
APPENDIX C

SAR Data Sheets

Eastern Milksnake

Lampropeltis triangulum

SARA Status: Special Concern



Description: The Eastern Milksnake is typically 60-90 cm in length, although it can grow to 1 m or longer. Its base colour is tan, brown or gray with dorsal red or brown blotches bordered with black.

There is often a “Y”- or “V”- shaped patch on the back of its neck or head. The ventral surface of the snake exhibits an irregular checkerboard pattern.

Distribution: In Ontario, the Eastern Milksnake is found throughout southern Ontario as far North as Sault Ste. Marie and Lake Nipissing. Where suitable habitat remains it is generally found to be common.

Biology: These snakes typically hibernate from late October/ early November and emerge in April or May. Hibernacula includes locations that are moist enough to prevent drying out over the winter and include mammal burrows, hollow logs, dirt or gravel banks, etc.. Mating occurs in May and by early June females tend to gather in communal egg-laying locations. Eggs are laid in a variety of places such as under boards, in loose soil or manure piles or leaf piles. After 50-70 days the hatchlings emerge.

Threats: The greatest threats to Eastern Milksnakes are habitat loss and the interaction with people. Roads are a significant source of mortality and as urban sprawl alters critical habitat, this species increasingly comes into contact with people. This snake is often mistaken for a venomous species and is deliberately killed.



Critical Habitat: The Eastern Milksnake has no apparent habitat preferences and has been found in a wide variety of environments from rocky outcrops and hillsides to meadows and pastures. It is often found in rural areas in and around old building structures. It is thought that this species tends to reside close to water and would require suitable locations for egg-laying and basking. This subspecies of milksnake is very secretive and spend much of their time hiding beneath logs, rocks and other similar debris. They tend to bask underneath objects that are in direct sunlight.

American Ginseng

Panax quinquefolius

SARA Status: Endangered



Description: American Ginseng is a perennial herb that measures 20-70 cm in height. The plant is rooted similar to a carrot. The stem ends in several compound leaves and a central flower. The flower is greenish-white and develops into bright red berries. Each plant may have more than one stem.



Distribution: In Ontario the range of American Ginseng extends across southern Ontario with concentrations occurring along the Niagara escarpment and the eastern edge of the Precambrian Shield. As of 2000 there were 65 records of American Ginseng in Ontario.



Biology: American Ginseng is long-lived and only begin flowering between the ages of 3-8. Buds are formed on the rhizome of the plant in late summer/ early fall and this will give rise to a new stem the following spring. Flowering begins in June and continues until August. The fruit typically develops beginning in July and ripens by September. This plant reproduces primarily through seeds and dispersal is done by birds. Ginseng seeds lie dormant for 18-22 months before germinating. The Minimum Viable Population Size for ginseng is estimated to be about 170 plants; each seed has only a 0.55% chance of reaching maturity.

Critical Habitat: In Canada, American Ginseng grows in rich, moist and undisturbed mature deciduous forests in areas of neutral soil, such as over limestone or marble bedrock. Colonies can often be found near the bottom of gently south-facing slopes where the microhabitat is warm and well-drained.

Threats: Harvesting, logging and clearing of land for agriculture and development are the primary identified factors for the significant decrease of American Ginseng.

Blanding's Turtle

Emydoidea blandingii

SARA Status: Threatened



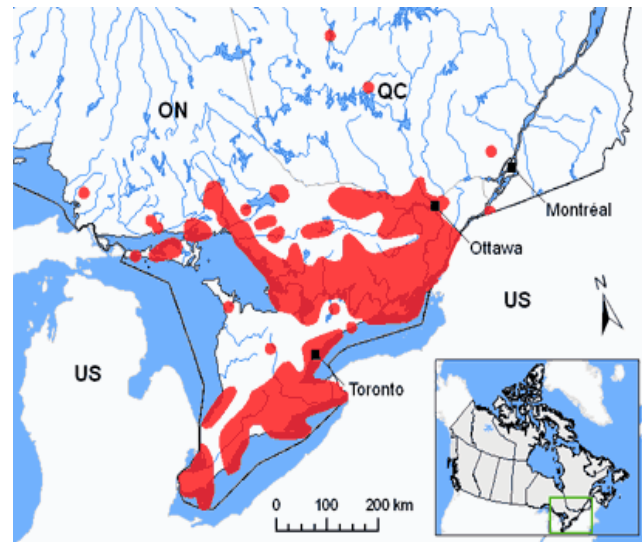
Description: The Blanding's Turtle is easily distinguishable by its bright yellow lower jaw, throat and lower shell. Adults have a domed and smooth upper shell that can be up to 27 cm in length and is usually black or dark brown with tan to yellow lines or spots randomly scattered that appear after 2 years of age. The markings tend to fade as the turtle ages.



Distribution: About 20% of the global range of the Blanding's Turtle is found in Canada, mainly in Ontario in the Great Lakes/ St. Lawrence region. The Ontario distribution is not continuous and Blanding's Turtle populations are often isolated from each other with an estimated density of less than 1/km².

Biology: These turtles can survive in the wild for more than 75 years. In Canada, females mature as late as 25 years. Every 2 to 3 years they produce a clutch of 3 to 19 eggs, which are typically laid in June and hatch in late September or early October. Eggs incubated below 22°C or above 32°C will not develop properly and the embryo mortality rate for this species is naturally high in the Canadian climate.

Critical Habitat: The Blanding's Turtle is primarily an aquatic species and inhabits lakes, streams and wetlands. In the winter it is generally found to in permanent pools 1 m deep or in slow-flowing streams. In the spring, summer and fall, it prefers shallow wetland areas with abundant vegetation. Juveniles tend to prefer shoreline areas with thick aquatic vegetation while adults are generally found in open or partially vegetated sites. Adults spend significant portions of time traveling in terrestrial environments between wetlands to find sites for sun exposure and nesting. They have been known to travel up to 7 km in search of food or a mate. The species usually nests in dry conifer or mixed hardwood forests, up to 410 m from a body of water. Females tend to prefer partially vegetated sites such as field or roadways and dig their nests in loose substrates, including sand, gravel and cobblestone.



Threats: This species is declining due to reduced nesting success as a result of predation and cool summer temperatures. Their habitat has been degraded as a result of development and alteration of wetlands. The road network that crisscrosses this turtle's habitat has isolated the subpopulations and increased female and hatchling mortality because females often attempt to nest on gravel roads or on the shoulders of paved roads. Loss of these mature, nesting females greatly reduces the long-term success of the subpopulations due to the delayed age of maturity, low reproductive output and extreme longevity.

Butternut

Juglans cinerea

SARA Status: Endangered



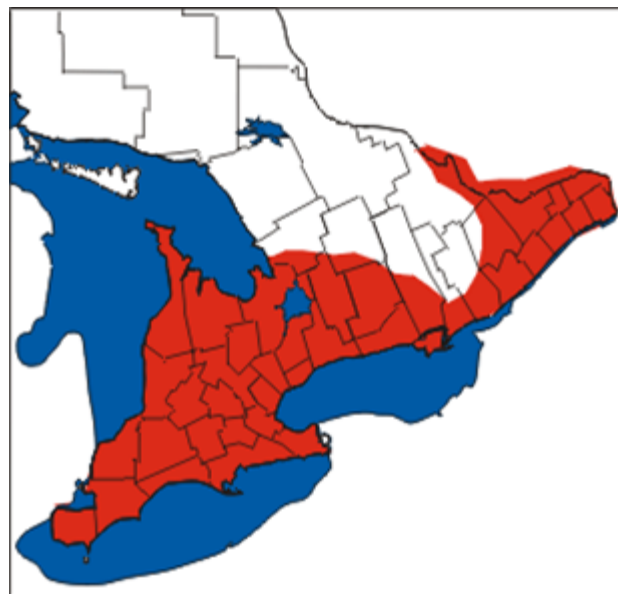
Description: Belonging to the Walnut family, this species is rarely more than 30m tall and 90 cm in diameter. The bark of a young tree is grey and smooth, becoming irregularly ridged as the tree matures. The Butternut has compound leaves made up of 11 to 17 leaflets arranged in a feather-like pattern opposite to one another. Each leaflet is approximately 9-15 cm long and almost stalkless. This tree produces edible nuts, each containing a single seed in a rigid shell with jagged edges and covered by a green and hairy husk.



Distribution: Native to northeastern and north central North America, the Butternut is widespread in Canada; conservative estimates place approximately 13 000 trees in southwestern Ontario as far north as the Bruce Peninsula.

Biology: Butternut trees rarely exceed a lifespan >75 years. The trees start to produce nuts around 20 years of age and produce a good crop every 2-3 years until maximum production occurs between 30-60 years of age. The tree flowers from April to June and is very sensitive to spring frost events. The pollinated fruits may develop individually or in clusters of 2-5 fruits and reach maturity during September or October. The fruits typically remain on the tree until after the leaves have fallen. The seeds are generally dispersed by water, squirrels or other small rodents. The species may also multiply by sprouts produced by young stumps.

Critical Habitat: Butternut primarily grows either alone or in small groups in deciduous forest stands. Large, pure populations have been found to exist on flood plains as the species grows best in the rich, moist and well-drained soils typically found along streams. It may also be found on well-drained gravel sites, especially those made up of limestone. The species does not tolerate shade. It is commonly associated with trees such as Linden, Black Cherry, Beech, Black Walnut, Elm, Hemlock, Hickory, Oak, Red Maple, Sugar Maple, Yellow Poplar, White Ash and Yellow Birch.



Threats: The primary threat to this species is the high rate of infection and resulting mortality from Butternut canker. This is a serious fungal disease that can kill a tree within a few years by entering the tree via cracks or wounds in the bark and multiplying rapidly, killing everything above the canker. Fungus spores are transported in wet weather and spread quickly. Surveys in eastern Ontario show that most trees have been infected.



Golden-Winged Warbler

Vermivora chrysoptera

SARA Status: Threatened



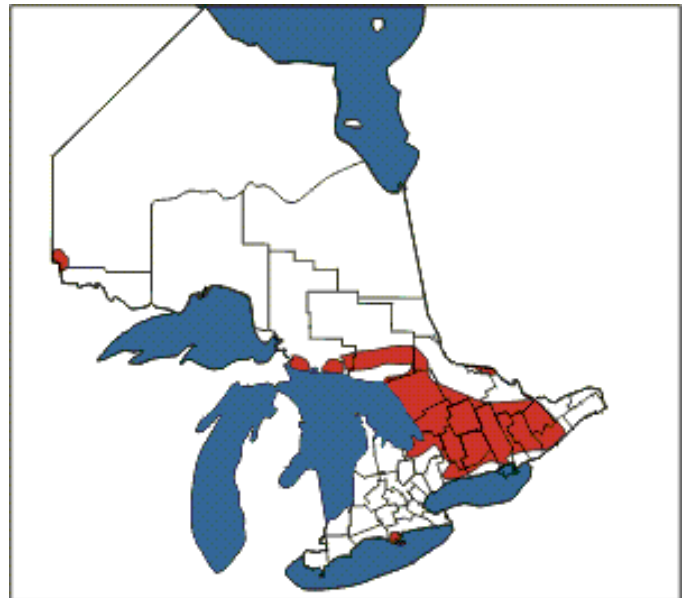
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Distribution: In Ontario, Golden-winged Warblers are found in the southeastern portion of southern Ontario, as far north as the Rainy River district near Lake of the Woods. Approximately 18% of the world's population breed in Canada with a large portion nesting in Ontario. This bird overwinters in Central America and northern South America.

Biology: Golden-winged Warblers usually breed at 1 year of age and can continue until 9 years of age. Couples build nests on the ground, at the base of a plant and produce 2-6 eggs/year. During the breeding season they are insectivores, eating caterpillars, moths, winged insects and spiders. Golden-winged Warblers are known to breed with Blue-Winged Warblers, giving rise to hybrids known as Brewster's Warblers or Lawrence's Warblers.

Critical Habitat: In their breeding areas, Golden-winged Warblers inhabit areas of early successional vegetation and are often found in dry uplands, swamp forests and marshes. They have shown preference for public utility (hydro-electric) rights-of-way, recently logged areas on the edge of fields and beaver ponds.

Description: The Golden-winged Warbler is a small songbird measuring 11 cm long. It is recognizable by its grey back, white belly, yellow forehead and a yellow patch on its wings. Males have black feathers around their eyes and throat while these feathers are grey on the females .



Threats: The main threats to the Golden-winged Warbler are the decreases in early successional scrub habitat within its breeding range and hybridization with the Blue-winged Warbler as the Blue-winged Warbler's range extends north and overlaps with the Golden-winged Warbler's. The eggs and chicks also fall victim to various predators such as raccoons, foxes, squirrels, mice, snakes, etc. Predators or nest abandonment is believed to cause 45% of nesting failure.