

STEWARDS' GUIDE SERIES



Muskoka
WATERSHED COUNCIL

What Are Species at Risk?

There are 5 classifications of Species at Risk in Ontario:

STATUS	DEFINITION
Extinct (Ext)	a native species that no longer lives anywhere in the world.
Extirpated (Exp)	a native species that no longer exists in the wild in Ontario, but still exist elsewhere.
Endangered (End)	a native species facing extinction or extirpation.
Threatened (Thr)	a native species at risk of becoming endangered if steps are not taken to address factors threatening it.
Special Concern (Sc)	a native species that is sensitive to human activities or natural events which may cause it to become endangered or threatened.



Northern Map Turtles (Sc)
Photo by Kenton Otterbein

Why Are These Species at Risk?

- ✦ Habitat loss (wetlands filled in, forests cut, grasslands ploughed & fenced)
- ✦ Habitat fragmentation (roads, development)



Golden-winged Warbler (Sc)
Photo by Eleanor Kee Wellman



Eastern Hog-nosed Snake (Thr)
Photo by Joe Crowley

- ✦ Competition from other species (invasive & introduced)
- ✦ Disease
- ✦ Predation
- ✦ Pollution & chemicals
- ✦ Traffic mortality
- ✦ Illegal/over hunting

Species at Risk Designations

There are 2 levels of designation for Species at Risk. They can be listed provincially and/or federally.

FEDERAL: Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) is a committee of academics, independent specialists and experts, Aboriginal knowledge-holders, government biologists, and museum staff who act as the authority

for assessing the conservation status of wildlife species that may be at risk of extinction in Canada.

PROVINCIAL: Committee on the Status of Species at Risk in Ontario (COSSARO) is another committee of experts whose role is to review COSEWIC species at risk and classify those that occur in Ontario. *This guide uses provincial designations.*

Species at Risk
in Parry Sound-Muskoka

There are **35 SPECIES AT RISK** found in Parry Sound-Muskoka.
For species-specific information, check out the Species at Risk factsheets.



Bald Eagle (Sc)
Photo by Kenton Otterbein



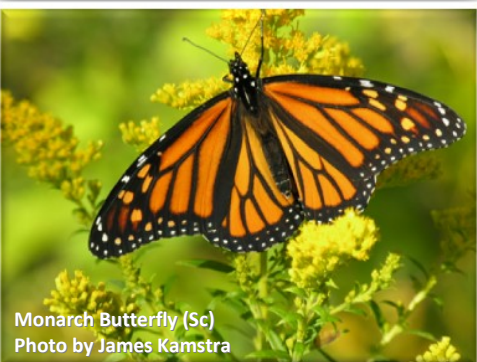
Least Bittern (Thr)
Photo by James Kamstra



Canada Warbler (Sc)
Photo by Ted Krug



Common Nighthawk (Sc)
Photo by Ted Krug



Monarch Butterfly (Sc)
Photo by James Kamstra

Birds

Bobolink (Thr)
Chimney Swift (Thr)
Eastern Meadowlark (Thr)
Least Bittern (Thr)
Peregrine Falcon (Thr)
Whip-poor-will (Thr)
Bald Eagle (Sc)
Black Tern (Sc)
Canada Warbler (Sc)
Cerulean Warbler (Sc)
Common Nighthawk (Sc)
Golden-winged Warbler (Sc)
Olive-sided Flycatcher (Sc)
Red-headed Woodpecker (Sc)

Snakes

Eastern Foxsnake (Thr)
Eastern Hog-nosed Snake (Thr)
Massasauga Rattlesnake (Thr)
Eastern Milksnake (Sc)
Eastern Ribbonsnake (Sc)

Turtles

Spotted Turtle (End)
Blanding's Turtle (Thr)
Eastern Musk Turtle (Thr)
Northern Map Turtle (Sc)
Snapping Turtle (Sc)

Lizards

Common Five-lined Skink (Sc)

Plants

Butternut (End)
Englemann's Quillwort (End)
Forked Three-awned Grass (End)
Branched Bartonias (Thr)
Broad Beech Fern (Sc)

Insects

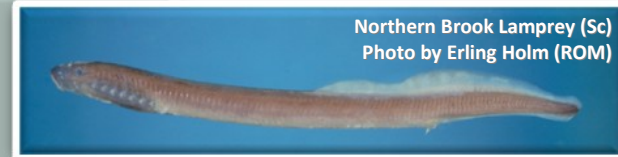
Monarch Butterfly (Sc)
West Virginia White Butterfly (Sc)

Fish

Lake Sturgeon (Thr)
Northern Brook Lamprey (Sc)

Mammals

Eastern Wolf (Sc)



Northern Brook Lamprey (Sc)
Photo by Erling Holm (ROM)



Blanding's Turtle (Thr)
Photo by Scott Gillingwater



Eastern Musk Turtle (Thr)
Photo by Scott Gillingwater



Snapping Turtle (Sc)
Photo by Joe Crowley



Spotted Turtle (End)
Photo by Scott Gillingwater

You can help SPECIES AT RISK!

Each of us has an important role to play in the recovery of Species at Risk.

Massasauga Rattlesnake (Thr)
Photo by Joe Crowley



Eastern Milksnake (Thr)
Photo by Scott Gillingwater



Eastern Foxsnake (Thr)
Photo by Joe Crowley

Common Five-lined Skink (Sc)
Photo by Joe Crowley



Around your home & cottage

- ✦ If you have a species at risk on your property, don't disturb or harass the species or their habitat. Be respectful and observe from a distance, especially during breeding season.
- ✦ Keep wetlands! Many species at risk are threatened by habitat loss - specifically the loss of forest and wetland areas. You can help by protecting these areas and native vegetation on your property.
- ✦ Create habitat on your property. Plant native species and leave dead standing trees (when it's safe), as they provide habitat for bald eagles and shelter for many other animals. Make small piles in the forest with brush to provide shelter and a place to rest for small animals.
- ✦ Avoid using chemicals and pesticides. They are not good for humans and they can leak into the ground and water and disturb animals, too. Use phosphate-free products whenever possible.
- ✦ Maintain your septic system.

Near water

- ✦ Create a buffer along your shoreline with native plants. It helps to filter runoff, provides habitat, and minimizes erosion.
- ✦ Build docks that minimize impacts to the shoreline and lake bed (i.e. floating docks).
- ✦ Watch for wildlife when boating and keep wake to a minimum near shore.

On the trails

- ✦ Stay on the trail. When you finish your hike, clean your shoes so you don't transport any invasive species back home. Invasive species can outcompete native species and reduce habitat for wildlife.
- ✦ Do not drive ATVs through sensitive habitat.

On the roads

- ✦ Keep your eyes open for wildlife crossing the road, especially turtles from May through October.

Help SPECIES AT RISK in Your Community!

- ✿ If you spot a species at risk, you can report your sighting to the Natural Heritage Information Centre (NHIC), which tracks and maintains a database of many of Ontario's species, or to the local MNR Species at Risk Biologist. The more we know about the habits and whereabouts of these species, the more effective our recovery efforts will be.
<http://nhic.mnr.gov.on.ca/>.
- ✿ Get involved with a local nature club to learn more about species at risk and participate in their outings. Local nature clubs include the Muskoka Field Naturalists, the Huntsville Nature Club, the Six Mile Lake Conservationists Club, and the Parry Sound Nature Club.
- ✿ Many provincial parks have programs geared toward species at risk. Check out Algonquin, Arrowhead, Killbear and Massasauga Provincial Parks for programs.
- ✿ Become a Citizen Scientist! Local stewardship programs like the Muskoka Conservancy, Muskoka Watershed Council, Parry Sound-Muskoka Stewardship Network, Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve, your local lake association and others all need volunteers. Get involved in your community!
- ✿ Ontario Nature, the Nature Conservancy of Canada, and Bird Studies Canada also have opportunities for volunteering.
- ✿ Spread the word! Whether it's online or in the yard with your neighbour, talking about species at risk makes more people aware of these animals. Tell others what you are doing to help and encourage them to get involved too.



Branched Bartonia (Thr)
Photo by Jeremy Rouse



Red-headed Woodpecker (Sc)
Photo by Ted Krug

Resources

- ✿ Species at Risk Factsheets
www.muskokaheritage.org/mwc/resources/
- ✿ Federal SAR registry www.sararegistry.gc.ca
- ✿ Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources SAR information
www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/Business/Species/index.html
- ✿ Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve www.gbbr.ca
- ✿ Adopt a Pond www.torontozoo.com/adoptapond/
- ✿ Royal Ontario Museum www.rom.on.ca/ontario/risk.php
- ✿ Natural Heritage Information Centre
<http://nhic.mnr.gov.on.ca/>
- ✿ Ontario Nature <http://www.ontarionature.org/>



Eastern Ribbonsnake (Sc)
Photo by Scott Gillingwater



Whip-poor-Will (Thr)
Photo by N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission

The Stewards' Guide Series is a collaborative project

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Cottage Life

