



# News Release

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## For Immediate Release

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### **SERVICE DETERMINES THAT THREE MOTH SPECIES DO NOT WARRANT PROTECTION UNDER THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) announced today it has completed a status review of the Tamaulipan agapema (*Agapema galbina*), *Sphingicampa blanchardi* (no common name) and *Ursia furtiva* (no common name) and concluded that they do not warrant protection under the Endangered Species Act (Act). The Service made this finding after a thorough review of all the available scientific and commercial information regarding the status of the Tamaulipan agapema, *Sphingicampa blanchardi* and *Ursia furtiva* and the threats to these species.

The status review was undertaken as a result of the June 18, 2007, petition from Forest Guardians (now WildEarth Guardians) requesting that 475 species in the southwestern United States be listed, including Tamaulipan agapema, *Sphingicampa blanchardi* and *Ursia furtiva*. On December 16, 2009, the Service published a 90-day finding for 192 of the 475 species, which suggested that listing the three moth species may be warranted and the Service initiated a status review.

Information provided by the petitioner suggested that for the Tamaulipan agapema and *Sphingicampa blanchardi* the present or threatened destruction or modification of their habitat from the clearing of native habitat for agricultural lands may threaten these two moths. The petitioners provided information for the *Ursia furtiva* which suggested that the present or threatened destruction or modification of their habitat from fire and urban development may threaten the species. Based on the best available information, the Service has determined that there is no evidence to indicate the magnitude and imminence of these threats or any other factors are impacting the Tamaulipan agapema, *Sphingicampa blanchardi* and *Ursia furtiva* at a level that constitutes a threat to any of the species now or within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of their range.

The known distribution of the Tamaulipan agapema within the United States is limited to Cameron and Hidalgo Counties in the lower Rio Grande Valley of south Texas. The Tamaulipan agapema has also been observed near Soto la Marina in Tamaulipas, Mexico, about 150 miles (241 kilometers) south of the United States border. *Sphingicampa blanchardi* is known to occur in a few isolated localities in Cameron and Hidalgo Counties, Texas, and the range of this moth likely extends into Mexico; however, no occurrences are documented there. Based on a single

documented specimen, *Ursia furtiva* is known to occur only in the Chisos Mountains of Big Bend National Park, Texas.

The Service's priority is to make implementation of the Act less complex, less contentious and more effective. The agency seeks to address the conservation needs of imperiled species before they require the protection of the Act, while accelerating recovery of threatened and endangered species across the nation, while making it easier for people to coexist with these species.

A copy of the 12-month finding and other information about the Tamaulipan agapema, *Sphingicampa blanchardi* and *Ursia furtiva* is available on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> at Docket Number [FWS-R2-ES-2011-0078]. Supporting documentation used in preparing this finding for Tamaulipan agapema and *Sphingicampa blanchardi* is available for public inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Corpus Christi Ecological Services Field Office c/o TAMU-CC, 6300 Ocean Drive, #5837, Corpus Christi, TX 78412. Supporting documentation used in preparing this finding for *Ursia furtiva* is available for public inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Austin Ecological Services Field Office, 10711 Burnet Road, Suite 200, Austin, TX 78758.

Please submit any new information, materials, comments, or questions concerning the Tamaulipan agapema or *Sphingicampa blanchardi* to the Corpus Christi Ecological Services Field Office. Please submit any new information, material, comments, or questions concerning *Ursia furtiva* to the Austin Ecological Services Field Office. If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), please call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 800-877-8339.

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