

Threatened

COLORADO

Colorado's Threatened & Endangered Wildlife 2026 Guide

Status data current as of October 13, 2026

60 at-risk animals, with their federal and Colorado status

threatenedcolorado.org

A free public education resource. No ads.

About this guide

What is included

This guide covers every animal in the Threatened & Endangered section of threatenedcolorado.org: 60 species as of October 13, 2026. Of these, 8 are federally endangered, 14 are federally threatened and 4 are proposed for federal listing. Colorado lists 18 of them as endangered and 12 as threatened, and 19 are Colorado species of special concern.

What is left out

The site's Native & Rare profiles, its Lost & Extinct species and all plants are not in this guide. Colorado's 13 federally listed plants confirmed in the state have their own section at threatenedcolorado.org/plants/.

How to use it

Species are grouped as mammals, birds, fish, reptiles and amphibians, and invertebrates, alphabetically within each group. The summary table on page 4 lists every species with its federal and Colorado status and the page it is on. Each entry gives both statuses, a short summary, its habitat, the broad regions of Colorado where it lives, its main threats, whether critical habitat is designated in Colorado and the address of its full profile, which has the sources, more photos and more detail. Page 3 explains what each status means.

Limits of the data

Statuses change. Federal status follows the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's ECOS database and Colorado status follows Colorado Parks and Wildlife. CPW's list can lag behind federal changes; where the two differ, this guide follows ECOS for federal status. Status data are current as of October 13, 2026. Before relying on a status, check the species' page on threatenedcolorado.org, USFWS ECOS or CPW.

Ranges are given by broad region only. To protect rare animals, this guide never gives exact locations. Each summary is drawn from the species' profile on the site, where every fact is cited.

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What the statuses mean

Each species carries two statuses. They are set separately, so a species can be listed at one level and not the other, or listed differently by each.

Federal status (Endangered Species Act, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service)

Federal: **Endangered**

A species "in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range."

Federal: **Threatened**

A species "likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range."

Federal: **Proposed**

"A proposed species is one that is found to warrant listing as either threatened or endangered, or delisting, after completion of a status review and consideration of other protective conservation measures." (NOAA Fisheries). The badge names the status the proposed rule would give, such as Proposed Endangered. Until a final rule, the species is not listed.

Federal: **Not listed**

No federal listing. Some of these species were once listed, or were reviewed and found not warranted.

Colorado status (Colorado Parks and Wildlife)

Colorado: **State Endangered**

"Endangered wildlife are species that are likely to become extinct throughout all or a large portion of their range." (CPW)

Colorado: **State Threatened**

"Threatened wildlife are species that are likely to become endangered in the near future." (CPW) Colorado's take prohibitions (C.R.S. 33-2-105) name endangered and threatened species.

Colorado: **Special Concern**

A state watch category for nongame wildlife, not a listing. A species qualifies if, for example, it left the state threatened or endangered list within the last five years, is proposed for federal listing or is a federal candidate, or shows "a downward trend in numbers or distribution lasting at least five years" (Colorado Natural Heritage Program, 1999). Colorado's take law does not mention special concern. Special Concern does not mean threatened.

Colorado: **SGCN**

Species of Greatest Conservation Need, from Colorado's State Wildlife Action Plan. CPW: "The SGCN list includes the species of animals and plants that most urgently need conservation action." It is a planning list, not a legal protection status.

Colorado: **Not listed**

No Colorado listing or designation.

Critical habitat

Critical habitat is designated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under the Endangered Species Act. Each entry says whether any is designated in Colorado.

Sources: 16 U.S.C. § 1532 (Endangered Species Act definitions); NOAA Fisheries, Glossary: Endangered Species Act; Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Threatened and Endangered Wildlife and State Wildlife Action Plan; Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Conservation Status Handbook (1999). Links on page 38.

Summary table

SPECIES	SCIENTIFIC NAME	FEDERAL	COLORADO	PAGE
Mammals (12)				
Black-footed Ferret	<i>Mustela nigripes</i>	Endangered	State Endangered	6
Black-tailed Prairie Dog *	<i>Cynomys ludovicianus</i>	Not listed	Special Concern	6
Canada Lynx	<i>Lynx canadensis</i>	Threatened	State Endangered	7
Gray Wolf *	<i>Canis lupus</i>	Threatened	State Endangered	7
Kit Fox *	<i>Vulpes macrotis</i>	Not listed	State Endangered	8
New Mexico Meadow Jumping Mouse *	<i>Zapus hudsonius luteus</i>	Endangered	SGCN	8
North American River Otter *	<i>Lontra canadensis</i>	Not listed	State Threatened	9
North American Wolverine *	<i>Gulo gulo luscus</i>	Threatened	State Endangered	9
Preble's Meadow Jumping Mouse *	<i>Zapus hudsonius preblei</i>	Threatened	State Threatened	10
Swift Fox *	<i>Vulpes velox</i>	Not listed	Special Concern	10
Townsend's Big-eared Bat *	<i>Corynorhinus townsendii pallescens</i>	Not listed	Special Concern	11
Tricolored Bat *	<i>Perimyotis subflavus</i>	Proposed Endangered	Not listed	11
Birds (17)				
American Peregrine Falcon *	<i>Falco peregrinus anatum</i>	Not listed	Special Concern	12
Bald Eagle *	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Not listed	Special Concern	12
Burrowing Owl *	<i>Athene cunicularia</i>	Not listed	State Threatened	13
Eastern Black Rail	<i>Laterallus jamaicensis jamaicensis</i>	Threatened	Not listed	13
Ferruginous Hawk *	<i>Buteo regalis</i>	Not listed	Special Concern	14
Greater Sage-Grouse *	<i>Centrocercus urophasianus</i>	Not listed	Special Concern	14
Greater Sandhill Crane *	<i>Antigone canadensis tabida</i>	Not listed	Special Concern	15
Gunnison Sage-Grouse	<i>Centrocercus minimus</i>	Threatened	Special Concern	15
Least Tern (Interior) *	<i>Sternula antillarum athalassos</i>	Not listed	State Endangered	16
Lesser Prairie-Chicken *	<i>Tympanuchus pallidicinctus</i>	Not listed	State Threatened	16
Mexican Spotted Owl	<i>Strix occidentalis lucida</i>	Threatened	State Threatened	17
Mountain Plover *	<i>Anarhynchus montanus</i>	Not listed	Special Concern	17
Piping Plover	<i>Charadrius melodus</i>	Threatened	State Threatened	18
Plains Sharp-tailed Grouse *	<i>Tympanuchus phasianellus jamesi</i>	Not listed	State Endangered	18
Southwestern Willow Flycatcher	<i>Empidonax traillii extimus</i>	Endangered	State Endangered	19
Whooping Crane	<i>Grus americana</i>	Endangered	State Endangered	19
Yellow-billed Cuckoo *	<i>Coccyzus americanus</i>	Threatened	Special Concern	20

* See the species page for a status note.

SPECIES	SCIENTIFIC NAME	FEDERAL	COLORADO	PAGE
Fish (17)				
Arkansas Darter *	<i>Etheostoma cragini</i>	Not listed	State Threatened	21
Bonytail Chub *	<i>Gila elegans</i>	Endangered	State Endangered	21
Brassy Minnow *	<i>Hybognathus hankinsoni</i>	Not listed	State Threatened	22
Colorado Pikeminnow	<i>Ptychocheilus lucius</i>	Endangered	State Threatened	22
Colorado River Cutthroat Trout *	<i>Oncorhynchus clarkii pleuriticus</i>	Not listed	Special Concern	23
Common Shiner *	<i>Luxilus cornutus</i>	Not listed	State Threatened	23
Greenback Cutthroat Trout *	<i>Oncorhynchus clarkii stomias</i>	Threatened	State Threatened	24
Humpback Chub *	<i>Gila cypha</i>	Threatened	State Threatened	24
Lake Chub *	<i>Couesius plumbeus</i>	Not listed	State Endangered	25
Northern Redbelly Dace *	<i>Chrosomus eos</i>	Not listed	State Endangered	25
Pallid Sturgeon *	<i>Scaphirhynchus albus</i>	Endangered	Not listed	26
Plains Minnow *	<i>Hybognathus placitus</i>	Not listed	State Endangered	26
Razorback Sucker *	<i>Xyrauchen texanus</i>	Threatened	State Endangered	27
Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout *	<i>Oncorhynchus clarkii virginalis</i>	Not listed	Special Concern	27
Rio Grande Sucker *	<i>Pantosteus plebeius</i>	Not listed	State Endangered	28
Southern Redbelly Dace *	<i>Chrosomus erythrogaster</i>	Not listed	State Endangered	28
Suckermouth Minnow *	<i>Phenacobius mirabilis</i>	Not listed	State Endangered	29
Reptiles & Amphibians (7)				
Boreal Toad *	<i>Anaxyrus boreas boreas</i>	Not listed	State Endangered	30
Desert Massasauga *	<i>Sistrurus tergeminus</i>	Not listed	Special Concern	30
Long-nosed Leopard Lizard *	<i>Gambelia wislizenii</i>	Not listed	Special Concern	31
Northern Leopard Frog *	<i>Lithobates pipiens</i>	Not listed	Special Concern	31
Ornate Box Turtle *	<i>Terrapene ornata ornata</i>	Not listed	Special Concern	32
Texas Horned Lizard *	<i>Phrynosoma cornutum</i>	Not listed	Special Concern	32
Wood Frog *	<i>Lithobates sylvaticus</i>	Not listed	Special Concern	33
Invertebrates (7)				
Monarch Butterfly *	<i>Danaus plexippus</i>	Proposed Threatened	SGCN	34
Pawnee Montane Skipper	<i>Hesperia leonardus montana</i>	Threatened	SGCN	34
Regal Fritillary *	<i>Argynnis idalia</i>	Proposed Threatened	Not listed	35
Silverspot Butterfly (Nokomis Fritillary)	<i>Speyeria nokomis nokomis</i>	Threatened	SGCN	35
Suckley's Cuckoo Bumble Bee *	<i>Bombus suckleyi</i>	Proposed Endangered	SGCN	36
Uncompahgre Fritillary	<i>Boloria acrocynema</i>	Endangered	SGCN	36
Western Bumble Bee *	<i>Bombus occidentalis</i>	Not listed	SGCN	37

* See the species page for a status note.

Black-footed Ferret

Mustela nigripes

Federal: **Endangered**

Colorado: **State Endangered**



Photo: Ryan Hagerty / USFWS · Public Domain

Billed as North America's rarest mammal, the black-footed ferret lives on black-tailed prairie dog colonies. Colorado has released more than 500 since 2001, first in the northwest and, after a 2013 state law allowed releases on private land, on the eastern plains and Front Range. Plague collapsed prairie dog colonies at several eastern-plains sites in the mid-2010s.

HABITAT Black-tailed prairie dog colonies on shortgrass and mixed-grass prairie.

RANGE REGIONS Eastern Plains · Front Range

THREATS Sylvatic plague; Prairie dog colony decline; Habitat loss

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/black-footed-ferret/

Black-tailed Prairie Dog

Cynomys ludovicianus

Federal: **Not listed**

Colorado: **Special Concern**

State special concern; never federally listed (a candidate 2000–2004, not warranted in 2009). Keystone of the plains, but plague can wipe out whole colonies.



Photo: Kayt Jonsson / USFWS · Public Domain

Black-tailed prairie dogs are still common in parts of Colorado and are a keystone of the plains, but plague can wipe out whole colonies. CPW aerial mapping of 2020 imagery found about 500,375 occupied acres. The species was a federal candidate from 2000 to 2004 and has never been federally listed.

HABITAT Grasslands of the eastern plains, where the animals live in colonies called towns.

RANGE REGIONS Eastern Plains

THREATS Sylvatic plague; Poisoning and control programs; Conversion of grassland to farms; Urban development

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/black-tailed-prairie-dog/

Canada Lynx

Lynx canadensis



Photo: Ryan Pennesi / U.S. Forest Service · Public Domain

Federal: **Threatened**

Colorado: **State Endangered**

Colorado's lynx descend from 218 animals released in the San Juan Mountains from 1999 to 2006, and CPW estimates 75–100 today. Colorado is the southern edge of the species' range. Lynx need dense spruce-fir forest, plenty of snowshoe hares and deep winter snow, where their large feet give them an edge over competing predators.

HABITAT	High-elevation spruce-fir forest, roughly 9,900 to 11,600 feet, with deep, persistent winter snow.
RANGE REGIONS	San Juan Mountains · Mountains
THREATS	Snowpack decline and climate change; Habitat loss; Vehicle collisions; Snowshoe hare decline
CRITICAL HABITAT	Designated in Colorado for the first time: the Southern Rockies unit, in effect Aug. 17, 2026.

threatenedcolorado.org/species/canada-lynx/

Gray Wolf

Canis lupus

Federal: **Threatened**

Colorado: **State Endangered**

Colorado's wolves are a 10(j) nonessential experimental population, treated as threatened; the species is endangered in most of the lower 48. CPW's list still shows it as federally endangered.



Photo: Lori Iverson / USFWS · Public Domain

Gray wolves returned to Colorado in December 2023 under Proposition 114, with releases in the central mountains of the Western Slope, where high-country elk herds provide prey. Colorado's wolves are a 10(j) nonessential experimental population, treated as threatened. Territories are expected to spread as the population grows, and dispersers do cross the Continental Divide.

HABITAT	Montane and subalpine forest with large elk herds and low road density.
RANGE REGIONS	Western Slope · Mountains
THREATS	Livestock conflict; Illegal killing; Habitat fragmentation; Human tolerance
CRITICAL HABITAT	None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/gray-wolf/

Kit Fox

Vulpes macrotis

Federal: **Not listed**

Colorado: **State Endangered**

State endangered since 1998 and one of Colorado's most vulnerable mammals. A 2007 survey found the western Colorado population close to extirpation.



Photo: Matt D'Agrosa / iNaturalist · CC BY 4.0

Kit foxes live only in western Colorado's semi-desert shrublands. A 2007 survey found the population close to extirpation, with suitable habitat shrunk from about 1.83 million hectares historically to about 120,000. No newer statewide survey has been published, so whether kit foxes still live in Colorado is uncertain. State endangered since 1998.

HABITAT	Semi-desert shrublands.
RANGE REGIONS	Western Slope
THREATS	Coyote predation; Habitat loss to agriculture and development; Road kill; Trapping and shooting
CRITICAL HABITAT	None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/kit-fox/

New Mexico Meadow Jumping Mouse

Zapus hudsonius luteus

Federal: **Endangered**

Colorado: **SGCN**

Federally endangered across its range since 2014, a separate listing from Preble's (threatened). In Colorado a Tier 1 Species of Greatest Conservation Need, not state-listed.



Photo: USFWS · Public Domain

A habitat specialist, this jumping mouse needs tall, dense streamside sedges and forbs on soils kept wet through the summer. Federally endangered since 2014, separately from Preble's, it is known in Colorado from two small, isolated populations near the New Mexico line. In Colorado it is a Tier 1 Species of Greatest Conservation Need, not state-listed.

HABITAT	Tall, dense sedges and forbs along streams, on soils kept wet by flowing water through the summer.
RANGE REGIONS	Southwest Colorado
THREATS	Livestock grazing; Riparian habitat degradation; Drought and water diversion; Wildfire
CRITICAL HABITAT	Designated in 2016; three of its eight units reach Colorado, one of them unoccupied.

threatenedcolorado.org/species/new-mexico-meadow-jumping-mouse/

North American River Otter

Lontra canadensis

Federal: Not listed

Colorado: State Threatened

State threatened. Wiped out by the early 1900s and reintroduced 1976–1991. CPW's Otter Y.E.A.R. survey (2026–27) is measuring its recovery.



Photo: Tom Koerner / USFWS · Public Domain

Wiped out of Colorado by the early 1900s, river otters were reintroduced from 1976 to 1991 and now breed in many parts of the state, mainly on the Western Slope. They have spread from the release sites into other rivers, and have been sighted on the Front Range. CPW's 2026–27 survey is measuring their recovery. State threatened.

HABITAT Rivers that keep open water in winter, and their banks.

RANGE REGIONS Western Slope · Mountains

THREATS Drought and reduced flows; Poorer water quality; Development; Loss of streamside vegetation

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/river-otter/

North American Wolverine

Gulo gulo luscus

Federal: Threatened

Colorado: State Endangered

Federally threatened since Jan 2, 2024 (88 FR 83726). CPW's threatened and endangered list shows only its state endangered status.

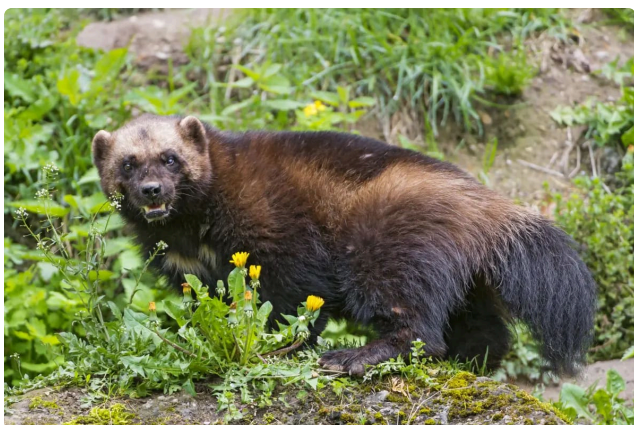


Photo: Blue Mountains – Oregon Conservation Strategy · Public Domain

Colorado has no wolverine population: a male from Wyoming tracked from 2009 to 2012 is the only one confirmed since 1919. CPW's January 2026 restoration plan would release up to 45, pending federal approval. Females den in deep spring snow, so suitable habitat is subalpine and alpine terrain where snow lasts into May.

HABITAT Subalpine and alpine terrain, from spruce-fir forest and krummholz to tundra, where snow lingers well into spring.

RANGE REGIONS None in Colorado

THREATS Climate change and snowpack decline; Habitat fragmentation; Recreation disturbance; Small population size

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/north-american-wolverine/

Preble's Meadow Jumping Mouse

Zapus hudsonius preblei

Federal: **Threatened**

Colorado: **State Threatened**

Federally threatened in Colorado and Wyoming; a 2008 rule dropping Wyoming was vacated and protection reinstated in 2011. Critical habitat (2010) is in Colorado only.



Photo: Robert Schorr / Colorado Natural Heritage Program · Public Domain

Preble's meadow jumping mice live along streams of Colorado's Front Range urban corridor, in dense native vegetation connected to nearby wetlands. Isolated populations in fragmented urban landscapes cannot exchange animals or recolonize after local losses. Federally and state threatened; a 2008 rule dropping Wyoming from the listing was vacated and protection reinstated in 2011.

HABITAT Streams lined with dense native vegetation, connected to adjacent wetlands.

RANGE REGIONS Front Range

THREATS Urban development; Habitat fragmentation; Water diversions; Overgrazing

CRITICAL HABITAT Designated in 2010: about 411 miles of rivers and streams and 34,935 acres, all in Colorado.

threatenedcolorado.org/species/prebles-meadow-jumping-mouse/

Swift Fox

Vulpes velox

Federal: **Not listed**

Colorado: **Special Concern**

State special concern and a legal furbearer. A federal candidate from 1995 to 2001; CPW surveys find it on about 80% of shortgrass prairie with no decline.



Photo: Craig Miller / Bureau of Land Management · Public Domain

Swift foxes occupy about 80% of surveyed shortgrass prairie in eastern Colorado, with no change found in 15 years of CPW surveys, and live in 22 of the 29 counties of their historical Colorado range. A federal candidate from 1995 to 2001, the swift fox is a State Special Concern species and a legal furbearer.

HABITAT Shortgrass prairie.

RANGE REGIONS Eastern Plains

THREATS Road deaths; Coyote predation

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/swift-fox/

Townsend's Big-eared Bat

Corynorhinus townsendii pallescens

Federal: **Not listed**

Colorado: **Special Concern**

State Special Concern and a CPW Tier 2 SGCN. NatureServe ranks it S2, imperiled, in Colorado. Not federally listed; two eastern subspecies are.



Photo: NPS · Public Domain

Townsend's big-eared bats live throughout Colorado except the eastern plains, wherever they find caves, mines and rock cavities with suitable temperatures. Females gather in summer maternity colonies, and the bats hibernate from late October to April. Gates on old mines can keep roosts safe. NatureServe ranks the species S2, imperiled, in Colorado.

HABITAT	Caves, abandoned mines and large rock cavities, used for summer maternity colonies and winter hibernation.
RANGE REGIONS	Western Slope · Mountains · Front Range foothills
THREATS	Roost disturbance; Mine closures; White-nose syndrome fungus
CRITICAL HABITAT	None designated in Colorado
threatenedcolorado.org/species/townsend-bat/	

Tricolored Bat

Perimyotis subflavus

Federal: **Proposed Endangered**

Colorado: **Not listed**

Proposed for federal endangered listing in 2022 after white-nose syndrome crashed eastern populations. Rare in Colorado, known from a few Front Range records.

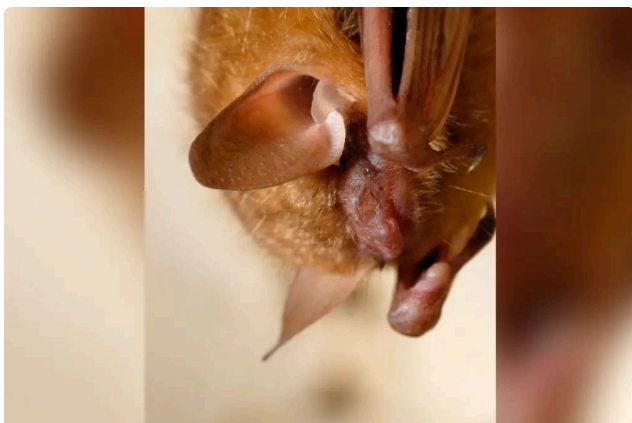


Photo: Pete Pattavina / USFWS · Public Domain

A tiny bat of eastern North America, hit hard by white-nose syndrome, the tricolored bat was proposed for federal endangered listing in 2022. It is rare in Colorado, known from a few Front Range records. In summer it roosts in leaf clusters of deciduous trees, and in winter in caves and mines.

HABITAT	Leaf clusters in deciduous trees in summer, and caves and mines in winter.
RANGE REGIONS	Front Range
THREATS	White-nose syndrome; Wind turbine collisions; Roost loss and disturbance; Climate change
CRITICAL HABITAT	None designated in Colorado
threatenedcolorado.org/species/tricolored-bat/	

American Peregrine Falcon

Falco peregrinus anatum

Federal: **Not listed**

Colorado: **Special Concern**

Federally endangered 1970–1999; removed from the list after recovering from DDT. Now State Special Concern and a CPW Tier 2 SGCN.



Photo: Roy W. Lowe / USFWS · Public Domain

DDT left only a few peregrine pairs in Colorado by the 1970s. The falcon recovered and left the federal list in 1999, when Colorado had at least 89 known nesting pairs. Peregrines nest on high cliffs and bluffs, usually above rivers, and some now use tall city buildings. Pairs return to the same ledge year after year.

HABITAT High cliffs and bluffs, usually overlooking rivers, and tall buildings in cities.

RANGE REGIONS Front Range · Mountains · Western Slope

THREATS DDT and other organochlorine pesticides (historical); Nest disturbance

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/american-peregrine-falcon/

Bald Eagle

Haliaeetus leucocephalus

Federal: **Not listed**

Colorado: **Special Concern**

Removed from the federal endangered list in 2007 but still protected by federal eagle law. State special concern in Colorado: 14 nesting pairs in 1987–94, at least 300 occupied nests in 2024.



Photo: Todd Harless / USFWS · Public Domain

Colorado went from 14 nesting bald eagle pairs in 1987–1994 to at least 300 occupied nests in 2024. Removed from the federal endangered list in 2007, they are still protected by federal eagle law. Many more eagles arrive in winter, when they gather near reservoirs and major rivers such as the South Platte, Arkansas, Rio Grande, Yampa and Colorado.

HABITAT Tall trees near reservoirs and major rivers.

RANGE REGIONS Statewide

THREATS Avian influenza; Lead exposure; Electrocution; Vehicle strikes

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/bald-eagle/

Burrowing Owl

Athene cunicularia

Federal: **Not listed**

Colorado: **State Threatened**

Not listed under the Endangered Species Act; protected federally under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and listed as State Threatened in Colorado.



Photo: Rod Colvin / USFWS · Public Domain

Burrowing owls nest on prairie dog colonies on Colorado's eastern plains. A 2022–23 CSU and CPW survey estimated about 4,900 adults on eastern-plains colonies, with colony occupancy similar to 2005. The owl is state threatened and protected federally under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, though not listed under the Endangered Species Act.

HABITAT Shortgrass prairie and grasslands with prairie dog colonies.

RANGE REGIONS Eastern Plains

THREATS Prairie dog decline; Habitat loss; Sylvatic plague; Vehicle collisions

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/burrowing-owl/

Eastern Black Rail

Laterallus jamaicensis jamaicensis

Federal: **Threatened**

Colorado: **Not listed**



Photo: Jarrett Woodrow / USFWS · Public Domain

Eastern black rails breed in Colorado in extensive cattail marshes with shallow, stable water in the lower Arkansas River Valley, calling from the marshes through a breeding season that begins in mid-May. 2018 surveys detected rails at 17 of 66 marshes. Elsewhere the breeding population is concentrated along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts. Federally threatened since 2020.

HABITAT Extensive cattail marshes with shallow, stable standing water.

RANGE REGIONS Arkansas Valley

THREATS Wetland loss; Water level fluctuation; Invasive vegetation; Drought

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/eastern-black-rail/

Ferruginous Hawk

Buteo regalis

Federal: **Not listed**

Colorado: **Special Concern**

Never federally listed; petitions in 1983 and 1991 were found not warranted in 1992. A USFWS Bird of Conservation Concern.



Photo: Brett Billings / USFWS · Public Domain

The ferruginous hawk is a grassland specialist that hunts jackrabbits and prairie dogs across Colorado's eastern plains, avoiding dense trees and developed areas. Some Colorado birds stay year-round, and birds from farther north also winter here. Never federally listed, it is a State Special Concern species and a USFWS Bird of Conservation Concern.

HABITAT Open shortgrass and mixed-grass prairie, shrubsteppe and rangeland, often near prairie dog colonies.

RANGE REGIONS Eastern Plains · Front Range foothills

THREATS Habitat loss and grassland fragmentation; Prairie dog decline; Wind turbine collisions; Powerline electrocution

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/ferruginous-hawk/

Greater Sage-Grouse

Centrocercus urophasianus

Federal: **Not listed**

Colorado: **Special Concern**

State Special Concern and a CPW Tier 1 SGCN. USFWS found federal listing not warranted in 2015. A different species from the federally threatened Gunnison sage-grouse.



Photo: Tom Koerner / USFWS · Public Domain

North America's largest grouse lives in the sagebrush of northwestern Colorado, the southeastern edge of its range. CPW recognizes seven Colorado populations and monitors more than 500 known leks. The birds stay almost entirely in sagebrush from late fall to spring. USFWS found federal listing not warranted in 2015. It is a different species from the Gunnison sage-grouse.

HABITAT Sagebrush flats, slopes, ridges and plateaus, usually at 6,000 to 9,000 feet, with moist meadows nearby for broods.

RANGE REGIONS Northwest Colorado · Mountain parks

THREATS Sagebrush loss and fragmentation; Energy development; Invasive weeds; Wildfire and drought

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/greater-sage-grouse/

Greater Sandhill Crane

Antigone canadensis tabida

Federal: **Not listed**

Colorado: **Special Concern**

State Special Concern and a CPW Tier 2 SGCN. Never federally listed. Nests in northwest Colorado; nearly the whole Rocky Mountain population stops in the San Luis Valley.



Photo: Kate Miyamoto / USFWS · Public Domain

Nearly the entire Rocky Mountain population of greater sandhill cranes stops in the San Luis Valley each spring and fall, between breeding grounds to the north and wintering grounds in New Mexico. Some pairs nest in northwest Colorado, in mountain parks with wet meadows, beaver ponds and willow-lined ponds. Never federally listed; State Special Concern.

HABITAT Wet meadows, shallow marshes and beaver ponds for nesting, and wetlands and grain fields during migration.

RANGE REGIONS San Luis Valley · Northwest Colorado

THREATS Wetland loss and degradation

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/greater-sandhill-crane/

Gunnison Sage-Grouse

Centrocercus minimus

Federal: **Threatened**

Colorado: **Special Concern**



Photo: Gary Kramer / USFWS · Public Domain

About 85% of the world's Gunnison sage-grouse live in Colorado's Gunnison Basin, a high sagebrush basin; six smaller, isolated populations lie elsewhere in Colorado and Utah. The birds need open lek sites, dense sagebrush for nesting and forb-rich wet meadows for chicks. About 3,500 breeding birds remain range-wide. Federally threatened since 2014.

HABITAT High sagebrush basins, roughly 7,500 to 9,500 feet, with forb-rich wet meadows nearby.

RANGE REGIONS Western Slope

THREATS Sagebrush loss and fragmentation; Drought; Invasive annual grasses; Infrastructure development

CRITICAL HABITAT Designated in 2014: about 1.43 million acres in Colorado and Utah.

threatenedcolorado.org/species/gunnison-sage-grouse/

Least Tern (Interior)

Sternula antillarum athalassos

Federal: **Not listed**

Colorado: **State Endangered**

Federally delisted in 2021 after recovering range-wide, but still state endangered in Colorado, where it nests only at a few lower Arkansas River reservoirs.



Photo: Laurie Sheppard / USFWS · Public Domain

Least terns nest on bare sand and gravel along reservoir shorelines in Colorado's lower Arkansas River basin, the only place they breed in the state. CPW closes nesting shorelines to people from early April to mid-August. The tern was federally delisted in 2021 after recovering range-wide, but it remains state endangered.

HABITAT	Bare sand or gravel on reservoir shorelines.
RANGE REGIONS	Arkansas Valley
THREATS	Changing reservoir levels; Regulated river flows; Predators; Disturbance
CRITICAL HABITAT	None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/least-tern/

Lesser Prairie-Chicken

Tympanuchus pallidicinctus

Federal: **Not listed**

Colorado: **State Threatened**

Federally listed 2023–2026; removed Feb 26, 2026, after a federal court vacated the listing. USFWS has opened a new status review. CPW's list still shows federally threatened.



Photo: Patricia Zenone / USFWS · Public Domain

Lesser prairie-chickens survive in southeastern Colorado, the northwestern edge of their range, in sand sagebrush and mixed-grass prairie. The population is small and declining. Federally listed from 2023, the bird was removed in February 2026 after a federal court vacated the listing, and USFWS has opened a new status review. It is state threatened.

HABITAT	Sand sagebrush prairie and short mixed-grass prairie on sandy soils.
RANGE REGIONS	Eastern Plains
THREATS	Habitat loss and fragmentation; Oil, gas and wind energy development; Drought; Overgrazing
CRITICAL HABITAT	None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/lesser-prairie-chicken/

Mexican Spotted Owl

Strix occidentalis lucida

Federal: **Threatened**

Colorado: **State Threatened**



Photo: Shaula Hedwall / USFWS · Public Domain

Colorado's Mexican spotted owls live in steep-walled canyons: in the Colorado Plateau canyon country of the southwest and in montane canyons of the Front Range and Wet Mountains. They need old, structurally complex mixed conifer and ponderosa pine forest with large trees and snags. The population is small and poorly known. Federally and state threatened.

HABITAT Steep rocky canyons with old mixed conifer and ponderosa pine forest.

RANGE REGIONS Front Range foothills · Southwest Colorado

THREATS High-severity wildfire; Logging and timber harvest; Climate change and drought; Barred owl competition

CRITICAL HABITAT About 322,000 acres in Colorado, along the southern Front Range and in the Wet Mountains.

threatenedcolorado.org/species/mexican-spotted-owl/

Mountain Plover

Anarhynchus montanus

Federal: **Not listed**

Colorado: **Special Concern**

State Special Concern and a CPW Tier 1 SGCN. USFWS twice proposed listing it as threatened and withdrew the proposal in 2003 and again in 2011.



Photo: Christoph Moning / iNaturalist · CC BY 4.0

A shorebird that avoids water, the mountain plover nests on bare ground in shortgrass prairie, often on prairie dog colonies, where chicks survive better. Colorado holds about 11,000 breeding birds, likely half or more of the world's breeding population. USFWS twice proposed listing it as threatened and withdrew the proposal both times.

HABITAT Short, grazed prairie with bare ground and flat terrain, including prairie dog colonies and fallow fields.

RANGE REGIONS Eastern Plains · Mountain parks · San Luis Valley

THREATS Conversion of prairie to cropland; Loss of prairie dog colonies; Nest loss to farm machinery; Oil and gas development

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/mountain-plover/

Piping Plover

Charadrius melodus

Federal: **Threatened**

Colorado: **State Threatened**



Photo: USFWS · Public Domain

Piping plovers nest on sandy shorelines of a few reservoirs in Colorado's lower Arkansas Valley, at the southern margin of the Northern Great Plains breeding range. Surveys found 4 to 9 nesting pairs in the 1990s and in 2000; no recent public count exists. Elsewhere in eastern Colorado it is a very rare migrant. Federally and state threatened.

HABITAT Sparsely vegetated sandy reservoir shorelines and sandbars.

RANGE REGIONS Arkansas Valley

THREATS Water level fluctuations; Predation; Human disturbance; Vegetation encroachment

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/piping-plover/

Plains Sharp-tailed Grouse

Tympanuchus phasianellus jamesi

Federal: **Not listed**

Colorado: **State Endangered**

State endangered; not federally listed. Now found almost only in northern Weld County, with smaller numbers in Logan and Sedgwick counties.



Photo: Rick Bohn / USFWS · Public Domain

Plains sharp-tailed grouse once nested across the northern two-thirds of eastern Colorado. Today they are found almost only in northeastern Colorado, where they depend on Conservation Reserve Program grasslands. Males display on leks, open sites with short vegetation, from March to June. State endangered; not federally listed.

HABITAT Conservation Reserve Program grasslands, with open, short-vegetation sites for leks.

RANGE REGIONS Eastern Plains

THREATS Habitat loss

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/plains-sharp-tailed-grouse/

Southwestern Willow Flycatcher

Empidonax traillii extimus

Federal: **Endangered**

Colorado: **State Endangered**



Photo: Dave Menke / USFWS · Public Domain

Colorado's small breeding population of southwestern willow flycatchers centers on the Rio Grande and Conejos River in the San Luis Valley, with a smaller presence in the far southwest. The birds need dense, multi-layered streamside shrubs. Colorado sits at the northern boundary of viable breeding habitat for the subspecies. Federally and state endangered.

HABITAT	Dense willow thickets and cottonwood-willow woodland along rivers and streams.
RANGE REGIONS	San Luis Valley · Southwest Colorado
THREATS	Riparian habitat loss; Water diversion and groundwater pumping; Invasive tamarisk; Brown-headed cowbird parasitism
CRITICAL HABITAT	Revised in 2013; includes segments of the Rio Grande, Conejos and Los Pinos rivers in Colorado.

threatenedcolorado.org/species/southwestern-willow-flycatcher/

Whooping Crane

Grus americana

Federal: **Endangered**

Colorado: **State Endangered**



Photo: Steve Hillebrand / USFWS · Public Domain

North America's tallest bird fell to about 21 wild birds by 1954; about 700 are wild now. Colorado lies west of the main migration corridor, and CPW reports no sightings since 2010. From 1975 to 1989, an experimental flock raised by sandhill cranes staged in the San Luis Valley. The birds never paired, and the last died in 2002.

HABITAT	Wetlands, shallow marshes and river sandbars, and farm fields during migration.
RANGE REGIONS	None in Colorado
THREATS	Habitat loss; Powerline collisions; Small population size; Drought and climate change
CRITICAL HABITAT	None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/whooping-crane/

Yellow-billed Cuckoo

Coccyzus americanus

Federal: **Threatened**

Colorado: **Special Concern**

Only the western DPS (west of the Continental Divide) is listed. Eastern-plains cuckoos are not federally listed.



Photo: Peter Pearsall / USFWS · Public Domain

Western yellow-billed cuckoos are rare breeders in western Colorado, in native cottonwood-willow forest along lowland rivers. Dams, water diversions and tamarisk have cut that forest to a fraction of its historical extent. Only the western population, west of the Continental Divide, is federally listed; cuckoos on the eastern plains are not.

HABITAT	Native cottonwood-willow forest along lowland rivers.
RANGE REGIONS	Western Slope
THREATS	Riparian habitat loss; Water diversion and dams; Tamarisk invasion; Drought and climate change
CRITICAL HABITAT	Finalized in 2021; two Colorado units, on the Colorado River and the North Fork of the Gunnison River.

threatenedcolorado.org/species/yellow-billed-cuckoo/

Arkansas Darter

Etheostoma cragini

Federal: **Not listed**

Colorado: **State Threatened**

State threatened. A federal candidate from 1989 until USFWS found listing not warranted on Oct 6, 2016 (81 FR 69425). CPW's species page still calls it a candidate.



Photo: Steven Wang / iNaturalist · CC BY 4.0

Arkansas darters live in small, sunny, spring-fed plains streams of Colorado's Arkansas River basin, often in pools with undercut banks and watercress. CPW knows them from eight drainages in the basin. The darter was a federal candidate from 1989 until USFWS found listing not warranted in 2016. It is state threatened.

HABITAT Small spring-fed streams with sand, silt or gravel bottoms and floating plants such as watercress.

RANGE REGIONS Arkansas Valley

THREATS Groundwater withdrawal; Stream dewatering; Non-native fish; Tamarisk

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/arkansas-darter/

Bonytail Chub

Gila elegans

Federal: **Endangered**

Colorado: **State Endangered**

Listed April 23, 1980. No self-sustaining wild population; presence depends on hatchery stocking across the Colorado River basin.



Photo: USFWS · Public Domain

Colorado has no self-sustaining wild bonytail. The fish once lived in the canyon reaches of the Colorado River and in the warmer reaches of the Green and Yampa rivers. Today hatchery-raised bonytail are stocked each year into the Colorado and Gunnison rivers through the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program. Federally and state endangered.

HABITAT Warm canyon reaches of large rivers, with backwaters and eddies.

RANGE REGIONS Western Slope

THREATS Dams and flow alteration; Nonnative fish predation; Water temperature changes; Water diversions

CRITICAL HABITAT Designated in 1994 on about 312 river miles in Colorado, Utah, Arizona, Nevada and California.

threatenedcolorado.org/species/bonytail-chub/

Brassy Minnow

Hybognathus hankinsoni

Federal: **Not listed**

Colorado: **State Threatened**

State threatened since 1998; never federally listed. NatureServe ranks it S3, vulnerable, in Colorado. Tier 1 in CPW's 2025 State Wildlife Action Plan.



Photo: Gajilynx / iNaturalist · CC BY 4.0

Brassy minnows live in low numbers in the lower South Platte River basin, in pools, backwaters and beaver ponds. The best sites are permanent deep pools with abundant underwater plants and woody debris, no large predatory fish and a link to other water through the driest months. Declining since the 1970s, it has been state threatened since 1998.

HABITAT Permanent pools, backwaters and beaver ponds of plains streams, with abundant underwater plants.

RANGE REGIONS Eastern Plains

THREATS Stream drying; Water development; Non-native predators

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/brassy-minnow/

Colorado Pikeminnow

Ptychocheilus lucius

Federal: **Endangered**

Colorado: **State Threatened**



Photo: Joe Ferreira / USFWS · Public Domain

Formerly called the Colorado squawfish, the Colorado pikeminnow lives in the upper Colorado River and the Green River system, including the Yampa and White rivers. Adults migrate hundreds of miles a year between wintering, spawning and feeding areas, so dams that fragment rivers hit them hard. The Yampa, the system's last largely free-flowing tributary, is vital to the species.

HABITAT Warm, large rivers with high spring flows and connected backwaters.

RANGE REGIONS Western Slope

THREATS Dams and flow alteration; Nonnative fish predation; Water diversions; Habitat fragmentation

CRITICAL HABITAT Designated in 1994 along 1,148 river miles in Colorado, Utah and New Mexico.

threatenedcolorado.org/species/colorado-pikeminnow/

Colorado River Cutthroat Trout

Oncorhynchus clarkii pleuriticus

Federal: Not listed

Colorado: **Special Concern**

State Special Concern and a CPW Tier 1 SGCN. USFWS found federal listing not warranted in 2007. Genetic work since then splits it into three lineages.



Photo: Cody Stricker / iNaturalist · CC BY 4.0

The native trout of Colorado's West Slope now lives mainly in cold, isolated headwater streams and high lakes across the Colorado River basin. NatureServe's 2024 assessment says fewer than 11% of historically occupied streams still hold it. USFWS found federal listing not warranted in 2007; genetic work since then splits the trout into three lineages.

HABITAT Cold headwater streams and high mountain lakes.

RANGE REGIONS Western Slope · Mountains

THREATS Hybridization with nonnative trout; Competition from brook trout; Whirling disease; Climate change

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/colorado-river-cutthroat-trout/

Common Shiner

Luxilus cornutus

Federal: Not listed

Colorado: **State Threatened**

State threatened since 1998; never federally listed. NatureServe ranks it S2, imperiled, in Colorado. Tier 1 in CPW's 2025 State Wildlife Action Plan.



Photo: Zakqary Roy / iNaturalist · CC BY 4.0

A glacial relict, the common shiner lives in Colorado only in transition-zone streams, the reaches of South Platte tributaries where the foothills meet the plains. CPW calls these cool, species-rich creeks a unique aquatic environment. The shiner is declining and disappeared from one creek after the September 2013 flood. State threatened since 1998; NatureServe ranks it S2 in Colorado.

HABITAT Clear, cool transition-zone creeks with rocky pools, where the foothills meet the plains.

RANGE REGIONS Front Range foothills

THREATS Urban and water development; Water quality degradation; Channelization for flood control; Non-native fish

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/common-shiner/

Greenback Cutthroat Trout

Oncorhynchus clarkii stomias

Federal: **Threatened**

Colorado: **State Threatened**

Listed endangered 1967; downlisted to threatened 1978. No critical habitat designated.



Photo: Chris Kennedy / USFWS · Public Domain

Colorado's state fish survived in just one original wild population, in a stream of the Arkansas drainage; its native range is the South Platte basin. Since 2014, CPW, USFWS and partners have used that stock to establish greenbacks in several South Platte basin waters where nonnative trout were removed. Listed endangered in 1967, it was downlisted to threatened in 1978.

HABITAT Cold mountain streams and high-elevation lakes.

RANGE REGIONS Front Range foothills · Mountains

THREATS Hybridization with non-native trout; Nonnative trout competition and predation; Habitat fragmentation; Whirling disease

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/greenback-cutthroat-trout/

Humpback Chub

Gila cypha

Federal: **Threatened**

Colorado: **State Threatened**

Reclassified from endangered to threatened with a 4(d) rule, effective Nov 17, 2021 (86 FR 57588). CPW's list still shows it as federally endangered.



Photo: Grand Canyon National Park / NPS · Public Domain

Colorado's only humpback chub live in one warm canyon reach of the Colorado River near the Utah line: about 430 adults in 2016–17. Water there stays warm, which favors this native fish over cold-adapted nonnative species that thrive below cold dam releases. The chub was reclassified from endangered to threatened in 2021. State threatened.

HABITAT Warm, swift canyon reaches of the Colorado River.

RANGE REGIONS Western Slope

THREATS Dams and cold-water releases; Nonnative fish predation; Flow alteration; Habitat loss

CRITICAL HABITAT Designated in the Colorado River canyon reach that holds Colorado's population, and at other sites across the range.

threatenedcolorado.org/species/humpback-chub/

Lake Chub

Couesius plumbeus

Federal: Not listed

Colorado: State Endangered

State endangered; never federally listed. NatureServe ranks it S1, critically imperiled, in Colorado. Tier 2 in CPW's 2025 State Wildlife Action Plan.



Photo: Spencer Quayle / iNaturalist · CC0

Common across Canada and the northern United States, the lake chub reaches its southern limit in Colorado, where a small relict population survives in Front Range headwaters. Listed as extirpated from the state in 1985, it was rediscovered in 1991 after an 85-year gap. CPW last recorded it in its main creek in 2007. State endangered; S1.

HABITAT Cool springs, seeps and slow pools with heavy cover at the headwaters of small streams.

RANGE REGIONS Front Range foothills

THREATS Groundwater pumping; Water diversion; Non-native fish; Small, isolated populations

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/lake-chub/

Northern Redbelly Dace

Chrosomus eos

Federal: Not listed

Colorado: State Endangered

State endangered; never federally listed. NatureServe ranks it S1, critically imperiled, in Colorado. Tier 1 in CPW's 2025 State Wildlife Action Plan.



Photo: Carter Dorscht / iNaturalist · CC0

Northern redbelly dace live only in the South Platte River basin, in cool, clear, heavily vegetated spring-fed water free of predatory non-native fish. By the 1990s one native population remained. CPW has since stocked about 30 sites, and five have become self-sustaining. State endangered; NatureServe ranks it S1, critically imperiled, in Colorado.

HABITAT Cool, clear spring-fed streams and ponds with heavy vegetation, slow pools and undercut banks.

RANGE REGIONS Front Range · Eastern Plains

THREATS Non-native predatory fish; Habitat alteration; Dewatering

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/northern-redbelly-dace/

Pallid Sturgeon

Scaphirhynchus albus

Federal: **Endangered**

Colorado: **Not listed**

Does not occur in Colorado. Included because South Platte water use is tied to its recovery through the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program.



Photo: Sam Stukel / USFWS · Public Domain

The pallid sturgeon has never been verified in Colorado; its nearest habitat is the lower Platte River in eastern Nebraska and the Missouri River. Colorado's connection is water: diversions from the South Platte reduce flows downstream, so Colorado takes part in the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program, which counts the sturgeon among its four target species.

HABITAT Large, free-flowing river channels with sand and gravel bottoms.

RANGE REGIONS None in Colorado

THREATS Dams and channelization; Flow alteration; Habitat loss; Water quality degradation

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/pallid-sturgeon/

Plains Minnow

Hybognathus placitus

Federal: **Not listed**

Colorado: **State Endangered**

State endangered; never federally listed. NatureServe ranks it SH, possibly extirpated, in Colorado. Tier 1 in CPW's 2025 State Wildlife Action Plan.



Photo: Tom Kennedy / iNaturalist · CC BY 4.0

Plains minnows are native to the Arkansas, Republican and South Platte basins on Colorado's eastern plains. None has been seen in the Arkansas River since the 1960s, and only a few were collected in the South Platte basin in the early 1980s and mid-1990s. NatureServe ranks the species possibly extirpated in Colorado. State endangered.

HABITAT Plains rivers and streams with shifting beds.

RANGE REGIONS Eastern Plains

THREATS Flow alteration; Dams and diversions; Non-native fish

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/plains-minnow/

Razorback Sucker

Xyrauchen texanus

Federal: **Threatened**

Colorado: **State Endangered**

Reclassified from endangered to threatened with a 4(d) rule, effective Aug 17, 2026 (91 FR 44756); 1994 critical habitat stays. CPW's list still shows federally endangered.



Photo: Sam Stukel / USFWS · Public Domain

Razorback suckers live in western Colorado's Colorado, Gunnison, Green, lower Yampa and White rivers, supported by hatchery stocking through the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program. Young fish need backwaters, side channels and flooded bottomlands, which dams and channelization have largely eliminated. Reclassified from endangered to threatened in August 2026.

HABITAT	Large warm rivers with backwaters, side channels and flooded bottomlands.
RANGE REGIONS	Western Slope
THREATS	Dams and flow alteration; Nonnative fish predation; Habitat loss; Water diversions
CRITICAL HABITAT	59 FR 13374 (1994): Colorado River (I-70 exit 90 to Utah), lower Gunnison and Yampa rivers, Green River below the Yampa

threatenedcolorado.org/species/razorback-sucker/

Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout

Oncorhynchus clarkii virginalis

Federal: **Not listed**

Colorado: **Special Concern**

Candidate 2008–2014. USFWS found listing not warranted in 2014 and again in December 2024. Managed under a range-wide CO–NM Conservation Agreement.



Photo: Chris Kitcheyan / USFWS · Public Domain

Rio Grande cutthroat trout live in cold headwater streams of the Rio Grande basin around Colorado's San Luis Valley, in the eastern San Juan Mountains and the Sangre de Cristo Range. Natural waterfalls have shielded some pure populations from nonnative trout. USFWS found federal listing not warranted in 2014 and again in December 2024.

HABITAT	Cold, high-elevation headwater streams.
RANGE REGIONS	San Luis Valley · San Juan Mountains
THREATS	Hybridization with nonnative trout; Nonnative trout competition; Drought and climate change; Whirling disease
CRITICAL HABITAT	None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/rio-grande-cutthroat-trout/

Rio Grande Sucker

Pantosteus plebeius

Federal: **Not listed**

Colorado: **State Endangered**

State endangered; USFWS found federal listing not warranted in 2024. Occupancy has fallen as much as 90%, and about 7–8 Colorado populations remain.



Photo: Pam Sponholtz / USFWS · Public Domain

Rio Grande suckers live in montane streams of the upper Rio Grande basin in south-central Colorado and north-central New Mexico. Occupancy has fallen as much as 90%, and about seven or eight populations remain in Colorado's San Luis Valley. USFWS found federal listing not warranted in 2024. State endangered.

HABITAT Low-gradient reaches of montane streams.
RANGE REGIONS San Luis Valley
THREATS Nonnative white suckers; Water diversions and dewatering; Nonnative trout; Drought and wildfire

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/rio-grande-sucker/

Southern Redbelly Dace

Chrosomus erythrogaster

Federal: **Not listed**

Colorado: **State Endangered**

State endangered; never federally listed. Two wild Colorado populations remain, plus transplants (Bestgen et al. 2013). NatureServe ranks it S1 in Colorado; CPW SWAP Tier 1.



Photo: Conway Hawn / iNaturalist · CC0

In Colorado, southern redbelly dace have been documented only in a small area of the Arkansas River basin, in small tributary streams and off-channel ponds. A 2013 review counted two remaining wild populations; others survive only as transplants from populations now gone. They need clear, cool, spring-fed water with slow pools and shade. State endangered; S1.

HABITAT Small spring-fed streams and off-channel ponds with shaded pools, algae and woody cover.
RANGE REGIONS Arkansas Valley
THREATS Dewatering; Non-native predatory fish; Pollution; Small, isolated populations

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/southern-redbelly-dace/

Suckermouth Minnow

Phenacobius mirabilis

Federal: Not listed

Colorado: State Endangered

Never listed under the ESA. State endangered in Colorado and a Tier 1 Species of Greatest Conservation Need in CPW's State Wildlife Action Plan.



Photo: Nick Tobler / iNaturalist · CC BY 4.0

Suckermouth minnows live in shallow riffles of warm, low-gradient eastern plains streams in the South Platte and Arkansas basins. In the South Platte basin only the lower river and one tributary hold them, but the species is still relatively widespread in the lower Arkansas River and its tributaries. It may be extirpated from the Republican basin. State endangered.

HABITAT	Shallow riffles with sand and gravel bottoms in warm plains streams.
RANGE REGIONS	Eastern Plains · Arkansas Valley
THREATS	Water development; Drought and flow alteration; Land development; Impoundment
CRITICAL HABITAT	None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/suckermouth-minnow/

Boreal Toad

Anaxyrus boreas boreas

Federal: **Not listed**

Colorado: **State Endangered**

State endangered since 1993. A federal candidate from 1995 to 2005; USFWS found listing not warranted in 2017. Chytrid fungus drove its decline.



Photo: Dana Shellhorn / USFWS · Public Domain

Colorado's only high-country toad breeds in mountain ponds, marshes, beaver ponds and wet meadows at about 7,500 to 12,000 feet. Chytrid fungus drove its decline, and NatureServe says more than 90% of historic sites have been lost; captive-raised toads are now released. A federal candidate from 1995 to 2005, it has been state endangered since 1993.

HABITAT	Ponds, marshes, beaver ponds and wet meadows at about 7,500 to 12,000 feet.
RANGE REGIONS	Mountains
THREATS	Chytrid fungus; Habitat loss; Altered hydrology; Climate change
CRITICAL HABITAT	None designated in Colorado
threatenedcolorado.org/species/boreal-toad/	

Desert Massasauga

Sistrurus tergeminus

Federal: **Not listed**

Colorado: **Special Concern**

State Special Concern; CPW Tier 2 SGCN. USFWS found a 2010 listing petition substantial in 2012; no 12-month finding was found. Not federally listed.



Photo: Logan Ediger / iNaturalist · CC BY 4.0

The desert massasauga is a small rattlesnake of southeastern Colorado's sandsage and shortgrass prairie, most abundant in the moister grassland below about 5,000 feet. Colorado's population is especially isolated from the rest of the subspecies' range to the south. USFWS found a 2010 listing petition substantial in 2012, but the snake is not federally listed.

HABITAT	Shortgrass prairie with sand sage, buffalograss and blue grama, below about 5,000 feet.
RANGE REGIONS	Eastern Plains
THREATS	Conversion to cropland; Overgrazing; Road deaths
CRITICAL HABITAT	None designated in Colorado
threatenedcolorado.org/species/desert-massasauga/	

Long-nosed Leopard Lizard

Gambelia wislizenii

Federal: **Not listed**

Colorado: **Special Concern**

State Special Concern and a CPW Tier 2 Species of Greatest Conservation Need. NatureServe ranks it S1, critically imperiled, in Colorado. Not federally listed.



Photo: Lon Brehmer / iNaturalist · CC BY 4.0

Long-nosed leopard lizards live only along Colorado's far western border, on bare ground or among sparse greasewood, sagebrush and rabbitbrush, sheltering in rodent burrows at night and through the winter. Radio-tracked Colorado lizards had the largest home ranges recorded for the species. NatureServe ranks it S1, critically imperiled, in Colorado.

HABITAT Sparse desert shrubland with bare ground and plenty of rodent burrows.

RANGE REGIONS Western Slope · Southwest Colorado

THREATS Invasive grasses; Shrubland loss

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/long-nosed-leopard-lizard/

Northern Leopard Frog

Lithobates pipiens

Federal: **Not listed**

Colorado: **Special Concern**

State Special Concern and a CPW Tier 1 SGCN. NatureServe ranks it S3, vulnerable, in Colorado. USFWS found federal listing not warranted in 2011.



Photo: Sam Stukel / USFWS · Public Domain

Once common across Colorado, the northern leopard frog lives in wet meadows and along marshes, ponds and streams in mountains and lowlands. It is still locally common but now rare or gone from many areas, particularly in the mountains, and scarce in most of southeastern Colorado. USFWS found federal listing not warranted in 2011.

HABITAT Wet meadows and the banks and shallows of marshes, ponds, reservoirs, streams and irrigation ditches.

RANGE REGIONS Statewide

THREATS Chytrid fungus; Bullfrogs and nonnative fish; Wetland loss

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/northern-leopard-frog/

Ornate Box Turtle

Terrapene ornata ornata

Federal: Not listed

Colorado: **Special Concern**

State Special Concern and a CPW Tier 2 SGCN. Removed from Colorado's collectible species in 2026 to protect declining populations. Not federally listed.



Photo: Joshua Smith / iNaturalist · CC0

Colorado's only land turtle lives in the prairie grassland and sandhills of eastern Colorado, where CPW calls it common in favorable habitat. It lives on land but sometimes soaks in pools. To protect declining populations, Colorado removed it from its list of collectible species in 2026, ending the collecting of wild box turtles.

HABITAT	Prairie grassland and sandhills.
RANGE REGIONS	Eastern Plains
THREATS	Pet trade; Development; Vehicle strikes
CRITICAL HABITAT	None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/ornate-box-turtle/

Texas Horned Lizard

Phrynosoma cornutum

Federal: Not listed

Colorado: **Special Concern**

State Special Concern. NatureServe ranks it S3, vulnerable, in Colorado. CPW's 2025 SWAP names it a Species of Greatest Information Need. Not federally listed.

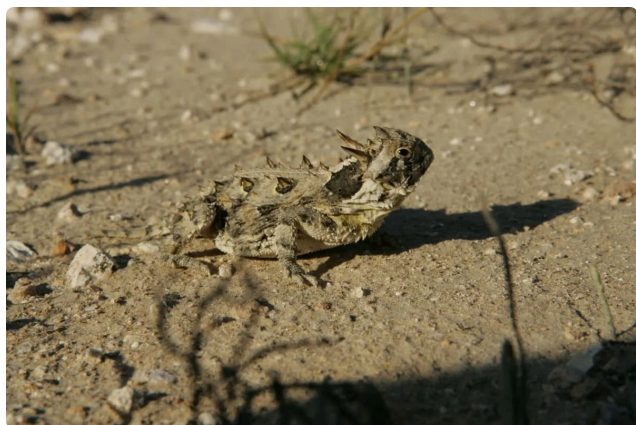


Photo: Steve Hillebrand / USFWS · Public Domain

The Texas horned lizard lives on southeastern Colorado's plains, almost entirely south of the Arkansas River, where CPW calls it fairly common. It eats harvester ants and favors grassland with large patches of bare ground, but is generally absent from land left barren by extensive plowing. NatureServe ranks it S3, vulnerable, in Colorado.

HABITAT	Plains grassland with large patches of bare ground.
RANGE REGIONS	Eastern Plains
THREATS	Plowing; Fewer harvester ants; Insecticides; Road deaths
CRITICAL HABITAT	None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/texas-horned-lizard/

Wood Frog

Lithobates sylvaticus

Federal: **Not listed**

Colorado: **Special Concern**

State Special Concern; in Colorado, only around North Park, Grand County and the upper Laramie River. NatureServe ranks it S3 here; a SWAP Species of Greatest Information Need. Not federally listed.



Photo: Yianni Laskaris / USFWS · Public Domain

Wood frogs live in Colorado only in three high-country areas in the north of the state, mostly between 7,900 and 9,800 feet, where they are locally fairly common. They use subalpine marshes, bogs, beaver ponds, wet meadows and willow thickets bordered by lodgepole pine, spruce, fir and aspen. NatureServe ranks the species S3, vulnerable, in Colorado.

HABITAT Subalpine marshes, bogs, ponds, beaver ponds and willow thickets, mostly at 7,900 to 9,800 feet.

RANGE REGIONS Mountain parks · Mountains

THREATS Chytrid fungus; Altered hydrology; Small, isolated populations

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/wood-frog/

Monarch Butterfly

Danaus plexippus

Federal: **Proposed Threatened**

Colorado: **SGCN**

Proposed as threatened in December 2024. Under a September 30, 2026, settlement, USFWS agreed to issue a final listing determination by June 6, 2030; ESA protections are not in effect.



Photo: Jim Hudgins / USFWS · Public Domain

Monarchs breed across Colorado each summer wherever native milkweed grows, the only plants on which they reproduce. Those west of the Continental Divide belong to the western population and migrate to California; those east of it migrate to Mexico. Proposed as threatened in December 2024, the monarch is not yet listed; a final decision is due by June 6, 2030.

HABITAT Grasslands, prairies and meadows where native milkweed grows.

RANGE REGIONS Statewide

THREATS Milkweed loss; Pesticide use; Climate change and drought; Overwintering habitat loss

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/monarch-butterfly/

Pawnee Montane Skipper

Hesperia leonardus montana

Federal: **Threatened**

Colorado: **SGCN**

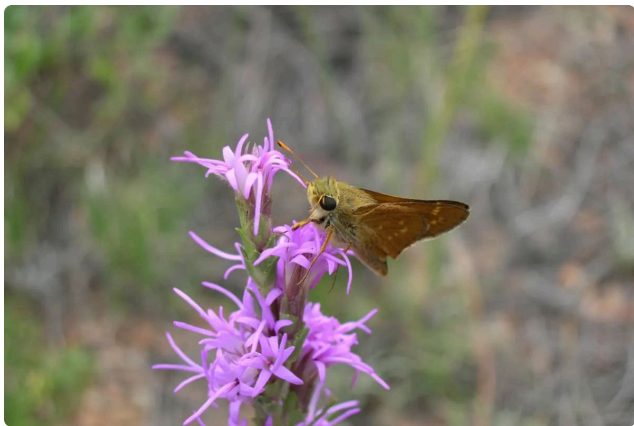


Photo: USDA Forest Service · Public Domain

The Pawnee montane skipper lives nowhere else on Earth: its whole range is about 25,000 acres of the South Platte River drainage in Colorado's Front Range foothills. It needs open ponderosa pine woodland with patches of blue grama grass, where its larvae develop. Fire suppression has let forests thicken and close over that grass. Federally threatened since 1987.

HABITAT Open ponderosa pine woodland on south-facing slopes, with blue grama grass and late-summer flowers.

RANGE REGIONS Front Range foothills

THREATS Fire suppression and altered fire regimes; Habitat loss; Recreation disturbance; Drought

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/pawnee-montane-skipper/

Regal Fritillary

Argynnis idalia

Federal: **Proposed Threatened**

Colorado: **Not listed**

Western subspecies (*Argynnis idalia occidentalis*) proposed threatened with a 4(d) rule, Aug 6, 2024 (89 FR 63888). No final rule as of October 2026.

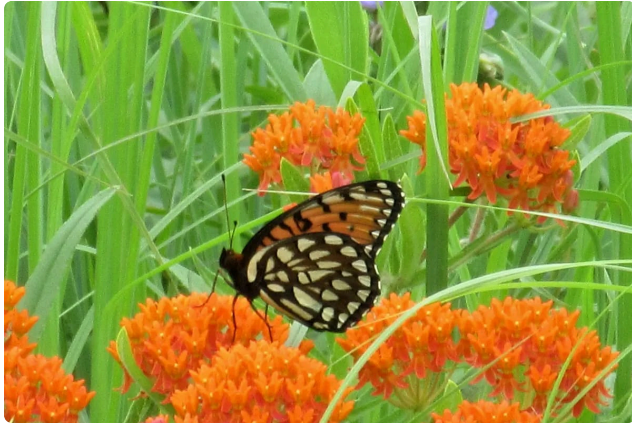


Photo: Jill Haukos / Konza Prairie Biological Station · CC BY 4.0

Eastern Colorado is the southwestern edge of the regal fritillary's range, and many sightings here are likely late-season wanderers. Colorado records come mainly from the far eastern plains, next to occupied areas in Kansas and Nebraska. Populations need large, connected patches of native prairie with violets. The western subspecies was proposed as threatened in August 2024.

HABITAT Large, connected patches of native prairie with violets and diverse wildflowers.

RANGE REGIONS Eastern Plains

THREATS Native prairie loss; Habitat fragmentation; Pesticide use; Violet host plant decline

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/regal-fritillary/

Silverspot Butterfly (Nokomis Fritillary)

Speyeria nokomis nokomis

Federal: **Threatened**

Colorado: **SGCN**

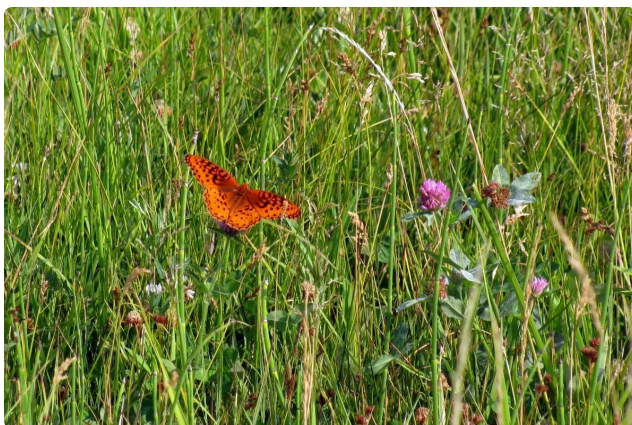


Photo: Terry Ireland / USFWS · Public Domain

The Nokomis silverspot lives in moist, open mountain meadows where year-round soil moisture supports bog violets and nearby flowers feed the adults. Only 21 colonies in 10 populations are known, and most of the populations are in Colorado. USFWS declined to designate critical habitat because publishing site maps would raise the risk of illegal collection. Federally threatened since 2024.

HABITAT Moist, open meadows with bog violets, seeps and springs, at about 5,200 to 8,300 feet.

RANGE REGIONS Western Slope · Southwest Colorado · San Luis Valley

THREATS Wetland loss; Water diversion; Drought; Violet host plant loss

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/nokomis-silverspot-butterfly/

Suckley's Cuckoo Bumble Bee

Bombus suckleyi

Federal: **Proposed Endangered**

Colorado: **SGCN**

Proposed endangered December 17, 2024 (89 FR 102074). No final rule as of October 2026. Critical habitat found not determinable.



Photo: Kendra Parrish / iNaturalist · CC0

A cuckoo bee, Suckley's depends on host bumble bee colonies such as the western bumble bee's, and cannot return where its hosts have disappeared. It was once found in Colorado from the eastern plains to subalpine meadows, but has not been documented here in over a decade, and USFWS has no U.S. record since 2016. Proposed endangered in December 2024.

HABITAT	Historically prairies, grasslands, mountain meadows and woodlands, wherever host bumble bees lived.
RANGE REGIONS	Eastern Plains · Mountains
THREATS	Host species decline; Habitat degradation; Pesticide exposure; Disease
CRITICAL HABITAT	None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/suckleys-cuckoo-bumble-bee/

Uncompahgre Fritillary

Boloria acrocnema

Federal: **Endangered**

Colorado: **SGCN**



Photo: AndreaNwilliams / Wikimedia Commons · CC BY-SA 4.0

This butterfly lives only in Colorado, in up to 11 small colonies in the San Juan Mountains above about 12,400 feet. Within those colonies it needs patches of snow willow on northeast-facing slopes, where late snowpack keeps the soil moist. USFWS estimates its monitored colonies have grown from about 1,000 adults to between 3,400 and 23,000.

HABITAT	Snow willow patches on northeast-facing alpine slopes above about 12,400 feet.
RANGE REGIONS	San Juan Mountains
THREATS	Climate change and snowpack decline; Extremely small range; Trampling and grazing; Recreational disturbance
CRITICAL HABITAT	None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/uncompahgre-fritillary/

Western Bumble Bee

Bombus occidentalis

Federal: **Not listed**

Colorado: **SGCN**

Petitioned for listing in 2015; USFWS found listing may be warranted in 2016. As of October 2026 no 12-month finding or proposed rule has been published.



Photo: Allison Clark / iNaturalist · CC0

Western bumble bees are still found in Colorado's mountain meadows and shrublands, mostly between about 5,000 and 11,000 feet, despite range-wide declines: USGS models show occupancy falling 57–93% since 1998. Mountain meadows and the wildflower-rich subalpine zone were strongholds. Petitioned for listing in 2015, the bee remains under federal review.

HABITAT Flower-rich mountain meadows, grasslands and shrublands, about 5,000 to 11,000 feet.

RANGE REGIONS Mountains

THREATS Disease; Habitat loss; Pesticide use; Climate change

CRITICAL HABITAT None designated in Colorado

threatenedcolorado.org/species/western-bumble-bee/

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Sources

Statuses come from these agencies, in this order. Each species' profile on threatenedcolorado.org lists its own sources.

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Status definitions on page 3:

- Legal Information Institute, Cornell Law School. 16 U.S. Code § 1532, Definitions: law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/16/1532
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