

## **OCELOT**

*(Leopardus pardalis)*

**STATUS:** Endangered (37 FR 6476; March 30, 1972; 47 FR 31670, July 21, 1982) without critical habitat.

**SPECIES DESCRIPTION:** Medium-sized [76-104 cm (30-41 in), 6.8-19 kg (15-40 lb)], spotted cat. Females are smaller than males. The upper surface (back) is grayish to cinnamon and paler on the sides; underparts and inside limbs are whitish; and dark markings form streaks that run obliquely down the sides, with two black stripes on each cheek. Young ocelots are darker than adults. The ocelot's tail is about half the length of its head and body. Species is nocturnal.

**HABITAT:** Desert scrub communities in Arizona; dense, almost impenetrable thickets in Texas; and humid tropical forests, coastal mangroves, and swampy savannahs in areas south of the U.S. Prey includes rabbits, small rodents, and birds. Universal component is presence of dense cover.

**RANGE: Historical:** Ranged over much of Texas, southeastern Arizona, the west and east coasts of Mexico, and Central and South America, with individuals found as far south as northern Argentina.

**Current:** Individuals are still found in southern Texas, Mexico and South and Central America in suitable habitat. Several confirmed sightings of ocelots have been made in Arizona in recent years, with confirmed sightings of live ocelots made in 2009 and 2011 in Cochise County.

**REASONS FOR DECLINE/VULNERABILITY:** Endangered due to habitat alteration and loss (primarily due to brush clearing), and predator control activities. Issues associated with border barrier development and patrolling the boundary between the U.S. and Mexico further exacerbate the isolation of Texas and Arizona ocelots from those in the Mexico.

**NOTES:** U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service completed the Draft Ocelot (*Leopardus pardalis*) Recovery Plan, First Revision in 2010. Because the species is listed throughout its range, which includes 22 countries, the ocelot presents a significant challenge for recovery planning. A copy of the recovery plan is available online at:  
[http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/arizona/Documents/SpeciesDocs/Ocelot/Draft\\_Ocelot\\_Recovery\\_Plan-First\\_Revision.pdf](http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/arizona/Documents/SpeciesDocs/Ocelot/Draft_Ocelot_Recovery_Plan-First_Revision.pdf)

Listed as a Species of Greatest Conservation Need by the State of Arizona.