

2022

BC Conservation Status Rank Review and Changes

Animals Summary

Birds

A total of 72 bird elements (species or subspecies) were reviewed in 2021. Of these, 35 had no change in status, and 23 had a rank change which did not impact the colour list (e.g., an element changing from S4 [Yellow List] to S5 [Yellow List]).

The following 6 species moved colour lists in a less imperiled direction (i.e., Red List to Blue List, or Blue List to Yellow List):

- **Broad-winged Hawk:** changed from S3?B (Blue List) to S4?B (Yellow List) due to increasing range and abundance in the province.
- **Red Knot:** changed from S1S2M (Red) to S3?M (Blue) due to evidence that larger numbers migrate through the province than previously recognized.
- **Olive-sided Flycatcher:** changed from S3S4B (Blue) to S4B (Yellow) due to a higher population estimate than previously used, the results of a formal threats assessment, and a lower rate of decline compared to the previous assessment.
- **Barn Swallow:** changed from S3S4B (Blue) to S4B (Yellow) based on revised population estimates and number of occurrences.
- **Long-billed Curlew:** changed from S3B (Blue) to S4B (Yellow) due to an increasing provincial population and a range extension into the north-central interior relative to previous assessments.
- **Barn Owl:** changed from S2? (Red) to S3 (Blue) due to an increase in range extent since the previous assessment, with breeding now confirmed in the West Kootenays.

The following 8 species moved colour lists in a more imperiled direction (i.e., Yellow List to Blue List, or Blue List to Red List):

- **Ruby-throated Hummingbird:** changed from S3B (Blue) to S1B (Red) due to its small range and population size in the province.
- **Killdeer:** changed from S4S5B (Yellow) to S3S5B (Blue) due to declining short-term and long-term trends.
- **Common Nighthawk:** changed from S4B (Yellow) to S3S5B (Blue) with the addition of a formal threats assessment completed in 2017, and updates to trends and the area of the occupancy.
- **Bobolink:** changed from S3B (Blue) to S2?B (Red) due to an evaluation of threats as well as declining short-term trends.
- **Horned Lark:** changed from S5?B (Yellow) to S3S5 (Blue) due to large and unexplained declines. The B (breeding) qualifier was dropped as the species winters in the province, and the new rank is based on trends in all seasons, not just for breeders.
- **Horned Lark, *merrilli* subspecies:** changed from S3? (Blue) to S1S3 (Red) due to significant and continuing long-term trend declines and likely declining short-term trends.

- **California Gull:** changed from S2S3B (Blue) to S1B,SNRN (Red) due to a very small and localized breeding population. At least tens of thousands of individuals occur as non-breeding visitors, so an unranked non-breeding rank score was also added.
- **Lesser Yellowlegs:** changed from S4S5B (Yellow) to S3S4B (Blue) due to short-term declines.

In addition to the rank changes this year, 22 species of accidental occurrence (recorded once to several times) were added to the “Accidental” list with a subnational rank of SNA.

There were scientific name changes for 9 bird species, and common name changes for 5 bird species based on revisions in taxonomy (Chesser et al. 2021).

Mammals

All of the bats were reviewed this year, with formal threats assessment completed for several species. Of the 18 bats reviewed, 6 species had changes to rank which did not affect their colour list placement. The following three species had rank changes which impacted their colour list placement:

Hoary Bat: changed from S4S5 (Yellow) to S3S4 (Blue) based on the results of a detailed threats assessment completed by COSEWIC in 2021.

Little Brown Myotis: changed from S4 (Yellow) to S3S4 (Blue) based on the results of an expert-led threats assessment, indicating higher threats than previously recognized and the continuing concern of White Nose Syndrome.

Yuma Myotis: changed from S5 (Yellow) to S3 (Blue) based on the results of an expert-led threats assessment, indicating higher threats than previously recognized and the continuing concern of White Nose Syndrome.

An initial rank assessment for the non-breeding component of **Northern Elephant Seal** was completed, resulting in its new rank of S1B,S4N (remaining on the Red List).

Taxonomic revision in the Ermine complex elevated the Haida Gwaii taxon to species status (now ***Mustela haidarum*** – **Haida Ermine**) and the change in specific epithet for mainland **Ermine** to ***Mustela richardsonii*** (from *Mustela erminea*) and the Vancouver Island subspecies to ***M. r. anguinae***.

Taxonomic revision in the North American Pygmy Shrews resulted in the scientific name change for **American Pygmy Shrew** to ***Sorex eximius*** from *S. hoyi*.

Amphibians

All of the amphibians were reviewed this year, with a total of 22 species assessed. Five had changes to rank which did not affect their colour list placement. Only one species changed lists:

Coeur d’Alene Salamander: changed from S4 (Yellow) to S3? (Blue) due to greater threats than previously known.

Three amphibian species had changes to common name, to match the taxonomic naming standard, Crother (2017):

- Blotched Tiger Salamander changed to **Western Tiger Salamander**;
- Northern Pacific Treefrog changed to **Pacific Treefrog**; and
- Roughskin Newt changed to **Rough-skinned Newt**.

Reptiles

Two snake species and populations had name changes to common name, to match the taxonomic standard, Crother (2017):

- Sharp-tailed Snake changed to **Common Sharp-tailed Snake**; and
- Gopher Snake changed to **Gophersnake**, including the **Gophersnake, *catenifer* subspecies** and **Gophersnake, *deserticola* subspecies**

Four turtle species and populations had name changes to common name, to match the taxonomic standard, Turtle Taxonomy Working Group (2021)

- Western Pond Turtle changed to **Northwestern Pond Turtle**;
- Painted Turtle changed to **Northern Painted Turtle**, including the **Northern Painted Turtle – Pacific Coast Population** and **Northern Painted Turtle – Intermountain – Rocky Mountain Population**;
- Leatherback changed to **Leatherback Sea Turtle**; and
- Pacific Ridley Sea Turtle changed to **Olive Ridley Sea Turtle**

Fish

- One species, the **Hoodwinker Sunfish *Mola tecta*** was added based on evidence that this recently recognized species occurs in marine waters of the province.
- A deep-sea, marine fish, the **Flabby Whalefish**, had a scientific name change from *Gyrinomimus* sp. 1 to ***Gyrinomimus grahami***.

Invertebrates

Four species had rank changes this year.

- The grasshopper, ***Metator nevadensis***, changed from S3 to SH as there have been no sightings since the 1950s.
- The **Vancouver Island Shieldback *Steiroxys cf. strepens***, a katydid, was ranked for the first time as S1 and is on the Red List.
- The spider ***Pholcus opilionoides*** was moved from SNR to SNA (Exotic) as it is an introduced species; and
- **Yellow Scarab Hunter Wasp *Dielis pilipes*** was assessed for the first time this year. The rank is S1S2 and is on the Red List.

A total of 7 invertebrate species were deleted due to new evidence that the species never existed in the province, or as a result of taxonomic revisions indicating that certain taxa were synonymous with other taxa already on our lists.

A total of 36 invertebrates had scientific name changes, and a further 5 had common name changes, mostly as a result of taxonomic revisions.

The federal **General Status** of Species in Canada program (<https://www.wildspecies.ca/>) steadily provides new lists of invertebrates that occur within B.C. These have provisional conservation status ranks that were assigned by experts working in the field. The CDC zoologists review these ranks as they are able and export them to B.C. Species and Ecosystems Explorer.

Often, the number of species within these groups is significant, and the CDC zoology unit does not have the capacity to review them all. In these cases, a rank of SNR (“not yet assessed”) is applied to each species.

This year two invertebrate groups were added:

- **True Bugs** (Hemiptera): 2062 elements were added but not reviewed (SNR).
- **Water Mites** (Hydrachnidia): 232 elements were added but not reviewed (SNR).

Sea Urchins, Sea Cucumbers, and Corals

These groups were initially ranked in 2019. We have re-set the ranks to SNR until the data is re-assessed as part of the General Status assessments in 2023.

References

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