

Pale Milksnake - *Lampropeltis triangulum multistriata*

Abundance: Rare

Status: NSS3 (Bb)

NatureServe: G5 S3

Population Status: Vulnerable due to restricted numbers, but extirpation is not eminent.

Limiting Factor: Habitat: the woodland and riparian habitats of this species are limited, but loss is not increasing significantly.

Comment: Changed from NSS2 in 2005 due solely to changes in the matrix.

Introduction

In Wyoming, the Pale Milksnake can be found within counties east of the Continental Divide. This species is often found below 8000 feet in elevation (Hammerson 1999). Pale Milksnakes are active from April to October. Breeding occurs shortly after emergence from hibernacula (Werner et al. 2004). Females lay 4-13 eggs from June to July under rocks, logs, or within old mammal burrows. Hatchlings typically emerge in late August and September. Prey items for this species include lizards, small snakes, mammals, and birds. In Wyoming, it is believed that mammals make up the majority of the milksnake's diet (Baxter and Stone 1985). Pale Milksnakes are primarily nocturnal, and are very secretive. During the day, this species is often hidden under cover. Milksnakes are usually observed in the open on humid nights or after rains. This species may hibernate communally with other species of snakes.

Habitat

In Wyoming, the Pale Milksnake prefers scarp woodlands of the plains and foothills zones (Baxter and Stone 1985). However, this species may also be found in dry conifer forests in montane areas. Milksnakes have been found at approximately 7000 feet in the Seminoe Mountains. This species can be found in shortgrass prairies, sandhills, shrubby hillsides, canyons, juniper woodlands, and arid river valleys (Hammerson 1999).

Problems

- h In some parts of the country, this species has been the target of collection for the pet trade.
- h Lack of basic information on the species presence, distribution, and ecology in Wyoming.

Conservation Actions

- h Develop management recommendations based on resulting data.
- h Survey and monitor population distribution, status, and habitat associations.

Monitoring/Research

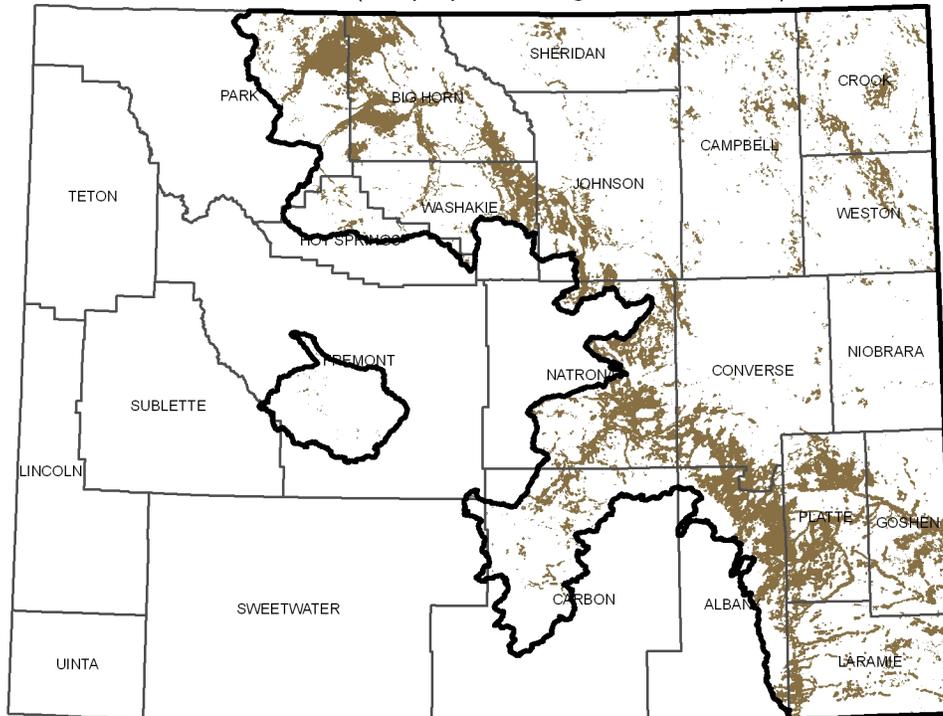
Conduct baseline surveys to gain better understanding of species distribution within the state.

Recent Developments

Reptiles have received increased attention within Wyoming. Incidental observations are encouraged to be reported to the herpetology program. Incidental observations have extended the known distribution of the Pale Milksnake in Wyoming westward into higher elevations.

References

- Hammerson, G.A. 1999. Amphibians and Reptiles in Colorado: A Colorado Field Guide, Second Edition. University Press of Colorado and Colorado Division of Wildlife. 484 pp.
- Werner, J.K., B.A. Maxwell, P. Hendricks, and D.L. Flath. 2004. Amphibians and Reptiles of Montana. Mountain Press Publishing Company, Missoula. 262pp.
- Baxter, G.T. and M.D. Stone. 1985. Amphibians and Reptiles of Wyoming. Second Edition. Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Cheyenne. 137pp.

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SOURCE: Digital maps of ranges and predicted distributions for Wyoming Species of Greatest Conservation Need: April 2010. Wyoming Natural Diversity Database. University of Wyoming, Laramie, Wyoming. Note that brown indicates the predicted distribution of the species; heavy black lines indicate outermost boundaries of possible occurrence.