

Appendix 9. NatureServe status

NatureServe is a non-profit and independent organization that provides information on the conservation status of the world's plants, animals, and ecological communities. Formed in 1999 by the Nature Conservancy and the Natural Heritage Network, NatureServe uses standard criteria developed by NatureServe, the Nature Conservancy, and the Natural Heritage Network to assign conservation ranks. The ranking system is unique in three key respects: it is based on objective biological criteria; it is applicable at multiple geographic levels; and it includes ranks not just for species but for ecological communities. For more information on NatureServe, its methods, and its ranks, visit the NatureServe Web page at <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer/aboutd.htm>.

In short, each element is ranked at three geographic levels: global (G), national (N), and subnational (S). The global rank is based on the status of the element throughout its entire range whereas the subnational rank is based solely on its status within a state, province, or territory. Each element is assigned a rank between one and five unless considered extirpated, extinct, historical, or unranked (see descriptions below). The rank is based on the number of extant occurrences of the element, but other factors such as abundance, range, protection, and threats are also considered if the information is available. For information on ranking in British Columbia, visit <http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/wld/documents/ranking.pdf>.

Code	Rank	Definition
1	Critically Imperiled	<i>Extremely rare or some factor(s) makes it especially susceptible to extirpation or extinction. Typically ≤5 existing occurrences or very few remaining individuals.</i>
2	Imperiled	<i>Rare or some factor(s) makes it very susceptible to extirpation or extinction. Typically 6 to 20 existing occurrences or few remaining individuals.</i>
3	Vulnerable	<i>Rare and local, found only in a restricted range (even if abundant at some locations), or because of some other factor(s) making it susceptible to extirpation or extinction. Typically 21 to 100 existing occurrences.</i>
4	Apparently Secure	<i>Uncommon but not rare, and usually widespread in the province. Possible cause for long-term concern. Typically >100 existing occurrences.</i>
5	Secure	<i>Common to very common, typically widespread and abundant, and not susceptible to extirpation or extinction under present conditions.</i>
X	Extirpated or extinct	<i>Not located despite intensive searches and no expectation that it will be rediscovered; presumed to be extirpated or extinct.</i>
H	Historical	<i>Not located in the last 50 years, but some expectation that it may be rediscovered.</i>
?	Unranked	<i>Rank not yet assessed.</i>
U	Unrankable	<i>Due to current lack of available information.</i>

In addition to the above ranks, the following ranking modifiers are defined below.

B	Associated rank refers to breeding occurrences of mobile animals
E	An exotic species or species introduced by humans to the province
N	Associated rank refers to non-breeding occurrences of mobile animals
Q	Taxonomic status is unclear or is in question
R	Reported from the province, but without persuasive documentation for either accepting or rejecting the report
T	A rank associated with a subspecies or variety
Z	Occurs in the province but as a diffuse, usually moving population; difficult or impossible to map static occurrences

