

Department of the Interior  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

<http://www.fws.gov/pacific>

# News Release



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## U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Releases Annual List of Candidates for Endangered Species Act

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service today released its Candidate Notice of Review, a yearly appraisal of the current status of plants and animals that are candidates for protection under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Nationwide, two species have been removed from candidate status, one species has been added and 11 have a change in priority from the last review in December 2007. There are now 251 species recognized by the Service as candidates for ESA protection.

In the Pacific Region, one species – the mardon skipper – was given a lower priority as a result of the detection of additional populations and federal regulations that provide some level of protection at most of the sites where it is found. However, the species continues to face threats such as off-road vehicle use, livestock grazing and pesticides, thereby meriting its continued status as a candidate for listing.

The complete notice and list of proposed and candidate species appears in today's Federal Register and can be found online at <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2008/pdf/E8-28986.pdf>.

As part of this review, the Service is soliciting additional information on these candidate species, as well as information on species that may be eligible for addition to future candidate updates. This information will be valuable in preparing listing documents and future revisions or supplements to the notice of review.

“We strongly encourage collaborative conservation efforts for all candidate species from Federal agencies, Tribes, and private organizations,” said Service Director H. Dale Hall. “The Service will continue to offer technical and financial assistance to support these efforts.”

Candidate species do not receive protection under the ESA, although the Service works to conserve them. Identification of candidate species provides resource managers with advance notice of species in need of conservation, allowing them to address threats before the species is listed.

The two species removed from candidate status are the Ogden mountainsnail, a mollusk species found in Utah, and the Florida indigo, a plant species native to tropical regions. The Service removed these species after new scientific information led to changes in taxonomy. As a result, both species have been found to be more widespread than once believed.

Today's notice also identifies one new candidate species, the Gierisch mallow, a plant species found in

Arizona and Utah. For the nine known populations of this plant, the primary threats are ongoing gypsum mining in Arizona and potential impacts from off-road vehicle use in Utah.

All candidates for addition to the federal list of endangered and threatened wildlife and plants are assigned a listing priority number based on the magnitude and imminence of the threats they face. When discretionary funding becomes available, the Service addresses species with the highest listing priority numbers first. The 11 changes in listing priority announced in today's notice are based on new information in the updated assessments of continuing candidates. Four species have had their priority increased while seven species have had their priority lowered. The net result of these changes is the new number of candidates assigned to the top priority category for listing (i.e., full species facing threats of high magnitude that are imminent) will change from 100 to 99.

The Service has several tools for protecting candidate species and their habitat, including a grants program that funds conservation projects by private landowners, states and territories. In addition, the Service can enter into Candidate Conservation Agreements (CCA), formal agreements between the Service and one or more parties to address the conservation needs of proposed or candidate species, or species likely to become candidates, before they become listed as endangered or threatened. The CCA participants voluntarily commit to implementing specific actions that will remove or reduce the threats to these species, thereby contributing to stabilizing or restoring the species.

The complete notice and list of proposed and candidate species appears in today's Federal Register and can be found online at <http://www.fws.gov/endangered/candidates/index.html>.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov).