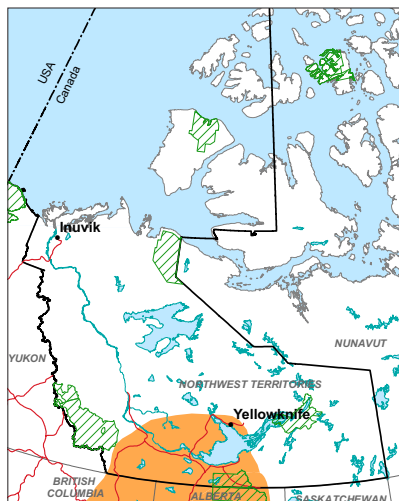
Female

Jim Richards



## Typical Habitat

- The Evening Grosbeak breeds in open, mature conifer-dominated forests.
- Its habitat includes areas with abundant seeds or insects to eat (will move around as the food supply changes).



Evening Grosbeak ■  
National Parks

The Evening Grosbeak is found year-round in the boreal forest, including the southern NWT. It is a nomadic species whose movements are driven by a variable food supply. In winter, Evening Grosbeaks eat seeds and are found in areas where seed-crops, such as pine and spruce, are high. In summer, they eat insects, especially Spruce Budworm, which has a natural cycle of periodic outbreaks that can attract large numbers of Evening Grosbeaks to an area. The Evening Grosbeak expanded its range to eastern Canada in the early 20th century. Since 1970, the species has seen population declines of 77% to 86% over most of its range, correlated with Spruce Budworm cycles. Other potential reasons for decline are not well understood, but could include multiple threats or cumulative effects affecting Evening Grosbeaks on their breeding grounds, wintering grounds, and during migration. A national management plan for the Evening Grosbeak is available at the federal [species at risk public registry](#).

## Did you know?

- The Evening Grosbeak can act as natural pest control for the Spruce Budworm, a native insect responsible for significant damage to forests across Canada.
- In winter, Evening Grosbeaks are familiar visitors at bird feeders.
- With its enormous bill, the Evening Grosbeak can crack seeds that are too large for smaller birds to open. Smaller birds sometimes seek out Evening Grosbeaks to eat the scraps they leave behind.
- Three subspecies of Evening Grosbeak are recognized in North America. The subspecies can be distinguished by their calls and distribution.

For the most current species information, visit the federal [species at risk public registry](#).

# Harris's Sparrow

*Zonotrichia querula*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Special Concern - 2017</b>	<b>Special concern - 2023</b>
NWT	Not applicable	Not applicable

The Harris's Sparrow is North America's largest sparrow. It has a chunky body with a barrel-shaped chest that makes its head look a bit small. Males and females have a similar appearance with streaky brown and black plumage, grey or brown cheeks, a white belly, and a pink bill. Breeding adults have a distinctive black bib, face and crown.

Weight: 26.2 to 48.8 g (0.9 to 1.7 oz)  
Length: 17 to 20 cm (6.7 to 7.9 in)

Report Harris's Sparrow sightings to  
[www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org)

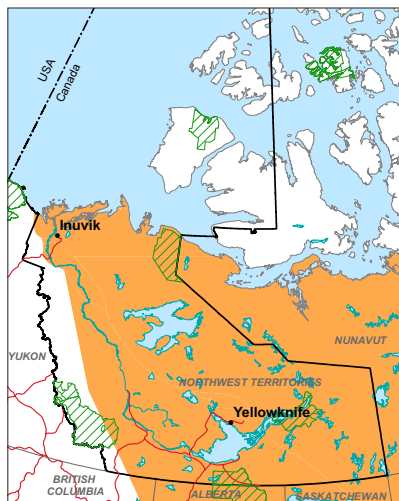
## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Breeding habitat degradation from climate change.
- Habitat loss and degradation from resource exploration and development.
- Human activities resulting in declining food sources and increased numbers of predators.



## Typical Habitat

- The Harris's Sparrow breeds in semi-forested tundra (open tundra mixed with patches of trees and shrubs).
- It nests on the ground, hidden in dense shrubby vegetation dominated by dwarf birch, alder and willow.
- Breeding territories typically include coniferous trees.



Harris's Sparrow ■  
National Parks ▨

Harris's Sparrows breed near the treeline in northern Canada. They arrive on their breeding territories in the NWT in late May to early June. The female builds a nest on the ground in which she lays three to five eggs; the male helps to feed the young. In late summer they form loose flocks before migrating to wintering grounds on the Great Plains of the south-central United States. Harris's Sparrow has undergone a significant long-term population decline. Christmas Bird Counts on the wintering grounds have shown a decline of 59% between 1980 and 2014, including a 16% decline from 2004 to 2014. Conversion of lands for agriculture on the wintering grounds, as well as pesticide use, are thought to be factors in the decline.

## Did you know?

- Harris's Sparrow is the only songbird that breeds exclusively in Canada. About half of its breeding range is in the NWT.
- Its song is a simple whistle of 1 to 3 evenly spaced notes of the same pitch.
- Crowberries, blueberries and bearberries are important food for Harris's Sparrows in the spring when they first return to the tundra. They include more insects and seeds in their diet as the season progresses.

For the most current species information, visit the federal species at risk public registry.



# Horned Grebe

*Podiceps auritus*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada (Western Population)	<b>Special Concern - 2023</b>	<b>Special Concern - 2017</b>
NWT	Not applicable	Not applicable

The Horned Grebe is a small waterbird with a short, straight bill with a pale tip. Its breeding plumage includes a distinctive patch of bright buff feathers behind the eye (“horns”) and extending back to the nape of the neck and contrasting sharply with its black head. The foreneck, flanks and upper breast are chestnut-red, while its back is black and belly white. This plumage is shared by both sexes.

Weight: 300 to 570 g (10.6 to 20.1 oz)

Length: 31 to 38 cm (12 to 15 in)

Report Horned Grebe sightings to  
[www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org)

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Increases in nest predators such as crows, ravens, magpies, gulls, mink and foxes.
- Predation on chicks by Northern Pike and gulls.
- Climate change may cause loss of wetlands due to drought or changes in water quality.



## Typical Habitat

- Habitat for Horned Grebe includes small ponds, marshes and wetlands, either natural or man-made.
- Grebes build floating nests in shallow water, and use willow, cattails or other plants for protection from predators and shelter from strong waves.



Horned Grebe ■  
National Parks ▨

Horned Grebes arrive in the NWT in May. They lay five to seven eggs that hatch in mid-June and July. Adults leave the NWT by mid-August and young leave by early September. They winter along the Pacific and Atlantic coasts of North America. They eat aquatic insects, small fish and crustaceans. Horned Grebe numbers have declined in their wintering areas as well as their breeding grounds across all regions of Canada, with steeper declines detected in the Prairie Pothole region than in the boreal forest. There are recent signs of a possible population increase from the Breeding Bird Survey. A national management plan for the Horned Grebe is available at the [federal species at risk public registry](#).

## Did you know?

- Once hatched, chicks are almost immediately able to swim and dive underwater. However, during the first few weeks they often ride on the backs of their parents and can even go underwater with them during dives.
- Horned Grebes are known for eating their own feathers to aid in digestion and even feed feathers to young chicks.
- Researchers are tracking Horned Grebes from Yellowknife to learn where they overwinter and what threats they are exposed to.

For the most current species information, visit the [federal species at risk public registry](#).

# Hudsonian Godwit

*Limosa haemastica*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Threatened - 2019</b>	Under consideration
NWT	Not applicable	Not applicable

The Hudsonian Godwit is one of the largest shorebirds that occurs in the NWT. It has long, dark legs and a long, slightly upturned bill. The bill is bi-coloured in both sexes, being pinkish red or orange at the base and becoming darker towards the tip. Females are usually larger than males, but males have darker plumage overall.

Weight: Females, 246 to 358 g (8.7 to 12.6 oz)  
Males, 196 to 266 g (6.9 to 9.4 oz)

Length: 36 to 42 cm (14 to 17 in)

Report Hudsonian Godwit sightings to  
[www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org)

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Breeding habitat degradation from threats like climate change and industrial development.
- Direct disturbance at nest sites from human activities, such as resource exploration and development.



## Typical Habitat

- Breeding habitat for the Hudsonian Godwit includes wetland areas of boreal and sub-Arctic regions, such as grass/sedge meadows or muskeg.
- The nest site is well concealed and often located on dry hummocks or ridges of tundra polygons.



Hudsonian Godwit ■  
National Parks ▨

Hudsonian Godwits are known to breed at three main locations in North America: western Alaska, the Hudson Bay coast, and along the Beaufort Sea coast in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region (especially the Mackenzie River Delta). Counts at migratory stopover sites indicate the species has declined significantly since the 1970s, although the reliability of these estimates remains low. The causes of this decline are unclear, but the species is considered vulnerable to disturbance because many individuals in the population gather together at only a small number of key staging and wintering sites.

## Did you know?

- Hudsonian Godwits undertake one of the longest migrations of any bird species in the world. They can travel more than 32,000 km annually between their North American breeding grounds and wintering sites in South America.
- They can fly continuously for extended periods and much of this distance is covered during non-stop flights over the ocean that can take several days.



# Ivory Gull

*Pagophila eburnea*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Endangered - 2023</b>	<b>Endangered - 2009</b>
NWT	Not applicable	Not applicable

The Ivory Gull is a medium-sized gull that can be identified by its pure white plumage and black legs.

Weight: 448 to 687 g (16 to 24 oz)  
Length: 40 to 49 cm (16 to 19 in)

Report Ivory Gull sightings to  
[www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org)

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

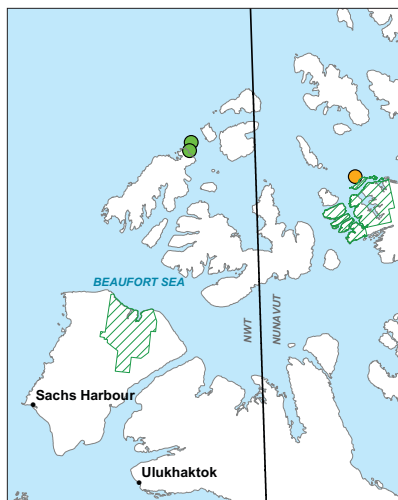
- Disturbance and pollution at marine feeding and resting areas.
- Contaminants affecting the food they eat.
- Degradation of marine feeding areas as a result of climate change.
- Human disturbance at colonies.
- Human activities resulting in increased numbers of predators (foxes, ravens and other gulls) near colonies.





## Typical Habitat

- Ivory Gull habitat includes pack ice or areas of open water surrounded by ice (polynyas).
- The Ivory Gull is an uncommon migrant in the Beaufort Sea and may winter in the offshore leads (fractures in the sea ice exposing open water) in some years.



- Ivory Gull Colonies ●
- Ivory Gull Historic Colonies ●
- National Parks ▨

Ivory Gulls are found across northern Canada, Greenland and the western European Arctic year-round. From September to May they winter in Davis Strait, Nunavut, along the southern edge of the pack ice. They move to the High Arctic in late May and then into their nesting colonies in June. Colony size ranges from a few to 200 pairs and they lay one to three eggs. Ivory Gull populations have declined by more than 70% since the 1980s and this decline may be attributed to illegal harvest in Greenland, high levels of certain contaminants in their foods, and degradation of ice-related feeding areas as a result of climate change. A national recovery strategy for Ivory Gulls is available at the federal [species at risk public registry](#).

## Did you know?

- In Canada, Ivory Gulls currently only nest in Nunavut on windswept plateaus, ice-choked islands, or on steep cliffs of mountains protruding from glaciers. They once nested on Prince Patrick Island in the Northwest Territories, but this site has been abandoned since its initial discovery in the 1800s.
- Large expanses of the western Arctic are apparently unsuitable for nesting Ivory Gulls because there is no ice-free ocean regularly available when the birds arrive to breed. Furthermore, the flat vegetated landscape of these islands supports predators of the Ivory Gull such as foxes.

For the most current species information, visit the federal [species at risk public registry](#).

# Lesser Yellowlegs

*Tringa flavipes*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Threatened - 2020</b>	Under consideration
NWT	Not applicable	Not applicable

The Lesser Yellowlegs is a medium-sized shorebird. Breeding birds have uniform gray to grayish brown upperparts with pale spotting. They have a dark bill, long slender neck, and distinctive bright, long yellow legs.

Weight: 79 to 91 g (2.8 to 3.2 oz)

Length: 23 to 27 cm (9.1 to 10.6 in)

Report Lesser Yellowlegs sightings to  
[www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org)

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Breeding habitat degradation from threats like climate change and industrial development.
- Direct disturbance at nest sites from human activities, such as resource exploration and development.



## Typical Habitat

- Lesser Yellowlegs typically breed in muskeg and open forests in the boreal ecozone.
- They nest in dense vegetation near open water.



Lesser Yellowlegs ■  
National Parks ▨

The Lesser Yellowlegs breeds across the boreal forest of Canada and Alaska. Approximately 80% of the breeding population occurs in Canada. Estimates from breeding and migration surveys suggest that populations of Lesser Yellowlegs have declined by 70% since 1970, and that the rate of decline has been increasing in recent decades. Causes of the decline are not completely understood, but loss of wetland habitat and under-regulated harvest during migration and on the wintering grounds are of primary concern.

## Did you know?

- Although not hunted in North America, Lesser Yellowlegs are a popular game bird to sport and subsistence harvesters in Central and South America, and the Caribbean.
- Lesser Yellowlegs are very defensive of their nest sites and will approach intruders in order to draw attention away from their eggs and young.
- Their distinctive “tu-tu” call can commonly be heard in boreal habitats during the breeding season.

For the most current species information, visit the federal species at risk public registry.

# Olive-sided Flycatcher

*Contopus cooperi*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Special Concern - 2018</b>	<b>Special Concern - 2023</b>
NWT	Not applicable	Not applicable

The Olive-sided Flycatcher is a deep olive-grey with a white breast and belly. The dark patches on either side of its white belly look like an unbuttoned vest. Its bill is short and stout, the top bill is dark and the bottom one is light with a black tip.

Weight: 29 to 35 g (1.0 to 1.2 oz)

Length: 18 to 20 cm (7 to 9 in)

Report Olive-sided Flycatcher sightings to  
[www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org)

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Habitat loss and degradation from human activities.
- Human activities resulting in increased numbers of predators and declining food sources.
- Large-scale decline or some other change in insect populations.



## Typical Habitat

- The Olive-sided Flycatcher lives in wetlands, mature conifer forests and areas with young trees, including those created by wildfires or clear-cuts.
- It also uses open forests containing tall trees or snags for perching.



Olive-sided Flycatcher ■  
National Parks ▨

The Olive-sided Flycatcher arrives in the NWT in late May and early June. Females incubate 3 to 4 eggs for about 15 days. The Olive-sided Flycatcher leaves the NWT in late July to early August and winters in South and Central America. It eats flying insects. Like many other species of birds that feed on flying insects, the Olive-sided Flycatcher experienced a decline of about 70% since the 1970s. The reasons for the decline are not well understood but could be related to the impacts of multiple threats or cumulative effects affecting Olive-sided Flycatchers on their breeding grounds, wintering grounds, and during migration. A 10% increase was recently estimated in Canada over a ten year period (2009-2019). A national recovery strategy for Olive-sided Flycatcher is available at the federal [species at risk public registry](#).

## Did you know?

- The Olive-sided Flycatcher perches on tall trees or snags and waits for insects to fly by before pursuing its prey.
- It has a loud song that sounds like “*quick, THREE BEERS.*”
- Females will also sing when agitated or when close to their nest.
- Household cats kill over two billion birds a year in North America. You can help birds by keeping your cats inside.

For the most current species information, visit the federal [species at risk public registry](#).



# Red Knot

**islandica subspecies**

*Calidris canutus islandica*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Not at Risk - 2020</b>	<b>Special Concern - 2012</b>
NWT	Not applicable	Not applicable

The Red Knot is a medium-sized shorebird with a small head, straight black bill (tapering from thick base to thinner tip), and long tapered wings giving an elongated streamlined profile to the body. Red Knots in breeding plumage have a rufous-red face, breast and belly. The *islandica* Red Knots have more vivid breeding colours than the *rufa* subspecies of Red Knot.

Weight: 135 g (5 oz)

Length: 23 to 25 cm (9 to 10 in)

Report Red Knot sightings to  
[www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org)

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Breeding habitat degradation from threats like climate change and industrial development.
- Direct disturbance at nest sites from human activities, such as resource exploration and development.



## Typical Habitat

- ▶ During the breeding season in the Arctic, Red Knots use dry vegetated and barren habitats such as windswept ridges, slopes or plateaus.
- ▶ Their nests are usually placed in a small patch of vegetation within about 500 m of a pond, wetland or waterbody.



Red Knot (*islandica* and *rufa* subspecies) ■  
National Parks ▨

The Red Knot *islandica* subspecies is one of two subspecies of Red Knot known to breed in Canada. The *islandica* subspecies breeds on the high Arctic islands north of Banks Island and winters in northwest Europe. They typically arrive on the breeding grounds from late-May to early-June and begin laying their clutch of four eggs by mid to late-June.

The eggs are incubated for a period of 21 to 23 days before the chicks hatch in mid-July. The Red Knot *islandica* subspecies population declined since the 1980s due to a decrease in food resources on their wintering grounds. However, the population has stabilized and former threats from shellfish harvesting in Europe have been reduced. These factors led to an improved status for Red Knot *islandica* in its most recent assessment.

A national management plan for Red Knot *islandica* subspecies is available at the federal [species at risk public registry](#).

## Did you know?

- ▶ Nests are extremely hard to find because Red Knots are well-camouflaged and are reluctant to leave their nest, even when approached at close distances.
- ▶ To prepare for migration to their breeding grounds, Red Knots undergo dramatic physiological changes that increase flying efficiency. Parts of their body used for

flying (heart and flight muscles) increase in size, and parts not useful for flight (digestive system) decrease in size to reduce weight. Once they arrive on their breeding grounds, their heart, flight muscles and digestive system return to normal.

# Red Knot

*rufa* subspecies

*Calidris canutus rufa*



## Assessment

## Legal List

Canada (Three populations with different wintering grounds)

1. Tierra del Fuego/Patagonia
2. Southeastern U.S./ Gulf of Mexico/Caribbean
3. Northeastern South America)

<sup>1</sup> **Endangered - 2020**

<sup>2</sup> **Endangered - 2020**

<sup>3</sup> **Special Concern - 2020**

<sup>1</sup> **Endangered - 2012**

<sup>2</sup> **Threatened - 2010**

<sup>3</sup> **Threatened - 2010**

NWT

Not applicable

Not applicable

The Red Knot is a medium-sized shorebird with a small head, straight black bill (tapering from thick base to thinner tip) and long tapered wings, giving an elongated streamlined profile to the body. Red Knots in breeding plumage have a rufous-red face, breast and belly. The *rufa* Red Knot breeding plumage is paler and more “washed out” than the *islandica* subspecies.

Weight: 135 g (5 oz)

Length: 23 to 25 cm (9 to 10 in)

Report Red Knot sightings to  
[www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org)

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Breeding habitat degradation from threats like climate change and industrial development.
- Direct disturbance at nest sites from human activities, such as resource exploration and development.





## Typical Habitat

- ▶ During the breeding season in the Arctic, Red Knots use dry vegetated and barren habitats such as windswept ridges, slopes or plateaus.
- ▶ Their nests are usually placed in a small patch of vegetation within about 500 m of a pond, wetland or waterbody.



Red Knot (*islandica* and *rufa* subspecies) ■  
National Parks ▨

The Red Knot *rufa* subspecies is one of two Red Knot subspecies known to breed in Canada. It breeds in the central Canadian Arctic, potentially including Banks and western Victoria Islands in the NWT. COSEWIC recognizes three populations of *rufa* Red Knot based on widely separated wintering locations, and has assessed the status of each individually.

Whether these three populations occupy geographically separate areas when on the Arctic breeding grounds is currently unknown. Overall, populations of *rufa* Red Knots have declined dramatically since the 1980s due to a decrease in their primary food source at a key stopover site used during migration. A national recovery strategy for Red Knot *rufa* subspecies is available at the federal [species at risk public registry](#).

## Did you know?

- ▶ Delaware Bay in New Jersey, U.S.A., is a critical stopover site for all three populations of *rufa* Red Knots during their northward migration. Their migration is timed to coincide with the spawning of horseshoe crabs.
- ▶ Horseshoe crab eggs are a very important food source for migrating *rufa* Red Knots because the eggs, unlike any other food resource, are immediately metabolized into fat. The birds must eat enough eggs at Delaware Bay to have the fat stores needed to sustain their northward migration to the Arctic breeding grounds. Their body weight can nearly double during this process.
- ▶ Two Red Knot populations that were formerly considered part of the *roselaari* subspecies are now thought to be *rufa*: those wintering in southeastern U.S./Gulf of Mexico/Caribbean and in northeastern South America.

For the most current species information, visit the federal [species at risk public registry](#).

# Red-necked Phalarope

*Phalaropus lobatus*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Special Concern - 2014</b>	<b>Special Concern - 2019</b>
NWT	Not applicable	Not applicable

The Red-necked Phalarope is a small shorebird with a thin, needle-like bill. Both sexes have a dark head with a white spot above the eye, white throat, and a dark back with bold, buff-coloured streaking. The bright, chestnut-red stripe down the sides of the neck is distinctive. Females have brighter and bolder plumage during the breeding season than males.

Weight: 29 to 44 g (1.0 to 1.6 oz)  
Length: 18 to 20 cm (7.1 to 7.9 in)

Report Red-necked Phalarope sightings to  
[www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org)

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Breeding habitat degradation from threats like climate change and industrial development.
- Direct disturbance at nest sites from human activities, such as resource exploration and development.



## Typical Habitat

- The Red-necked Phalarope breeds in low and sub-Arctic tundra and tundra-forest transition habitats.
- Nests are typically found in grass-sedge vegetation near freshwater wetlands, lakes, ponds, rivers or streams.



Red-necked Phalarope ■  
National Parks ▨

Red-necked Phalaropes can be found throughout much of the NWT during the breeding season, arriving in the territory from late-May to early-June. Females lay a clutch of four eggs which is then incubated by the male for a period of 19-21 days. Red-necked Phalaropes appear to have experienced significant declines at an important migratory staging area since the 1970s, but the overall population trend is unknown. A national management plan for Red-necked Phalarope is available at the [federal species at risk public registry](#).

## Did you know?

- Red-necked Phalaropes spend much of the year at sea. They primarily come inland during the breeding season and on migration.
- The typical sex-roles found in most bird species are reversed in phalaropes. Females have brightly-coloured plumage and compete for males, who are better camouflaged and are solely responsible for parental care of the eggs and young.
- Red-necked Phalaropes feed on plankton and aquatic invertebrates which they capture with their bills while swimming. They can often be observed spinning in circles, which creates an upward current that draws prey items closer to the surface where they can be captured more easily.

For the most current species information, visit the [federal species at risk public registry](#).

# Rusty Blackbird

*Euphagus carolinus*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Special Concern - 2017</b>	<b>Special Concern - 2009</b>
NWT	Not assessed	No status

Rusty Blackbirds are medium-sized forest birds. During the breeding season (May to July), males are uniformly black with a faint greenish gloss on the body. Females are slate grey without gloss. In fall and winter, males and females show rusty brown feathers on the head, back and chest.

Weight: 45 to 80 g (1.6 to 2.8 oz)

Length: 21 to 25 cm (8.2 to 9.8 in)

Report Rusty Blackbird sightings to  
[www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org)

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Activities that change their forest and wetland habitats such as forest clearing, changes in surface water levels or flow patterns and wetlands drying as a result of climate change.
- Mercury in wetlands, deposited from the atmosphere and released by melting permafrost.
- Human activities resulting in declining food sources and increased numbers of predators.



## Typical Habitat

- Rusty Blackbirds live throughout the boreal forest, and in wetland areas during the breeding season and migration.
- They breed near open water in treed wetlands (bogs, fens and swamps), often in loose colonies.
- Rusty Blackbirds primarily nest in small spruce trees.



Rusty Blackbird ■  
National Parks ▨

Rusty Blackbirds live in the boreal forest of the NWT from early May to mid-October. They typically congregate into flocks in the fall and migrate to the south and east-central United States. This formerly abundant species has seen steep population declines since the early 20th century, including a decline of 66-80% from 1970 to 2014. It appears the pattern of long-term decline may have moved towards a stable trend over the last decade. The population trend in the NWT is uncertain but there are some indications of a possible decline based on Breeding Bird Surveys. A national management plan for Rusty Blackbird is available at the federal [species at risk public registry](#).

## Did you know?

- Rusty Blackbirds rely almost exclusively on aquatic insects and larvae for food, particularly dragonfly nymphs.
- Rusty Blackbirds can accumulate high levels of mercury contamination through the insects they eat.
- Blackbirds are not protected by the *Migratory Birds Convention Act*, but the NWT *Wildlife Act* protects Rusty Blackbird nests and eggs from disturbance.
- In their southern range, Rusty Blackbirds are affected by blackbird control programs associated with farming.

# Short-eared Owl

*Asio flammeus*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Threatened - 2021</b>	<b>Special Concern - 2012</b>
NWT	Not assessed	No status

Short-eared Owls are light tan with wide brown streaks on their upper parts and thinner well-defined vertical streaks on their breast and belly. There are black spots on the undersides of their wings near the wrists. They have small “ear tufts” and black bands that frame their yellow eyes. Short-eared Owls are about the size of a crow. Females are slightly larger and darker than males and have heavier streaking.

Weight: Females, 284 to 475 g (10.0 to 16.8 oz)  
Males, 206 to 363 g (7.3 to 12.8 oz)

Length: 34 to 42 cm (13.3 to 16.4 in)

Report Short-eared Owl sightings to  
[WILDLIFEOBS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:WILDLIFEOBS@gov.nt.ca)

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Habitat loss and degradation from human activities, mainly in their southern range.
- Climate change is predicted to alter their tundra habitat, reducing prey availability and increasing predation risk.



## Typical Habitat

- In summer, Short-eared Owls nest on the ground in grasslands, tundra, bogs, marshes and other open (non-forested) areas.
- Their habitat includes areas with abundant small mammals to eat (the owls move around as small mammal populations fluctuate).



Short-eared Owl ■  
National Parks ▨

Short-eared Owls likely arrive in the NWT in April or May. They lay an average of seven eggs by mid-June and the owlets hatch in early July. Short-eared Owls probably leave the NWT by late October. It is uncertain where owls from the NWT spend the winter.

Short-eared Owl numbers vary in space and time in response to cycles in their main prey, small mammals. Short-eared Owls have suffered significant population declines in Canada since the 1960s, including an estimated 30% decline from 2004 to 2016. A national management plan for Short-eared Owl is available at the federal [species at risk public registry](#).

## Did you know?

- One of the best ways to identify a Short-eared Owl is to watch its distinct moth-like flight when hunting (deep wing-beats, occasional hovering and cutting low over patches of grassland or marsh).
- Short-eared Owls are the only owls that build their own nests.
- They typically search for food at dawn and dusk.

# Whooping Crane

*Grus americana*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Endangered - 2010</b>	<b>Endangered - 2003</b>
NWT	Not applicable	Not applicable

Measuring an impressive 1.5 m, Whooping Cranes are the tallest birds in North America. They have a white body with a red and black head and black-tipped wings.

Weight: 6.4 to 7.3 kg (14 to 16 lb)

Height: 1.5 m (5 ft)

Report Whooping Crane sightings to [www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org) or the Whooping Crane Hotline: (306) 975-5595

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

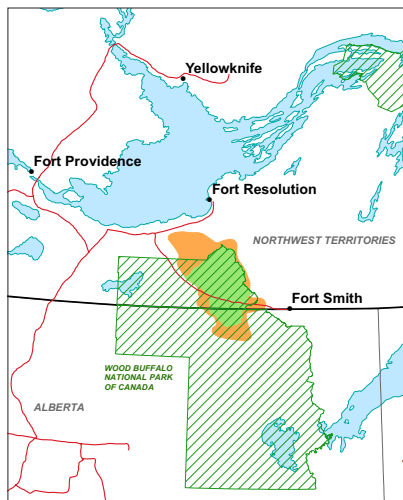
- Habitat loss and degradation.
- Disturbance on breeding grounds (aircraft flights, human foot traffic and ATV traffic).
- Accidental shooting.
- Predators on breeding grounds (black bear, wolverine, grey wolf, red fox, mink, lynx and ravens).
- Collisions with power lines.





## Typical Habitat

- Whooping Cranes nest in shallow ponds that contain bulrush or sedge, and that are separated by narrow forested ridges in and around the north-east corner of Wood Buffalo National Park.
- Critical habitat (meaning the habitat needed for survival or recovery) is identified and protected under the federal *Species at Risk Act* in Wood Buffalo National Park.
- Non-breeding Whooping Cranes use a much wider area for several years before breeding in and around Wood Buffalo National Park.



Whooping Crane ■  
 Whooping Crane Critical Habitat ■  
 National Parks ▨

Whooping Cranes winter in southern Texas and arrive on their breeding grounds in the NWT in April and May. During fall migration, they spend up to 8 weeks in Saskatchewan. Whooping Cranes usually lay two eggs in a nest consisting of a pile of vegetation in shallow water. Usually only one of the chicks survives to fly south in September. Whooping Cranes eat small fish, amphibians and other animals, insects, roots, berries and grain. They almost went extinct in the 1940s due to habitat loss in their prairie breeding grounds and overharvesting by settlers. Recently, the population has been slowly increasing. A national recovery strategy for Whooping Crane is available at the federal [species at risk public registry](#) and includes critical habitat identification.

## Did you know?

- Whooping Cranes are able to fly non-stop for up to 10 hours, covering distances of 750 km.
- From 21 cranes in the early 1940s, the nearly 850 Whooping Cranes in North America today are descendants of only three family lines.
- The population that nests in and around Wood Buffalo National Park is the only naturally occurring and self-sustaining population in the world. The population is around 500 birds.
- Summer 2021 was the first time since conservation efforts began that over 100 Whooping Crane nests were counted, with at least half the nests having surviving chicks.

For the most current species information, visit the federal [species at risk public registry](#).

# Yellow Rail

*Coturnicops noveboracensis*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Special Concern – 2023</b>	<b>Special Concern – 2003</b>
NWT	Not applicable	Not applicable

The Yellow Rail is a small bird with a short tail, short bill and buff-coloured plumage. The wide dark stripes on its back are crossed by white bars. The white wing patch, which is visible in flight, helps distinguish Yellow Rails from other similar marsh birds.

Weight: Males, 41 to 68 g (1.4 to 2.4 oz)

Length: 15 to 19 cm (5.9 to 7.5 in)

Report Yellow Rail sightings to  
[www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org)

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Habitat loss and degradation from human activities.
- Human activities resulting in declining food sources and increased numbers of predators.
- Breeding habitat degradation from climate change.



## Typical Habitat

- Yellow Rails nest in marshes dominated by sedges and grasses, wet meadows and shrubby wetlands.
- Nesting areas have little or no standing water (generally 0 to 12 cm) and the ground is saturated with water throughout the summer.
- Recent research in the NWT suggests both the range and the population size of Yellow Rail are much larger than previously thought.



Yellow Rail ■  
National Parks ▨

Yellow Rails breed in Canada and the northern United States and winter on the East and Gulf coasts of the United States. They likely arrive in the NWT in the latter part of May and nesting occurs in June and possibly July. Females lay seven to ten eggs on nests built on or just above the ground that are concealed with a canopy of dead vegetation.

There is evidence of some population decline since the early 2000s. The reasons for the decline are not well understood, but they could be related to the impacts of multiple threats or cumulative effects affecting Yellow Rails on their breeding grounds, wintering grounds, and during migration. A national management plan for Yellow Rails is available at [the federal species at risk public registry](#).

## Did you know?

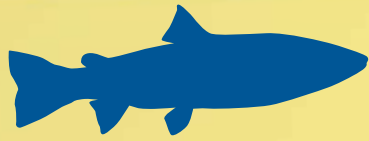
- Yellow Rails are rarely seen. They expertly hide in the dense marsh vegetation, aided by their camouflaged plumage.
- The diet of Yellow Rails is mainly invertebrates and seeds.
- Acoustic recording units (ARUs) detected a large population of Yellow Rails in Edézhíé Protected Area, extending the known range of the species about 150 km further north.
- The unique call of the Yellow Rail is a rapid series of five monotonous and metallic ticks (or clicks) sounding like two pebbles or coins tapped together: *tick-tick, tick-tick-tick*. Calling can mainly be heard during the hours from dusk to dawn, and the sound can carry for up to a kilometre.

For the most current species information, visit [the federal species at risk public registry](#).



# Bull Trout

*Salvelinus confluentus*



## Assessment

Canada  
(Western Arctic  
Population)

**Special Concern - 2012**

NWT

Not applicable

## Legal List

**Special Concern - 2019**

Not applicable

Bull Trout have a long and slender body with a relatively large head and jaws. Their back is olive-green to blue-grey in colour, and their sides are greenish to silvery with small pink, yellow-orange or red pale round spots. Their belly is pale-coloured and may become yellow, orange or red in males during spawning season. Traits that help distinguish Bull Trout from other fish species include pale round spots on their sides and back and the absence of black markings on their dorsal fin. Instead, Bull Trout have a white line on the leading edges of the pelvic and anal fins.

Length: Varies based upon its life history (see *Did you know?*)

Resident: 250 to 410 mm

Fluvial: 400 to 730 mm

Adfluvial: 400 to 900 mm

Report Bull Trout sightings to  
[WILD.LIFE.OBS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:WILD.LIFE.OBS@gov.nt.ca)

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Industrial activities and infrastructure can degrade or fragment Bull Trout habitat; for example by adding sediment or nutrients, blocking movement of fish, or changing water flow.
- Although overlap in distribution is minimal in the NWT, Bull Trout are difficult to distinguish from other char and trout species that are commercially fished.
- Other threats include diseases and pathogens, introduced and invasive species, climate change and cumulative effects.



## Typical Habitat

- In the NWT, Bull Trout are widely distributed, but in low abundance, throughout much of southern (Dehcho) and central (Sahtú) in drainages west of the Mackenzie River. The northernmost known location is the Gayna River.
- Spawning occurs in the fall in water temperatures below 10°C in clean flowing streams over cobble or loose gravel. These areas are typically associated with groundwater sources.
- Presence of Bull Trout is a good indicator of ecosystem health. These fish require cold, clean, and well oxygenated water as well as connected watersheds, making them highly sensitive to habitat changes.



Bull Trout (Western Arctic Population) ■  
National Parks ▨

Bull Trout, contrary to their name, are not actually trout but are a species of char. For over a century Bull Trout were thought to be an inland form of Dolly Varden (page 92), but in 1980, research proved these two species are distinct. In Canada, Bull Trout is found in British Columbia, Alberta, Yukon and the NWT. It is a coldwater species found in lakes, streams and rivers from sea level to mountainous areas. It feeds on a wide variety of items including other fish. The typical maximum age of Bull Trout is unknown, but specimens have been recorded up to 24 years old. Bull Trout grow slowly, do not reproduce until they are between five to seven years old, and may not spawn every year. Because of this, they do not recover easily from population declines.

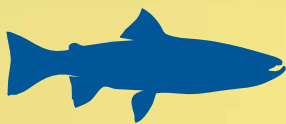
## Did you know?

- There are four types of life history strategies used by Bull Trout. The resident form is isolated and spends its life in small rivers or streams. The fluvial form lives in small rivers and streams, migrating between spawning streams and larger streams. The adfluvial form is similar to the fluvial form, but matures in lakes rather than streams and rivers. The anadromous form is found only in southwestern British Columbia and Washington, and migrates from spawning freshwater streams to the sea.
- The female digs her nest (redd) accompanied by a dominant male who defends her eggs from other males. Some males nicknamed “sneakers” are able to mimic females, allowing them to approach close enough to fertilize some of the eggs.



# Dolly Varden

*Salvelinus malma malma*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada (Western Arctic Population)	<b>Special Concern - 2010</b>	<b>Special Concern - 2017</b>
NWT	Not applicable	Not applicable

Dolly Varden are a type of char with large eyes below the top of a round, medium-sized head. The base of their tail is long and wide, and their tail fin is flat and broad. The tail fin is unforked, a trait that helps distinguish Dolly Varden from other fish species. Juveniles are brown coloured with a whitish belly, small round red spots, and 8 to 12 rectangular marks on their sides and back. Adults have small, pale pink or red spots, with surrounding bluish halos. Spawning sea-run males are brightly coloured and develop a hook on the lower jaw, while females, non-spawners and freshwater males are more muted in colour.

Length: Anadromous forms: over 350 mm (13.8 in)

Freshwater forms: less than 300 mm (11.8 in)

Report Dolly Varden sightings to  
[WILDLIFEOBS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:WILDLIFEOBS@gov.nt.ca)

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Drier and warmer conditions due to climate change could lead to lower water levels and reduced groundwater flows, reducing the amount of suitable freshwater habitat, especially for spawning and overwintering.
- Industrial infrastructure projects and resource extraction can degrade habitat in ocean and freshwater environments.
- Other threats include diseases and pathogens, introduced and invasive species, and over-harvesting.



## Typical Habitat

- Anadromous and freshwater forms of Dolly Varden spawn and overwinter in freshwater springs where sufficient oxygen and suitable temperature levels provide high quality habitat for survival and egg incubation.
- Gwich'in knowledge indicates that spawning habitat requires relatively warm water, a fast current or high gradient, and plenty of shoreline cover and vegetation with abundant insect larvae available for food.
- Anadromous Dolly Varden migrate to the sea to feed for the summer, then return to freshwater in September and October to spawn and overwinter.



Dolly Varden ■  
National Parks ▨

Dolly Varden belong to the same family as trout and salmon. Individuals may be anadromous (use both sea water and freshwater during their life) or live in freshwater only. In North America, the Western Arctic Population ranges from Alaska, east along the North Slope of the Yukon Territory, and east to the Mackenzie River.

## Did you know?

- Dolly Varden and Bull Trout (page 90) both occur together in the Gayna River, NWT. Hybridization between these two species has been recorded, but hybrids are generally not as successful as either parent species in the natural environment.
- Cross-breeding between different life forms of Dolly Varden is not uncommon. Some freshwater males live alongside anadromous fish in the fall and winter and reproduce by “sneaking” into redds (egg laying sites) to spawn with anadromous females. This strategy is called “sneak-spawning.”
- This fish’s name comes from a character in a novel by Charles Dickens, Dolly Varden, who wore brightly coloured dresses. A popular fabric pattern with red polka dots was named after her in the 1800s. The fabric in turn inspired the name of the fish, because the Dolly Varden’s pink spots reminded people of the colourful cloth.

# Northern Wolffish

*Anarhichas denticulatus*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Threatened - 2012</b>	<b>Threatened - 2003</b>
NWT	Not applicable	Not applicable

The Northern Wolffish is a marine fish with protruding front teeth and powerful jaws. Its head is small, with a small mouth, blunt snout and small eyes. Its body is long and stout, with small or no pectoral fins. It has a uniform body colour, ranging from charcoal-black to dark chocolate.

Weight: 13.5 to 20 kg (30 to 44 lb)

Length: 0.8 to 1.45 m (2.6 to 4.8 ft), but can grow up to 180 cm (5.9 ft)

Report Northern Wolffish sightings to  
[WILDLIFE OBS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:WILDLIFE OBS@gov.nt.ca)

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

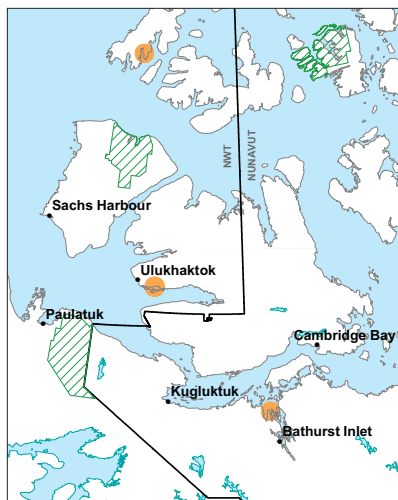
- Unknown threats in the western Arctic.





## Typical Habitat

- The Northern Wolffish is found over sand and shell hash bottom types in temperatures between 2.5°C and 4.5°C, and at depths between 500 and 1,000 m.
- It inhabits cold, deep ocean waters and preys on jellyfish, sea urchins, crabs and starfish.



Northern Wolffish ■  
National Parks ▨

The Northern Wolffish is a solitary fish that is slow-growing and long-lived. This fish does not undertake long migrations and the size of its territory is very restricted. Northern Wolffish reach maturity at five years of age and can live to 14 years. A primarily eastern species, it is found as far north as the Davis Strait off Nunavut, off southwest Greenland, on the northeast Newfoundland and Labrador shelves, on the Flemish Cap, in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and sometimes on the Scotian Shelf. Northern Wolffish have been reported in only two locations in the NWT: Prince Albert Sound on western Victoria Island and Mould Bay on Prince Patrick Island. It is unknown if the Northern Wolffish is rare in the NWT or if the lack of captures reflects the limited amount of fishing effort in marine waters of the western Arctic. A national recovery strategy for Northern Wolffish is available at the federal [species at risk public registry](#).

## Did you know?

- The fearsome teeth of the Northern Wolffish ensure that it has few natural predators.
- In most areas it inhabits, this fish is not eaten by humans because of its watery and jelly-like flesh.

# Shortjaw Cisco

*Coregonus zenithicus*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Threatened - 2003</b>	No status
NWT	Not applicable	Not applicable

The Shortjaw Cisco has a thin, elliptical body that is covered with large, smooth scales. It is mainly silver in colour, with olive or tan colouring on the back and a white belly. Its small, toothless mouth has a bottom jaw that is often shorter than, or even with, the upper jaw. The gill rakers (or comb-like structures on the inner surface of the bony arch supporting the gill) number between 32 and 46, which is typically less than other cisco species.

Length: 340 to 420 mm (13.3 to 16.4 in)

Report Shortjaw Cisco sightings to  
[WILDLIFE OBS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:WILDLIFE OBS@gov.nt.ca)

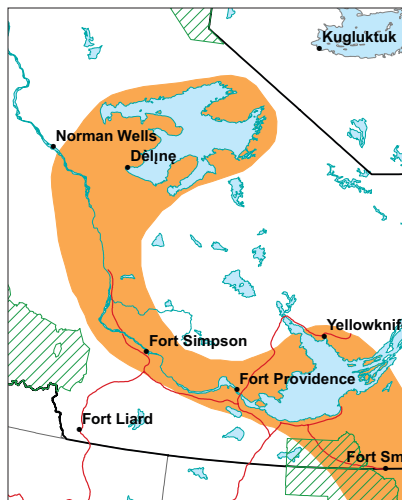
## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- May include local habitat degradation, climate change and hybridization with other ciscoes.



## Typical Habitat

- The Shortjaw Cisco has been found in Great Slave Lake and Tazin River. The Shortjaw Cisco, or a Shortjaw-like form, has also been found in Great Bear Lake.
- The Shortjaw Cisco inhabits deep waters, 55 to 180 m, with reports of movement into shallower waters during the spawning season.
- Juveniles have been found in water as shallow as 10 m.



Shortjaw Cisco ■  
National Parks ▨

Shortjaw Cisco is a member of the same family as trout and salmon. While best known from the Great Lakes, Shortjaw Cisco has been reported in a few deeper lakes from Ontario to the NWT. Shortjaw Cisco eat shrimp, crustaceans and insects.

In turn, they may be eaten by Lake Trout, Northern Pike and Burbot. Shortjaw Cisco spawning occurs in the fall. Eggs are deposited over the lake bottom and are left to develop unattended. Lifespan is typically 10 to 13 years but individuals up to 20 years old have been found in Great Slave Lake.

## Did you know?

- The Shortjaw Cisco, along with Lake Cisco (previously called Lake Herring), may have been two of the key colonizing species into lakes created as the glaciers retreated after the last ice age.
- Cisco species identification is difficult because ciscoes can have different shapes and colours even within the same population. This variation has likely interacted with hybridization, local adaptation and parallel evolution to produce a confounding assortment of forms and species of ciscoes.
- The Governor in Council referred the Shortjaw Cisco back to COSEWIC in 2006 for further consideration.

# Northern Leopard Frog

*Lithobates pipiens*



## Assessment

## Legal List

Canada

(Western Boreal/  
Prairie Populations)

**Special Concern - 2009**

**Special Concern - 2005**

NWT

**Threatened - 2013**

**Threatened - 2015**

The Northern Leopard Frog is usually green, or sometimes brownish. It has dark spots surrounded by distinct, light borders and an unmarked, milky-white underside. Newly hatched tadpoles are slender and black.

Length: Newly hatched tadpole, 8 mm (0.3 in)  
Adult (snout-to-vent), 5 to 11 cm (1.9 to 4.3 in)

Report Northern Leopard Frog sightings  
to [WILDLIFE0BS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:WILDLIFE0BS@gov.nt.ca)

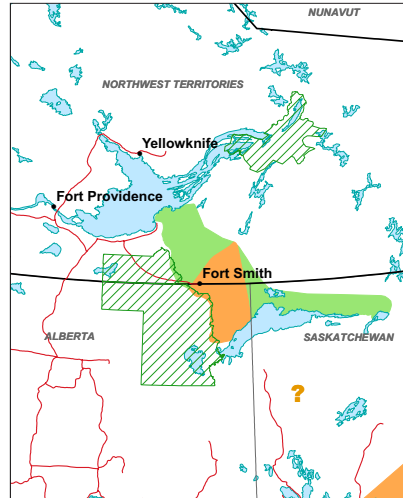
## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Diseases (e.g. ranavirus and chytrid fungus).
- Loss or modification of wetland habitats from human activities.
- Accidental human-caused mortality.
- Environmental contaminants.
- Increasing UV-B radiation.
- Multiple threats, such as disease, habitat change and UV-B radiation, can have complex and interacting effects.



## Typical Habitat

- The Northern Leopard Frog breeds in lakes, ponds, marshes and flooded areas of streams.
- Summer ranges include meadows and grasslands.
- Northern Leopard Frogs over-winter in the unfrozen bottoms of rivers and lakes.



- Northern Leopard Frog (recent) ■
- Northern Leopard Frog (historic) ■
- National Parks

Northern Leopard Frogs are uncommon in the NWT, having only been found near the Slave, Taltson and Tazin rivers. Their call is a long drawn-out rattling snore, usually ending with several rapid short grunts. The number of Northern Leopard Frogs has declined in large parts of western Canada since 1980. The range in the NWT is not well known but there is evidence that the occupied range in the NWT may have shrunk since the late 1980s. The cause of population and range changes remains unknown.

A national management plan for Northern Leopard Frog is available at the federal [species at risk public registry](http://www.nwtspeciesatrisk.ca) and an NWT amphibian management plan is available at [www.nwtspeciesatrisk.ca](http://www.nwtspeciesatrisk.ca).

## Did you know?

- Northern Leopard Frogs, like most amphibians in the NWT, are at the northern-most limit of their range.
- Connectivity between the NWT population and populations in southern Canada is uncertain.
- Recent genetic research showed that the NWT population of Northern Leopard Frogs has restricted gene flow with other populations and shows evidence of inbreeding, typical of small and isolated populations.
- A guide to amphibians and reptiles of the NWT is available at [www.ecc.gov.nt.ca](http://www.ecc.gov.nt.ca) or by contacting [WILDLIFEOBS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:WILDLIFEOBS@gov.nt.ca).

# Western Toad

*Anaxyrus boreas*



## Assessment

## Legal List

Canada  
(Non-calling Population)

**Special Concern - 2012**

**Special Concern - 2005**

NWT

**Threatened - 2014**

**Threatened - 2016**

Western Toads are usually green or brown. They have a light stripe down the middle of the back and reddish-brown “warts” on the back, sides and upper limbs. Newly hatched tadpoles and toadlets are black.

Length: Newly hatched tadpole: 1 cm (0.4 in)

Adult (snout to vent): 5 to 12 cm (1.9 to 4.7 in)

Report Western Toad sightings to  
[WILDLIFE OBS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:WILDLIFE OBS@gov.nt.ca)

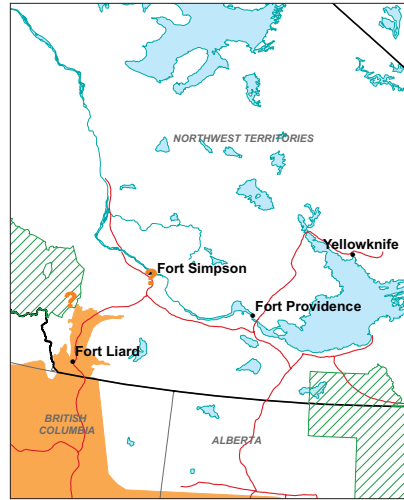
## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Diseases (e.g. ranavirus and chytrid fungus).
- Accidental mortality from traffic or ATVs.
- Loss or modification of wetland habitats from human activities.
- Environmental contaminants.
- Increasing UV-B radiation.
- Multiple threats, such as disease, habitat change and UV-B radiation, can have complex and interacting effects.



## Typical Habitat

- Western Toads breed in a wide variety of wetlands such as shallow silty or sandy ponds, lake shores, oxbow wetlands, gravel pits and roadside ditches.
- The toad's summer ranges include shrubby-forested areas, wet shrublands, avalanche slopes and meadows.
- They over-winter by burrowing in the ground with snow cover deep enough (up to 1.3 m) to prevent freezing and moist enough to prevent their skin from drying.



Western Toad ■  
National Parks ▨

Western Toads are found in the Liard River basin in the Dehcho region. They often return to the same wetlands year after year. Western Toads are long-lived amphibians that can live for nine years. Females reach maturity at 4 to 6 years old and usually breed only once in their lifetime. These factors limit the Western Toad's ability to recover from population declines. Western Toad numbers are declining in the southern part of their range in British Columbia and the United States. An NWT amphibian management plan is available at [www.nwt-species-at-risk.ca](http://www.nwt-species-at-risk.ca) and a national management plan for Western Toad is available at the federal [species at risk public registry](http://species-at-risk-public-registry).

## Did you know?

- Western Toads are vulnerable to getting run over and killed especially when crossing the Liard Highway near the Muskeg River bridge. Please slow down and watch out for toads!
- Sometimes adults and young toads move together in large groups – this is called a “mass movement event.”
- A survey in 2019 found three new Western Toad breeding sites, beside the Muskeg River and about 30 km to the north beside the Liard River.
- A guide to amphibians and reptiles of the NWT is available at [www.ecc.gov.nt.ca](http://www.ecc.gov.nt.ca) or by contacting [WILDLIFE0BS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:WILDLIFE0BS@gov.nt.ca).



# Gypsy Cuckoo Bumble Bee

*Bombus bohemicus*



## Assessment

## Legal List

Canada

**Endangered - 2014**

**Endangered - 2018**

NWT

**Data deficient - 2019**

No status

Gypsy Cuckoo Bumble Bee is a medium-sized bumble bee. The upper segment of the hind leg has a convex, densely hairy outer surface and lacks a pollen basket. Females usually have a white-tipped abdomen or at least a white patch on the back of the abdomen. Sides of the thorax are mostly black in both sexes. The Gypsy Cuckoo Bumble Bee can be distinguished from other cuckoo bumble bees found in the NWT by black hairs on the top of the head; other similar species have pale hairs.

Length: Females, 1.7 to 1.8 cm; Males, 1.2 to 1.6 cm

**Report Gypsy Cuckoo Bumble Bee sightings to  
WILDLIFE OBS@gov.nt.ca**

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Declines in the populations of host species like McKay's Bumble Bee and Yellow-banded Bumble Bee.
- Introduction of exotic bumble bee species for pollination, which can spread diseases to native bees.
- Use of pesticides and herbicides.
- At high densities, imported honey bees can outcompete native bumble bees for pollen.





## Typical Habitat

- Gypsy Cuckoo Bumble Bees require host bumble bee nests, which are typically underground in abandoned rodent burrows.
- Females probably overwinter in soil, mulch or rotting logs.



Gypsy Cuckoo Bumble Bee   
National Parks

Gypsy Cuckoo Bumble Bee is a 'social parasite.' Like other cuckoo bumble bees, they do not collect pollen or establish their own colonies. Instead, they take advantage of the nests and workers of other 'host' bumble bees. Potential host species found in the NWT include McKay's Bumble Bee (page 104), Yellow-banded Bumble Bee (page 110) and Cryptic Bumble Bee. Gypsy Cuckoo Bumble Bee is found in northern regions around the world. In the past 20 to 30 years there have been large population declines in eastern Canada and the species has disappeared from many of its former sites. However, Gypsy Cuckoo Bumble Bee can still be found in western Canada. Population size and trend in the NWT is unknown. A national recovery strategy for the Gypsy Cuckoo Bumble Bee is available at the federal species at risk public registry and includes critical habitat identification.

## Did you know?

- In spring, the Gypsy Cuckoo Bumble Bee female emerges from her overwintering site and searches for a host nest. She displaces the host queen and lays her own eggs. The host workers then raise her offspring.
- There are recent records of Gypsy Cuckoo Bumble Bee from Fort Simpson, Norman Wells and Inuvik.
- A guide to bumble bees in the NWT is available at [www.ecc.gov.nt.ca](http://www.ecc.gov.nt.ca) or by contacting [NWTBUGS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:NWTBUGS@gov.nt.ca).

# McKay's Bumble Bee

*Bombus mckayi*



## Assessment

## Legal List

Canada

(Formerly *Bombus occidentalis mckayi*)

**Special Concern - 2014**

**Special Concern - 2023**

NWT

**Data deficient - 2019**

No status

McKay's Bumble Bee is a medium-sized bumble bee. It has a short head and a band of yellow hair across the thorax in front of the base of the wings. Between the wings there is a black band or a large black central spot. The tip of the abdomen is almost always white. This northern species has longer hair overall and yellow hair behind the wings and on the third segment of the abdomen, which help to tell it apart from the Western Bumble Bee.

Length: Female queens, 1.6 to 1.9 cm (0.63 to 0.75 in)  
Female workers, 1.1 to 1.3 cm (0.43 to 0.51 in)  
Males, 1.0 to 2.0 cm (0.39 to 0.79 in)

**Report McKay's Bumble Bee sightings to**  
[WILDLIFEOBS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:WILDLIFEOBS@gov.nt.ca)

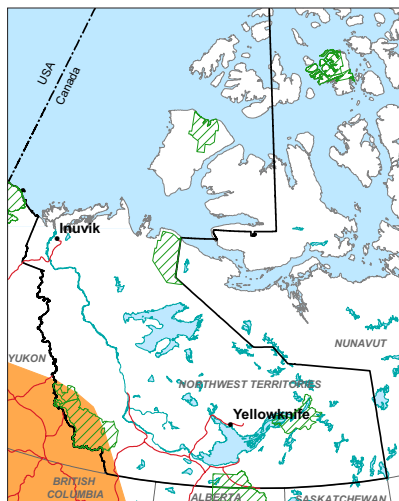
## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- High parasite load compared to other bumble bee species.
- Introduction of exotic bumble bee species for pollination, which can spread diseases to native bees.
- Use of pesticides and herbicides.
- At high densities, imported honey bees can outcompete native bumble bees for pollen.



## Typical Habitat

- McKay's Bumble Bees use a wide range of habitats, as long as flowers and nest sites are available.
- Nests are usually underground in abandoned rodent burrows or within hollows in decaying wood.
- Queens overwinter in loose soil or rotting trees.



McKay's Bumble Bee   
National Parks

McKay's Bumble Bee is found in the western mountains of the NWT as well as northern British Columbia, Alaska and Yukon. Recent surveys suggest this northern species is still common. However, the closely related southern species Western Bumble Bee is experiencing a serious population decline. Because the reasons for the southern decline are unknown, there is cause for concern for McKay's Bumble Bee as well.

## Did you know?

- McKay's Bumble Bee used to be a subspecies of Western Bumble Bee but is now considered a distinct species.
- All members of the McKay's Bumble Bee colony die in the winter except for the new queens. They leave the colony, mate, hibernate and emerge the following spring to establish new colonies.
- Bumble bees play a crucial role in transferring pollen between plants, allowing fertilization which is essential for fruit and seed production.
- A guide to bumble bees in the NWT is available at [www.ecc.gov.nt.ca](http://www.ecc.gov.nt.ca) or by contacting [NWTBUGS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:NWTBUGS@gov.nt.ca).

# Suckley's Cuckoo Bumble Bee

*Bombus suckleyi*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Threatened - 2019</b>	Under consideration
NWT	Not assessed	No status

Suckley's Cuckoo Bumble Bee is a medium-sized bumble bee with a black head. The upper segment of the hind leg has a convex, densely hairy outer surface and lacks a pollen basket. Suckley's Cuckoo Bumble Bee looks similar to the Gypsy Cuckoo Bumble Bee (page 102), but its thorax is mostly yellow on the sides. There are prominent triangular ridges on the underside of the last segment of the abdomen.

Length: Females, 1.5 to 2.5 cm (0.59 to 0.98 in)  
Males, 1.5 to 2.2 cm (0.59 to 0.87 in)

Report Suckley's Cuckoo Bumble Bee sightings  
to [WILDLIFEOBS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:WILDLIFEOBS@gov.nt.ca)

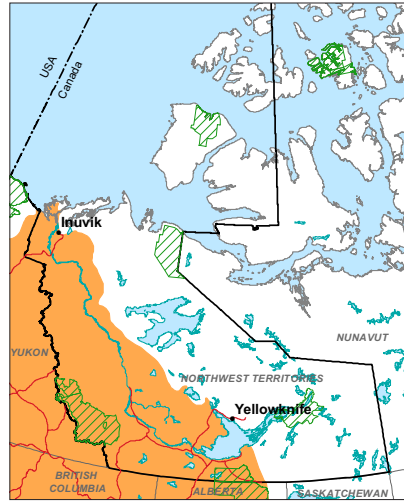
## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Declines in the populations of host species, such as McKay's Bumble Bee and Yellow-banded Bumble Bee.
- Introduction of exotic bumble bee species for pollination, which can spread diseases to native bees.
- Use of pesticides and herbicides.
- At high densities, imported honey bees can outcompete native bumble bees for pollen.



## Typical Habitat

- Suckley's Cuckoo Bumble Bees require host bumble bee nests, which are typically underground in abandoned rodent burrows.
- Females probably overwinter in soil, mulch or rotting logs.
- The bees visit flowers for nectar, such as aster, thistle and goldenrod.



Suckley's Cuckoo Bumble Bee ■  
National Parks ▨

Suckley's Cuckoo Bumble Bee is a 'social parasite.' Like other cuckoo bumble bees, they do not collect pollen or establish their own colonies. Instead, they take advantage of the nests and workers of other 'host' bumble bees. Potential host species found in the NWT include McKay's Bumble Bee (page 104), Yellow-banded Bumble Bee (page 110) and Cryptic Bumble Bee. Suckley's Cuckoo Bumble Bee was historically widespread in western North America with scattered populations in the east. Populations of their host species have declined in Canada, therefore Suckley's Cuckoo Bumble Bee populations have probably declined also. Population size and trend in the NWT are unknown.

## Did you know?

- Cuckoo bumble bees are naturally less abundant than other bumble bees because they do not produce workers.
- Bumble bees have a type of genetic sex determination that makes them very prone to extinction when population sizes are small.
- A guide to bumble bees in the NWT is available at [www.ecc.gov.nt.ca](http://www.ecc.gov.nt.ca) or by contacting [NWTBUGS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:NWTBUGS@gov.nt.ca).

# Transverse Lady Beetle

*Coccinella transversoguttata*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	Special Concern - 2016	Special Concern - 2021
NWT	Not assessed	No status

Transverse Lady Beetle is a small, round beetle that can be distinguished from other lady beetles by its colour pattern. Its wing covers are red to orange with black markings: a 'transverse' black band across the front and four elongated black spots toward the back. The head is black with two separate pale spots. The plate behind the head is also black with pale markings on either side.

Length: 5.0 to 7.8 mm (0.20 to 0.31 in)

Report Transverse Lady Beetle sightings to  
[WILDLIFEOBS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:WILDLIFEOBS@gov.nt.ca)

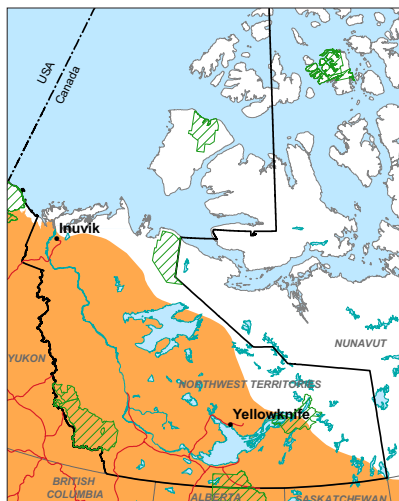
## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- ▀ Negative interactions with non-native species such as Seven-spotted Lady Beetle.
- ▀ Use of pesticides.



## Typical Habitat

- Transverse Lady Beetles use a wide range of habitats and are found on a variety of plants.
- They move around to take advantage of available prey (aphids and other insects).



Transverse Lady Beetle   
National Parks

Historically, the Transverse Lady Beetle was found across Canada and was one of the most common lady beetle species. When it was common, it played an important role in the biological control of aphids and other ‘pests’ of gardens and crops. However, since 1986 it has undergone population declines. In many areas where it was once common it is now absent, below detection limits, or at low numbers. Reasons for the population declines are unclear, but introduced non-native lady beetles are probably an important factor that has brought increased competition and predation, as well as new diseases and parasites. Pesticide use may also be a factor. The Transverse Lady Beetle is still common in the NWT, Yukon and British Columbia where there are fewer non-native lady beetle species.

## Did you know?

- NWT residents submitting photos to the NWT Species Facebook page and iNaturalist have helped scientists to learn about lady beetles in Canada.
- There are 32 native lady beetle species in the NWT and one introduced species. Three other native species are expected to be present but not yet confirmed.
- A guide to lady beetles in the NWT is available at [www.ecc.gov.nt.ca](http://www.ecc.gov.nt.ca) or by contacting [NWTBUGS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:NWTBUGS@gov.nt.ca).

# Yellow-banded Bumble Bee

*Bombus terricola*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Special Concern - 2015</b>	<b>Special Concern - 2018</b>
NWT	<b>Not at Risk - 2019</b>	No status

Yellow-banded Bumble Bee is a medium-sized bumble bee with a short head. It has yellow hair on the second and third segments of the abdomen as well as a band of yellow hair across the thorax in front of the base of the wings. The rest of its body is primarily black, except for a fringe of brownish-yellow hairs on the fifth segment of the abdomen.

Length: Female queens, 1.9 to 2.1 cm (0.75 to 0.83 in)  
Female workers, 1.0 to 1.5 cm (0.39 to 0.59 in)  
Males, 1.3 to 1.5 cm (0.51 to 0.59 in)

**Report Yellow-banded Bumble Bee sightings to**  
[WILDLIFEOBS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:WILDLIFEOBS@gov.nt.ca)

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

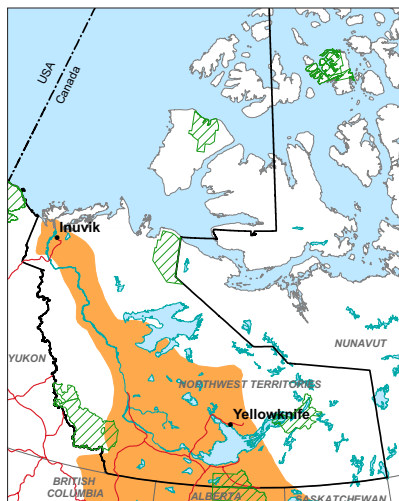
- Introduction of exotic bumble bee species for pollination, which can spread diseases to native bees.
- Use of pesticides and herbicides.
- At high densities, imported honey bees can outcompete native bumble bees for pollen.





## Typical Habitat

- Yellow-banded Bumble Bees use a wide range of habitats, as long as flowers and nest sites are available.
- Nests are usually underground in pre-existing cavities like abandoned rodent burrows and rotten logs.
- Queens overwinter in loose soil or rotting trees.



Yellow-banded Bumble Bee ■  
National Parks ▨

The Yellow-banded Bumble Bee is found in the northern United States and much of Canada, from eastern British Columbia, southeast Yukon and the Northwest Territories eastward through to Newfoundland and Labrador. It was once one of the most common bumble bee species in Canada, but since the early 1990s there have been significant population declines across southern and central Canada. Reasons for the population declines are unclear, but they are probably due to a combination of factors such as diseases and parasites introduced from managed bumble bees used in greenhouses, pesticide use, climate change and habitat loss. In the NWT, the Yellow-banded Bumble Bee is still one of the most commonly encountered bumble bees and there is no evidence of declines. A national management plan for Yellow-banded Bumble Bee is available at the federal species at risk public registry.

## Did you know?

- There are 24 known native bumble bee species in the NWT. A guide to bumble bees in the NWT is available at [www.ecc.gov.nt.ca](http://www.ecc.gov.nt.ca) or by contacting [NWTBUGS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:NWTBUGS@gov.nt.ca).
- A number of important food plants in the NWT, including cranberries and blueberries, rely on bumble bees for pollination.
- The Yellow-banded Bumble Bee was recently found in Inuvik. This was the first time it had been documented so far north.
- An NWT-specific assessment found that Yellow-banded Bumble Bee is Not at Risk in the territory, but it is still a species of Special Concern in Canada.



# Hairy Braya

*Braya pilosa*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Endangered - 2013</b>	<b>Endangered - 2018</b>
NWT	<b>Threatened - 2012</b>	<b>Threatened - 2014</b>

Hairy Braya belongs to the mustard family. The stems grow from a tuft of leaves at the base of the plant and have white flowers arranged in dense clusters. Hairy Braya is distinguished from other closely related species by its large flowers and the shape of its fruits (nearly round with very long “styles” [elongated reproductive structures]).

Height: 4.5 to 12.0 cm (1.8 to 4.7 in)

Report Hairy Braya sightings to  
[WILDLIFE OBS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:WILDLIFE OBS@gov.nt.ca)

## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- ▶ Rapid erosion of habitat along the coast (erosion rate estimated at 9.5 m per year).
- ▶ Erosion is increasing because of climate change-related effects (reduced sea ice, rising water level, increased wave height, more frequent storms, and permafrost thaw).
- ▶ Hairy Braya plants and habitat on the coast can also be impacted by salt from ocean spray and waves.



## Typical Habitat

- Hairy Braya occurs on bluffs and dry uplands with calcium-rich sandy loam and silty clay loam soils.
- It needs bare soil to become established.
- Periods of standing water, erosion, and disturbance from grizzly bear digs and from muskox and caribou hooves appear to be involved in creating or maintaining these bare soil habitats.



- Hairy Braya ■
- Areas Containing Critical Habitat ■
- National Parks ▨

Hairy Braya is a rare flowering plant found nowhere else in the world except on the Cape Bathurst Peninsula and Baillie Island, NWT, in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region. Its total range is very small (about 460 km<sup>2</sup>). Hairy Braya is restricted to an area that remained ice-free during the last ice age. It has apparently been unable to expand its range into surrounding areas since the ice receded. Along the coast, Hairy Braya numbers are declining because of rapid coastal erosion and salt spray.

Fortunately, most Hairy Braya plants are found inland or along protected coastal areas, in habitats that appear to be stable. An NWT recovery strategy for Hairy Braya is available at [www.nwtspeciesatrisk.ca](http://www.nwtspeciesatrisk.ca). A national recovery strategy is available at the federal species at risk public registry and includes critical habitat identification.

## Did you know?

- Due to the remoteness of Cape Bathurst, Hairy Braya faces little direct threat from human activities. The area is also managed carefully by the Inuvialuit.
- Hairy Braya was first found by Sir John Richardson in 1826 during an expedition in search of the Northwest Passage. At that original site, the shoreline eroded by about 85 m between 2011 and 2015. By 2022, Hairy Braya was no longer present there.
- Places like Cape Bathurst that remained glacier-free during the last ice age tend to be “biodiversity hotspots” with high species diversity and species that are rare or unique, like Hairy Braya.
- In 2022, researchers found more Hairy Braya in stable inland habitats and collected seeds to be conserved for the future in a seed bank.



# Nahanni Aster

*Symphyotrichum nahanniense*



	Assessment	Legal List
Canada	<b>Special Concern - 2014</b>	<b>Special Concern - 2018</b>
NWT	Not assessed	No status

Nahanni Aster is a perennial wildflower. Its flowers have yellow centres and white to pale pink or purple petals. It typically grows in clumps of about two to 10 stems, which are green to reddish and often have fine woolly hairs towards the base. The stems are branched to form an open cluster of flowers. Nahanni Aster is similar in appearance to the Rush Aster (*Symphyotrichum boreale*), which also occurs in the Nahanni area.

Height: up to 35 cm (13.8 in)

Report Nahanni Aster sightings to  
[WILDLIFE OBS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:WILDLIFE OBS@gov.nt.ca)

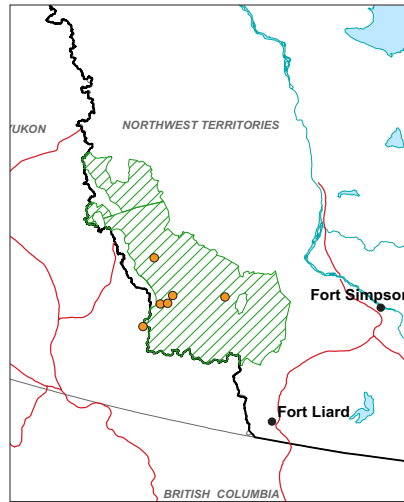
## Potential Threats in the Northwest Territories

- Climate change and seismic activity could alter groundwater discharge and lead to changes in the habitat.
- Nahanni Aster is found at very few sites, so a random environmental event such as an earthquake, fire or landslide could potentially have a large impact on the population.
- Trampling by Park visitors or researchers.
- Accidental introduction of invasive non-native plant species.



## Typical Habitat

- Found at hot and warm springs with tufa (calcium carbonate deposits) within Nahanni National Park Reserve.
- Thrives around the edge of thermal springs and along the streams and seepage discharging from the springs.
- Usually rooted in moss, but has also been found in broken old tufa and dense turf with rushes and sedges.
- Grows in open areas, unshaded by shrubs or trees.



Nahanni Aster Sites ●  
National Parks ▨

Nahanni Aster is a rare flowering plant found only in Nahanni National Park Reserve, in the southern Mackenzie Mountains of the NWT. It is confined to seven known sites at thermal springs that are associated with two major geological faults. All Nahanni Aster sites are within about 150 km of each other. Surveys in 2003, 2012 and 2019 have monitored and mapped the extent of previously known sites and explored other thermal springs in the area, documenting new populations each time. Parks Canada will continue to learn more about this species and explore typical Nahanni Aster habitat in search of potential new populations. A national management plan for Nahanni Aster is available at the federal species at risk public registry.

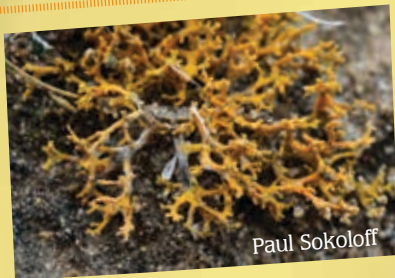
## Did you know?

- Nahanni Aster faces little direct threat from human activities because it occurs in remote locations within a national park reserve.
- Nahanni Aster may have persisted through the last ice age in an ice-free refugium, or it may have evolved about 11,000 years ago when the Nahanni area was ice-free but the surrounding region was still covered by ice.

# OTHER GLOBALLY RARE SPECIES

## Arctic Orangebush Lichen

*Seiophora aurantiaca*



Paul Sokoloff

Grows on gravelly and sandy soils in exposed places like shorelines, beach ridges and hummocky tundra. All known locations of this species are in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, NWT (Banks Island, Melville Island, Victoria Island and Cape Parry).

## Raup's Willow

*Salix raupii*

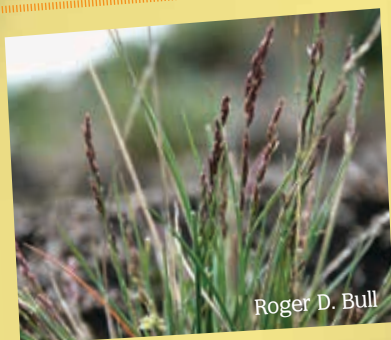


Canadian Museum of Nature

Prefers gravel floodplains and treed bogs and has only been found in two locations in the south-western NWT, three in the Yukon, three in British Columbia, and two in Alberta.

## Banks Island Alkali Grass

*Puccinellia banksiensis*



Roger D. Bull

Found infrequently in frost-heaved, densely vegetated tundra near the shores of inland freshwater lakes. There are three known locations on Banks Island in the NWT, four in Nunavut, and one in Alaska.

## Drummond Bluebell

*Mertensia drummondii*

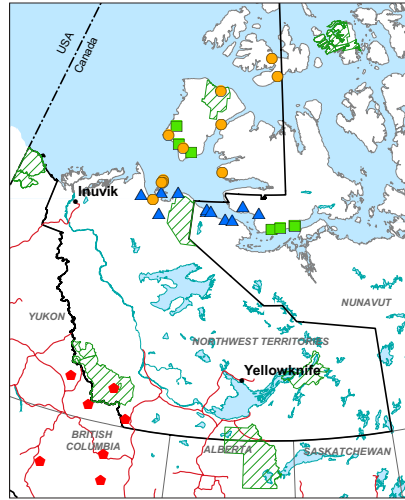


Jo Overholt

Grows in sparsely vegetated sand dune habitats, and on sandy banks near the coast, in northern Canada and Alaska.

## Why is there a Conservation Concern?

- These are globally rare species that are ranked May Be at Risk by the NWT General Status Ranking Program.
- They have very restricted distributions limited to the NWT and neighbouring areas.



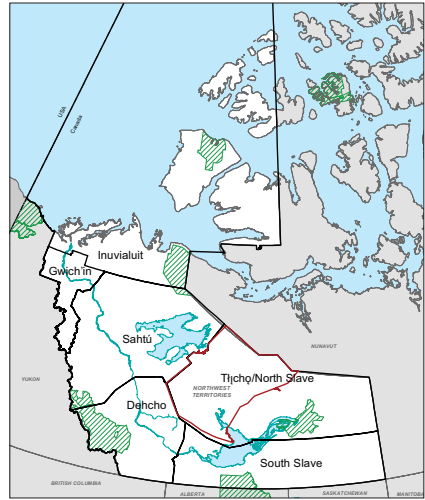
- Arctic Orangebush Lichen ●
- Banks Island Alkali Grass ■
- Drummond Bluebell ▲
- Raup's Willow ★
- National Parks ▨

## Did you know?

- Some areas of the NWT remained glacier-free during the last ice age, which may have allowed species such as Raup's Willow, Banks Island Alkali Grass, and Drummond Bluebell to survive. Knowledge on these species and areas is limited.
- Hairy Braya (page 112) and Nahanni Aster (page 114) are also globally rare plants which are found in areas that were glacial refugia.
- Mackenzie Hairgrass, a species of Special Concern in Canada, is no longer considered an NWT species. Experts re-examined the single specimen from the east arm of Great Slave Lake and determined it was likely not Mackenzie Hairgrass but a different type of hairgrass.

# SPECIES STATUS AT A GLANCE

This checklist summarizes species at risk in the NWT, their status and the regions in which they are found. See page 8 for an explanation of the assessment and legal listing processes for Canada and the NWT. See page 4 for an explanation of the categories used in the table.



NWT Region   
 Wek'èezhì Co-management Lands   
 National Parks

## Mammals

Species	Status in NWT		Status in Canada		South Slave	Dehcho	North Slave/Ticho	Sahtu	Gwich'in	Inuvialuit
	Assessment	Legal List	Assessment	Legal List						
Barren-ground Caribou	Threatened	Threatened	Threatened	Under Consideration	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Boreal Caribou	Threatened	Threatened	Threatened	Threatened	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bowhead Whale	Not applicable	Not applicable	Special Concern	Special Concern						✓
Collared Pika	Not assessed	No status	Special Concern	Special Concern		✓		✓	✓	✓
Dolphin and Union Caribou	Endangered	Special Concern	Endangered	Special Concern						✓
Eastern Red Bat	Not assessed	No status	Endangered	Under Consideration	✓	✓	✓			
Grey Whale	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not at Risk	Special Concern						✓
Grizzly Bear	Special Concern	No status	Special Concern	Special Concern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



**Mammals**

**Birds**

Species	Status in NWT		Status in Canada		South Slave	Deneho	North Slave/Tiicho	Sahtu	Gwich'in	Inuvialuit
	Assessment	Legal List	Assessment	Legal List						
Hoary Bat	Not assessed	No status	Endangered	Under Consideration	✓	✓	✓			
Little Brown Myotis	Special Concern	Special Concern	Endangered	Endangered	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	
Northern Mountain Caribou	Special Concern	Special Concern	Special Concern	Special Concern		✓		✓	✓	
Northern Myotis	Special Concern	Special Concern	Endangered	Endangered	✓	✓		✓		
Pearly Caribou	Threatened	Threatened	Threatened	Threatened						✓
Polar Bear	Special Concern	Special Concern	Special Concern	Special Concern						✓
Ringed Seal	Not applicable	Not applicable	Special Concern	Under Consideration						✓
Silver-haired Bat	Not assessed	No status	Endangered	Under Consideration	✓					
Wolverine	Not at Risk	No status	Special Concern	Special Concern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Wood Bison	Threatened	Threatened	Special Concern	Threatened	✓	✓	✓			
American White Pelican	Special Concern	Under Consideration	Not at Risk	No status	✓	✓				
Bank Swallow	Not applicable	Not applicable	Threatened	Threatened	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Barn Swallow	Not applicable	Not applicable	Special Concern	Threatened	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	Not applicable	Not applicable	Special Concern	Special Concern						✓
Canada Warbler	Not applicable	Not applicable	Special Concern	Threatened	✓	✓				
Common Nighthawk	Not applicable	Not applicable	Special Concern	Special Concern	✓	✓	✓	✓		

Birds

Species	Status in NWT		Status in Canada		South Slave	Dehcho	North Slave/Tiicho	Sahtú	Gwich'in	Inuvialuit
	Assessment	Legal List	Assessment	Legal List						
Eskimo Curlew	Not applicable	Not applicable	Endangered	Endangered						
Evening Grosbeak	Not applicable	Not applicable	Special Concern	Special Concern	✓	✓	✓			
Harris's Sparrow	Not applicable	Not applicable	Special Concern	Special Concern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Horned Grebe	Not applicable	Not applicable	Special Concern	Special Concern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hudsonian Godwit	Not applicable	Not applicable	Threatened	Under Consideration					✓	✓
Ivory Gull*	Not applicable	Not applicable	Endangered	Endangered						✓
Lesser Yellowlegs	Not applicable	Not applicable	Threatened	Under Consideration	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Olive-sided Flycatcher	Not applicable	Not applicable	Special Concern	Special Concern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Red Knot ( <i>islandica</i> subspecies)	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not at Risk	Special Concern						✓
Red Knot ( <i>rufa</i> subspecies)**	Not applicable	Not applicable	Endangered Endangered Special Concern	Endangered Threatened Threatened						✓
Red-necked Phalarope	Not applicable	Not applicable	Special Concern	Special Concern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rusty Blackbird	Not assessed	No status	Special Concern	Special Concern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Short-eared Owl	Not assessed	No status	Threatened	Special Concern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Whooping Crane	Not applicable	Not applicable	Endangered	Endangered	✓					

\* Ivory Gulls currently do not breed in the NWT, but are an uncommon migrant in the Beaufort Sea.

\*\* There are three populations of Red Knot *rufa* with different wintering grounds and different statuses.

**Birds**

**Fishes**

**Amphibians**

**Insects**

**Plants and Lichens**

Species	Status in NWT		Status in Canada		South Slave	Dënecho	North Slave/Tiicho	Sahtú	Gwich'in	Inuvialuit
	Assessment	Legal List	Assessment	Legal List						
Yellow Rail	Not applicable	Not applicable	Special Concern	Special Concern	✓	✓	✓			
Bull Trout	Not applicable	Not applicable	Special Concern	Special Concern	✓	✓		✓		
Dolly Varden	Not applicable	Not applicable	Special Concern	Special Concern				✓	✓	✓
Northern Wolfish	Not applicable	Not applicable	Threatened	Threatened						✓
Shortjaw Cisco	Not applicable	Not applicable	Threatened	No status	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Northern Leopard Frog	Threatened	Threatened	Special Concern	Special Concern	✓					
Western Toad	Threatened	Threatened	Special Concern	Special Concern		✓				
Gypsy Cuckoo Bumble Bee	Data deficient	No status	Endangered	Endangered	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
McKay's Bumble Bee	Data deficient	No status	Special Concern	Special Concern		✓		✓		
Suckley's Cuckoo Bumble Bee	Not assessed	No status	Threatened	Under Consideration	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Transverse Lady Beetle	Not assessed	No status	Special Concern	Special Concern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Yellow-banded Bumble Bee	Not at Risk	No status	Special Concern	Special Concern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hairy Braya	Threatened	Threatened	Endangered	Endangered						✓
Nahanni Aster	Not assessed	No status	Special Concern	Special Concern		✓				
Other globally rare species					Contact SARA@gov.nt.ca for more information					

# STEWARDSHIP AND WHAT YOU CAN DO

There are many ways that YOU can be a steward of the land, animals and plants. The **NWT Species Conservation and Recovery Fund** provides funding for projects that support the long-term conservation, recovery and protection of species that are at risk in the NWT.

The federal **Habitat Stewardship Program (HSP)** funds projects that conserve and protect species at risk and their habitats. The federal **Aboriginal Fund for Species at Risk (AFSAR)** program supports Indigenous governments, Indigenous organizations and communities to participate in the conservation and recovery of species at risk. **Canada's Nature Fund** and the **Nature Fund for Aquatic Species at Risk** offer additional funding opportunities.

## GOVERNMENT OF CANADA FUNDING PROGRAMS

### **HSP & AFSAR**

[www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/environmental-funding/programs](http://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/environmental-funding/programs)

### **Nature Fund**

[www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/nature-legacy/fund](http://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/nature-legacy/fund)

### **Aquatic Species at Risk – HSP, AFSAR & Nature Fund**

[www.aquaticspeciesatrisk.gc.ca](http://www.aquaticspeciesatrisk.gc.ca)

## NWT SPECIES CONSERVATION AND RECOVERY FUND

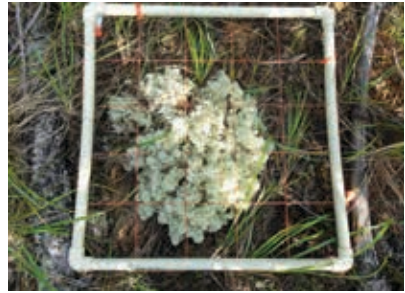
[www.nwt-species-at-risk.ca/SCARF](http://www.nwt-species-at-risk.ca/SCARF)



# BOREAL CARIBOU HABITAT RESTORATION

Denínu Kúyé First Nation has developed a community-based program in Fort Resolution for the stewardship of Boreal Caribou habitat in their traditional territory. Since 2021, they have been using funding from AFSAR and the NWT Species Conservation and Recovery Fund to study and assist the regeneration of caribou habitat, particularly in areas affected by wildfire or industrial development.

Boreal Caribou rely on lichen during winter months when other food sources are scarce. DKFN and their project partners are testing the best ways to transplant lichen, monitoring lichen regrowth and learning about the factors that affect transplant success. Their results will contribute to conservation and restoration of Boreal Caribou habitat in the NWT.



Marc d'Entremont

Research team – Standing (L-R): Krysia Tuttle, Ryan Batten, Marc d'Entremont, Gord Beaulieu. Sitting (L-R): Bryce McKinnon, Phil Beaulieu, Grace Orsted, Martha Beaulieu



# FOR MORE INFORMATION

## GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

### Environment and Climate Change Canada

Canadian Wildlife Service

867-669-4765

[ec.sarnt-lepnt.ec@canada.ca](mailto:ec.sarnt-lepnt.ec@canada.ca)

[www.canada.ca/en/services/environment/wildlife-plants-species/species-risk](http://www.canada.ca/en/services/environment/wildlife-plants-species/species-risk)

### Fisheries and Oceans Canada

1-866-538-1609

[fwisar@dfo-mpo.gc.ca](mailto:fwisar@dfo-mpo.gc.ca)

[www.aquaticspeciesatrisk.ca](http://www.aquaticspeciesatrisk.ca)

### Parks Canada Agency

1-888-773-8888

[information@pc.gc.ca](mailto:information@pc.gc.ca)

[www.pc.gc.ca](http://www.pc.gc.ca)

## GOVERNMENT OF THE NWT

### Department of Environment and Climate Change

Toll-Free 1-855-783-4301

or contact your regional Environment and Climate Change office

[SARA@gov.nt.ca](mailto:SARA@gov.nt.ca)

[www.nwt-species-at-risk.ca](http://www.nwt-species-at-risk.ca)

## OTHER AGENCIES

### Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC)

[www.cosewic.ca](http://www.cosewic.ca)

### Species at Risk Committee

[www.nwt-species-at-risk.ca/SARC](http://www.nwt-species-at-risk.ca/SARC)

### Conference of Management Authorities

[www.nwt-species-at-risk.ca/CMA](http://www.nwt-species-at-risk.ca/CMA)



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[#NWTSpeciesAtRisk](https://twitter.com/NWTSpeciesAtRisk)

